



T. C.

**YEDİTEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**TURKISH-BRITISH RELATIONS IN WORLD WAR II: STRATEGIES AND
PRIORITIES**

by

Hakan Özden

**Supervisor
Prof. Dr. Mesut Hakkı Caşın**

**Submitted to the Institute of Social Sciences
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctorate of
Political Science and International Relations**

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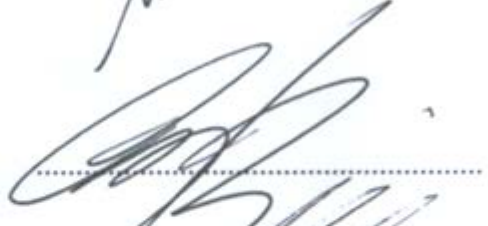
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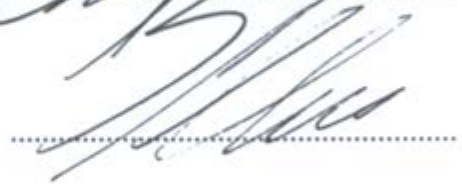
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AC	Allied Council-Allied Commission
AMET	Africa Middle East Theatre
BCOS	The British Chief of Staff
BritEmb	British Embassy
CAB	Cabinet Papers
CIGS	Chief of the Imperial General Staff
COS	Chief of Staff
D-Day	The term used to designate the unnamed day on which an operation commences
EAC	European Advisory Commission
ForMin	Foreign Minister
FO	Foreign Office
HQ	Headquarters
JCS	US Joint Chief of Staff
JIC	Joint Intelligence Committee
JPS	Joint Planning Sub-Committee of the Chief of Staff/Joint Planning Staff
MFA	Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MP	Member of Parliament
NSDAP	Nationalist Socialist German Workers Party (Nazi Party)
OSS	Office of Strategic Services
PHPS	Post Hostilities Planning Sub-Committee of the Chief of Staff Committee
PM	Prime Minister
RAF	Royal Air Force
RPP	Republican People's Party
SIS	Secret Intelligence Service
SIGINT	Signals Intelligence
SOE	Special Operations Executive
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
V-E Day	The day of the Allied Victory in Europe

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ABSTRACT

The years between 1939 and 1945 are the witness to the Second World War that was an extremely destructive experience where the world countries were subject to disintegration as the Allied and the Axis Powers. Against the rising German and Italian Fascism, the Western democracies of the Great Britain and the USA sealed an alliance with the communist Soviet Union.

On the other hand, Turkey had experienced the trauma of the First World War, took on the burden of the Ottoman Empire already collapsed and made the Independence War against the invasion of the homeland by international forces. At one and the same time a Republican nation state was founded on the principles that are in line with those of the Western democracies. The Republic of Turkey was tired, not holding adequate military and economic resources and definitely decisive in not to become a party of the war, unless the territorial integrity is under threat, as she encountered the threat by the Second World War. The Turkish politics was based on the decisiveness to survive by maintaining the national territorial integrity.

The USA is far from other countries and is isolated and protected against all kinds of devastation. She has enormous economic and military striking power. The Soviet Union posed a threat on Turkey from eastern and western side while Germany and Italy did so from the western and southern side. Therefore, the atmosphere of uncertainty that prevailed between Turkey and Britain betokened a course that exhibited instability in three phases in the course of the Second World War.

While accepting the Western Democracy as her role model after the Turkish War of Independence, Turkey had established a close alliance relationship with Britain during the period between 1939 and 1941, then in 1941 and 1942 she first concluded non-aggression pact with the Third Reich (Nazi Germany) and got gradually closer to the fascist Germany induced by vitalization of Germany-supported nationalist and anti-Soviet movements. During that period the English politicians adopted an updated 'appeasement' policy based on the principles to raise long-lasting negotiations. In third phase, comprising the period between 1943 and 1945, Turkey re-approached England in line with increasing achievements by England and the Allied Forces. At the end of War in 1945, Turkey declared war against Germany, following the insistent attitude maintained by England, in order not to be excluded from the post-war negotiations.

ÖZET

1939-1945 yılları, dünyanın kaçınılmaz şekilde Müttefik ve Mihver olarak bir ayrışmaya uğradığı olağanüstü yıkıcı bir deneyim olan İkinci Dünya Savaşı'na işaret eder. Yükselişe geçen Alman ve İtalyan Faşizmine karşı, Büyük Britanya ve ABD batılı demokrasileri Komünist Sovyetler Birliği ile ittifak kurmuşlardır.

Ancak, Türkiye, Birinci Dünya Savaşı'nın travmasını yaşamış, çökmüş bir Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun yükünü sırtlamış ve uluslararası güçlerin toprağını işgal etmelerine karşı bir kurtuluş savaşı vermiştir. Aynı zamanda, prensipleri Batı demokrasileriyle aynı çizgide olan Cumhuriyetçi bir ulus devlet kurmuştur. Türkiye Cumhuriyeti, İkinci Dünya Savaşı tehdidi ile karşı karşıya kaldığında, yorgun, askeri ve ekonomik kaynakları yetersiz ve kesinlikle ulusal toprak bütünlüğü tehdit edilmedikçe bir sıcak savaşa girmeme kararlılığındadır. Türk siyasetinin temelinde, ulusal toprak bütünlüğünü koruyarak yaşamını sürdürme kararlılığı vardır.

ABD uzakta, tecrit edilmiş ve her türlü tahripten korunmuş konumdadır. Muazzam bir ekonomik ve askeri vurucu güce sahiptir. Sovyetler Birliği, doğudan ve batıdan, Almanya ve İtalya ise batıdan ve güneyden Türkiye'ye karşı bir tehdit potansiyeli oluşturmaktadırlar. Bu nedenle, Türkiye ve Britanya arasında oluşan belirsizlik ortamı, II. Dünya Savaşı boyunca üç aşamada değişkenlik gösteren bir çizgiye işaret eder.

Türk Ulusal Kurtuluş Savaşı'ndan sonra, Batı Demokrasisini rol model alan Türkiye, 1939-1941 yılları boyunca Britanya ile yakın bir ittifak ilişkisine girmişken, 1941 ve 1942 yıllarında, önce Nazi Almanyası ile saldırmazlık antlaşması yapmış ve Alman destekli Sovyet karşıtı milliyetçilik hareketlerinin canlanmasıyla Faşist Almanya'ya giderek yaklaşmıştır. İngilizler, bu dönemde uzun müzakereler yaratma prensiplerine dayalı güncelleştirilmiş bir 'yatıştırma' siyaseti gütmüşlerdir. 1943-1945 yıllarını oluşturan üçüncü dönemde ise, Türkiye, İngiltere ve Müttefiklerin artan başarılarıyla birlikte İngiltere'ye tekrar yakınlaşmıştır. Türkiye, 1945 yılında, savaş sona ererken İngiltere'nin ısrarcı tutumu ile savaş sonrası görüşmelerden soyutlanmamak için Almanya'ya savaş ilan etmiştir.

CHAPTER I: THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1. INTRODUCTION

The period of the Second World War could be regarded as one that builds up a highly notable phase of modern Turkish history. The Turkish administration under the İnönü government conducted diplomatic tactics as to abstain from the Great Powers' suppression, which were greatly praised. Yet, it could be visibly realized that Turkish scholars have presented much more attention regarding the earlier periods of political and diplomatic history of Turkey. Nevertheless, the period of 1939-1945 is perhaps one of the most important topics which there are not great amount of academic work available. Relations between Turkey and the Allies, especially the Great Britain need to be reconsidered from a more realistic viewpoint in that there is substantial evidence that reveals Turkey as a "non-belligerent ally" in the first and last phases of the war, interacting with Great Britain in specific. This dissertation, therefore, purports to question the actual and historically relevant positioning of the new Turkish Republic in handling international relations with the warring states. The widespread belief about Turkey in having preserved its distance to all of them has been questioned and the common sense opinion was that Turkey, even though having almost no power to cope with the World War II period, could manipulate the warring states and survived the trauma and destruction of the Great War. It not only preserved its integrity and national safety, but also maneuvered skillfully in avoiding any offensive enmity from any of the parties. Even though, considered as a great success, Turkey's neutral stance needs to be re-examined and studied under the light of the dynamics in the period, which is also the necessity because British positioning in international relations reveal that British secret service intrusion into Turkey in trying to establish an alliance with Turkey would be the natural consequence of British interests in the region, especially at the time. When analyzed, British strategy in establishing its international relations is based on an

... attempt to occupy sections of the Eurasian mainland, especially those areas from which invasions might be mounted against them... maintain a balance of power among mainland nations by

supporting the weaker coalition... seek alliances with powers outside the region to strengthen their position with respect to more proximate continental units.¹

British foreign policy, therefore, can be interpreted as securing its outward periphery by occupying strategic locations there. Occupation may not always mean a military occupation; it sometimes refers to political occupation in sustaining allied and mutual interaction with possible hostile invasions from outside the periphery. Before and during the World War II, Turkey was on the periphery, through which both German and Italian infiltrations could have become potential threat to the security of the allies. Moreover, since it has been a basic position of Britain in sustaining its dominant role in international relations by consorting to ‘balance of power,’ it had to sustain its strategy of ‘supporting the weaker coalition,’ which was then Turkey. Therefore, Britain had to reinforce Turkey by supplying military, economic and political backup. Even more, as it is the third basic principle of Britain to ‘seek alliances with powers outside the region’ it had to establish alliance with Turkey against the Nazi threat and Italian fascism.

Thus, research questions emerge and need be clarified: How could such a country like Turkey with scarce resources maintain its impartial stance and survive the war? What were the Turkish policies during the period that helped Turkey to sustain very intimate relations with the parties, especially, again, the Great Britain? Was the diplomacy of President İnönü passive and coward?

To answer such questions, the dissertation will concentrate on theories of international relations and depict a theoretical background to establish a common denominator between the British and Turkish benefits. It will also offer a brief account of Turkish-British relations, taking them back to colonial times and imperial interactions until the World War I. The dissertation puts forward a hypothesis and aims that Turkey was a “non-belligerent ally” of Britain in the periods of 1939-1940 and 1943-1945, which were the first and last

¹ James E. Dougherty and Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, *Contending Theories of International Relations: A Comprehensive Study* (New York: Longman, 2001), p. 173.

phases of the war. The second phase of 1941-1942, on the other hand, marks a period that the belligerent parties were mainly balanced.

The dissertation also puts forward a hypothesis that Turkey was not and could not be totally impartial due to the fact that it would not have been left to act as a totally independent zone by any of the parties because of her invaluable geo-strategical location. When the long history between Ottoman Turks and the British is examined, it could be observed that Britain had never tended to disconnect itself and its interests from neither Anatolia nor the Middle East. The logical extension of such an interest in the region, therefore, is enough to reconsider Turkish and British relations during the most crucial clash ever, World War II. The dissertation will focus on three periods marked by World Wars: Historical background of Turkish and British relations before and during World War I; the interwar period of 1923-1939; and finally gives a detailed account of the Turkish-British relations during the World War II, when intimacy reached a peak and cryptos between both states overflowed. The reader should also note that the dissertation never uses any of the conspiracy theories to support the theses.

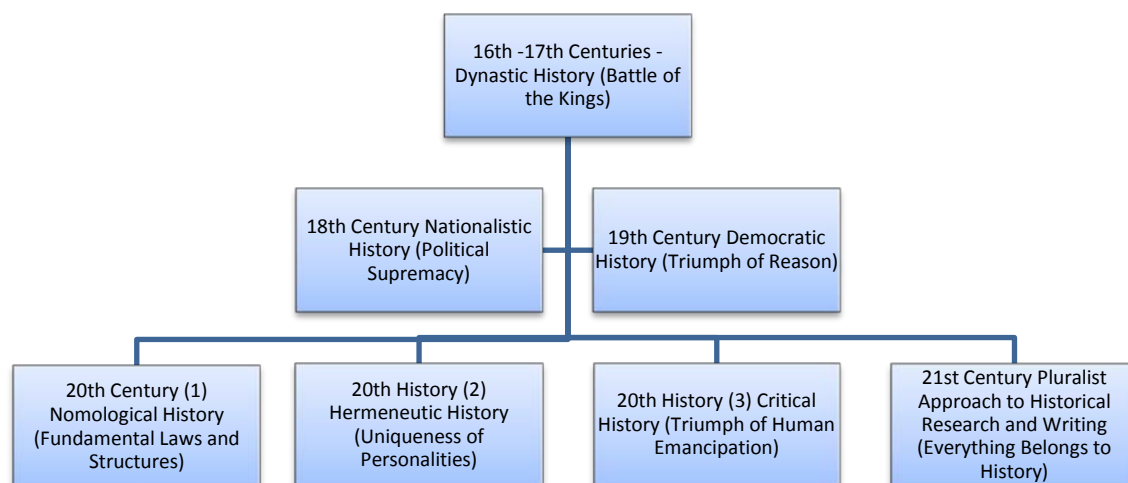
2. METHODOLOGY/APPROACH

Vladik Nersesyants, the Russian political scientist, addressed the historical approach in political science and international relations research at a World Congress of Political Sciences as follows:

The world history of political theories is a major component of mankind's non-material culture. It represents in concentrated form the vast experience of many generations; it includes the principal landmarks and findings of the many centuries of research into the theory of politics, state, law and political power. The historical approach is thus means of understanding and assessing the past,

historically determined, significance of political theories and their present role.²

The progress in historical research which was put forth by such authors as Barzun and Graff and Iggers, among others, was illustrated by the model in Figure 1.



Source: Jacques Barzun and Henry F. Graff, *The Modern Researcher*, 2nd ed. (New York: Brace & World, 1970).; George C. Iggers, *New Directions in European Historiography* (London: Methuen, 1985)., quoted in David E. McNabb, *Research Methods for Political Science: Quantitative and Qualitative Methods* (New Delhi: Sharpe Inc, 2005), p. 372.

Within its long period of history, political history has undergone some changes; one of which is in the same manner that political science itself has changed. Three positions of political science were explored by Orren and Skowronek that start with the first fifty years of formal academic discipline, beginning in 1880 and ending about 1930.³ The institutions of politics were the main focal point of this period. What they meant by institutions was the principal formal and informal rules and agreements which enabled the government to function and the political and economic world to remain despite revolutionary change. The

² Vladik Nersesyants, "Integrating Research: The Dialectics of the Historical and the Logical" (Paper presented in the 14th World Congress of Political Sciences, Soviet Political Science Association/USSR Academy of Sciences, Washington DC, 1988) quoted in David E. McNabb, *Research Methods for Political Science: Quantitative and Qualitative Methods* (New Delhi: Sharpe Inc, 2005), p. 372.

³ Karen Orren and Stephen Skowronek, "Order and Time in Institutional Study: A Brief for the Historical Approach," In *Political Science and History*. James Farr, John S. Dryzek and Stephen T. Leonard eds., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 296-317.

formal structure of constitutions was the main institution that allowed this. So, constitutional arrangements were the natural research topics. Avery Leiserson underlined a course of contact points in society where political conflict comes into being and pointed out the necessity of a formal constitutional institution as follows:

The distinction between social and political structures in a free democracy... a free people, voluntarily associated in a society... requires a political system, a formal structure of legally coercive public offices and decision making process based upon units of electoral organization different from those of the social and economic structures.⁴

Orren and Skowronek, during the 1950s and 1960s, have clarified the adoption of the behavioralist approach by political scientists as having been resulted in a radical reorientation of political study.⁵ The centre of attention of political science research switched from institutions to analysis of individual behavior in political groups and organizations during these two decades. Political history researchers changed their focus as well, except their ongoing interest of political thought. There came up studies that analyzed changes in social structures and groups which were affected by behavioral forces. Government was regarded by political scientists, as a process which could be described and measured in behavioral terms. It was put forward that inferential approaches could let for the prediction of future behavior. The institutions of government were accepted as being part of the larger political system which was an outcome of human creation.

The final stage of political science which was defined by Orren and Skowronek came out as a reaction to the strict empiricism supported by behaviorists. Mathematical models were developed by political scientists to identify behavior in their application of rational choice theory. What rational choice theory, being adopted from economics, argues is that

⁴ Avery Leiserson, "Empirical Approaches to Democratic Theory," In *Political Research and Political Theory*. Oliver Garceau ed., (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 17.

⁵ Karen Orren and Stephen Skowronek, "Order and Time in Institutional Study: A Brief for the Historical Approach," In *Political Science and History*. James Farr, John S. Dryzek and Stephen T. Leonard eds., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 296-317.

people make decisions, including political decisions, by which they seek for achieving the greatest benefits or utility, from the alternative that has been chosen. Researchers of rational theory have largely internalized the principles of game theory along with a renewed interest in institutionalism. Some of the new institutionalist researchers work on institutions to get to the core of institutional politics as an almost stable game in play. Institutions, the formal and informal rules, norms and standards of politics come into existence to maintain equilibrium within the process of government.⁶

2. 1. THE NATURE OF POLITICAL HISTORY

If the history consists of the written record of the past or current events, then political history must compose of the written record of the past and contemporary political phenomena. So, political history becomes the recorded story of politics, political institutions and the actors in the political world. Political history dates back to the Mesopotamian society where the first written records were kept and reaches up today where political activities continue to occur. Politics, occurring in the context of a society, is a social phenomenon. Thus, political history can be identified by some as social history. There would be no politics existing without people that interact with each other. Elton stated that “there is no politics without contact.”⁷ Consequently, political history involves events, institutions, societies, and individuals that make contact with each other in whatever form at whatever time.

It has also been argued that the political history is the record of power, including the struggle for achieving, keeping or reacting against power over one’s fellow human beings. In this manner, the history of politics is defined as the story of people that are in the event of conflict over power. Precisely, diplomats who are rational, intelligent and in favor of peace and that negotiate in a civilized manner are also some part of the process of conflict. However, most of the process has been a long and bloody one comprising of war, famine,

⁶ David E. McNabb, *Research Methods for Political Science: Quantitative and Qualitative Methods* (New Delhi: Sharpe Inc, 2005), pp. 374-375.

⁷ Geoffrey R. Elton, *Political History: Principles and Practice*. (New York: Garland, 1984), p. 6.

pillage, fratricide, regicide, genocide, and the repetition of man's ability to do harm to his fellow man.⁸

2. 2. SHIFTING DIRECTIONS IN POLITICAL HISTORY

It has been argued by Geoffrey R. Elton that political history's broad or global attention has also gone through a process of evolutionary change over the past 200 years.⁹ The history of political thought is the earliest focus of political historians which has the longest record of inquiry. With the historical analyses applied to political treaties of Greece and Rome, this kind of history has hit its stride and may have reached its peak with Machiavelli's political discourse. Plato, Hobbes, Locke and Marx are among the influential observers and commentators on politics and government whose analyses and writings are included. As political science and international relations have been one of the branches of philosophy for a long time, the philosophical approach within the study of politics has been dominant. The second point of emphasis for political history lays on diplomatic and military history which concentrates on detailed reporting of the recorded activities on governmental institutions, significant diplomats and famous military leaders. The archival records of many branches of government that include agencies and departments have been the principal source of this history. The third one is constitutional history and administrative history. As the historical record of these topics contributes to the explanation of the rules of the society from which they were drawn, much weight has been given to it. In this manner, such a focal shift enables to change the focus of research from devoting attention to the stories of great men and great events to the institutions that make government likely to exist.

In relation to direction and emphasis of approach, a pluralistic approach has been adopted by modern political historians. As McNabb puts forward, the shifting philosophical ground has brought about a good thing. He quotes Burke as:

⁸ David E. McNabb, *Research Methods for Political Science: Quantitative and Qualitative Methods* (New Delhi: Sharpe Inc, 2005), pp. 374-375.

⁹ Geoffrey R. Elton, *Political History: Principles and Practice*. (New York: Garland, 1984), p. 6.

The long-standing opposition between political and non-political historians is finally dissolving. G. M. Trevelyan's notorious definition of social history as "history with the politics left out" is now rejected by almost everyone. Instead we find concern with the social element in politics and the political element in society. On the one hand, political historians no longer confine themselves to high politics, to leaders, to elites. They discuss the geography and sociology of elections and the republic in the village. They examine political cultures, the assumptions about politics which form part of everyday life but differ widely from one period or region to another.¹⁰

2. 3. RESEARCH DESIGN

The research will be conducted in terms of "Multidisciplinary/Pluralistic Analysis". Evidently, methods and methodologies are borrowed from other fields; political history, diplomatic history, international relations history and history for instance, contributed with a period analysis. The term "revisionist history" which is an example of interdisciplinary borrowing, has been called forth for the interpretation of historical data that would serve for a definite goal; understanding the reality. The work of a group of historians under the leadership of William Appleman Williams¹¹ during the 1960s, which has since been characterized as "revisionist history," by consulting the standard archives, resulted in the discipline-specific meaning of the term. Keeping in line with the same principle, a very detailed archival research, personal papers and syllabi are combined with the thesis, backing up to thicken the political and diplomatic history and giving a richer and broader cultural palette.

¹⁰ Peter Burke, *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2001),, quoted in David E. McNabb, *Research Methods for Political Science: Quantitative and Qualitative Methods* (New Delhi: Sharpe Inc, 2005), p. 378.

¹¹ He was one of the 20th century's most prominent revisionist historians and has been called the favorite historian of the Middle American New Left.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

In order to question the validity of the theory, the study assumes the following research questions to be answered:

- 1) What were the special and historic dynamics that forced Turkish-British relations in World War II?
- 2) Had Britain been deviated from her traditional principles of foreign policy during the period?
- 3) Did Turkey follow absolute neutrality and preserved her positioning as equidistant to all belligerents?
- 4) What were Turkey's foreign policy principles in terms of balance of powers and Western democracies after her experience with World War II?
- 5) Could the British Isles and Anatolia maintain complete isolationist policy?
- 6) How did unrevealed official documents reveal Turkish-British and Turkish-German relations during the period?
- 7) Could Turkey claim and sustain full impartiality and survive the war?
- 8) Was Turkey impartial?
- 9) Was the diplomacy of President İnönü passive and coward?

4. THEORY

In Chapter 5, Book 6, of *On War*, Carl von Clausewitz, sets out his “kind of common-sense that borders on wit.” He further mentions that “the aggressor is always peace loving (as Bonaparte always claimed to be); he would prefer to take over our country unopposed. To prevent his doing so, one must be willing to make war and be prepared for it. In other words, it is the weak, those likely to need defense, who should always be armed in order not to be overwhelmed. Thus decrees the art of war.” W. B. Gallies comments on the citation that Clausewitz identified war “as occasioned and kept in being chiefly by ... the

relatively weaker, 'the harmless defenders,' with whom we all feel and immediate and proper human sympathy." The weak are like an invitation to the strong. Geoffrey Blainey mentions about the first part and supports his statement that "Clausewitz believed a clear ladder of international power tended to promote peace." The strong does not need to fight the weak. While being on equal terms retains peace, supremacy makes peace certain.¹² Theoretical assertions concerning the spreading of war fall within two categories, which depend on whether war raises or reduces the likelihood of a following war. Following are the explanations of how far might lead to war:

- 1) The victorious state may be stimulated by its success and its newly acquired power and seek to further its gains (e.g., revolutionary France);
- 2) The defeated state may move to recover its losses from an earlier war (e.g. Austria after the Silesian Wars) or overturn a punitive peace settlement (e.g., Germany after Versailles);
- 3) A dispute over the division of the spoils of war may turn the victorious states against one another (e.g. the Second Balkan War);
- 4) The expansion of an ongoing war by the use of military force against nonbelligerents may be perceived as necessary for victory or the achievement of other national objectives (e.g., the Japanese attack against Pearl Harbor as an expansion of the Sino-Japanese War);

¹² Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 371., quoted in Peter Paret, "Clausewitz: A Bibliographical Survey," *World Politics* 17/2 (1965): 268.; W. B. Gallie, *Philosophers of Peace and War: Kant, Clausewitz, Marx, Engels and Tolstoy* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p. 63.; Geoffrey Blainey, *The Causes of War* (Melbourne: Sun Books, 1977), 109.; See also William B. Moul, "Balances of Power and European Great Power War, 1815-1939: A Suggestion and Some Evidence," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 18/3 (1985): p. 481. The comment is in a letter from Marx to Engels, October 31, 1857.

- 5) Third states may intervene in order to defend an ally, protect their own interests, maintain the existing balance of power, or perhaps demonstrate their own credibility (e.g., World War I);
- 6) These non-belligerents may perceive that their rivals have been militarily weakened or diplomatically isolated by war and decide to exploit this opportunity and intervene militarily (e.g., the Italian intervention in the Austro-Prussian War);
- 7) Seeing that third states are engaged in a war that precludes their intervention elsewhere, a state may take that opportunity to advance its interests by force in another country (e.g., the French invasion of Mexico in 1862).¹³

There exist some claims on why war, rather than being the cause of war, would decrease the probability of successive war:

- 1) War may deplete a nation's resources and leave it incapable of fighting another war;
- 2) War, and particularly unsuccessful war, may generate the belief that another war should not be undertaken unless the likelihood of victory is nearly certain;
- 3) War, and particularly unsuccessful war, may induce a change in the political elite and bring to power those committed to a more peaceful policy;
- 4) War, especially long and destructive war, may generate a general revulsion against violence and immunity against subsequent war

¹³ Jack S. Levy, "The Contagion of Great Power Behavior, 1495-1975," *American Journal of Political Science* 26/3 (1982): pp. 562-563.

until the memory of war gradually fades. This is the well-known “war-weariness”;¹⁴

5) This war-weariness may even inhibit subsequent war by others (e.g., the systemic effects of the U.S. on the use of the atomic bomb) though this may be rare;

6) A war between states A and B rendering the subsequent use of force by state C unnecessary against the weakened loser and too risky against the strengthened winner is a more likely form of negative contagion.¹⁵

The phenomenon of world or predominant war has been accepted as a distinguishing type of conflict for a long period, and one that has acted uniquely in world history.¹⁶ Robert Gilpin puts forward:

The great turning points in world history have been provided by these hegemonic struggles among political rivals; these periodic conflicts have recorded the international system and propelled history in new and uncharted directions. They resolve the question of which state will govern the system, as well as what ideas and values will predominate, thereby determining the ethos of succeeding ages. The outcomes of these wars affect the economic, social and ideological structures of individual societies as well as the structure of the larger international system.¹⁷

¹⁴ Richardson, for example, argues that “a long a severe bout of fighting confers immunity on most of those who have experienced it.” Lewis F. Richardson, *Statistics of Deadly Quarrels* (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1960), pp. 128-131.

¹⁵ Jack S. Levy, “The Contagion of Great Power Behavior, 1495-1975,” *American Journal of Political Science* 26/3 (1982): p. 563.

¹⁶ The concept of World War has also been referred to as “global war,” “general war,” “extensive war,” “systemic war,” and “hyper-war.” In spite of some differences, these concepts refer to the same basic phenomenon. Jack S. Levy, “Theories of General War,” *World Politics* 37/3 (1985): p. 344.

¹⁷ Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 203.

Throughout history, these wars have been the most devastating ones resulting in a nonproportional part of fatalities in international violence. Despite the significance of such a phenomenon, there have been critical approaches as to identify and theorize about wars.¹⁸ *The Balance of Power Theory* puts forward adaptable prepositions concerning the reasons, results and alliances of wars. Additionally, it coincides with particular theoretical presuppositions upon which each theory is based.

4. 1. THE BALANCE OF POWER THEORY

It is essential to measure the comparative strength in relation to security among states in an environment of armed, sovereign, self-regarding states. However, there are sometimes deficiencies in such measurement. Precision is not likely as there is no to interstate power. Moreover, there is also inconsistency in the outcomes of so much attention. For instance, there exist many studies on the “balance of power” and war of the great powers; however the results of that much attention are inconsistent. For some, peace is resumed by equilibrium of power; for some a determined imbalance retained peace; some find one way at one time and another way at a different time; while some come up with the view that a balance of power preserved peace for one type of state but not for a different kind; while some find nothing notable at all.¹⁹

¹⁸ Jack S. Levy, “Theories of General War,” *World Politics* 37/3 (1985): pp. 344-345.

¹⁹ See for example; Alan N. Sabrosky, “From Bosnia to Sarajevo: A Comparative Discussion of Interstate Crises,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 19/1 (1975): pp. 57-74.; Wayne Ferris, *The Power Capabilities of Nation States* (Lexington: MA, 1973).; Randolph M. Siverson and Michael R. Tennefoss, “Power, Alliance and the Escalation of International Conflict, 1815-1965,” *American Political Science Review* 78/4 (1984): pp. 1057-69.; David Garnham, “Dyadic International War, 1816-1965: The Role of Power Parity and Geo-graphic Proximity,” *Western Political Quarterly* 29/2 (1976): pp. 231-42.; Michael Mihalka, “Hostilities in the European State System, 1816-1970,” *Peace Science Society International Papers* 26 (1976): pp. 100-16.; William B. Moul, “European Great Power Pacda de Contrahendo and Interstate Imperial War, 1815-1939: Suggestions of Pattern,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 16/1 (1983): pp. 81-102.; Bruce M. Russett ed., *Peace, War and Numbers* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1972).; A. F. K. Organski and Jack Kugler *The War Ledger* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).; Peter Karsten, Peter D. Howell and Artis Frances Allen, *Military Threats: A Systematic Historical Analysis of the Determinants of Success* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1984).; Brian Healy and Arthur Stein, “The Balance of Power in International History: Theory and Reality,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 17/1 (1973): pp. 33-62. See also William B. Moul, “Balances of Power and the Escalation to War of Serious Disputes among the European Great Powers, 1815-1939: Some Evidence,” *American Journal of Political Science* 32/2 (1988): pp. 241-242.

The balance of power paves the way for planning policy in an intelligent and objective manner leaving out the differences made by empirical domains. It has been accepted as a very practical ground that sorts out the nature of state system and asserts the operational rules by which single states are assured to survive within the system. Its virtue is in its objectivity, its separation from ideology, its being universal and independent from short-term considerations. Power and power relationships were pointed out as the major, timeless and inevitable elements in international affairs.²⁰ More clearly, it is something to do with alliances, the possibility of alliances and counter alliances.

Taking national interest under guarantee is claimed to be the target of balanced power. In return, the national interest undertakes the protection of the state in an environment in which there are actual or potential enemies that are concerned with international competition with each other for more power. Theorists of balance of power argue that there is only one true interpretation of the national interest. The national interest stays the same for a long period to be achieved by the same means of balance of power without taking into account the complex structure of a given state's society, various pressures and demands, counter-pressures and counter-demands that constitute the national political context. On condition that a foreign policy's purpose, based on the balance, is to safeguard the power position of the state in a world of enemies, the quest for power should become an end itself, i.e., a motivation. It is likely to accept a balance theory by which the power is admitted solely as the means to be associated with reasonable ends. However, such an approach has not been the type of argument of analysts that have stuck to the balance of power. Most of them have argued that power itself is the major concern of all statesmen that motivate them. The secondary position involves the uses of power in this approach. It is allowed that power could be used for all kinds of ends apart from the enjoyment for its own sake. It is argued that it is the quest for power in itself that carries the essential significance so it is asserted that these secondary usages are not relevant regarding the aim of understanding international relations. It is by the 18th and 19th century literature that such modern assumptions were born. There is nowhere a suggestion that states do anything

²⁰ Ernst B. Hass, "The Balance of Power as a Guide to Policy-Making," *The Journal of Politics* 15/3 (1953): p. 370.

but try to take hold of power as much as possible in order to guarantee their own protection. In fact, on condition that the base of inter-state life is assumed to be conflict, then any other policy would be suicidal. The core outcome of such reasoning is the argument that regarding the decision-making process of statesmen, the power position of several states in the system is the sole guiding and significant principle. Preserving the balance of power is the primary factor of policy-making to which all other motives should be secondary, if not contrary.²¹

In relation to the meaning of national interest, it is usually put forward that the national interest contains all features of state aspirations that are related to the permanent and perpetual requirements of the state. Frequently, the geographical position is set apart and assumed to hold the key to a certain national interest. To illustrate such an argument, Britain's secluded position, American commandment over the Pacific and the Atlantic, Germany's centre position between France and Russia, Russian desire to gain access to warm-waters could be given. The need of Germany and Japan for dependable sources for industrial raw materials and markets for manufactured goods are demonstrated as their key national interest. On the contrary, French national interest is claimed to be relating the requirement for the extension of French culture to the "Aborigenes" of the Upper Ubangi. If the policies of balance of power are not practiced with reference to some central principle more nearly than the concept of self-preservation, they would remain to be incogitable. Thus, policies of balance of power consider the primacy of power as a motivation in itself. As long as national interest remains to be stable, it makes no major difference whether the search for power is supposed to be an end in itself or power must be sought and accumulated to realize other motivations involved in national interest.²²

The "Balance of Power Theory," thus, envisages that states seek to survive as independent and national entities. In addition, they search for power in the anarchical global system. It is argued that states are likely to become submissive to the will of others or lose their security and prosperity in the absence of power. Anarchy forces states to increase their power as maximizing power and security and physical survival are inseparable. Competing

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 377-378.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 380-381.

for power becomes natural in international politics. However, provided that a single state or a coalition of states acquires supremacy, it would likely presume to impose its will on others. Weaker states could lose their security and in rare instances, cease to exist. So, weaker ones gather together to form coalitions in the face of a probable threat and the possibility of domination and elimination from the stronger side. States, particularly small ones, are often unable to maintain their own security. Moreover, the driving forces behind a rising or dominant state could compel it to search for hegemony or rule out the weaker ones. States that are under threat could also internalize balancing strategy of building up arms, to procure equalizing capacities so to balance the military strength of the rising power.²³

Is peace among states best preserved by means of equality of power or supremacy of power of a status quo state? As far as the balance of power theorists are concerned, the superiority of a single state or a coalition of states in terms of power is considerably an undesired concept due to the possibility of the superior state's engagement in aggressive behavior. The state with hegemonic power would tend to impose its will on the others. On the contrary, from the viewpoint of theorists, it is the existence of the preponderance of power that generally provides peace among Great Powers. No single state or a coalition of states maintain immense power in time of parity, thus it would have no stimulation to wage war against the weak. Equilibrium of power among states leads to the prevention of war as the actors do not anticipate victory as the defender is accepted to be advantageous compared to the attacker, namely a three to one advantage. Balance among states are attained by some means, such as the building up of arms, consolidation of economies, acquisition from outside sources, and formation of alliances. Additionally, preventive war is also considered to be essential in the maintenance of balance. As Kenneth Waltz suggests, "balancing is a sensible behavior when the victory of one coalition at the mercy of the stronger one... On the weaker side, they are both more appreciated and safer, provided of course, the coalition they join achieves enough defensive or deterrent strength

²³ T. V. Paul, James J. Wirtz and Michael Fortmann eds., *Balance of Power: Theory and Practice in the 21st Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), pp. 4-5.

to dissuade adversaries from attacking.”²⁴ Structural realists assume a law-like phenomenon in international politics. Waltz argues that:

From the theory, one predicts that states will engage in balancing behavior whether or not balanced power is the end of their acts. From the theory, one predicts a strong tendency toward balance in the system. The expectation is not that a balance once achieved will be maintained but that a balance once disrupted will be restored in one way or another. Balances of power recurrently form.²⁵

The primary target of balancing of power is stability. With respect to international stability, all entities continue to exist and no single state turns out to be superior and there occurs no great power war on condition that a balance is dominant. Some theorists of balance of power argue that the merit of the system lies in the survival of all states, whether big or small, and the maintenance of a specific order. There is no loss of resources or power on the side of the actors as there is an enduring sustainment or reproduction of status quo. As for the classical realists legitimacy is linked to balance of power for achieving international order. Henry Kissinger argued: “A balance of power makes the overthrow of international order physically difficult, deterring a challenge before it occurs. A broadly based principle of legitimacy produces reluctance to assault the international order. A stable peace testifies to a combination of physical or moral restraints.”²⁶ The system of balance of power is shaped with the rules of legitimacy which evoke states to raise opposition to any kind of coalition or a single state trying to achieve a dominant position within the rest of the system; compel actors that agree with supranational principles and regard all major parties as role partners. So, the balance of power theory recognizes the rules of Westphalian sovereignty which declares that sovereign states have a legitimate right to exist without

²⁴ Kenneth N. Waltz. *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), pp. 126-127.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

²⁶ Henry Kissinger, “War Roared into Vacuum Formed by a Sidestepping of Statesmanship,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 27, 1989, p. 1.

taking into account their size and power capacities, and that in order to impede the emergence of a lawless situation, the equilibrium in power is virtual.²⁷

4. 1. 1. The Balance of Power in the 19th Century

In the 19th century, Europe was regarded as a great “confederation” or “system” by the supporters of the balance of power. Europe was accepted as a “great family” of actors that share similar institutions, similar values and cultural traits regardless of its division into sovereign states engaged in an endless competition. In a culturally united Europe, the system of balance of power would be referred to as one in which the power of state is distributed so as a single state would not be able to attain a hegemonic position without calling the alliance of other states into existence which can defeat the one in search for hegemony. For some, the balance system was accepted as one that provided equal power distribution between two “scales,” and there should be “balancer” states that keep themselves outside. Simplicity itself was reflected in the rules that governed the decision making process in the balancing of power. There needs to be adjustability to exterior changes at the highest degree regarding successful balancing policies.²⁸

The sequence of events in 1854 explores the outstanding instance of successful balancing policies. Great Britain was disturbed by the possibility of Russian gain of control over the Straits and called for a set of policies. As Russia being authorized with such control, however, called for a rapid policy change, containing different local and global measures of implementation.²⁹ The Ottomans acquired their “ancient rule” back with the expiration of the *Hünkâr İskelesi* treaty and the agreement of the Straits Convention of 1841; and the Russian interest in the Ottoman territory was revitalized. In order to serve that end, Russia was eager to complete an entente with the United Kingdom. However, the threat of intervention of Austria in the Ottoman-Montenegro war made the Tsar daring, as well as the threats of bombardment directed by the French through the Russo-French conflict over

²⁷ T. V. Paul, James J. Wirtz and Michael Fortmann, eds., *Balance of Power: Theory and Practice in the 21st Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), pp. 5-7.

²⁸ Ernst B. Hass, “The Balance of Power as a Guide to Policy-Making,” *The Journal of Politics* 15/3 (1953): pp. 370-374.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 374.

the Holy places that frightened the Sultan. In 1853, Russia had the chance of pressing a namely more rundown Ottoman Empire. Moreover, together with their claims that the keys to the Holy Places be returned to the Orthodox Church from the Catholic Church which was backed up by the French, the Tsar also asserted rights over the Christian subjects of the Sultan. However, the second demand was refused and the Danubian principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia were taken up by the Russian, in return. Despite the efforts of the Great Powers to reconcile, which were actually unsuccessful, after two months the Sultan waged war.³⁰

With the demand of the Sultan, the United Kingdom and France moved their naval forces from the Mediterranean to Constantinople (İstanbul), at a time when the Russo-Turkish conflict was becoming intensified. When the Ottoman Fleet was destroyed by the Russian, the Fleets of Britain and France entered the Black Sea together with instructions that advocated Turkish interests. The naval position and strength of the British and the geographical location of the Straits needed to be particularly considered. By the waters that separated the United Kingdom from the other great powers, she attained the reach over all and she also fell within the reach of some of them. However, there was pretty much a defensive barrier and in the absence of a “Continental Ally,” British position was much more a matter of incommensurability of land and sea capacities, rather than equality or inequality of power. The Ottoman Empire, being encamped in Europe was a “Continental State.” In terms of its physical position, the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus were able to surround the Black Sea or extend the Mediterranean. Regarding the political aspect, the Straits constituted a gate and the Great Power that tended the gatekeeper at Constantinople (İstanbul) would acquire the advantage. The conventions among states and the condition of the Ottoman, the so-called “Sick Man,” and its alliances and wars were the factors that determined whether the barrier would be opened or closed by the gatekeeper. For instance, Russia was replaced by the British as the protector of the Sultan, with the Straits Convention in 1841, and Russia’s Black Sea coast could be bombarded and blockaded by

³⁰ William B. Moul, “Balances of Power and European Great Power War, 1815-1939: A Suggestion and Some Evidence,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 18/3 (1985): p. 508.

the naval powers allied with the Ottomans in the Russo-Turkish war. It was applied in the Crimean War in 1854-1856, at which sea power could withstand land power.³¹

As another notable example, Akkerman Treaty of 1826 by which the Russian acquired territorial gains and a continuation of the Greek uprising into a sixth year led to further possibilities for the Russian, could be given. The United Kingdom made up an entente with the Russian to be able to shackle Russian interference in the incident. An unwilling France was made part to the entente and consular relations were maintained by the Great Powers with the Greeks, an armistice was declared and on condition that the armistice was refused, they agreed to compel it on the combatants “without... taking any part in the hostilities between the Two Parties.” Military action became liable as the armistice was forced upon the Sultan and as a result, the Ottoman and Egyptian fleets were destroyed at Navarino Bay on the afternoon of October 20, 1827. The Sultan relinquished the treaty of Akkerman and opposed the armistice and finally declared a Jihad. Although, when France occupied Morea while the Russian fought Turkey within the terms of the entente by which the British had sought to restrain her, the Ottomans wore the Russians out over the Balkans.³²

Another instance is the First Syrian War, like the odd war at Navarino Bay that grew out of the Greek war of independence. Kavalalı Mehmet Ali who was the Pasha of Egypt, asked for Syria to be held to him as an award in return for his assistance against the Greeks but he was faced with the Sultan’s refusal and took Syria as a reaction. The Turks were beaten by him at Konya and then he found the way to move forward into Anatolia. The Sultan called for the British help but his calls came to nothing. There were no available ships and the United Kingdom did not accept an alliance as there were some trouble in Ireland and Portugal and Belgium were face to face with international crises. Moreover, France started her conquering of Algeria with the consent of Mehmet Ali Pasha and was not eager to assist the Sultan, as well as the Sultan was not willing to call. The Sultan, driven into

³¹ William B. Moul, “Balances of Power and the Escalation to War of Serious Disputes among the European Great Powers, 1815-1939: Some Evidence,” *American Journal of Political Science* 32/2 (1988): pp. 253-254.; William B. Moul, “Power Parity, Preponderance and War Between Great Powers, 1816-1989,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 47/4 (2003): pp. 478-479.

³² William B. Moul, “Balances of Power and European Great Power War, 1815-1939: A Suggestion and Some Evidence,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 18/3 (1985): p. 507.

hopelessness, demanded help from the Tsar: Mehmet Ali Pasha was convinced by 30.000 Russian troops to return Syria. As a result, Russia, not able to capture Constantinople (İstanbul) in war, got into the city with the cooperation of the Ottomans and left out with an eight year mutual defense agreement. The Treaty of *Hünkâr İskelesi*, unlike some other defense alliances kept the Great Powers separated which were noncontiguous.

Figure 2

THE EASTERN QUESTION, 1820-1860				
Year	Ottoman intra-imperial disorders	Ottoman interstate war	Ottoman Great Power coalition	Agreements on Straits separate?
1820	Greek Independence			
1821				
1822				
1823				
1824				
1825				
1826				
1827		Navarino Bay		
1828		Russo-Turkish		
1829				
1830	First Syrian War			
1831				
1832				
1833			Russia	
1834				
1835				
1836				
1837				
1838				
1839	Second Syrian War		United Kingdom Austria, Prussia Russia	Not separate
1840				
1841				
1842				
1843				
1844				
1845				
1846				
1847				
1848				
1849				
1850				
1851	Montenegrin War			
1852				
1853		Russo-Turkish		
1854			France, Austria United Kingdom	Not separate
1855				
1856				
1857				
1858				
1859				
1860				

Source: William B. Moul, "Balances of Power and European Great Power War, 1815-1939: A Suggestion and Some Evidence," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 18/3 (1985): p. 506.

The Second Syrian War developed out of the first one. The attempts of the Sultan to demand the return of Syria were encountered with military destruction. Although he was defeated on land and his entire fleet was deserted, he enforced that Mehmet Ali Pasha give it up. Mehmet Ali Pasha was supported by the French and Russia by the Sultan. The Straits in Ottoman hands prevented France from reaching Russia and Russia did not have much capacity to operate in the Eastern Mediterranean. The United Kingdom possessed the naval capability and found the chance to replace the influence of Russia on the land bridges of Syria and Suez to India. In 1840, the Mediterranean fleets of France and Britain could have been accepted on equal terms. However, the overall strength of the navies was not. Additionally, with the coalition that Britain maintained against France, any kind of struggle would be very one-sided. Peace was ensured by supremacy.³³

Besides the example of the Ottomans, the history of international relations provides us many examples of states gathering together to preserve the status quo. It was a milestone in the politics of European Great Powers when the Russo-German Reinsurance Treaty of June 1890 was terminated and the following Franco-Russian defense alliance of January 1894 was achieved. The dispute between Italy and Austria-Hungary in 1911 and the dispute between Russia and Austria-Hungary in 1912 can be regarded as ones that were fixing the division of Great Powers that started with the agreement between France and Russia and progressed with the ententes of Anglo-French and Anglo-Russian. France and the United Kingdom set up a military arrangement against Germany following their friendly comprehension after the Moroccan dispute of 1911. The dispute between Russia and Austria-Hungary in 1912 in the Balkans was tagged after another conflict that was over in the Great War. Putting forward such incidents helps to add to the argument that “war is most likely when the power of the dissatisfied challenger and its allies begins to approximate the power of those who support the status quo.”³⁴

As a single power did not possess the essential resources to preserve its objectives, mostly it was in need of forming up an alliance besides protecting the status-quo and thus needed

³³ Ibid., p. 508.

³⁴ William B. Moul, “Power Parity, Preponderance and War Between Great Powers, 1816-1989,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 47/4 (2003): pp. 485-486.

to find potential partners. For this reason, the nature of alliances has to be taken into account in terms of two distinct, yet inter-related senses: the political and diplomatic relationships among governments that enable joint military action; and the securing of cooperation between the armies concerning their operations. To illustrate, Britain was the sole partner that attended in all seven coalitions that were held against the revolutionary and Napoleonic France in 1792-1815. Britain, in line with historical tradition, was in tendency to reckon upon the support of the continental allies and realizing its advantages to the maximum as the leading maritime power, due to the small size of its army which implied that it was not able to win a land war on its own. On the occasion of a land war, Britain rarely operated solely. At the Waterloo Battle of June 1815, which brought the last offer of Napoleon to European hegemony to an end, the Duke of Wellington, the British commander, was in command of 23.000 troops and 44.000 Belgian, Dutch and Germans. It should not be ignored that the Prussian arrival at the field through the end of the day provided the weary British-led forces with the support that they were in need of and thus had a key role in the defeat of France.

One other significant aspect of a coalition is to give legitimacy to a war effort. In terms of forced alliances, there is the absence of this vital moral feature as a single power practices domination over the other partners in its own interest. To exemplify, Napoleon urged Austria and Russia in 1807-1809 after his victory, to take part in his “continental system” which sought to develop an economic blockade against Britain. Napoleon, claiming the trading interests of his unwilling partners, created opposition against his domination. In search of reimposing his will, he launched the 1812 intervention in Russia which turned out to be a disaster and prepared for his eventual downfall. Napoleon could have used the potential tensions upon the allies after the defeated French armies’ return from Russia and the creation of the Sixth Coalition, however, he could not accomplish. He relied on a prior tactic of his career by which he concentrated too much on defeating the enemies one by one, but he could not succeed up against the great numbers and developed organization that the new coalition was able to perform. At the Battle of Leipzig of October 1813, the

so-called “Battle of Nations,” a French army consisting of 190.000 was defeated by allied forces of 335.000 troops.³⁵

Figure 3 – Timeline of Alliances

1792-97	First Coalition against France: Prussia, Austria, Britain, Spain, Sardinia, Netherlands
1798-1802	Second Coalition: Austria, Britain, Russia, Naples, Ottoman
1805	Third Coalition: Austria, Britain, Russia, Naples
1806-07	Fourth Coalition: Britain, Russia, Prussia, Saxony, Sweden
1809	Fifth Coalition: Britain, Austria, Spain
1813-14	Sixth Coalition: Britain, Austria, Prussia, Russia, Sweden
1815	Seventh Coalition: Britain, Austria, Prussia, Russia, Sweden, Netherlands
1854-56	Crimean War: Britain, France, Ottoman and Piedmont against Russia
1859	Italian War of Unification: French and Piedmont against Austria
1866	Austro-Prussian War: Austria against Prussia and Italy
1870-71	Franco-Prussian War: France against Prussia and other German States

Source: Graham Goodlad, *The Unpredictable Past: Alliances and Warfare, 1792-1945*,” *History Review (History Today)* (2012): pp. 46-47.

During the 19th century and even earlier, British main goal in foreign policy had been to endeavor securing a European balance of power. A severe equilibrium between the major powers in Europe denoted that a power could not solely threaten British security. Then Britain would be able to channel its energy and attention towards the Empire. The final

³⁵ Graham Goodlad, “The Unpredictable Past: Alliances and Warfare, 1792-1945,” *History Review (History Today)* (2012): pp. 46-47.

defeat of Napoleon in 1815, which was ensued by the peace settlement at the Vienna Congress, assured for a long time that a balance of power in Europe stared in the face.³⁶

4. 1. 2. The Balance of Power in the 20th Century – First Half

A world-wide empire of twelve million square miles and a quarter of the world's population were governed by 41 million Britons at the dawn of the 20th century. Britain had an unchallengeable naval supremacy and London had been the undisputable world financial capital. However, Britain, as an economic power, was face to face with a severe competition from the United States and Germany which frightened much. Primarily, by the turn of the century, Britain was caught up on by the United States and Germany in many key sectors of industrial production. Between the two countries, the most serious threat had been posed by Germany. Germany was determined to apply a more pretentious and vigorous foreign policy under the leadership of Kaiser Wilhelm II that ruled from 1888 until 1918, which had extended German economic confrontation. By the first of a series of naval laws passed by the German Reichstag in 1898, it was decided to equip Germany with a powerful high seas fleet. A fleet was considered, by the German leadership, to be a clear evidence that Germany was a Great Power, besides providing protection for the nation's overseas empire and worldwide trade. On the other side, such an emerging naval power of Germany was not welcomed by Britain. Germany's great industrial strength proved that it was in a state of actualizing its desires of acquiring the status of world power. Additionally, the concentration of the German fleet in the North Sea was an indication of a potential threat to British security.

Crises came suddenly and intensely. In 1912, when the first Balkan War began, the Ottoman Turks were pushed out from Europe by a coalition which consisted Serbia, Montenegro, Greece, and Bulgaria. The division of spoils became a matter of dispute among the victorious powers in the Second Balkan War. When the creation of an independent Albania was supported by Austria, Russia's attempt to gain an outlet to the sea by reinforcing a Serb drive was frustrated. Russia, having been humiliated in Europe,

³⁶ Paul W. Doerr, *British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), p. 5.

decided that on condition that its Great Power status was not to be endangered, she should not back down against Austria-Hungary again. Serbia, with regard to Vienna, was an intimidation to Austro-Hungarian security so it was decided that it should be limited to the status of a satellite state at the earliest opportunity. In the meantime, subsequent to the Moroccan crises of 1911, French and British military representatives started a second round of staff conversations, by the end of which an impression emerged that Britain would come to the assistance of France in case of an attack by Germany. In 1912, in order to consolidate their home-waters fleet, the British concluded that their naval forces would be removed from the Mediterranean and so the French to take away theirs from the Channel and the Atlantic to focus on the Mediterranean. Although both sides took decisions independently, it clearly indicated an existence of the community of interest between the sides, by 1912.

The assassination of the Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914 gave Vienna the pretext to crush Serbia. The Austrians presented an ultimatum to Serbia on July 23. Although the Serbs returned a conciliatory reply, the Austrians declared war on Serbia on July 28. The Russians mobilized in support of Serbia and Germany rallied to the support of Austria-Hungary. The British issued a desperate, last minute call for a conference in London to avert war, but the Germans rejected the proposal. By August 3, Germany was at war with France and Russia. The Germans had already demanded that the government of Belgium to allow German troops to pass through Belgian territory as part of the campaign against France. The Belgians refused, but the Germans invaded regardless. Thereafter, the German invasion of Belgium provided the legal justification for British entry into the war.



Source: http://www.johndclare.net/causes_WWI4.htm

It was the first mission of British diplomacy during the war to acquire the support of neutral powers. However, it was when Turkey got into the war that Britain had a misfortune, on October 29, 1914, on the side of Germany and Austria-Hungary, forming what was hence known as the Central Powers. On the other hand, Italy rejected going into the war, having claimed that the Triple Alliance was obviously a defensive arrangement which had been invalidated by Austrian attack on Serbia. Subsequently came secret negotiations among Rome, Paris and London. Italy, after joining the Entente (Allied Powers) in May 1915, declared war on its former allies. Britain and France had made a promise that notable territorial gains would be given to Italy in the post-war settlement so that Italian support would be acquired. However, such promises which were stated in the secret Treaty of London resulted in endless complications in 1919.

1917 was the certain year of the war. A harsh strike for the Allies was the collapse of the Russian Empire in that year. When the Bolshevik acquisition of power took place in November, it was realized that reconstruction of the Eastern front was not likely to happen in the near future. However, in April 1917, the United States declared war on Germany. The loss of the Eastern front was more than compensated as the United States entered the war though it took a year to transform potential American power into fighting field army. Yet, the Allies were compelled to give up much ground by the German offensive but while

the Germans were wasting the last of their reserves, the Allies were building up theirs. By the autumn of 1917, the Central Powers came to the edge of collapse: Ottomans could not stand the British offensive from Egypt, and after being defeated at Vittorio Veneto, Austria-Hungary surrendered. But the defeat of Germany was skeptical: the Allied troops had not crossed into German territory on the Western front. The German government had made its citizens sure that they were winning the war. As late as March 1918, German troops had come out of the war with victory and occupied large grounds in Eastern Europe, and repelled the Allies back in the West. In November, many Germans could hardly believe that they had been defeated in the war.³⁷

Risto Ropponen brought out a dichotomy among France, England, Italy, Germany, and Austria in his study of the conception of Russian power in the pre-war period.³⁸ In his article "The Perception of Power: Russia in the Pre-1914 Balance," William C. Wohlforth reinforced Ropponen's general conclusion and put more to it claiming that British decision makers had a more positive stance in the First World War, whereas the French had less, and the Germans and Russians were more indifferent to Russian power than the Austrians. As Wohlforth argued that in most cases the perceptual separation supported a certain line of policy. From the Russian point of view, a strong Russia implied a balance of power and that there was no need for intervention. As for France, there needed to be a strong Russia so that it would not be hopeless, however not so powerful as to remove the necessity of military backing. With regards to Germany, what best suited the preventive-war argument was a Russia that got weaker but on the verge of acknowledging her full potential.³⁹

Russia's opponents viewed her as weaker, whereas her allies assumed her as stronger, which holds that the decision makers of both sides could have believed that they were on the edge of superiority. On the other side, the existence of "dual" balance of power has several implications. Firstly, the objective power distribution capacities in 1914 were almost close to equilibrium as ever occurred in international relations. Thereby, different

³⁷ Paul W. Doerr, *British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), pp. 10-15.

³⁸ Risto Ropponen, *Russia's Power* (Helsinki: Historiallisia tutkimuksia, 1968), p. 8.

³⁹ William C. Wohlforth, "The Perception of Power in the Pre-1914 Balance," *World Politics* 39/3 (1987): p. 376.

conclusions about power relationships could be drawn from the same evidence. In the presence of four years of conflict, it is hard to talk about the Entente's superiority, the harnessing to the Entente of American economic power and her intervention were essential for victory. Secondly, the dual balance of power adds to the argument on the origins of the war. It makes sense on the explanation of German belligerency and the rejection of the Entente Powers to give up. Often organizational conditions were assumed to be the source of the willingness of all states to engage in war or the reluctance of all to take risks for peace; it could partially be clarified by the belief of each side that "if things came to it," it could come out victorious. Wohlforth further underlines that there is support for Geoffrey Blainey's notion of war as "a dispute about the measurement of power."⁴⁰

There are aggressive wars which are imposed on the weak by the strong; however, there is some conviction that war is often the consequence of diplomatic conflicts with no solutions owing to the conflicting interpretations of their bargaining power. Regarding the dynamic theories, the theory of balance of power paves the way for the explanation of why power transitions cannot be attained in a peaceful manner. It would be hard to understand why a weaker challenging state would support the provocation of war or a weaker state with dominance would seek for the preservation of status quo, on condition that power relationships were totally transparent. As power relationships can be non-transparent and as each side can perceive a different distribution, the demands of others can be detected as illegitimate and unjustified by each side in terms of the existing power distribution.⁴¹

Despite the common belief that there laid restraints and suppressions in the source of the First World War as significant elements, the eruption of the Second World War is not identified by some scholars with motives concerning the structure. The First World War sets up an image of statesmen in the middle of a structural stalemate who failed to avoid an undesired war, on the other hand, The Second World War reminds of a tragedy in which pathetic characters take place. It is also suggested by some historians that the problem with the standard historical account of World War II is that "the actors in the drama appear only

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 377.; Geoffrey Blainey, *The Causes of Wars* (New York: Free Press, 1973), p. 114.

⁴¹ William C. Wohlforth, "The Perception of Power in the Pre-1914 Balance," *World Politics* 39/3 (1987): p. 377.

as personified images, no longer as real persons... The Drama has a villain (Hitler) and a sinner (Chamberlain) – what more does one need to explain the outbreak of war in 1939, especially when the supporting roles are played by lesser villains such as Mussolini and Stalin and lesser sinners like Beck and Daladier.”⁴²

Most students of international relations also employ a villain/sinner image to explain the origins of World War II. The father of neorealism himself, Kenneth Waltz, at least partially endorses it:

A small number system can always be disrupted by the actions of a Hitler and the reactions of a Chamberlain... One may lament Churchill’s failure to gain control of the British government in the 1930s, for he knew what actions were required to maintain a balance of power.⁴³

Similarly, outstanding game theorists like Emerson Niou and Peter Ordeshook state that “sympathize... with the analyses that interpret Hitler’s personality... as critical to the outbreak of World War II rather than some breakdown in traditional balance of power forces.”⁴⁴ Furthermore, John Mueller points out Hitler as the sole cause of World War II and adds: “It almost seems that after World War I, the only person left in Europe who was willing to risk another total war was Adolf Hitler.”⁴⁵

There are also some different assumptions and theories that try to explain the causes of the Second World War. However, seeking a shed new light on an important case which also many scholars have come to think familiar, I support the argument that “the defeated state may move to recover its losses from an earlier war.” In the introduction to his magisterial history of the 20th century, the historian Eric Hobsbawm writes of an otherwise intelligent

⁴² Quoted in Randall L. Schweller, “Tripolarity and the Second World War,” *International Studies Quarterly* 37/1 (1993): p. 73.

⁴³ Kenneth N. Waltz. *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), pp. 175-176.

⁴⁴ Emerson Niou and Peter Ordeshook, “Stability in Anarchic International Systems,” *American Political Science Review* 84/4 (1990): p. 1231.

⁴⁵ John Mueller, “The Essential Irrelevance of Nuclear Weapons: Stability in the Postwar World,” *International Security* 13/2 (1988): p. 75.; Randall L. Schweller, “Tripolarity and the Second World War,” *International Studies Quarterly* 37/1 (1993): p. 74.

American student who asked if the phrase “Second World War” meant that there had been a first. And anyone who has thought history for any length of time can recount similar stories.⁴⁶

Therefore, the aim of the dissertation then is threefold: (1) the relations between Turkey and Britain in the Second World War; (2) The challenges faced by Turkey and Britain and their respective foreign policy makers in putting together functioning coalitions; (3) The theoretical analysis of the relations between Turkey and Britain, to a discussion of what the “Second World War” meant, also mentioning the alliance patterns and to explanation of the alliance strategies of the States during the period of 1939-1945.

⁴⁶ Quoted in Paul W. Doerr, *British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), p. 1.

CHAPTER II: THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE TURKISH-BRITISH RELATIONS

5. RELATIONS FROM 1583 to 1923

Turkish-English relations began at the end of the 16th century which was a rather late start. Some Englishmen that were concerned only with trade brought forth the attempt for the first contracts. As entrepreneurial English merchants began to concern themselves about trade in the middle of the 16th century, doing business with distinct places, with the countries of the Levant and the lands of the “Great Turk,”⁴⁷ could not be ignored. In 1553, Anthony Jenkinson, an Englishman, was the first to achieve at Aleppo, Syria “a safe conduct of privilege” in this field, from Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent. He was permitted to arrive in Turkish ports with ships, to load and unload his merchandise on condition that he paid ordinary duties. However, he did not put this grant to use and twenty-five years passed before interest was awakened in the Levant trade in London. Yet two London merchants of the time, Edward Osborne and Richard Staper were the ones to take the first actual steps towards this trade. William Harborne (a factor of Osborne’s) was sent to İstanbul with the consent of Queen Elizabeth, who arrived at İstanbul at the end of October 1578. Harborne aimed at securing full freedom of trade for English subjects and well accepted by the Sultan. Sokullu Mehmet Pasha, the Grand Vizier, was inclined to keep cautious about the claims of the English “Agent,” particularly when he impeded the alliance of England against their common enemy, Spain. The developments, such as the arrival of Harborne at İstanbul and his demands for English subjects to be given privileges resulted with a start of official correspondence between the Turkish Sultan and the English Queen. The first letters of Sultan Murat the 3rd, were dated March 20th 1579, and Elizabeth’s answer October 25th, 1579, respectively; both of which were written in a very friendly manner. The main subjects were the intimate relations between the two countries

⁴⁷ The term was used by the British in late of the 16th century. *See Akdes Nimet Kurat, Türk-İngiliz Münasebetlerine Kısa Bir Bakış (1553-1952): A Short Survey of Turco-British Relations, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1952), pp. 7- 17.*

in all the letters of the Turkish Sultans, from those of Sultan Murat (in 1579) to the letter of Sultan Selim III (in 1793).⁴⁸

However, it was at the end of the 18th century that external conditions contributed to a closer relationship between Britain and the Ottoman Empire. Two developments gave cause for this result. The first was the expansion of the Russian Empire towards the south specified by the acquisition of Crimea by Russia from 1774 to 1783. The other one was the growing interests of Britain in the Eastern Mediterranean caused by the British conquest of India in the 18th century. In case Russia had taken hold of the control of the Straits, namely the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, she could have become a threat for the shortest route to India. Thus, the significance of building up an alliance with the Ottomans against Russia was realized by British statesmen. Moreover, the two countries leagued together in an anti-French alliance as a result of Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798.⁴⁹

The occupation of Syria by Mehmet Ali Pasha, the Governor of Egypt, during 1831 and 1832, enabled the common political interests of the two countries. Russian warships attained the right of passage through the Straits by the resultant treaty of *Hünkâr İskelesi* while the other powers were deprived of the same right. Such developments brought the British into action. The British Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston, persuaded the governments of Austria, Prussia and Russia to sign a joint Convention of 1841 that bound the signatories to incarcerate Mehmet Ali Pasha to North Africa, as the army of the Sultan sustained further defeats under the command of him. An Anglo-Austrian fleet blockaded Beirut and so the army of Egypt returned to its homeland.⁵⁰

The defeat of the Sultan by Mehmet Ali Pasha would pose a threat against the interests of Britain as that might have provided Russia with the opportunity of holding the control of the Turkish Straits. In the autumn of 1853, a war broke out between Russia and the Ottoman Empire in what was now Romania and the Russian Admiral Nahimof destroyed

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

⁴⁹ William Hale and Ali İhsan Bağış, eds., *Four Centuries of Turco-British Relations: Studies in Diplomatic Economic and Cultural Affairs*, (Northgate; Wallington; Beverley; North Yorkshire: The Eothen Press, 1984), p. 2.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

the Turkish fleet in the harbor of Sinop. Meanwhile, the British and the French Governments had already moved their warships to the Sea of Marmara and in March 1854, they participated with the Turks against Russia in Crimea. As the war was over by the Treaty of Paris of 1856, Russia was banned to keep its naval forces in the Black Sea and so it was called a halt to the Russian threat against the Ottoman Empire for the next twenty years. However, as rebellions broke out in the Sultan's Bulgarian provinces, the threat reappeared in the 1870s. During the consequent Russo-Turkish war of 1877/8, Osman Pasha's defense of the fortress of Plevne checked the Russian armies for four months. In the meantime, a European coalition came into existence against the Russian advance. When the Russian forces appeared before İstanbul in January 1878, they were met with a British fleet anchored in the Sea of Marmara. Russia encountered the probability of a new war against an Anglo-Turkish coalition and retracted. By the Treaty of Berlin of July 1878, Russian territorial acquisition was restricted to Romania and Batum and the Ottoman Empire assured a further lease of life. The alliance of 1878 reflected the high-water mark of Anglo-Turkish collaboration in the 19th century. In return, however, Great Britain acquired the right to occupy and administer Cyprus.⁵¹ In 1882, Egypt was captured by the British forces, which was still nominally a province of the Ottoman Empire, by which Britain procured a base of the Eastern Mediterranean that did not rely on an alliance with the Sultan for its efficacy.⁵²

Many historians suggest that Britain had a very strong impact on the Ottoman Empire through the period of 1839 to 1876 which is also named as the period of *Tanzimat* (reforms) *par excellence* in Turkish historiography; for adapting those reforms. The Russophobe Canning (from 1852 Lord Stratford de Redcliffe) who was British ambassador

⁵¹ From the convention of defensive of alliance between Great Britain and Turkey, signed on June 4, 1878, the following article is quoted: "If Batum, Ardahan and Kars, or any of them shall be retained by Russia and if any attempt shall be made at any future time by Russia to take possession of any further territories of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan in Asia, as fixed by the definitive treaty of peace, England engages to join His Imperial Majesty the Sultan in defending them by force of arms. In return... His Imperial Majesty the Sultan further consents to assign the Island of Cyprus to be occupied and administered by England." In law, however, Cyprus remained a part of the Ottoman Empire, but occupied and administered by Great Britain. **Reviewed Work(s), "Annexation of Cyprus by Great Britain,"** *The American Journal of International Law* 9/1 (1915): pp. 204-205.

⁵² William Hale and Ali İhsan Bağış, eds., *Four Centuries of Turco-British Relations: Studies in Diplomatic Economic and Cultural Affairs*, (Northgate; Wallington; Beverley; North Yorkshire: The Eothen Press, 1984), p. 4.

in Istanbul from 1841 to 1858 had intimate relations with many of the leading Ottoman reformers and thus played a vital part in this support. The startup of the *Tanzimat* coincided with the efforts to solve the second Egyptian crisis. On November 3, 1839, when Ottoman fortunes diminished drastically, an imperial edict which was written by leading reformer and foreign minister Reşit Pasha, but announced in the name of the new Sultan (Abdülmecit), was read outside the palace gates (at the square of the Rose Garden) to an assembly of Ottoman notables and foreign diplomats. It was a declaration of intent on the part of the Ottoman Government that stipulated in effect some reforms such as the realization of guarantees for life, honor and property, the new system of tax farming, a conscription system for the army and ultimately equality before the law for all subjects regardless of their religion.⁵³ The Great Powers also encouraged the post 1839 reforms, such as *Islahat*. The Grand Vizier Mehmet Emin Ali Pasha prepared a new package of reforms on February 18, 1856, which put forward further rights to the Ottoman Christians in the empire. The package was also included in the Treaty of Paris, 1856. However, it would be misleading to ascribe all the reforms to foreign pressure only. An intrinsic impression also became the result of the reforms which supported that the only way of saving the empire was the introduction of European-style reforms.⁵⁴ Yet the economic conditions of this period are more disputable. For instance, one of the most extensively approached events in relation to the collapse of the Ottoman industry in the 19th century is the 1838 Anglo-Turkish Commercial Convention. Signing of free trade agreements with as many periphery states as possible to attain foreign markets for their manufacturers was on the agenda of Britain as most European industrial countries followed a protectionist policy before they went liberal. All local monopolies in the empire were eliminated by the 1838 Treaty and all British merchants were provided with the opportunity of buying goods anywhere in the empire and moreover, foreign merchants (but not domestic) were exempted from an 8 percent internal customs duty which had previously been lied on goods transported within the empire. Export duties were increased from 3 to 12 percent

⁵³ Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2004), pp. 50-51.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

import duties from 3 to 5 percent.⁵⁵ The economic privileges that the Ottoman Empire entitled to Western states were suggested by many scholars to be the basic reason of her collapse.

The decline of the Anglo-Turkish relations reached to the highest point during the First World War.⁵⁶ The relations between Turkey and Britain began to deteriorate as a result of the increase of the German influence in the Ottoman Empire.⁵⁷ As the Ottoman Empire was now regarded as an enemy, it was not likely to prolong Britain's strategic interests in the Eastern Mediterranean by preserving and supporting her. Consequently, Britain reversed its policy and aimed the partition of the Ottoman Empire.⁵⁸

Relating the partition of the Ottoman Empire, secret negotiations began to take place as early as 1915. During that year, the İstanbul Agreement of March 18, 1915 was finalized between Britain, France and Italy who admitted Russia possessing İstanbul and the Dardanelles. Italy's demands in the Dodecanese were recognized by the Treaty of London, April 26, 1915, and she was affirmed a share in the expectant disposal of Anatolia. By the Sykes-Picot Agreement signed between Britain and France on May 16, 1916, they were procured with wide spheres of influence in the Arab territories of the Empire. Italians were given a sphere of influence in the Aegean and the Mediterranean coastline of Anatolia by the agreement of St. Jean de Maurienne of April 17, 1917. Ultimately, Britain opted for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, by the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917. Thus, Britain's policy concerning the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire was completely inverted in less than two years of war.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Jeffrey G. Williamson, *Trade and Poverty: When the Third World Fell Behind* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2011), pp. 102-103.

⁵⁶ William Hale and Ali İhsan Bağış, eds., *Four Centuries of Turco-British Relations: Studies in Diplomatic Economic and Cultural Affairs*, (Northgate; Wallington; Beverley; North Yorkshire: The Eothen Press, 1984), p. 4.

⁵⁷ Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Türk-İngiliz Münasebetlerine Kısa Bir Bakış (1553-1952): A Short Survey of Turco-British Relations*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1952), p. 22.

⁵⁸ Sevtap Demirci, *Strategies and Struggles, British Rethoric and Turkish Response: The Lausanne Conference, 1922-1923* (İstanbul: The ISIS Press, 2005), p. 19.

⁵⁹ Mesut Hakkı Çaşın, "Strategic Effects of World War I to International Security and Power Balances in the Middle East" (Proceedings of the Israeli-Turkish International Colloquy, Tel Aviv, Israel, April 3-6, 2000), p. 33.

Map 1: Europe, Middle East and Africa, 1914-1918



Source: Map from the documentary of the National Archives, London: Map Division, National Archives.

Turkey and the Central Powers were defeated and Britain and her allies were exhausted, by 1918. Following the Mudros Armistice of 1918, what came as clear indications of the total reversal of 19th century British foreign policy which envisaged support for the existence and the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire, were the occupation of various parts of Turkish territory and the encouragement of the Greek invasion of İzmir in May 1919, based upon a decision by the Supreme Council in relation to clause 7 of the Armistice, and finally the signing of the Treaty of Sevres on August 10, 1920.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Sevtap Demirci, *Strategies and Struggles, British Rethoric and Turkish Response: The Lausanne Conference, 1922-1923* (İstanbul: The ISIS Press, 2005), pp. 19-20.

There were some massive changes in Turkey from two years onwards the Armistice of Mudros and the Treaty of Sevres, as the Turks were gathered together by Mustafa Kemal, later Atatürk, in national resistance against the partition plan that the entente powers sought to impose on their country. Actually, as Lloyd George's Government in London gave support to the Greek claims in Asia Minor, it could be argued that the war between Greece and the Turkish nationalists aiming to secure control of Western Anatolia was a war between Britain and the Turks. However, even the military campaign was at its height, Atatürk still was aspirant to keep the diplomatic options open – as his colleague Fethi Okyar was sent to London in 1922, to reveal whether Britain would approve a Greek withdrawal without any further bloodshed. Osman Okyar, son of Fethi Bey, told in detail the story of his father's mission to London. Afterwards, due to the confrontation between the British and the Turks at Çanakkale in September 1922, as a consequence of Lloyd George's retraction, the route to peace was cleared between Turkey and the former Entente powers which was reflected in the form of the Treaty of Lausanne in July 1923.⁶¹

In order to accomplish a precise peace between Turkey and the Allies, the Lausanne Conference was carried out in November 1922 that came as the eventual phase of World War I regarding the long standing Eastern question. As the Ottoman Empire was defeated in the Great War, it was inescapable for her to break up and the final deadly blow to the "Sick Man of Europe" came by the strike of the Sevres Treaty of 1920. However, there was massive diplomatic activity triggered as a result of the success of a nationalist movement of the Turks led by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Although the Allies had an intense eagerness to acquire what had been planned in the Treaty of Sevres, they noticed that they were not in a situation to dictate terms of peace any more.⁶²

It was the first time since the outbreak of the First World War that the Lausanne Conference laid on the necessary ground for settlement between Turkey and Britain. Both

⁶¹ William Hale and Ali İhsan Bağış, eds., *Four Centuries of Turco-British Relations: Studies in Diplomatic Economic and Cultural Affairs*, (Northgate; Wallington; Beverley; North Yorkshire: The Eothen Press, 1984), pp. 4-5.; Albert Howe Lybyer, "Turkey Under the Armistice," *The Journal of International Relations* 12/4 (1922): pp. 447-473.

⁶² Sevtap Demirci, *Strategies and Struggles, British Rethoric and Turkish Response: The Lausanne Conference, 1922-1923* (İstanbul: The ISIS Press, 2005), p. 183.

sides accommodated their conflicting interests through reciprocal compensations and concessions. What triggered Turkey's move towards Britain stemmed from three main assessments. Firstly, Turkey was in urgent need of peace and stability and the only power that could provide these was regarded to be Britain. Thus, a settlement with Britain was inevitable. Secondly, Turkey was extremely sensitive about issues regarding its sovereignty rights and independence resulting from the rigour of the destructiveness of the capitulatory regime. Thereby, any kind of solution even if suggesting remotely any foreign interference in its internal affairs was unacceptable. Main interest of Britain was in territorial and political issues that did not pose a threat to Turkish independence and sovereignty. Mosul was a particular case which was approved to be postponed. Though the suspension of the Mosul question was granted as unsatisfying by some of the leading Turks, the wish for an immediate peace and Anglo-Turkish friendship surpassed it. Thirdly, as a consequence of the devastation of the war, Turkey was in need of economic and financial assistance in order to reconstruct its economy. Financial difficulties impelled the Turks to attain peace as early as possible to call for assistance from abroad. In this regard, Britain was regarded as a potential creditor that would accommodate Turkey with the necessary assistance to meet the urgent requirements.⁶³

From British point of view, as a war with Turkey would damage British interests, the reconciliation between Turkey and Britain was essential. Firstly, it was excessively hard for Britain to commit herself to a cause that was most likely to come to grief due to the weariness caused by the war, strained resources and economic deficiencies. Furthermore, Britain realized that there would be no help provided by its allies in case of a war. On the condition that a war was inevitable, Britain would be fighting alone as a result of the lack of unity among the Allies. Additionally, war would bring the end of the Conservative Government which had committed itself to the cause of peace. As far as Lord Curzon was concerned, his chance of attaining premiership would fail: his chance of becoming the next Prime Minister would increase by the success at Lausanne which had been his lifetime ambition that he could not bear to see unfulfilled. Secondly, as most of the territorial and strategical claims of Britain were taken under guarantee, it was relatively satisfied. Under

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 183-184.

given conditions that Britain had to reach negotiation, the least unsatisfactory terms possible were achieved. Concerning the Mosul question, it could be advocated that Britain would refrain from resuming any kind of hostilities with Turkey relating such a matter, as it was likely for the League of Nations to reach a conclusion in favor of Britain. Finally, from British point of view, a friendly Turkey would mean providing a “buffer zone”⁶⁴ against Russian intrusion and thus she would serve for British interests in the Middle East. To put it in different way, on the condition that Britain had attained Turkish cooperation, it would be presumptive to obtain effective control over any developments likely to put its long term interests in the region at risk. The Lausanne Conference could be regarded as a turning point in Middle Eastern history. It changed the map of the region as it brought a new international system into being. A new part in the relations of Turkey and Britain had started resulting from the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and prepared themselves for their new roles in world affairs.⁶⁵ The Treaty of Lausanne was ratified by the Grand National Assembly on July 24, 1923. Although being the only defeated nation of the First World War, Turkey still found opportunity to negotiate peace on its own terms and acquired most of its demands from the Entente. Meanwhile, the Lausanne Treaty was the only post-war agreement that depended on mutual negotiations.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ See *Chapter VI* for further discussion.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 184-186.; Mim Kemal Öke, *Belgelerle Türk-İngiliz İlişkilerinde Musul ve Kürdistan Sorunu 1918-1926* (Ankara: Türk Kültürünü Araştırma Enstitüsü, 1992), pp. 104-107.

⁶⁶ Philip Marshall Brown, “The Lausanne Conference,” *The American Journal of International Law* 17/2 (1923): pp. 294-295.; Ayla Göl, “A Short Summary of Turkish Foreign Policy: 1923-1939,” *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi* 1/4 (1993): p. 58.; Philip Marshall Brown, “The Lausanne Treaty,” *The American Journal of International Law* 21/3 (1927): pp. 503-504.; Reviewed Work(s), “Treaty with Turkey and Other Instruments Signed at Lausanne July 24, 1923,” *The American Journal of International Law* 18/1 (1924): pp. 1-4.

6. RELATIONS FROM 1923 to 1939

The borders of Turkey which were created by the Treaty of Lausanne started to increase the strategic importance of Turkey. It had borders with the important European powers after 1923, such as the Soviet Union, Britain in Mosul, France in Syria and Italy in the Aegean Islands. In the meantime, the Lausanne Treaty led to several problems between Turkey and the Entente Powers as the Mosul question, the Straits and the Hatay question.⁶⁷

6. 1. THE MOSUL QUESTION

Mosul was the key point where Turkish and British interests intersected. In October 13, 1922, Atatürk articulated his special interest in Mosul, when he was dealing with the Greeks. Issued in "Figaro," the interview, conducted by an American journalist, Richard Danin, revealed Atatürk's attitude towards Mosul. Atatürk stated that the Turkish territory included İstanbul and Thrace in the west and Mosul half of Iraqi territory in the southeast. When he was asked if he had not had any worry in getting encountered with a British offensive, he said, "I have not been warring with the British, but with Greeks."⁶⁸ It was clear that Mosul was regarded as a natural extension of the new Turkish territory by Mustafa Kemal, when replying to a question on October 24, 1922 concerning any Turkish demand from oil sources, answered without hesitation: "Mosul is within our boundaries."⁶⁹ He considered that Mosul would not become a point of significant issue between the Turkish and the British. The only conflict, if there be any, would be in İstanbul, where the British were in a strict control of the Ottoman Sultan. However, Mosul became a critical point of at least a diplomatic struggle especially by Lord Curzon, the Turkish hater, who wrote in a British confidential document on January 4, 1920:

... Turks must be expelled from Europe. As aforesaid by the American Senator Lodge, İstanbul must be definitely taken from the Turks, who were nothing but a seed of plague, initiator of wars

⁶⁷ Ayla Göl, "A Short Summary of Turkish Foreign Policy: 1923-1939," *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi* 1/4 (1993): p. 58.

⁶⁸ *Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri: I-III 1906-1938*. Edited by Türk İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü, Vol. 1, 3th ed. (Ankara: Dil ve Tarih Coğrafya Fakültesi Basımevi, 1981), part III, p. 46.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

and damnation for her neighbors; Turkey must be erased from Europe...⁷⁰

The Mosul problem was a significant event that determined the reciprocal attitudes between the Turkish Government and the British. As the British considered Mosul a key point for rich oil resources, she had much interest in the region because it could supply rich economic and strategical benefits for her in the Middle East. Lord Curzon, who was the official mouthpiece for the British Government, mainly articulated this attitude for the British. Lord Curzon stressed, “Mosul belonged to Iraq, on historical, economic and racial grounds.”⁷¹ Lord Curzon also put forward four main topics concerning why Mosul could not be left to the Turkish side and the British involvement there. These are:

- 1) Arab population in Mosul is high,
- 2) Kurds do not want to live with Turks, to which he gave examples of Dersim incident and 1914 Bitlis incident,
- 3) Stemming from Mudros Convention, Britain has certain responsibilities towards Arabs who were loyal to her.
- 4) Since the British military was victorious over the Turkish in WWI and invaded Iraq, she has all the right to conquer Mosul, being a part of Iraq.⁷²

To that end, Britain, the mandatory state of Mesopotamia, declared the Mosul⁷³ issue as the “Turkish Question.” Mosul, according to the Turkish claim, was in the National boundary determined by the National Pact, Misak-ı Milli. However, within the articles of the Treaty

⁷⁰ Erol Ulubelen, *İngiliz Gizli Belgelerinde Türkiye* (İstanbul: Cumhuriyet Kitapları, 2009), pp. 200. Document 646.

⁷¹ Ayla Göl, “A Short Summary of Turkish Foreign Policy: 1923-1939,” *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi* 1/4 (1993): p. 62.

⁷² Mim Kemal Öke, *Belgelerle Türk-İngiliz İlişkilerinde Musul ve Kürdistan Sorunu 1918-1926* (Ankara: Türk Kültürünü Araştırma Enstitüsü, 1992), pp. 107-119.; Esra Sarıkoyuncu Değerli, “Lozan Barış Konferansında Musul,” *Balıkesir Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 10/18 (2007): p. 135.

⁷³ G. L. Cluttonion of the British Foreign Office writes in 1924 “The Turks would undoubtedly like Mosul but this is a claim we are unlikely to hear anything about so long as the Turkish-British connection exists.” quoted in Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 141.

of Lausanne, it was decided that the Turkish-Iraqi border had to be settled with Britain since she had been appointed as trustee for Iraq. Britain's indulgence in this issue would be for an easy solution of the problem. If any solution had not been found for the problem, within a nine-month period, it would have been transferred to the League of Nations, as was finally consorted to by Britain on August 6, 1924 when she demanded the Iraqi border issue put on agenda. Turkey's claim was that the border issue had to be decided by the votes of the local people and, therefore, "a plebiscite"⁷⁴ would be the only solution to solve "the boundary dispute."⁷⁵ The British claim was though not alike. They insisted that Mosul had to be cleared off the Turkish dominancy, and that the region had to be evacuated. The claim was asserted by British ultimatum on October 9, 1924. The Turkish objection against the ultimatum was rejected by the League of Nations that issued a decision in Bruxelles, Belgium, that gave Mosul to Iraq. Upon this, Turkey rejected the decision, which was taken then to the Permanent Court of International Justice. The Court reached the verdict that Mosul is ceded to Iraq, which the Turkish Government evaluated as a political matter that should not have been solved through judicial effort. Despite Turkish objection, the borderline was decided to be set according to the resolution on December 16, 1925. The Turkish party finally accepted the resolution on June 6, 1926 but put forward three credentials:

- 1) Britain would sign a neutrality treaty with Turkey,
- 2) The sovereignty of Mosul would be transferred to Iraq as a self-governing state,
- 3) A request for a 10 % share for 25 years in Mosul oil.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Vote of the people of some region as to choice of sovereignty.

⁷⁵ Quincy Wright, "The Mosul Dispute," *The American Journal of International Law* 20/3 (1926): p. 454.; Ayla Göl, "A Short Summary of Turkish Foreign Policy: 1923-1939," *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi* 1/4 (1993): p. 61.

⁷⁶ Quincy Wright, "The Mosul Dispute," *The American Journal of International Law* 20/3 (1926): pp. 453-464.; Ayla Göl, "A Short Summary of Turkish Foreign Policy: 1923-1939," *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi* 1/4 (1993): p. 62.; Mim Kemal Öke, *Belgelerle Türk-İngiliz İlişkilerinde Musul ve Kürdistan Sorunu 1918-1926* (Ankara: Türk Kültürünü Araştırma Enstitüsü, 1992), p. 165.

The development of Turkish-British relations with the Mosul issue culminated with a surprising trade in terms of the third point of the agreement. Turkey gave in for its demand for the share from Mosul oil for a £ 500.000 payment. The Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Aras, declared that for the peace of the world and of the Orient, the liberty and the happiness of Iraq, as well as leading British-Turkish relations to normalization, Turkey had decided to undertake sacrifice for the territorial dispute issue. This initiative, for his Government, was a historic decision to sustain friendship between Turkey and Britain, which was the ultimate guarantee for the autonomy of Mosul.⁷⁷

6. 2. THE TURKISH ACHIEVEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS: TURKEY’S ADMISSION INTO THE ‘LEAGUE OF NATIONS,’ 1932

Although it was against her benefits, after the settlement of the Mosul question, Turkey, by becoming a member of the international committee, started to pursue a more internationally acceptable policy. The most probable way seemed to be a member of the League of Nations. Yet Turkey had to recast a few issues before being invited by the members and being approved by all member states. First of all, Turkey needed the consent of the Soviet Russia with whom Neutrality and Non-aggression Treaty was concluded. Turkey had declared that in case of any sanctions taken against the Soviets by the member states, she would have rejected providing that the Soviet Russia did not engage in any hostile action against any member states.

Such an agreement would not only guarantee Russian security but also reinforce Turkey’s responsibility as a peacemaker and make her an important member. Secondly, against the revisionist Italy whose ultimate goal was reestablishing the Great Roman Empire, Turkey had to adopt an antirevisionist policy which led to more vital and inevitable relations among Turkey and Britain.⁷⁸ As the fascist Italy had become a threat both in the Mediterranean and the Balkans, the new state of Turkish-British relations which was constituted on the common denominator of the League of Nations was on behalf of both

⁷⁷ Ayla Göl, “A Short Summary of Turkish Foreign Policy: 1923-1939,” *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi* 1/4 (1993): p. 62.

⁷⁸ Elif Uyar, *Türk-İngiliz İlişkileri (1929-1936)* (Antalya: Yeniden Anadolu ve Rumeli Müdafaa-i Hukuk Yayınları, 2007), p. 165.

states. Turkey, by making her choice for the League of Nations, declared her approach in the international arena as an anti-revisionist democratic country with Britain and France and denounced that she was against totalitarian regimes such as that of Germany and Italy.

6. 3. BALKAN ENTENTE, FEBRUARY 9, 1934

To reinforce her security in the Balkan Peninsula and establish friendships there, Turkey initiated a series of bilateral negotiations with the Balkan states. Her aim was to give to relations a new dynamism and a redefinition of the status quo as depicted by the Lausanne Treaty. Not only Turkey but also all Balkan states were willing to cooperate for a common conference so as to establish solidarity among them against rising uncertainties and polarization in Europe.

Sustained as a succession of a four-step conference, Balkan Entente was signed by Turkey, Greece, Yugoslavia and Romania in 1934. Bulgaria and Albania were excluded in that the former was following a revisionist policy by claiming Dobruca from Romania, while the latter was under the domination of Italy.⁷⁹ The Entente concluded:

- 1) Turkey, Greece, Yugoslavia and Romania would preserve and secure all Balkan boundaries;
- 2) They agree to negotiate with each other concerning the precautions and sanctions to be taken against outside threats, while also accepting not to get involved in taking any political action without the consent of any Balkan state concerned.⁸⁰

While Germany on the south was emerging as a basic threat for European security, Italian fascism was signaling from the West. Therefore, the Balkan States were urged to cluster around a unified and integrated community to resist any hostile threat from such states. So, efforts in establishing solidarity and stability in the Balkan Peninsula were not coincidental.

⁷⁹ Marin Pundeff, "The Balkan Entente Treaties," *The American Journal of International Law* 48/4 (1954): p. 637.

⁸⁰ Mehmet Gönlübol et al., eds., *Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası (1919-1995)* (Ankara: Siyasal Kitabevi, 1996), pp. 102-103.

6. 4. MONTREUX CONVENTION OF 1936 AND TURKISH-BRITISH RELATIONS BY THE MEDITERRANEAN PACT

As the Mosul issue was settled, Turkish-British relations fell into a phase of inertia. Even though the major trouble that was ruled out, paved the way for closer relations, it was not smooth or fast. An environment of relative peace was set up by the Locarno Agreement,⁸¹ which was acknowledged as a very fruitful age of the inter-war years. The relations among Turkey and Britain started to get much friendlier during this period. In 1929, the two countries showed their contentment on the visit of the British Mediterranean Fleet. Moreover, in 1930, a Commerce and Navigation Treaty between Britain and Turkey was concluded. In 1935, when an Italian offensive over Ethiopia had taken place, Turkey sensed the menace of Italian imperialism in the Mediterranean. Besides Turkey, Greece had as well been aware of the need of protection of the region of Eastern Mediterranean up against an Italian threat. As a result, the construction of a Mediterranean Pact was brought forward by Turkey and Greece. However, such an offer was not promoted by Britain until the Abyssinian trouble because:

- 1) Britain did not want to undertake further commitments beyond the Locarno Agreement and the Covenant of the League of Nations;
- 2) It was difficult to see how the guarantee could be limited to defense against naval attack in the region;
- 3) It would be difficult to exclude Egypt, Russia and Romania from participation in the Pact, but their involvement would cause the most difficult problems.⁸²

⁸¹ The Locarno Treaties were seven agreements negotiated at Locarno, Switzerland, on 5 October-16 October 1925 and formally signed in London on December 3, in which the First World War Western European Allied Powers and the new states of central and Eastern Europe sought to secure the post-war territorial settlement and return normalizing relations with defeated Germany.

⁸² Ayla Göl, "A Short Summary of Turkish Foreign Policy: 1923-1939," *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi* 1/4 (1993): pp. 66-67.

In 1936, the situation was completely different. Hence Great Britain accepted the proposal of Turkey. The Mediterranean Pact was signed in July 1936 by Turkey, Greece, Yugoslavia and Great Britain. It was announced by the British Administration that on condition that Turkey, Greece or Yugoslavia were to be subjected to an act of aggression that violated the Covenant of the League of Nations, these countries would be assisted by Britain. It could be observed in the final analysis that unless France and Italy had taken part, it would not be possible to mention about a realistic state of security of the Mediterranean. Even so this pact was accepted as one that indicated the presence of an Anglo-Turco-Greek alliance in Eastern Mediterranean. In November 1936, Greece and Malta were visited by the Turkish fleet as an indication of this reconciliation.⁸³

Map 2: Europe on the Eve of World War 2



Source: <http://www.wwnorton.com/college/history/ralph/resource/wwii.htm>

⁸³ Ibid., pp. 66-67.

Meanwhile, the area of Rhine was started to get rearmed by Germany; whereas Manchuria was invaded by Japan who was one of the signatory states of the Lausanne Treaty and afterwards she receded from the League of Nations. Moreover, there existed another probability. Turkey was afraid of a possible Italian conquest of Ethiopia as Italy could divert its interest to the Straits and aim to make certain of supplies of oil from the Black Sea. Such a development would show up on condition that Italy gained control of the Straits. Following such acts, Turkey had applied some sort of diplomacy as to change the demilitarized status of the Straits and had sent a formal note to the parties of the Lausanne Treaty. On July 20, 1936, Bulgaria, France, Britain, Japan, Romania, Turkey and the Soviet Union gathered together at Montreaux to conclude a convention. Except that Italy did not approve to sign the convention until 1938.⁸⁴ The articles of the convention were as follows:

- 1) All trade ships, in times of peace and when Turkey is not involved in any war, were free to pass through the Straits; the ships were liable to pay usual taxes to be decided by Turkish authorities;
- 2) The vessels had to stop at the entrance of the Straits to have medical check-up;
- 3) If in the event that Turkey is at war, the vessels could pass through, unless they had the intention of aiding the Turkish enemy;
- 4) If under threat of war, Turkey would also allow the vessels to pass freely;
- 5) Neighboring states had to notify Turkey beforehand if their warships and submarines more than 15 tons would demand passage;

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 67.

- 6) Bigger warships had to be notified to the Turkish Government at least eight days beforehand; the duration would be extended to fifteen days for the states that had coast on the Black Sea;
- 7) There would be quotas for tonnages, individual and overall;
- 8) Airplane loads could by no means be used;
- 9) The vessels of a warring state would not be let to pass through;
- 10) The duration of the terms of the convention would be in effect for twenty years;
- 11) Turkey could militarize the Straits immediately, when and if necessary.⁸⁵

Montreux was an absolute achievement for Turkey, and it blocked the natural seaway and ambitions of the Soviet Russia to claim rights of the Straits and to descent to the Mediterranean. It also frustrated the Italian ambition to claim the entire Mediterranean as *Mare Nostrum*,⁸⁶ while also blocking her way to Anatolia.

6. 5. NYON TREATY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1937

One year after the terms of the Montreux were decided on, the concern about the seas and the security of trade vessels was brought discussion in the international arena. The concern emerged due to the fact that trade vessels were torpedoed and sunk in the international waters of the Mediterranean. Especially Italian submarines were notorious in being the main cause. To conclude the threat in a conference and produce absolute decisions and sanctions, Britain and France called for a meeting in Nyon, Switzerland on September 10, 1937. The suspected parties, Italy, Albania, and Germany, did not participate in the conference; Turkey, the Soviet Union and Romania did.

⁸⁵ Rifat Uçarol, *Siyasi Tarih (1789-2001)* (İstanbul: Der Yayınları, 2006), pp. 731-732.; Gordon East, "The Mediterranean Problem," *Geographical Review* 28/1 (1938): pp. 83-101.

⁸⁶ That means "Sea becomes yours."

The final decision presumed that any submarine spotted as cruising around a vessel was interpreted as hostile and a threat. Moreover, another term of the decision stated that the Mediterranean was to be divided into two zones of responsibility as east and west, which was to be patrolled by British and French war fleets. A similar meeting was also held on September 17, when parallel decisions were made concerning hostile warships, besides submarines.⁸⁷ Despite the efforts put in Nyon, suspicious incidents of torpedoed vessels continued even after a few years later, as in the incidents of Refah in 1941 and Atılay in 1942. Italian submarines were again blamed of aggression.

It could be put forward that the policy pursued by Turkey in relation to acquiring rights by legal means, constituted a sole example in international relations of the period. The atmosphere of rapproachment between Turkey and Britain could clearly be exemplified by the tarriance of King Edward VIII in İstanbul in 1936 and the visiting of İnönü to London in 1937. The Credit Agreement was finalized on May 27, 1938. In order to achieve Turkish reliance and friendship, Britain, Germany and Russia carried out a silent striving for some time. Though, Turkey took its part on the side of England in 1936. Moreover, the Montreaux Convention has promoted Turkish-British relations.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Baskın Oran et al., eds., *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar*, Vol I (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2006), p. 313.

⁸⁸ Ayla Göl, "A Short Summary of Turkish Foreign Policy: 1923-1939," *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi* 1/4 (1993): p. 68.

CHAPTER III: THE FIRST PHASE OF THE RELATIONS IN WORLD WAR TWO (1939-1941)

7. TURKEY'S WIDENING FRIENDSHIPS, 1939

1920s witnessed an increasing intimacy among Turkish-British relations after a period of direct belligerency between 1914 and 1918. Britain assessed that establishing an alliance with Turkey would be the most accurate to strengthen her position in the Mediterranean and the southwest Europe against a foreseen German and Italian aggression in early 1939. Britain could rely on the support of Turkey in all circumstances in case she was attacked in the West but not in the Mediterranean.⁸⁹ Actually it meant that Britain could trust Turkey in case of a war with Italy. Britain would be obliged to adjust its political relations in the Mediterranean according to the conditions if it accepted the risk of disagreement with Italy. The states which may be potential allies according to war plans of Britain in the Mediterranean would have a significant place. The most significant potential ally for Britain was Turkey. Actually, Eden's policy was the indicator of a harmony with Turkey by accepting a possible conflict with Italy; reluctant sanctions, Montreux and Nyon; and many other thoughts. This was the strategy that Britain applied.⁹⁰

The three chiefs of staff signed a report on 20th February 1938. This report indicated that reconciliation with Turkey was vital. They especially underlined the importance of military advantages that Turkey's alliance with Britain would bring in case of a war with Germany and Italy. The Anglo-French strategy had this recommendation in its core. British and French navies equally shared the defense of the Mediterranean. The British navies were responsible for the eastern half and the French ones were responsible for the western end. If Germany entered in Balkan countries, the presence of British navies in the Adriatic,

⁸⁹ Frank G. Weber, *The Evasive Neutral: Germany, Britain and the Quest for a Turkish Alliance in the Second World War* (St. Louis, University of Missouri Press, 1979), p. 21.

⁹⁰ CAB 23/86, CAB 63(36), 4 November 1938. "The policy of Eden, however, clashed with Chamberlain. For instance, Chamberlain's interest was confined primarily to the great questions Germany, Italy and Japan... For Chamberlain, the question of Turkey was entirely associated and subordinate to those of Germany and Italy, and the question of Italy, ancillary to that Germany. He did not think deeply about Turkey but accepted the judgment of the professionals as a lawyer does his brief. At last, the Foreign Office convinced him that Turco-British relations were important." *See also* Yüksel Güçlü, *Turco-British Rapprochement on the Eve of the Second World War*, *The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1997), p. 82.

Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean would be under threat. Turkey's alliance could totally prevent Italian trade with the Black Sea due to the closure of the Straits. İzmir harbor would be advantageous in the operations against the Dodecanese. Therefore, Turkish interference in Britain would have an influence on a position in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean which was difficult to over accentuate.⁹¹

Being ally with Turkey had so much importance for Britain and because of her essential position in Mediterranean policy Britain made an offer to Turkey for partnership. This position of Turkey was known by the Foreign Office and so Turkey was named as a “Small Great Power” in there. Foreign Office thought that policies of other Balkan countries would willingly be affected by the policies of Turkey. Britain’s Moslem colonies being many in number would also be supported by it.⁹² Britain's general considerations were as follows:

- a. The Sea Route through the Mediterranean, The Suez Canal, and the Red Sea to the Far East: The canal depends for its security on the defense of Palestine and Egypt, and the latter country contains the only base from which British fleet can operate in the Eastern Mediterranean.
- b. The Anglo-Iranian Oil-fields: The security of these is very much bound up with the integrity of Iran.
- c. The North-West Frontier in India: The security of India is largely dependent on the existence of a friendly and stable Afghan government.⁹³

Britain was required depth to defend these interests. Depth could be obtained in Turkey and Iraq. Turkey was, in fact, the first line of the Suez Canal against aggression from the north. Similarly, it was from Iraq that Britain might first check a Russian advance from the Caucasus or the Caspian to the Persian Gulf. The defense of Turkey and Iraq therefore was

⁹¹ CAB 53/44, ‘European Appreciation: 1939-1940,’ 26 January 1939.

⁹² Lynn H. Curtright, “Great Britain, the Balkans and Turkey in the Autumn of 1939,” *The International History Review* 10/3 (1988): pp. 444-451.

⁹³ CAB 66/3/48, “Review of Military Policy in the Middle East,” December, 1939., p. 340.

of the greatest military importance to Britain, quite apart from considerations arising from her treaty obligations and the need to maintain her prestige in the Moslem world.⁹⁴

On the other hand, Germany's central position in and resources on land and in the air enabled her to embark on an offensive in the Balkans.⁹⁵ A serious threat to Turkey and Greece might therefore come into existence with the beginning of a German drive into Balkans. There were no Balkan Powers capable of offering serious resistance to Germany, except Turkey.⁹⁶ Moreover, there were various indications that Bulgaria was coming into the war. This theoretically obliges Turkey to come in under the Balkan Pact, but it was a question how far she would come. In any event Turkish policy had hitherto been decided less by political than by military and strategical considerations.⁹⁷

It was also a question that what the value of the guarantee to Romania and Greece could be without the full cooperation of Turkey, as keeper of the Straits, and of the U.S.S.R.⁹⁸ So, it would be possible to say that Britain was in direct need of Turkey's alliance and would not hesitate to propose taking the actions which might be useful for Turkey. France also accepted that Turkey's alliance was very precious in war with Axis powers. For France, Turkey's alliance was important for a strong French position in Syria and it would make it easy to obtain the islands under Italian possession in the Dodecanese and put an end to the threat pointed at the naval position of allies in the Aegean. The allied forces would be able to use Turkey's harbors and air bases in order to boost their control over the Eastern Mediterranean. In addition to that, Turkey would play the role of supply route to the Soviet Union and the Balkans and put an end to Italian commerce in the Black Sea.⁹⁹

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 340.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 337.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 337 (2).

⁹⁷ Editorial, "Opinion in Turkey Steadier: German Hesitation," *The Times*, February 27, 1939., p. 3.

⁹⁸ Editorial, "Turkey and Britain: Balkan Pledges Welcomed," *The Times*, April 15, 1939., p. 12.

⁹⁹ Lynn H. Curtright, "Great Britain, the Balkans and Turkey in the Autumn of 1939," *The International History Review* 10/3 (1988): p. 436. "On the eve of the war British, French and Russian military and naval experts too expected that a war in Europe would almost certainly involve Turkey and the Straits. In the course of discussions held in Moscow in August 1939, preparatory to the conclusion of an alliance, it was proposed that, should Germany move against Britain and France in the west, the British and French fleets would endeavour to obtain mastery of the Mediterranean and close the Dardanelles to German and Italian shipping. Should Germany move against Poland and Romania in the east, of against Russia by of Finland, Estonia and Latvia, then Russia would in addition to close the Bosphorus and the mouth of the

On the other hand, Turkey's position was apparent and she was following the policy of having a more determined tendency of developing close relations with Britain. Turkish foreign policy makers accepted that the country should never repeat the same mistake: fighting on the wrong side in war ranges; namely fighting against Britain. In effect, before his death, Atatürk had legated that his country should never let itself be drawn in Germany's political wake as before. Once, Germany was an ally of Turkey and Turkey did not want it again.¹⁰⁰

When Romanian Foreign Minister and current President of the Parliament Council of the Balkan Entente met Saraçoğlu on 7th April in İstanbul, they took the decision of following the same path with Western powers in order to include Germany's aggression. Italy invaded Albania on the meeting day of Saraçoğlu and Gafencu. Albania's occupation by Mussolini preoccupied London because of the fear that Italians might continue expanding through Balkans and the Near East. The British government regarded that Italy and Germany organized their acts together and the Axis powers had comprehensive powers. Since Nyon, Italy was absolutely included in the possible enemies of Britain for the first time. Italy was placed on the top of Turkey's demons' list upon its invasion. Turkey, just as

Danube against the emergence of enemy naval forces into the Black Sea. Were the Russian Black Sea fleet to be threatened by superior naval forces in that sea, then Britain and France would at once dispatch naval forces through the Straits – an action which would seem to presuppose Turkish support – sufficient to secure the destruction of the enemy. Should war occur in the Balkans, particularly were Bulgaria to side with the Axis powers, then all three would aid Turkey in the protection of its territories. It was pointed out, however, that, while it was of the utmost importance that communications be maintained between the Western powers and Russia, there was little likelihood that this could be accomplished quickly by the way of the Mediterranean as Italy had upwards of a hundred submarines in that sea, and the waters South of the Dardanelles were particularly suited to their use. At the first opportunity, therefore, the Dodecanese, which provided excellent sites for submarine bases, should be seized.” *See A. L. Macfie, “The Turkish Straits in the Second World War, 1939-45,” Middle Eastern Studies 25/2 (1989): p. 239.*

¹⁰⁰ Yüksel Güçlü, *Turco-British Rapprochement on the Eve of the Second World War, The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1997), p. 77. *Please note:* A very important part played in the improvement of Turco-British relations by the British ambassador Loraine at Ankara. “During his term of duty between 1934 to 1939 Loraine apparently became a personal friend of Atatürk and this rapport between the British ambassador and the Turkish president, Atatürk, became something of a legend.” To learn more about his biography, *See Gordon Waterfield, Professional Diplomat: Sir Percy Loraine of Kirkharle Bt. 1860-1961* (London: John Murray, 1937).

Italy and France, considered the invasion of Albania as an upcoming Italian expansion in overall Balkans.¹⁰¹

When analyzed, it is clearly seen that Turkey, not only with her political attitude but also publicly depicted a nationalist approach on the events that were happening. For instance, Ahmet Ağaoğlu in *İkdam* newspaper wrote that Turkey could not be likened to Czechoslovakia, Ethiopia, or Albania, as she was deprived of and totally left without a government or a ruler, and without any military capability and equipment. Yet, he claimed that she had survived through challenges, owing to the efforts of great men, one of whom, the leading genius, Mustafa Kemal, had passed away, also adding that his legacy was sustained and pursued by his dedicated comrades.¹⁰² Asım Üs, in *Vakit* newspaper, highlights that Italians should be more respectful in tuning their discourse about Turkey, and adds that Turkey has much faith in its military, which is a guarantee enough for Turkish survival. As is the case, Turks, he declares, do not need any guarantor to sustain her neutrality that may have been misinterpreted as her vulnerability. Turks relied heavily on their national policy of maintaining domestic peace that is also projected on the international arena as peace in the world, a vision to be sustained by all means, again, by the Turkish military.¹⁰³

In adopting that policy Turkey had been guided by her own interests and by her reliance on her own army and not by any assurances from Italy, the value of which was described as problematical, or by threats from any direction. It was added that relations between Turkey and Italy were friendly and correct, but veiled threats may upset them.¹⁰⁴ On 10 April, Prime Minister Refik Saydam made a statement on foreign policy saying:

In these times, when ideas and interests conflict with such violence,
no ideology or passion on interests will make Turkey from the path

¹⁰¹ John Kinross, *Atatürk: The Rebirth of a Nation* (London: Wiedenfield & Nicolson, 1964), p. 545.; Denis Mack Smith, *Mussolini's Roman Empire* (New York: Penguin Books, 1977), pp. 150-154; MacGroger Knox, *Mussolini's Unleashed* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 40-41.; Anthony Adamthwaite, *France and the Coming of the Second World War* (London, Frank Cass, 1977), p. 309.

¹⁰² *İkdam*, April 9, 1939.

¹⁰³ *Vakit*, April 12, 1939.

¹⁰⁴ Editorial, "Turkey and Britain: Balkan Pledges Welcomed," *The Times*, April 15, 1939., p. 12.

of peace. No act capable of imperiling the life or well-being of the Turkish nation will come first from your government, unless our good will come first, our sincere and friendly neutrality towards all States, should be directly or indirectly the object of an attempt at violation.¹⁰⁵

However, Turkey's faith in herself and the ability to exercise power or to overcome any challenge, needed cooperation with the allies; especially with Great Britain, as also mentioned above Great Britain, needed cooperation with Turkey.

7. 1. ANGLO- TURKISH MUTUAL AID AND ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT, MAY 12, 1939

Indeed, the states wanted to declare the agreement earlier; however France wanted three parties in this agreement. Turkey was apparently discontent with France's approach towards Hatay question. So, she rejected to declare a tripartite agreement until definitely reaching an agreement on Hatay.¹⁰⁶ So, the British and Turkish governments alone agreed to conclude a definite long-term agreement in the interests of their national security.¹⁰⁷ In the event of an act of aggression leading to war in the Mediterranean, they would be prepared to cooperate and to lend one another all the aid and assistance in their power. The declaration as Chamberlain explained, is not directed against any country but is designed to assure Great Britain and Turkey of mutual aid and assistance. Each country had need of the other, and each was bringing important political and strategical contributions to the

¹⁰⁵ Editorial, "Turkey's Faith in Herself: Prime Minister's Statements," *The Times*, April 22, 1939., p. 10.

¹⁰⁶ Lynn H. Curtright, "Great Britain, the Balkans and Turkey in the Autumn of 1939," *The International History Review* 10/3 (1988): p. 437. The British postponed the announcement of their agreement with Turkey an hour at a time to further increase the pressure both on Turkey and France in hopes that the declaration was tripartite. Nonetheless, both the Turkish and the French could not agree on some terms of the declaration.

¹⁰⁷ "Although the declaration was signed, Germany did not stop sending military supplies to Turkey, the countries continued to trade. This was because Turkey met 60 per cent of Germany's chrome demand in 1939 with its sales of 115,000 tons of chrome to the Reich." See Gül İnanc, "The Politics of 'Active Neutrality' on the Eve of a New World Order: The Case of Turkish Chrome Sales during the Second World War," *Middle Eastern Studies* 42/6 (2006): p. 908. Obtaining chrome was so important in the war years that it was used with other alloys to strengthen steel, particularly in connexion with armour plating in armaments such as tanks, gun shields and etc.

common defensive fund. A defensive pact with Great Britain offered Turkey the support of a great naval, industrial and financial power, which could also give Turkey extensive moral and material assistance in the event of aggression. The articles of the declaration could be briefly outlined as follows:

1. Subsequent conclusion of a long-term reciprocal defense treaty,
2. Mutual guarantees. Pending the completion of the definite treaty, Turkish and British governments declare that in the event of an act of aggression leading to war in the Mediterranean area, they would be prepared to co-operate effectively and to lend each other all aid and assistance in their power,
3. The guarantee would not be directed against any country and was defensive in nature,
4. Additional and more definite talks were to proceed,
5. Turkey and Britain would consult on how to ensure the stability of the Balkans,
6. The freedom of either signatory to enter other agreements.¹⁰⁸

In the Grand National Assembly, before reading the articles of the declaration, Premier Saydam addressed to fast development of late events that called for immediate solutions on behalf of his government. While drawing attention to the original intention of Turkey to remain neutral in the war, Saydam declared that a shift became inevitable in line with the unexpected developments in the Balkan Peninsula and the Eastern Mediterranean, which necessitated for the impossibility of keeping up with the former policy of neutrality. Moreover, he claimed that any intervention in the Mediterranean would be a direct threat to Turkey's security, with which all concerned nations could be in danger. If the peace in the region, he added, were under direct threat, Turkey would establish collaboration with peace-keeping states, either by direct participation in war or by any other means.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ Editorial, "The Agreement with Turkey," *The Times*, May 13, 1939., p. 15.

¹⁰⁹ *Anatolian News Agency*, May 13, 1939.

Turkey was accused by the Deutsche Diplomatisch-politische Korrespondenz of deviating from the Montreaux Convention which alleged that her safeguarding of the Dardanelles would take place in favor of all states. It was further stated by the writer that Turkey was not a neutral state any more as she was bound to England in an alliance by which it was ensured that both sides would provide its support if one part should get into a conflict in the Mediterranean. It was argued by the writer that if the Reich was to get into a war in the Mediterranean that Italy had been a part in, the alliance was implemented against Germany. The commentators found it difficult to explain away an alliance made by Turkey in the face of German assurances and German warnings, and so soon after the arrival of the German ambassador in Turkey, Herr von Papen. Most of them fell back on the stock explanation of British diplomatic successes – the fear psychosis which has nothing to do with German policy or methods, but it was said to be manufactured by the English in the interests of their policy of a collective preventive war against the Reich. Turkey was warned that she had sacrificed her own interests to serve foreign aggression and hegemony aims, and that her action had originated tensions for which she should take full responsibility.¹¹⁰

On May 29, opening the fifth Grand Congress of the Republicans Peoples Party in Ankara, President İnönü referred to the Anglo-Turkish agreement and the coming agreement with France. He said:

National defense measures become daily more imperative, because as long as the international crises lasts, there can be no other security. Several nations, exposed to unexpected hurricanes, are passing through a period of anguish. The present menacing situation cannot last much longer. Either one group of unconscious masses will be flung against another or common sense will prevail to establish real peace in accordance with humanity's needs. We shall never admit the right of big coalitions of Powers to overthrow smaller nations. Each is entitled to lead its own independent life.

¹¹⁰ Editorial, "The Agreement with Turkey: Nazi Criticism," *The Times*, May 15, 1939., p. 12.

That is why we created the Balkan Entente. Realizing that today the blow may fall on our neighbors and tomorrow on ourselves, we are taking timely measures to meet the dangers confronting Turkey. The Anglo-Turkish agreement was not conceived in any aggressive spirit but was intended to be a contribution towards the safeguarding of humanitarian ideals. Turkey was ready to undertake pledges towards any country which served peace.¹¹¹

According to Lord Halifax and his advisers, the declaration of agreement had a big importance as it would guarantee the security line that the British was planning to realize in the southeastern Europe. Turkey's role was to encourage and support Romania and through Romania, Poland. Turkey's responsibility of convincing its partners in the Balkan Entente was now going to attenuate the disagreement with Bulgaria and as far as possible in the bloc. The declaration's scope represented the biggest engagement that Britain had made with the aim of composing an alliance in Europe against Axis aggression. Turkey and Britain were going to act together in case of what the Axis powers might do in the Mediterranean or the Black Sea. Britain guaranteed to intervene whenever the Axis powers put Turkey's interests in danger in the Balkans. On the other hand, Turkey committed to assist Britain with all its military force in the Mediterranean or Balkans if Britain would come to these regions because of its interests or its new guarantees to Greece and Romania. Shortly, Turkey and Britain agreed on acting in cooperation against the Axis aggression in any part of the eastern Italy.¹¹²

The Turkish Press of May 14 commented very favorably on the Turco-Britain declaration and printed extracts from articles published about it in French, German and Italian newspapers. Nadir Nadi expresses the general state of the press as the following:

The proclamation of reciprocal assistance that we promulgated with Britain on May 12th, used to turn the press of one-party system

¹¹¹ Editorial, "Turkey Awakened: President on Her Part in Peace Front," *The Times*, May 30, 1939., p. 10.

¹¹² Yüksel Güçlü, *Turco-British Rapprochement on the Eve of the Second World War*, The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1997), p. 92.

period into a monophonic chorus. Almost all of the writers set themselves to compete to be up against Hitler and Mussolini. Thoughts and beliefs were to be expressed only to some extent with implicit sentences. The overall stance of newspapers against incidents regarded by the government as significant, were arranged in accordance with the instructions from the general directorate of press and information. Once in a while, the Prime Minister held press conferences by which he warned as if ordering the newspaper owners or representatives.¹¹³

7. 2. TURKEY, GETTING CLOSER WITH THE ALLIES: FRANCO-TURKISH MUTUAL AID AND DEFENSE AGREEMENT SIGNED, JUNE 23, 1939

The agreement between France and Turkey for mutual defense was an important indicator of an attempt to build a permanent partnership between Turkey and the Allies. The frame of the agreement was based on the Anglo-Turkish agreement. Both of them indicated that the agreement was not against any country. Similarly, its purpose was to protect the interests of both nations and to maintain mutual assistance and support when there is an aggression which might cause war in the Mediterranean area. Both governments decided together that security was needed to be provided in the Balkans. They consulted each other in this issue. On the other side, the Eastern Mediterranean had the Hatay issue and the Syrian problem. A direct negotiation between the related governments was necessary for the solution of these issues.¹¹⁴ Supporters of the French government stated that the Hatay issue concerned France; however the positions would change if it was the Great Britain who had the dominant power.¹¹⁵ However an agreement was signed for the re-annexation of Hatay to Turkey. In Ankara and Paris, a declaration which was similar to the Turco-British declaration, was issued.

¹¹³ Nadir Nadi, *Perde Aralığından* (İstanbul: Cumhuriyet Yayınları, 1964), p. 40.

¹¹⁴ Editorial, "France and Turkey," *The Times*, June 27, 1939., p. 15.

¹¹⁵ Editorial, "France and Turkey: Defense Pact Signed," *The Times*, June 24, 1939., p. 11.

7. 3. TURKEY'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE BALKAN ENTENTE AND BRITISH HELP

Turkey's agreement with Britain and France provided her with the opportunity to delay any type of action in the Balkans. This is due to the contribution of Western countries to this delay by persisting Turkey to make a commitment to Greece and Romania, which are guaranteed countries. By the time Turkey continued to delay any action until receiving an important quantity of military and financial support from the West.¹¹⁶ According to Turkey, the conditions of the Balkan Entente were obliging Turkey to help Greece in the event that Bulgaria or a third country (excluding Italy upon Greece's demand) in cooperation with Bulgaria aggresses it. Turkey was also thinking that she was going to be obliged to provide help in the Eastern Mediterranean if Greece was involved in the aggression which included the British guarantee and the Turco-British declaration in this region. Turkey was much more careful in her attitude towards Romania. Saraçoğlu could estimate the possible results: 1. Germany and Italy would attack the area reaching to the Balkans; 2. One of the Axis powers would improbably however possibly remain neutral during the attack of another Axis power in the Balkans; 3. A third power other than Italy or Germany would aggress Romania. In the third case, Turkey was not willing to help Romania, especially against a Russian aggression except that the aggressor was Bulgaria and the Balkan Entente applied. Saraçoğlu did not accept being legally obliged to help Romania for the first two cases and Turkey was unwilling to accept such a responsibility as long as its security was not in direct danger.¹¹⁷ The Turkish government was extremely anxious not to be involved in hostilities against the U.S.S.R. and it was this consideration which would influence them if Britain asked for the passage of warships through the Straits. Turkey, would not like to be moved to any extent but if the U.S.S.R. went further, Turkey would unlikely face the biggest problem of her.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Lynn H. Curtright, "Great Britain, the Balkans and Turkey in the Autumn of 1939," *The International History Review* 10/3 (1988): p. 438.

¹¹⁷ Yüksel Güçlü, *Turco-British Rapprochement on the Eve of the Second World War*, The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1997), p. 101.

¹¹⁸ CAB 65/2/19, "Meeting of the War Cabinet: The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs drew attention to telegram No: 798 dated the 14th November 1939," 16 November 1939., p. 135.

London realized that the only legal and reliable way of receiving Turkish help for Romania was to have Turkey as one of the battling parties. For this reason, Britain sought the way of bringing Turkey or even only Turkey's name into war while Britain was engaged in hostilities as a consequent of implementing the guarantee. Britain's purpose was certainly to acquire the right of passing through the Straits. Consequently, London offered a draft agreement on 4th of June. According to the draft, Turkey was going to provide Greece and Romania with all necessary help and assistance, which is equal to a promise of being included in the war, at any time the pledges of Western countries entered into force. In other words, London was asking for a guarantee. According to British point of view, in Turkey's guarantee to Greece, the obligations were not more than what Turkey accepted in the declaration. The most important reason for giving place to this provision in the draft agreement was to simplify the addition of a similar however more fundamental article concerning Romania.¹¹⁹

7. 4. ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL LOANS TO TURKEY

Turkey's abandonment of neutrality in May had not only disrupted the war supplies coming from Germany however also caused Turkey to need these supplies more as her probability of getting involved in the war increased. Turkey was basically demanding loans and credits for buying weaponry, different market choices for her fixed products and other supply sources in case that Germany stopped trading. The Western powers were already aware that Turkey might desist from the idea of entering into war if her requests were not satisfied. However they were also determined to meet all these financial requests according to a political agreement which satisfies both parties rather than completely according to Turkey's wishes. Actually the latter one seemed to be Turkey's intention. At the end of June, British government was making the preparations to grant Turkey a loan of ten million pounds (in addition to a credit of sixteen million pounds prepared in 1938). Additionally, London was making its plans to deliver the six million pounds-valuing war materials within twelve months. However, Britain encountered serious restrictions that it could not exceed due to its armament program and shortage in its currency reserves. For

¹¹⁹ Yüksel Güçlü, *Turco-British Rapprochement on the Eve of the Second World War*, The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1997), p. 102.

instance, according to its calculations, London was going to manage to provide little more than one-tenth of what Ankara predicted as necessary. In the budget, there were additionally five million pounds to give to Turkey as credit. However Britain did not mention this sum of money that it kept as a reserve. The British raised its objection concerning alternative markets as it could no more reach the raw products. So, it advised Turkey to continue its efforts with Russia. In conclusion, Britain's exchange status did not allow it to consider giving a cash loan. London warned Knatchbull-Hugessen about not talking about this issue.¹²⁰

However, Turkey estimated that their needs were much higher. For instance, if Turkey and other Balkan states were attacked, the first demand would be likely to be for air support and particularly for modern fighter Aircraft.¹²¹ Therefore, Britain remembered that since they started negotiations, Turkey was convinced to enter into war only under the condition of being supplied an important quantity of military and financial support. Turkey presented an inclusive plan on 14th of July. The plan was about a credit of thirty-five million pounds for a rearmament program; a bullion loan of fifteen million pounds for reinforcing the Turkish currency and one more credit of ten million pounds for immediate weapon purchases. The program laid down the recognition of Turkish weapons industry and giving orders in the United States, Belgium and Sweden as condition. It also mentioned about making all the frozen balances available before the devaluation of Turkish Lira and carrying out all commercial relations on a compensation basis. Turkey was also insistent about paying the fifteen million pounds back by tobacco deliveries. It was urging France and Britain to think about to what extent they could satisfy these conditions and how to do it in the best way.¹²²

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 103.

¹²¹ CAB 66/4/9, "War Cabinet: The Balkan Problem," 11 December 1939., p. 76.

¹²² British Foreign Policy Documents., Ser. 3 Vol. 5, No. 320, 'Knatchbull-Hugessen (Ankara) to Halifax,' 14 July 1939., cited in Yüksel Güçlü, *Turco-British Rapprochement on the Eve of the Second World War*, The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1997), p. 103.

Agreement in principle on the draft treaty was reached on September 1. It was indeed the day when the German army and air force launched an attack on Poland.¹²³ Britain granted Turkey a credit of ten million pounds for weapon purchases and a loan of three million pounds which increased up to five million pounds in the first year without interest. Britain and France could not politically support their request of cooperation and besides, they provided Turkey with a unilateral guarantee against a European power. This power was accepted to be either Bulgaria or Germany.¹²⁴

7. 5. SOVIET-GERMAN NON-AGGRESSION PACT, AUGUST 23, 1939

The Soviet-German trade agreement on August 20 and the Non-Aggression Pact on August 23 gave the Turkish leaders a severe shock. The biggest threat of Turkey, the Soviets had made the unexpected by signing that act. However, the publication of the terms of the Pact on Non-Aggression between Germany and Russia had in no way shaken the determination of Turkey to stand firmly by her engagements to Great Britain and France.¹²⁵ This case nearly put Turkey in a state of “unconsciousness.” Presumptions constituted response of Turkey and this response relatively pessimistic according to the reasons being resource of decision of Joseph Stalin. Russia being a challenging companion till now continued her *status quo* policy since 1934 and also provided a common security. Russia’s cooperation with the armed Nazis was very disappointing for Turkey. This cooperation meant that the partnership of Turkey with Britain and France would not be pleasant for Moscow.¹²⁶

¹²³ “The day the war broke out, Turkey cut of economic relations with Germany and started to negotiate with Britain and France in order to find alternative markets for its products, of which chrome was major of them.” See Gül İnanc, “The Politics of ‘Active Neutrality’ on the Eve of a New World Order: The Case of Turkish Chrome Sales during the Second World War,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 42/6 (2006): p. 908.

¹²⁴ Yüksel Güçlü, *Turco-British Rapprochement on the Eve of the Second World War*, The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1997), p. 104.

¹²⁵ Editorial, “Turkey Firm on Her Engagements: Unmoved by Soviet-Nazi Pact,” *The Times*, August 25, 1939., p. 11.

¹²⁶ Murat Metin Hakkı, “Surviving the Pressure of the Superpowers: An Analysis of Turkish Neutrality During the Second World War,” *An Electronic History Journal* 3 (2007): p. 50.

7. 6. TURKISH-BRITISH-FRENCH DECLARATION OF AGREEMENT, OCTOBER 19, 1939

Following the Turkish-British Common Declaration of Agreement, a similar agreement was signed among Turkish, British and French States. The terms of the Agreement signed in October of the same year, Turkey was included in a tripartite solidarity, which was an open declaration of alliance. The alliance was based on reciprocal security of the states involved. In case Turkey was attacked by a European state, for instance, both Britain and France would provide military backup as well as all means of aid. Reciprocity was maintained with a Turkish involvement to any attack on both states in the Mediterranean. And if it were the case so that Turkey was dragged into war in the Mediterranean, both states would struggle for Turkish security. Yet, Turkey's responsibility would also cover help to the states in case they were involved in any hot war due to their commitments to Greece or Romania. On the other hand, if both states were attacked by a European State not mentioned in the agreement, Turkey would preserve her neutrality. In any case, the agreement guaranteed that Turkey would never get involved in a war with the Soviet Union.¹²⁷ The main points of the treaty were:

- Britain and France undertake to come to the assistance of Turkey
 - a. If an act of aggression is committed against Turkey by a European power and,
 - b. In the event of an act of aggression by a European power leading to war in the Mediterranean area in which Turkey is involved.
- The Turkish government agree to come to the assistance of Great Britain and France
 - a. In the event of an aggression by a European Power leading to war in the Mediterranean area in which the United Kingdom and France are involved, and

¹²⁷ Cemil Koçak, *Geçmişiniz İtinayla Temizlenir* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2010), p. 289.

- b. If the United Kingdom and France are engaged in hostilities in virtue of either of their guarantees to Greece and Romania of April 13, 1939.
- A protocol is included providing that the obligations of this treaty cannot compel Turkey to action having as its effect or involving as its consequence hostilities with the U.S.S.R. The treaty, which also provides for consultation in certain cases of aggression has been concluded for 15 years.¹²⁸

An agreement which was confidential and exceptional laid down some conditions to Turkey: twenty-five million pounds for affording munitions, immediately delivering the orders which were the counter balance of the credit, establishing a commission for determining what Turkey needed more to challenge the attacks, a loan equal to fifteen million pounds in gold whose interest and capital could be paid back in Turkish Lira and which would be used for buying Turkish commodities. According to Article 6 of this special confidential agreement, Turkey was obliged to meet the requirements of the political treaty only after receiving the munitions, the loan in gold and new orders which could be placed upon the decision of the commission. This triple treaty also involved a comprehensive military contract. It was composed of some hypotheses which were to be discussed and difficulties related to the transportation of troops and allied unions in Turkish territories including the Marmara Sea. However this territory did not cover the Black Sea due to Russian clause. Finally, Turkey added a provision which would prevent an independent declaration of peace or ceasefire in order to prove that it would be out of question to use the Russian clause as an explanation for Turkey's abandonment in the event that the Soviet Union was included in an upcoming conflict.¹²⁹

The Foreign Minister of Turkey, Saraçoğlu said in the Turkish Parliament:

¹²⁸ The text of the treaty is in *League of Nations Treaty Series*, Vol. CC. pp. 167-175.; Editorial, "Anglo-French Treaty with Turkey, Mutual Assistance Against Aggression, Special Provision for Russia: Mr. Chamberlain's Statement," *The Times*, October 20, 1939., p. 3.; Editorial, "Imperial and Foreign, Treaty with Turkey: The Full Text," *The Times*, October 20, 1939., p. 3.

¹²⁹ The Secret Protocols are outlined in Rene Massigli, *La Turquie devant la Guerre; Mission a Ankara* (Paris: Plon, 1964), pp. 292-295.

The treaty has not only political and military but also great economic and social importance for Turkey. Atatürk, after winning independence and creating a strong new Turkey, set his heart on leading his people towards progress, culture and civilization. Cooperating with Great Britain and France, the Turkish people will not only work for peace but will assure the full development of their natural genius. The treaty is not due only to the recent crises but is a natural consequence of a long series of events which have led the British, French, and the Turkish nations to cooperate and trust each other. (Referring to protocol 2, Saraçoğlu said that it showed Turkey's friendly feelings towards Russia.)¹³⁰

7. 7. THRACE ISSUE

Meanwhile, Britain was so cautious that a possible attack to Turkey would come from the Thrace, so did Turkey thought. The main policy that Britain concentrated was to build up her resources in Turkey, backed by her own forces in the Levant and Middle East with a view to forming a military front with Turkey in Thrace.¹³¹ Should a German or Russian advance in the Balkans might start, the British thought it might well be necessary for them to make sacrifices and took risks elsewhere in order to take such measures to support Turkey as could be implemented at short notice. However, Turkey, at that time, considered that she could hold her frontier without the assistance of allied formations while Britain thought that Turkey might be optimistic in this respect. However, while the strength of the Turkish defenses on the Thracian Frontier might be expected to afford some measures of protection, Britain was unwise to rely upon Turkey being able to hold the German advance with her own forces unless France and Britain were able to afford adequate support against the German air force. Moreover, even if Turkey had to fall back east of the Bosphorus, it would be necessary to provide some air assistance to afford a measure of security against hostile air attack in Western Turkey. Nevertheless, the British thought that in either event it

¹³⁰ Editorial, "Pact Ratified with Turkey: Sarajoglu's Tribute to Allies," *The Times*, November 9, 1939., p. 8.

¹³¹ CAB 66/3/48, "Review of Military Policy in the Middle East," December., 1939, p. 340 (2).

would be undesirable to base British or French air forces in Thrace and this emphasized the essential need for Turkey immediately to undertake a considerable measure of aerodrome development in Western Anatolia and to improve road and rail communications in that area. In any case, Britain pointed out that up to December 1939, Turkey had made no request for allied formations in Thrace. Moreover, Turkey was most unwilling to enter into Staff conversations and adequate preparations for the operations of an allied force were therefore impossible.¹³²

Economic side on a satisfying of war footing constituted the real demand of Turkey. For instance, during winter 1939 – spring 1940 Menemencioğlu conducted negotiations that were aimed to obtain Turkey the means to give service for a wide purchase of armaments. Finding an alternative or strengthen market for the production of Turkey – and so to support Turkish industrialization economically were not relatively among the targets of London negotiations that Menemencioğlu made with the British Ministry of Blockade officials during January – February 1940. In fact the target was to finance arms purchases. During 1939 – 1940, Menemencioğlu did not aim a completely economic approach but aimed to get finance of Turkey on a satisfying war footing.¹³³

¹³² Ibid., p. 341.

¹³³ Brock Millman, “Turkish Foreign and Strategic Policy 1934-42,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 31/3 (1995): p. 494.

8. TURKEY STANDS FIRM, 1940

At the beginning of 1940, a secret “Chrome Agreement” was concluded between “Britain, France and Turkey in Paris on January 8, 1940, by which and in particular Article 2, France was to buy 4/15, and Britain 11/15 of Turkey’s total chromium production of 250.000 tons; apart from the amount exported to the US. According to the 6th article of the contract, Turkey would be able to sell its surplus production of 250.000 tons to third countries if Britain and France had given consent of the sale beforehand. The contract was effective for two years which could also be renewed for one more year. The deadline for renewal was stated in article 7, emphasizing eight partners to sign a longer-term contract; however, Britain was not willing to extend the contract beyond two years as she was supplying most of its chrome from its colonies.”¹³⁴

8. 1. THE FEAR OF THE SOVIETS: FOREIGN POLICY PLANNING

On February 1940, a detachment of Russian troops had crossed the Caucasus frontier into Turkey and declined to withdraw. The facts of the incident were obscure. It appeared that a battalion of Soviet troops crossed the frontier and were disarmed by the Turks. Turkey, then, it was reported invited the Soviet authorities to send a detachment to recover the arm, but at the same time interned the men, who seemed to have been deserters. The Soviets, therefore, sent a cavalry regiment to pick up the equipment. Whether they were genuine

¹³⁴ “The sudden defeat of France in 1940 raised the question of whether Turkey would continue to honor the Chrome Agreement and the trade with France. At this point, the British, in order to block sale of chrome to Germany, offered a new arrangement by which they would buy France’s share as well and then sell it on to the U.S. In fact, the US had been importing Turkish chrome for several years, and the volume was rapidly growing; for example while the US import of chrome amounted to \$178,194 in 1929, the value had risen to \$770,509 by 1937. In fact, the American Smelting and Refining Company had been carrying out research from the 1930s on the probable chrome reserves in Turkey. Within the framework of Britain’s new proposal, the sale price to the US would be determined by London Metal Exchange’s chrome value, which was \$21 (free on board-fob) per ton instead of the predetermined price of \$23 (fob). Although Turkey was earning less by selling its chrome output to a third party, namely the US via Britain, this deal was still acceptable because the payment was in cash.” *See Gül İnanc, “The Politics of ‘Active Neutrality’ on the Eve of a New World Order: The Case of Turkish Chrome Sales during the Second World War,” Middle Eastern Studies 42/6 (2006): p. 908.* In the same way, a purchasing agreement for the chrome which was reserved Britain under the chrome agreement had been concluded for the period of July 1st to December 31th, 1940. This provided for the purchase of the whole present stock and production of chrome down to the end of the year, estimated at 180.000 tons, at a price of 105/- per ton. *See also CAB 68/7/10, “Monthly Report submitted by the Minister of Economic Warfare covering the period July 15th – August 31st, 1940,” 1940., pp. 71 (6).*

deserters or agents provocateurs was not known. After this incident, the Supreme Defense Council of the Turkish Republic, presided over by Marshal Fevzi Çakmak, the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, declared a state of emergency throughout the country. However, it was not evident that this condition had been invoked as justification to declare the state of emergency.¹³⁵ On the other hand, Turkish foreign policy planners had an excessive difficulty in the application of their policies as the Germans fought in Europe and the Soviets fought in Finland and the outcome of Battle of France was not certain.¹³⁶ It was not known in advance at the time of the formation of an alliance between Turkey, France and Britain that the Germans had achieved success in Western Europe or that the Axis Powers had reached so close to Turkey, or that there was a threat of enemy surrounding.¹³⁷ Thus, “Turkey felt herself alone, face to face with victorious German hordes or possible severe threat from Russians.”¹³⁸

It was because the Soviet ambition still remained to be satisfied in Europe, to gain control of the Dardanelles.¹³⁹ British Ambassador Kantchbull-Hugessen reported on the 28th June that the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs had informed him that the Soviets were to occupy other points on the Black Sea or at the entrance to the Bosphorus which would mean war, and that in that event Turkey would ask Britain’s assistance under the Treaty of Alliance, and in particular for the dispatch of a British naval force into the Black Sea.¹⁴⁰ British, however, thought that the Soviet Government was not likely to press the Dardanelles claim to the utter most. It was hardly likely that they would provoke Turkey

¹³⁵ After this incident, rumors had aroused that Turkey had mobilized 500.000 men, of whom 350.000 were said to have been sent to the Soviet frontier and at the same time reports of desertion of a Soviet battalion and of a further Soviet squadron were officially described as inaccurate. It was also said that Turkey proposed to the Russians to withdraw her troops from the frontier if the Russians would do the same. The official Turkish News Agency had circulated a denial of the rumors. *See Editorial, “Emergency in Turkey, Caucasus Border Incident: Defense Council’s Decisions,” The Times, February 24, 1940., p. 6.; Editorial, “Turkey and Soviet: Rumours of a Frontier Clash,” The Times, February 26, 1940., p. 6.*

¹³⁶ Selim Deringil, “The Preservation of Turkey’s Neutrality during the Second World War: 1940,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 18/1 (1982): p. 31.

¹³⁷ Türkkaya Ataöv, *Turkish Foreign Policy 1939-1945* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi, 1965), 66.; Selim Deringil, “The preservation of Turkey’s neutrality during the Second World War: 1940,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 18/1 (1982): p. 31.

¹³⁸ Cevat Açıkalın, “Turkey’s International Relations,” *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs)* 23/4 (1974): p. 483.

¹³⁹ CAB, 66/9/34, “Comments on the Recent Conversation between His Majesty’s Ambassador at Moscow and Mr. Stalin,” 9 July 1940., p. 169 (1).

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 169 (2)-170.

into the War, unless they were acting in conclusion with Germany. Such conclusion, for British, would particularly seem to be difficult in the case of the Straits, which Germany and Soviet Union both covet, Germany as a bridge leading to Asia, and the Soviet Union as a waterway leading to the Mediterranean. On the other hand, it was conceivable that Germany might egg on the Russians to threaten the Straits, in the hope that Turkey, realizing that Britain could not help them, would turn to Germany for help and thus gave Germany an opportunity of establishing herself on the Straits as the friend and ally of Turkey. Such an appeal would be highly embarrassing to Britain because it would be difficult for Britain to give adequate naval support against the Soviet Union and Britain did not want to be involved in war with the Soviet Union. If this would be the case, Britain would become a non-belligerent vis-à-vis of the Soviet Union, just as Turkey is a non-belligerent vis-à-vis of Italy.¹⁴¹ Fortunately, Turkey was anxious to improve her relations with the Soviet Union and it was clearly in Britain's interests that she must do so and Britain decided to act as a intermediaries so as to bring about a rapprochement between the two governments.¹⁴² In considering this suggestion, Britain should all no doubt desire to do everything that she could to detach the Soviet Government from Germany and drew them into her orbit. But in applying this policy she did nothing to alienate the Turkish government. The friendship of Turkey was so vital for Britain for the following reasons:

- a) Turkey was Britain's ally,
- b) Turkey was and is a Mediterranean Power and as such could provide valuable bases for British fleet,
- c) Turkey lied on the direct route between Europe and Britain's vital spheres of interest in the Middle East-namely Iraq, Palestine and Transjordan,
- d) Turkey was the leading member of the Balkan Entente on the one hand, and the Saadabad Pact on the other, and thus had great influence on the policy of the countries in the Near East and Middle East,

¹⁴¹ **Ibid., p. 170.**

¹⁴² **Ibid., pp. 169 (2).**

- e) In the event of a long war, Soviet economic support to Germany might become a decisive factor and it was impossible to exclude the possibility of a Soviet attack on British interests in the Middle East. In such circumstances Britain might feel obliged to retaliate and this Britain could only do if Turkey was on the British side.¹⁴³

These were the purposes; Britain decided to avoid in her dealings with Soviet Russia anything which might alienate Turkey, who was very essential for her. Moreover, Britain was willing to bring Soviet Russia and Turkey together because she would like to get them to collaborate against the common German danger in the Black Sea and because she wished to prevent a clash between them which might involve herself in war with Soviet Russia.¹⁴⁴ The greatest danger that British foreign policy planners believed that Turkey might in the event of deterioration in her relations with Russia be driven in the absence of effective British support to reinsure herself with Germany at Britain's expense.¹⁴⁵

8. 2. THE FEAR OF ITALY AND GERMANY: ITALY'S ENTRY TO THE WAR AND FOREIGN POLICY PLANNING

Turkey had always continued to keep a watchful eye on Italy. The studiously ambiguous policy of Italy had also caused suspicion in Ankara. Italian policies were thought in Turkey to imply that Italy would not commit herself definitely until the eleventh hour. Turkey had made no secret of her reaction to such ambitions, Turkish statesmen seizing every occasion to proclaim their determination to defend their own and Balkan independence. Any attempt, no matter from what source, to establish a political and economic hegemony was certain to meet with a stiff resistance from Turkey.¹⁴⁶

Correspondingly, Italians' first aim had always been to gain complete naval control in the Mediterranean and eventually to control the Suez Canal and Red Sea route as means of

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 169 (1-2).

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 170.

¹⁴⁵ CAB 66/11/42, "Future Strategy: Appreciation by the Chief of Staff Committee," 4 September 1940., pp. 179 (1).

¹⁴⁶ Editorial, "Turkey Ready for All Comers: Safeguarding Balkan Independence," *The Times*, March 30, 1940., p. 8.

communication with her East African Empire. In addition, she aimed at establishing for herself a dominant position in North Africa, overthrowing the British position in Egypt and thus linking up her North and East African possessions. The successes of Germany had given Italy a better chance of achieving her aims than ever before.¹⁴⁷ On the other hand, the eventual German fear was that there was a possibility that the German advance through the Balkans led her to go further on Asia Minor and Iraq in pursuance of her traditional *Drang Nach Osten* policy. Her immediate aim would be to gain control of the Straits and, ultimately, control of the oil supplies of Iraq.¹⁴⁸

The events on June, such as Italian's declaration of war on June 10, 1940 and the Battle of France, had radically changed the conditions under which Britain thought economic warfare must be waged. With Northern Europe under control and the Mediterranean closed by Italy's entry into the war, contraband control previously the chief weapon of economic war had become relatively unimportant. The British decided that almost everywhere in Europe it should be replaced, so far as the naval situation allowed, by simple "blockade," by the prevention of the passage of ships to Northern Europe and into the Mediterranean. However, even before the defeat of France a complete naval blockade would not be possible; while the fact that Turkey had not closed the passage from the Black Sea inevitably reduced the pressure that could be exercised on the enemy by the complete blocking of the three exits from the Mediterranean. British foreign policy makers believed that Britain should be able to keep up Britain's economic pressure on the Axis by the combined use of naval blockade, world shipping control and export control overseas.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ CAB 66/11/42, "Future Strategy, Appreciation by the Staff Committee: Part II, Courses of Action Open to the Enemy," 4 September 1940., p. 190.

¹⁴⁸ CAB 66/11/42, "Future Strategy, Appreciation by the Staff Committee: An Attack on Egypt from Libya," 4 September 1940., p. 191. "On June 10, 1940, from the balcony of the Palazzo Venezia in Rome, Benito Mussolini announced that Italy had declared war on France and Britain. In effect, Mussolini's declaration of war reflected his deep commitment to the Roma-Berlin Axis, born in the aftermath of the Abyssinian War of 1936. It also reflected the megalomaniacal aims of Mussolini and his followers to turn the Mediterranean into an Italian *mare nostrum* (our sea)." *See also Williamson Murray and Allan R. Millett, A War to be Won: Fighting the Second World War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), pp. 91-109.

¹⁴⁹ CAB 68/6/59, "Monthly Report submitted by the Minister of Economic Warfare covering the period June 10th – July 10th, 1940," 1940., p. 343.

Meanwhile, Turkey had been taking precautions against the possibility of the war being extended to the Mediterranean. Turkey assumed that Great Britain and France would not give up the struggle even if the enemy should overrun France and knew that any struggle in the Mediterranean would make Anatolia occupy a key position.¹⁵⁰ The indications pointed that Turkey would not depart from her attitude of non-belligerency. At the same time, the significance of the *communiqué* issued after the meeting of the RPP on June 14 was that Turkey would not deviate from alliance. The importance of strengthening the Anatolian bastion against the inevitable German-Italian attempt to break the allied blockade was again emphasized in Turkish political circles.¹⁵¹

8. 3. TURKEY DECLARED HER NON-BELLIGERENCY, JUNE 26, 1940

Turkish government's decision to maintain non-belligerence was actually taken on the same day Italy entered the war. The declaration was:

The Government of Turkish Republic has considered the situation which has arisen from Italy's entry into the war and have decided on the application of Protocol 2... Turkey will preserve her present attitude of non-belligerency for the security and defense of our country. While continuing on the side military preparations, we also have to remain more vigilant than ever. We hope by this position of watchfulness and by avoiding any provocation, we shall preserve the maintenance of peace for our country and for those who are around us.¹⁵²

Turkish Prime Minister Refik Saydam made the statement in the Grand National Assembly saying that Turkey was not departing from a state of non-belligerency consequent upon Italy's entry into the war and this was also applauded by the Deputies. The Prime Minister had invoked the protocol to the tripartite treaty under which Turkey was not obliged to undertake any action which could involve her in conflict with the Soviet Union. The PM

¹⁵⁰ Editorial, "Turkey Prepared to Act: Loyalty to Her Obligations," *The Times*, June 13, 1940., p. 6.

¹⁵¹ Editorial, "Turkey Watch on Events: Statement Today," *The Times*, June 17, 1940., p. 6.

¹⁵² FO 371/R6641/316/44., cited in Selim Deringil, "The Preservation of Turkey's Neutrality during the Second World War: 1940," *Middle Eastern Studies* 18/1 (1982): p. 40.

also declared that Turkey would continue her military preparations and would be more vigilant than ever. It was hoped that this non-provocative attitude would maintain the peace of Turkey and that of neighboring countries.¹⁵³ President İnönü, just before the declaration of non-belligerency, had said that in consequence of Italy's unprovoked declaration of war, Turkey was bound by treaty to render to Britain and France all the assistance in her power. Turkey, it was added, always fulfilled her obligations. These measures would naturally be influenced by the direction in which Italy might strike.¹⁵⁴

R. Bowker of the Foreign Office Southern Department commented on June 28 that "the declaration was unsatisfactory on all points."¹⁵⁵ G. L. Clutton made a general frame of its weaknesses from a British perspective: a) Any reference to an agreement signed with Britain was excluded. b) Statement of preparations in the Turkish army lacked notification and mobility. c) There was no indication that Turkey's decision of remaining out of the war depended on conditions, which gave the signs of Turkey's absolute neutrality.¹⁵⁶

Despite the heavy disappointment of Britain upon Turkey's decision to remain out of the war, the events legitimized Turkey's arguments. Turkey's neutral friendship became priceless when the size of the catastrophe caused by France's collapse was realized and British presence in the Middle East and India was now under menace. However, Britain realized that Turkey was in an unreliable status. Major General Cornwall-Evans made a prediction on 17th July: Turkey could be conquered by Germany and Germans could advance until the Iraqi frontiers in sixteen weeks. According to him, the Turkish could have little power to resist once the Germans were on the other side of the Straits. Britain expressed that Turkey was barely expected to do otherwise as she declared to remain out of war and completely rearranged the problems she was having. The treaty was not an actual asset however it was valuable as a potential. Any other approach which would push Turkey to make a move towards Germany was worrisome.¹⁵⁷ Huggesen unwillingly admitted on

¹⁵³ Editorial, "Non-Belligerency of Turkey," *The Times*, June 28, 1940., p. 6.

¹⁵⁴ Editorial, "Turkey Prepared to Act: Loyalty to Her Obligations," *The Times*, June 13, 1940., p. 6.

¹⁵⁵ Selim Deringil, "The Preservation of Turkey's Neutrality during the Second World War: 1940," *Middle Eastern Studies* 18/1 (1982): p. 40.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 40. "Papen, in fact reported that the game has been won."

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

21st of August that Turkey would show mostly responsibility rather than an asset at this stage.¹⁵⁸

8. 4. THE HATAY QUESTION AND THE SITUATION OF FRENCH FLEET

It was now the question of the status of Hatay to be solved again. Turkey was not prepared that France might lay down her arms. Turkey's confidence was before based on M. Reynaud's assurances which were now denied by the events. Nevertheless, Papen, the German Ambassador, assured the Turkish government that Italy did not intend to make any move towards Syria.¹⁵⁹ The CoS submitted that not only the British position in the Middle East but also Turkey's own security might be put into danger in addition to adverse consequences as a result of forcing Turkey.¹⁶⁰

"The other problem was the defeat of France which caused an imbalance between the fragile powers in the Mediterranean. The French fleet was especially worrying Turkey as they could seriously threaten Turkey from the sea. On 25th June, Huggesen reported that Turkey's point of view did not change. He accepted that these two questions were constantly being asked: a) what will the French fleet do? b) Does the British aircraft strength depend on addressing the anticipated aggressions? Saraçoğlu told Huggesen that the French would do the greatest mistake in the history if they surrendered to the Axis powers." A Foreign Office minute dated 1st July 1940 and written by Sir O. Sargent emphasized:

Enormous importance the Turks attach to the issue [French Navy]. It is in fact, abundantly clear that on the answer to the question whether or not we are to lose the French fleet, we may be able to argue that it was not our fault. But this will not cut much ice with the Turks... The Turks may well take the loss as finally disposing of our sea power in the Mediterranean, and as depriving us of any

¹⁵⁸ **Ibid.**

¹⁵⁹ Editorial, "Turkey Anxious But Calm: Confidence in British Determination," *The Times*, June 19, 1940., p. 6.

¹⁶⁰ Selim Deringil, "The Preservation of Turkey's Neutrality during the Second World War: 1940," *Middle Eastern Studies* 18/1 (1982): p. 43.

value as an ally. It might even afford them the occasion to make terms with the Germans...¹⁶¹

The Foreign Office had doubted that Turkey would choose to take side with Germany given that Britain failed to safeguard her against possible Russian hostility. The Foreign Office was concerned that:

What means we have of convincing Turkey that it is in her own interest to continue to collaborate with us? ... The first thing is clearly to convince her that if she refuses to compound with Germany and Italy she is safe from being attacked by sea... It all depends, therefore on whether we can assure her that the Germans and Italians will not be able to use the French fleet to establish a complete preponderance in the E. Med.¹⁶²

Selim Deringil argues that all this evidence points to the fact that “securing Turkey’s loyalty was a major factor in the British decision to destroy the French fleet.”¹⁶³

8. 5. TURKEY STARTED CRITICIZING HERSELF: DEBATES

It was a far shocking situation for Turkey that the powerful German attack of France starting on May 10, 1940 and Germans outmaneuver the Maginot line and pushed deep into France on June 5, 1940. The situation in the Balkans had never been worse than that. Russia conquered Bessarabian Bukovina, Transylvania was conquered by the Hungarians and the Dobrudja was conquered by the Bulgarians. And also the remains of Romania, a little later being a member of Tripartite Pact and rejecting the Anglo-French guarantee given to her in 1939 and the Balkan Pact were conquered by German masters. German military penetration had begun in satellite that Bulgaria was adored. Furthermore, for Russia and Germany, Turkey was a subject for which they would bargain. The essentiality of reaching the Middle East was supported by Italy; Russian politicians were deeply active in admissions, the cession of Turkish Thrace. After the Germans would reach Basra

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 36-37.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 37.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

through Turkey, the Japanese and the Germans made plan to meet in the Indian Ocean. Yugoslavia was following a very peculiar and puzzling policy between Italy and Germany. Greece adopted most graceful and alert attitude.¹⁶⁴ Moreover, from the Axis Powers' point of view, the campaign was victorious in line with Italy's waging of war against France and Great Britain on June 10, 1940 and German occupation of Paris on June 14 and signing of armistice on June 22.

Turkey claimed that the best armies in Europe had belonged to France; İnönü had held that it would be the Maginot line where the war would break out in the west which would be completed in four to five days. It was put forward dreadfully by some Turkish authorities, as the military reserves of the Allied Powers continued to increase in Europe, that they had been part of the weaker side. The Turkish MPs, such as Faik Ahmet Barutçu, were much more doubtful because the war had flared out in Sedan. He articulated for the major concern as the possibility that Turkey may have been, once again, in the more vulnerable of the alliances, which he feared could have been her usual and inevitable destiny.¹⁶⁵ For instance, Saraçoğlu was criticized by Kazım Karabekir for taking part on the losing side as Italy would participate only if the allies were to be defeated. Saraçoğlu's reply was ambiguous stating that it was a mistake to claim that Turkey would soon be joining the war and to alert the public.¹⁶⁶ Meanwhile, there were calls in the Turkish Press to be reasonable and not to repeat the mistake of 1919. Yunus Nadi in *Cumhuriyet* argued that had Europe read into the requirements of the 20th century properly, it could have contributed to the development of a society of nations by being respectful to their rights of existence, back in 1919. Quite the contrary, Europe had skipped such an excellent opportunity of keeping up peace while it magnified enmity and hatred, by consorting to its hegemonic claims. The more, therefore, they strived for overpowering and enslaving its neighboring nations, the more they created enemies in the future.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ Cevat Açıkalın, "Turkey's International Relations," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs)* 23/4 (1974): pp. 482-483.

¹⁶⁵ Faik Ahmet Barutçu, *Siyasi Anılar* (İstanbul: Milliyet Yayınları, 1977), p. 36.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

¹⁶⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, June 23, 1940.

A.Ş. Esmer, on the other hand, took a more allied stance stating that the Nazi threat and aggressive act in Europe initiated and continued due to the optimistic belief of Western Europe that Hitler had only been moving with the intention of eliminating the terms of Versailles Treaty. Esmer also pointed that such unfair terms gave Hitler the right to denounce them and seek for equality with other nations. Yet, according to Esmer, Hitler's word proved itself unreliable, as he deviated from his original intention and determination. Western Europe was not ready to encounter such an aggressive determination as it was preoccupied with the idea of keeping their neutrality. Therefore, Esmer pointed out, history would justify Hitler's action, only if he could win the War and bring about a new system that would be more just than that of Versailles.¹⁶⁸

Sadak wrote in *Akşam*, underlining a contrasting view that marked the obligation for any nation to be ready for a possible war. Neutrality, for him, could not be the position to be claimed, as it was only a mask of self-deception behind which states hide themselves to preserve their existence. Sadak concluded that Turkey stayed out of the war in spite of her geographical location, which proved that she had at least been consistent with her policy of being detached from the warring parties, or keeping her distance.¹⁶⁹ Falih Rıfkı Atay in the semi-official *Ulus* stated the fact that Turkey would not take an adventurous stance, while she knew that any future adventure could also be inevitable and unavoidable in the future.¹⁷⁰

Furthermore, it was felt in the Assembly that a new opening was essential towards Germany if the conditions were still available. It was stated that it would be Turkey's benefit to take advantage of her valuable strategic position within the European balance. Kazım Karabekir, on the other hand, pointed out the significance of a Turkish-German co-operation against a possible Russian threat. He underlined that such a co-operation should not be realized as an alienation of the Anglo-Turkish alliance; instead it was to be read as a realistic approach to secure Turkey's interests. Orbay, in contrast, attracted attention to another possibility with which Turkey could become an ally equal in strength and

¹⁶⁸ *Ulus*, June 22, 1940.

¹⁶⁹ *Akşam*, July 16, 1940.

¹⁷⁰ *Ulus*, June 16, 1940.

negotiation power with the British. He claimed that Britain would be one of the final victors in the war, but, before the final victory, if she had been weakened through active involvement, she would be obliged to negotiate with Turkey on more equal grounds. If only they were weakened in Belgium, they would desperately seek for aid and alliance of Turkey, which would be for Turkey's ultimate advantage.¹⁷¹

8. 6. TURCO-GERMAN TRADE AGREEMENT, JUNE 20, 1940

There were two arrangements being negotiated between Germany and Turkey regarding the commercial exchanges in the beginning of January 1940. Under the first of these, Turkey proposed to purchase German goods to the value of £ 7 million, and Germany in return to make large purchases of Turkish products, including Turkish tobacco (£ 4.100.000), sultanas, figs, hazel-nuts, olive oil (£ 250.000), sesame seed, oil cake and cotton (£ 70.000), Numan Menemencioğlu, the Secretary-General of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, had refused to enter into any discussions on the subject of olive oil and cotton during his visit to London, on the ground, it was argued that he was not authorized to do so. Britain, however, had given a draft agreement to Menemencioğlu dealing with these products both of which were very much required by Germany. Huggesen, the British Ambassador in Ankara, drew to the point that Turkey had secured the best possible bargain with Britain in regard to some of her products, she should at once turn to Germany and sell to her others which Britain also wished to purchase.¹⁷²

Now, both countries signed an agreement on June 20, 1940. This agreement was signed quickly after Italy's presence in the war after some criticisms in Turkey. Papen interpreted this as an indicator of Turkey's wish to continue her relation with the Axis.¹⁷³

¹⁷¹ Faik Ahmet Barutçu, *Siyasi Anılar* (İstanbul: Milliyet Yayınları, 1977), pp. 106-127.

¹⁷² CAB 65/5/14, "Conclusion of the Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street, S.W. 1," 15 January 1940., p. 54 (2).

¹⁷³ D. G. F. P.; D. IX. No. 434, p. 568., cited in Selim Deringil, "The Preservation of Turkey's Neutrality during the Second World War: 1940," *Middle Eastern Studies* 18/1 (1982): p. 43.

8. 7. GERMAN TROOPS BEGAN TO ENTER ROMANIA, OCTOBER 7, 1940

German troops began entering Romania on 7th of October. This case attributed a function to Article 3 of the Treaty which was obliging Turkey to provide all her help and support if Britain had to apply her guarantee to Greece and Romania. However Huggesen sent a telegram to London on 12th of October stating that it would be illogical to demand Turkey to implement Article 3. This is because Turkey would request concrete support and goodwill statements would not strongly influence her. Aware of its weakness, London decided to keep Turkey as a voluntary neutral partner instead of an unwilling party.¹⁷⁴

8. 8. ITALIAN ATTACK ON GREECE, OCTOBER 28, 1940

The situation got worse by the declaration of British government on March 1, 1940 which blocked exportation of all German coal to Italy over Rotterdam. Progress of German Army through the French lines having almost no difficulty in May radicalized not only the war but also the position of Italian. According to Mussolini, with announcement of war on June 10, 1940, they were on the edge of victory and Italy attacked Greece brutally.¹⁷⁵ It has been often asserted from the Greek operation to oppress the Germans to adjourn their attack on Russia by five weeks as it had a vital effect on the consequence of the Russian operation in 1941; but Germans did not accept the truth of this assertion.¹⁷⁶ Furthermore, Hitler gave information to Mussolini about his strategy that was developed into two alternative plans. On the other hand, Mussolini was well informed by Hitler about his strategy having developed into two alternative plans. First one included the very quick capture of Gibraltar that depended on Generalissimo Franco being major ally. Secondly while minimal collaboration with Spain was provided, for the usage of French Colonial Africa intimate collaboration with the Vichy government was predicted.¹⁷⁷

Bulgaria against a possibility of her attack to Greece was warned harshly by Turkey. On 28th of October, according to Huggesen report, Saraçoğlu informed the Greek Ambassador

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

¹⁷⁵ Harry Cliadakis, "Neutrality and War in Italian Policy, 1939-40," *Journal of Contemporary History* 9/3 (1974): p. 180.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 183.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 184.

that total reliance of Greece to Turkey could be managed in case of a situation of the Bulgarian attack.¹⁷⁸ Meanwhile, President İnönü speaking at the opening of Turkish National Assembly that:

Turkey's attitude of non-belligerency should not be an obstacle in the maintenance of friendly relations with all countries. During the past year a great number of erstwhile free and independent countries had had to submit to foreign invasion, but the attacks directed against Britain following the defeat of France had met with obstinate resistance. This fact had led the war into a new phase. It seemed likely that phase would be of long duration and the suffering and the misery of mankind would continue for a long time to come. It was impossible not to be deeply moved by this dark prospect and not to note with great sorrow and pain this retrogression of civilization. Turkey had lived through these times without being shaken united as it was in its ideal of security and independence. Turkey did not covet an inch of territory beyond her own frontiers and she had no intention of trespassing on anyone's rights... Our attitude of non-belligerency need not constitute an obstacle to normal relations with all the countries which show the same measure or good will towards us. The attitude of non-belligerency makes absolutely impossible with no exception what so ever, the use of our territory of our seas or skies by the belligerents in action against each other and will continue to make such use categorically and absolutely impossible so long as we take no part in the war. French developments in the conduct of the war,

¹⁷⁸ Selim Deringil, "The Preservation of Turkey's Neutrality during the Second World War: 1940," *Middle Eastern Studies* 18/1 (1982): p. 46. In Turkish opinion Bulgarian policy was completely opportunist. Neither Germany nor the Soviet Union wanted the peace of the Balkans to be disturbed at present. Therefore, Bulgaria remained neutral. Should Germany policy change, Bulgaria would endeavour to profit at the expense of her Balkan neighbors. And it was not believed in Turkey that German non-intervention in the conflict between Italy and Greece would last indefinitely. *See also* Editorial, "Bulgarian Offer to Turkey, Scepticism in Angora," *The Times*, December 11, 1940., p. 4.

however, require our close attention. Our neighbor and friend, Greece, whose territory lies in that zone, the security and tranquility of which is of primary importance to Turkey, unfortunately finds herself dragged into war. Together with our ally, Great Britain, we are carefully studying and envisaging the situation which has now ensued. We hope that the political principle which I earlier stated, and which has kept our country out of the horrors of war, will in the same manner maintain our security in the future.¹⁷⁹

“Churchill felt that help for Greece was crucial as it was likely to have an important effect on Turkish opinion.” He cabled Wavell on November 26:

It might be that ‘Compass’ (Operation of aid to Greece), would in itself determine action of Yugoslavia and Turkey, and anyhow in event of success, we should be able to give Turkey far greater assurance of early support, than it has been in our power to do so far. One may indeed see the possibility of centre of gravity in Middle East shifting suddenly from Egypt to the Balkans and from Cairo to Constantinople.¹⁸⁰

Turkey did not have adequate armaments to act by herself, so it was ready to get direct assistance from her allies. Moreover, no beneficial plan for common action had been found

¹⁷⁹ Editorial, “Turkey and the War, Unbreakable Tie with Britain: Relations with the Soviet,” *The Times*, November 2, 1940., p. 4. On November 2, 1940, Yugoslavia declared her neutrality in the Italo-Hellenic war and the Balkan problem reached its peak.

¹⁸⁰ Winston Churchill, *The Second World War: Their Finest Hour* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1950), p. 483. “On the other hand, In the Russo-German talks of November 1940, initiated by Hitler in order to allocate spheres of influence and arrange for the partition of the bankrupt estate of the British Empire, the Straits question played as Von Papen had predicted a leading part. At the opening meeting, held on November 12, Ribbentrop, the German Foreign Minister, began by suggesting that what was required was the scrapping of the Montreux Convention and its replacement by a new agreement, negotiated by those countries with a particular interest in the issue primarily Russia, Turkey, Germany and Italy guaranteeing Russia free access to the Mediterranean than it had hitherto enjoyed. Molotov, in reply, showed a disturbing determination to seek what he referred to as a number of explanations regarding the significance of Hitler’s proposed “New Order” in Europe.” See also A. L. Macfie, “The Turkish Straits in the Second World War, 1939-45,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 25/2 (1989): p. 241.

in staff conferences. The thrust north had been blocked by the insufficiency of Allies to submit beneficial direct assistance, especially that of Britain's. Consequently, this caused Turkey to become more geographically isolated place from Germany. Also acting in the Balkans was impossible due to the complete failure of the Balkan Pact. Briefly, it was not surprising to see that Turkey could do much in the summer and fall of 1940 and passivity of Turkey was what made Britain glad.¹⁸¹ As Britain had to secure a foothold in Greece, new strategical and foreign policy possibilities had emerged.¹⁸²

¹⁸¹ Brock Millman, "Turkish Foreign and Strategic Policy 1934-42," *Middle Eastern Studies* 31/3 (1995): p. 501. Meanwhile, Papen, the German Ambassador, had made in Berlin some statements which raise the suspicion that his return would be the signal for the outbreak of a new war of nerves against Turkey. Papen, however, assured that Italy and Germany would respect Turkish independence and the Soviet Union would renounce a settlement in her favor of the Straits question and seek an outlet on the Persian Gulf instead. After the visit of Molotov's visit to Berlin, Papen said that Turkey was faced with the urgent problem of restoring completely her friendly relations with the Soviet Union and with seeking a rapprochement with the Axis Powers. *See also* Editorial, "Axis Warns Turkey, Threatened War of Nerves: Papen's Lecture," *The Times*, November 20, 1940., p. 4.

¹⁸² Editorial, "Bulgarian Offer to Turkey, Scepticism in Angora," *The Times*, December 11, 1940., p. 4.

CHAPTER IV: THE SECOND PHASE OF THE RELATIONS IN WORLD WAR TWO (1941-1943)

9. TURKEY ON THE ALERT, 1941

The second phase (1941-1943) was one in which the belligerent parties were seemed to be balanced.¹⁸³ Turkey felt isolated because she was surrounded by the Axis forces. The result of this was especially the attendance of Bulgaria to the Axis in March. Yugoslavia and Greece was invaded by the Germans in April and so Germany came to the Western borders of Turkey. Syria was held by Vichy and a pro-German outbreak took place in Iraq. Only non-Axis boundary belonged to Soviet Union and Iran.¹⁸⁴ In order to avoid movement of the Germans down through the Balkans to the Aegean and the Turkish Straits, early in 1940 Turkey, the principal hope in the eastern Mediterranean, had already been called on by the British to create an anti-Axis diplomatic front in Southeast Europe.¹⁸⁵

On January 13, Huggesen wrote to Foreign Office saying that he had a conversation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Saraçoğlu, and said that he laid the great emphasis to Saraçoğlu on the danger which Britain felt to be approaching that Germany would make a move either against Bulgaria or Yugoslavia and in particular that there was a likely hood that Germany would penetrate into Bulgaria without proceeding further. In answer to Huggesen, Saraçoğlu argued that it would be difficult for the Germans to undertake any serious operations in this part of the world. It seemed to Saraçoğlu that Germany could not put enough troops in at the present time and moreover her main object should be an attack on the United Kingdom. Saraçoğlu also told that he had drawn the attention of the German

¹⁸³ William Hale and Ali İhsan Bağış, eds., *Four Centuries of Turco-British Relations: Studies in Diplomatic Economic and Cultural Affairs*, (Northgate; Wallington; Beverley; North Yorkshire: The Eothen Press, 1984), p. 93.

¹⁸⁴ Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 117.

¹⁸⁵ Annette Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), 21. On January 1, 1941, Churchill sent to the Turkish people a New Year message saying that "it may well be that our recent victories in the Mediterranean presage what the coming year may bring. In times of stress, it is a blessing to have good friends and during the hard months that have gone by we have been fortunate to have had Turkey's unwavering friendship. *See also* Editorial, "Churchill's Message to Turkey," *Mercury*, January 3, 1941., p. 1.

Ambassador to these developments and pressed him as to their reason. The German Ambassador, Papen, Saraçoğlu told, admitted personally that there were certain increases but he had stated that the object was mainly to deal with communist activities. Papen also said that there was also an element of precaution against British seizure of Salonika or an attack against Germany from this part of the world. He, however, slurred rather over this last point and concentrated on the importance of counteracting communist activities. Saraçoğlu added that Papen was giving only his personal opinion. Saraçoğlu, then spoke of the Bulgarian attitude and suggested that Bulgarians were inclined to resist German penetration and it might be possible for Turkey to come to some understanding with the Bulgarian Government. Huggesen, in contrast, said that the Bulgarian attitude seemed to Britain to be entirely unsatisfactory. According to him, Bulgaria had weakened considerably. Britain, he said, did not believe Bulgaria could resist any German pressure.¹⁸⁶

9. 1. BRITISH OFFER TO TURKEY: JOIN THE WAR, JANUARY 12, 1941

Britain relied on the fact that developments were proceeding so rapidly that it seemed to her that a psychological moment had arrived in which action should be taken. Inaction, according to Britain, would be more dangerous than any form of action and delay would be equally dangerous. Britain thought that the best thing would be for the two governments to examine the whole position together in order to decide on the best line to take and offered Turkey to come to the conclusion that the best line of action would be for Turkey to declare war on Italy at once. It would also enable Britain to use the naval and air bases in Turkey that the effect of Turkish support would be of great moral value in the Balkans and against Germany and that in general joint action between the two countries would introduce an element of strength. The other point was that the Turkish Government would make it clear that she would go to war as soon as German troops or aircraft entered into

¹⁸⁶ FO 195/2469, File: Balkans, no. 26, Part II, 131-255, "Minutes: Conversation Between Huggesen and Saraçoğlu," 13 January 1941.

Yugoslavia or Bulgaria. Britain emphasized the advisability of such a declaration that was being made jointly by the Turkish and Yugoslav Governments.¹⁸⁷

9. 2. TURKISH REPLY: NO

Turkey replied to Britain on the Yugoslavian issue that German push through Yugoslavia was the only uncertain point, as regards it depended on the result of her present negotiations with Belgrade. Saraçoğlu told Hugessen on January 20 that he had learnt from the Greek Ambassador that Yugoslavia would regard a German push through Bulgaria as *casus belli*. Saraçoğlu told that this was a good augury for Turkey's forthcoming negotiation.¹⁸⁸ Turkish attitude to Bulgaria, on the other hand, was the crux of the whole matter. Britain, in particular had asked the Turkish Government to make a declaration that the penetration of German troops over the Danube into Bulgaria would be regarded as a *casus belli*. Turkey had refused for reasons diametrically opposed to Britain's views. Turkey thought that such a declaration would alienate Bulgaria and provoke Germany. Britain, in contrast, had thought that it would encourage Bulgaria and deter Germany. Turkey asked Britain the following questions:

- a) If Turkey made such a declaration, would it deter Germany?
- b) If Turkey went to war over this, what should she do?
- c) What support Britain give?
- d) Turkey wanted for an armored division to be put into Thrace. Would Britain agree to do so?
- e) If Turkey were to go into war, she would be attacked by Russia. What would be the British attitude?¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁷ **Ibid.**, Britain was also quite aware of the fact that what Turkey should actually do if she had to declare war in consequence of such a declaration; what help Britain could give? On the effect of Russia, what could Britain do to help Turkey in Caucasus? See also FO 195/2469, File: Balkans, no. 26, Part III, 256-400, "Meeting Between Saraçoğlu, General Marshall-Cornwall and Hugessen," 21 January 1941.

¹⁸⁸ FO 195/2469, File: Balkans, no. 26, Part III, 256-400, "Meeting Between Saraçoğlu, General Marshall-Cornwall and Hugessen," 21 January 1941.

¹⁸⁹ **Ibid.**, For the question of "c", Hugessen thought that Saraçoğlu appeared to be under the impression that Britain was too much engaged in Albania, Libya and Abyssinia to spare anything. Hugessen told Saraçoğlu that Britain had in reserve in Egypt one armored and two infantry divisions with regiments of anti-aircraft, anti-tank and other guns etc. Which Britain should throw in wherever she was most required on a combined

The Turkish government had been under the impression that Britain could not give serious help since the Albanian and African campaigns had been wound up.

9. 3. TURKISH-BULGARIAN NON-AGGRESSION PACT, FEBRUARY 17, 1941

The extraordinary military precautions had been taken by the Turkish Government in Thrace and İstanbul after the Italian attack had brought war near to Turkey and that as a matter of principle Turkey would regard her security as being endangered if a non-Balkan power should obtain a lodgment in the Balkans. The importance of the declaration was that the anxieties both of Turkey and of Bulgaria were believed to be removed. Bulgaria was now certain that Turkey and Britain were not preparing to take any aggressive action against her. German propaganda, on the other hand, was claiming that by the declaration Turkey had given Germany a free hand in Bulgaria. However, the answers seemed to be that if Turkey had any intention of attacking the Germans in Bulgaria, there was nothing in the declaration to prevent them.¹⁹⁰ Terms of the agreement were:

- a) Turkey and Bulgaria consider that an unchanging basis of their foreign policy is to abstain from aggression,
- b) Turkey and Bulgaria, mutually inspired by the most friendly intentions, is determined to develop neighborliness,
- c) They will develop mutual trade to the maximum compatible with their economic structure,
- d) The Governments hope that this friendship will inspire their newspapers.¹⁹¹

front running from the Adriatic to the Black Sea. Saraçoğlu did not seem to think that Britain should be able to do this for some time. Hugessen told Saraçoğlu that the ideal was to clear up Africa and Albania and that Britain should then have large forces at both sides' disposal. Hugessen did not mention as he had some time ago that by May, Britain should have 15 divisions in Egypt and 20 or more by the late summer. Hugessen thought it would be necessary to clear Saraçoğlu's mind and reassure him as to the support Britain could give. And for the question of "e", Hugessen believed that it would be necessary to convince Turkey of Russian military weakness and also show Turkey that Britain was contemplating giving assistance on the Caucasus as well as the Thracian front.

¹⁹⁰ Editorial, "Turkey and Bulgaria, Gains from the Agreement: Doubts Dispelled in Sofia," *The Times*, February 20, 1941., p. 4.

¹⁹¹ Editorial, "Turkish Bulgarian Non-Aggression Pact," *Canberra Times*, February 19, 1941., p. 1.

The German Ambassador in Ankara, Von Papen, on the other hand, had clearly explained Germany's position on Turkey:

We quite understand your alliance with Great Britain and how Italian pretensions at the time drove you into it. Any chance of Italy being a nuisance is now dissipated, and Russia is your only real and permanent danger. We have no points at issue with you whatsoever, and are prepared now and for all time to guarantee both your frontiers in Thrace and in the Caucasus against Russia. Great Britain, however good her will may be, is not able to implement a guarantee of this sort even if she were to give it. Only Germany is in a position to give and implement such a guarantee.¹⁹²

Huggesen, however, cabled to Foreign Office on February 22 saying that:

- 1) The news which we receive from various sources and that which reaches us through the agencies shows us that the most contradictory opinions and comments are being expressed regarding the Turco-Bulgarian declaration, ranging from "Turkey has drawn Bulgaria into the wake of British policy" to "Bulgaria has drawn Turkey into wake of German policy." For this reason, it is useful once again to define our policy.
- 2) Turkish policy has in no way changed. Turkey remains faithful to her alliances. She intends to live on good terms with all the powers, particularly her neighbors. Turkey would in no case remain indifferent to such foreign activities as might take place in her zone of security. Turkey will oppose by force of arms any aggression directed against her territorial integrity and against her independence.

¹⁹² FO 195/2469, File: Balkans, no. 26, Part V, 501-600, "Lt. Col. Kluss' Visit to Huggesen," February 27, 1941.

- 3) The Turco-Bulgarian Agreement constitutes an entente of two states whose will it is to safeguard their peace, who hold the stand of friendship to each other and declare that they have no aggressive aim in any quarter. Furthermore, any aspiration which may disclose itself in the same circumstances for the realization of a similar object would likewise receive a warm welcome from Turkey.¹⁹³

9. 4. TURKEY'S IMPORTANCE GREW STEADILY: THRACE ISSUE AGAIN AND TURKISH LIMITED HELP FOR GREECE

Turkey's importance was bound up with the question of support for Greece on her double front in 1941 spring when Hitler, it was generally accepted, would strike towards Salonika to try to relieve the pressure upon the Italians in Albania. It was believed that the Nazis saw Turkey as the key state in the situation and that Hitler hoped to keep Turkey out by coming down through Bulgaria and on the Western side into Greece and offering no threat to Turkish territory. Obviously, the Nazis believed that if the Greeks could be dealt singly, the turn of Turkey would come later.¹⁹⁴

The possibility of a German attack on Greece, however, was not covered by any Turkish-Greek Agreement and it had become a practical possibility only very recently.¹⁹⁵ Soon after, in February, Turkey had made a secret convention with Greece for military cooperation in Western Thrace. The general dissertation on strategy and on the general situation was as follows:

- a) The Greeks had a division disposed between Dedeagatch (a division less a regiment) and Demotica (one Regiment). In the event of an enemy cutting communication between Salonika and Eastern Thrace these Greek would, if both Greece and Turkey at war, operate under Turkish command, whether in defense or in

¹⁹³ FO 195/2469, File: Balkans, no. 26, Part VI, 601-700, "Hugessen to Foreign Office," 22 February 1941.

¹⁹⁴ Editorial, "Turkey's Role, Increasing Importance," *West Australian*, February 26, 1941., p. 7.

¹⁹⁵ Editorial, "When Turkey Will Move, Watch on Bulgaria: Possibility of German Attack," *The Times*, October 30, 1940., p. 4.

attack. It might be possible for Turkey to take over the Demotica and Dedeagatch defenses so that the Greek division could be shipped round by sea to reinforce Salonika.

- b) If Greece was at war and Turkey was not, these troops would continue to hold their present positions and would be helped by Turkey secretly as much as possible (for instance provision of supplies). In the event of their being driven back, they would withdraw into Turkish territory where they would nominally be interned, but in fact, if possible majority would be passed back to Greece.¹⁹⁶

However, Turkey, as for her own interests, was not willing to take more action for the help of Greeks. In March, Greeks were much distressed at realization which had dawned upon them that if Greece was attacked, Turkey would not regard this as *casus belli*, in spite of previous undertakings. Britain believed that Turkish inaction in face of a German attack on Greece would have a most demoralizing effect on Greek people and armies in the field. The British believed that Turkey should make an effort to meet situation which was dangerous for them. Britain forced Turkey to make a declaration of solidarity with Greeks and thought that this would immediately have heartening effects on Greeks and with steps the British were taking would give Yugoslavia a lead.¹⁹⁷ The British had tried a lot to convey the Turkish Government that in the light of the developments some more positive

¹⁹⁶ FO 195/2469, File: Balkans, no. 26, Part VI, 601-700, "Minutes: Turco-Greek Convention," 22 February 1941. It was not surprising that the Convention had been made just before the visit of British Foreign Minister Eden and General Sir John Dill who visited Turkey on January 26, 1941. According to Nicholas Tamkin, the mission of the visit was to encourage Turkey to join in the battle. *See also Nicholas Tamkin, Britain, Turkey and the Soviet Union, 1940-45: Strategy, Diplomacy and Intelligence in the Eastern Mediterranean* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 40. Turkey, however, argued that she was not in a position to go to war owing her lack of Air Force and motorized units. Turkey added that it was better for her to stay defensive. *See* FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part III, 201-300, "Appreciation of Present Turkish Position," 20 August 1941.

¹⁹⁷ FO 195/2469, File: Balkans, no. 26, Part VII, 701-800, "Telegram from Sir Miles Lampson to Huggesen," 6 March 1941.

policy than Turkish Government had hitherto been prepared to declare war and would best serve interests of Turkey herself and the allies.¹⁹⁸

Numan Menemencioğlu, on the other hand, at an interview with United Press Correspondent on March 8, stated the Turkish Foreign Policy as:

- a) Cardinal principle of Turkish policy remains defense of her own independence. This does not necessarily mean that we will not fight before she is directly attacked nor does it mean that Turkey will automatically enter the war if Germany attacks Greece. Turkish independence was menaced by German occupation of Romania, was more menaced by the occupation of Bulgaria and would be further endangered by an attack on Greece. Turkey will take action when in cooperation with Great Britain; she can make the most effective use of the special characteristics of her army and geographic position. It would be ridiculous to expect the Turks to waste their strength in an attempt to swing in behind German forces attacking Greece. Turkish army is chiefly of defensive value.
- b) If the Germans attempt to reach the Dardanelles the Russian would probably express their displeasure more forcibly than over the occupation of Bulgaria but would do nothing about it. Russians would be glad to see Turkey put up a stiff but no help is expected.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁸ FO 195/2469, File: Balkans, no. 26, Part VIII, 801-900, "Telegram from Sir Miles Lampson to Huggesen," 13 March 1941.

¹⁹⁹ FO 195/2469, File: Balkans, no. 26, Part VIII, 801-900, "Menemencioğlu's Interview with United Press Correspondent," 10 March 1941.

9. 5. GERMANS NOW ON THE BORDER OF TURKEY: GERMAN OCCUPATION OF BULGARIA, MARCH 1, 1941 AND HITLER'S PERSONAL LETTER TO PRESIDENT İNÖNÜ

Having failed to remain neutral, Bulgaria joined the Axis when German troops demanded permission to use Bulgarian territory to invade Yugoslavia and Greece. As Turkey viewed the situation created by the German march into Bulgaria, the maintenance of peace in the Balkans was now a forlorn hope. The only question was how long it would be before Turkey was involved in the war. The Turkish army in Thrace completely put on a war footing. Then, Turkey and Great Britain had in common agreed on plans of action to meet every eventuality which the Ministers and Chief of Staff of the two countries could foresee.²⁰⁰

However, it was also surprising that Hitler, on March 4, sent a letter to the Turkish President İnönü saying that the friendly relations existing between the two countries would not come to an end. Hitler added that in spite of Turkey's alliance with Great Britain the relation between Turkey and Germany had not been disturbed by any incidents. Hitler hoped that this would continue to be the case after the occupation of Bulgaria. Hitler was also credited with assuring President İnönü that the German Army had received orders not to approach the Turkish frontier.²⁰¹ That is to say that Hitler expressed the desire of Germany to remain on friendly terms with Turkey. However, similar assurances in respect of Greece had not been given.²⁰² In reply to Hitler, President İnönü wrote on January 12 that the basic principle of Turkey was her own independence and territorial security. İnönü added that he believed there was no need to encounter in the Balkans. The historical

²⁰⁰ Editorial, "Turkey's Policy Settled: Thracian Army to be Put on War Footing," *The Times*, March 5, 1941., p. 4.

²⁰¹ Editorial, "Hitler's Overtures to Turkey: Unfavorable Opinion in Angora," *The Times*, March 8, 1941., p. 4.

²⁰² Editorial, "New Precautions in Turkey, Germans Expected to Push on: Straits Still Open," *The Times*, March 7, 1941., p. 4.

friendship between the two countries, he said, would prevent any hostile encirclement in the region.²⁰³

9. 6. TURKEY ACCEPTED TO HELP GREECE

Although, the German intentions after the occupation of Bulgaria were still obscure, the Turkish political circles were granted that the German Army intended to push on farther.²⁰⁴ In this connection, Turkey was now convinced to help Greeks. In his telegram to Cairo, Huggesen reported that the following issues:

- a) Turks agreed to our giving all available assistance to Greece,
- b) They took note that we ask nothing from them and,
- c) Because we are giving everything to Greece we can give them little in the near future,
- d) The facts point to the conclusion that, unless attacked, Turkey cannot be brought in at present,
- e) She will never be brought in against her own wishes and judgment.
- f) Mainly in view of our inability to equip her for modern warfare she is reluctant to take the risk and,
- g) In our own interests and especially in view of importance of Turkey as a barrier to the Middle East, it is most undesirable for Turkey to come in until we are sure that she can do so without risk of defeat. Defeat would throw on us the burden of blocking a German advance to the Middle East, a function which Turkey is performing at present as a non-belligerent,
- h) Turkey has been confirmed in her policy of extreme caution. Her loyalty to us is beyond doubt but her anxiety to avoid hostilities in her present inadequately prepared state is equally certain. It may be

²⁰³ Genelkurmay Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Başkanlığı et al., ed., *Türk Subaylarının İkinci Dünya Savaşı Hatıraları*, Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1999), p. 129.

²⁰⁴ Editorial, "New Precautions in Turkey, Germans Expected to Push on: Straits Still Open," *The Times*, March 7, 1941., p. 4.

that she hopes to get through it is certain that she will fight if attacked,

- i) It is unwise to press Turkey to come into the war so long as there is a risk of her being overwhelmed owing to inadequacy of equipment and absence of British support. Moreover, such pressure would be useless and only arouse suspicion. If it were carried to the point of making Turkey “mulish” it might do serious damage to our relations. You will remember that Minister of Foreign Affairs stated that Turkey would come in at her own time. From purely physical point of view therefore I agree entirely with views in General Marshall – Cornwall’s note of February 19th, most secret, to Commander in Chief, Middle East, that Turkey should keep quiet until fully equipped. This might be in the autumn, but Minister of Foreign Affairs has mentioned 1942 as Turkey’s own date,
- j) But from point of view of morale (x) is undesirable because of the effect on Greece and Yugoslavia, because it would encourage impression that Turkey is not executing her engagements and because of opening afforded to German propaganda and pressure. These considerations point to (y) maintenance of pressure on Turkey to come in as soon as possible without waiting to be attacked, or at least to adopt a firmer attitude,
- k) If we accept (x) we must put up with the inevitable moral ill effects. If we succeeded in (y) we should be taking great physical risks. But our efforts to induce the Turkish Government to take over Thracian bridgeheads has obtained completely negative result.²⁰⁵ Physical certainty seems the most important point and it

²⁰⁵ On April 3, Marshal Fevzi Çakmak, General Asım Gündüz and the War Minister had a conversation with Major General Sir Michael O’Moore and Brigadier A. J. Pollack. The Turkish Generals welcomed to hear the experiences of British Generals and also welcomed the suggestions of them. The British High Command recommended Marshal Fevzi Çakmak that they hoped the Turkish Army would not try and fight on their forward line in Thrace but that the Army would fall back in good time on the rearward defenses at “Çatalca

would therefore appear that we must overlook present weakness of Turkish attitude accept the position that Turkey will not fight unless attacked, concentrate on increasing her strength for later on and in the meanwhile try to keep her up to as great a degree of firmness as possible short of what she considers the point of provocation.²⁰⁶

9. 7. THE NEW FOREIGN POLICY PARAMETERS OF TURKEY AND BRITAIN AFTER THE GERMAN OFFENSE IN GREECE AND YUGOSLAVIA

“The German offensive in Greece and Yugoslavia starting on April 6, 1941, and the overrunning of Greece, seemed to confirm Turkey’s worst fears.”²⁰⁷ In his conversation with Hugessen, Menemencioğlu said that the Germans had never intended to come down into the Balkans but having been obliged to do so by Italian defeats, had relied after their occupation of Bulgaria, on first detaching Yugoslavia and then on gradually engaging Turkey on their side. Menemencioğlu, then stated the important thing that the point was to do nothing which might risk the premature collapse of one of the defensive positions. Every day of delay was a day gained as it enabled Turkey to press on with her preparations. If Turkey were to attempt any offensive action, it would not only be

and Demirkapı.” The Generals added that the British High Command had no intention of dictating any particular form of strategy to the Turkish High Command but that they were very anxious that the large number of Turkish divisions now concentrated in the forward area of Thrace should not be trapped by a German armored drive across the Maritza Valley South of Edirne as the Polish Army was in the Poznan salient by the German armored formation. The British Generals also pointed out that such a withdrawal of the Turkish field army would involve the pursuing German forces in having to maintain themselves by an ever increasing and narrow line of communications which would contract in breadth as they advanced and would be subjected continuously to air bombardment by British squadrons based on Northern Greece and Anatolia. **See FO 195/2469, File: Balkans, no. 26, Part X, 1001-1100, “Minute Sheet: The Conversation Between the Turkish High Command with the British Generals,” 04 April 1941.** Soon after this conversation, the Turkish Army fell back to Çatalca line. Many of the military historians have regarded and depicted this new line as the successful attitude of the Turkish High Command. Indeed, the new strategy had been recommended by the British High Command.

²⁰⁶ **FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part I, 1-100, “Telegram from Hugessen to Cairo,” 13 March 1941.**

²⁰⁷ **Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 120.**

extremely difficult to get the Turkish armies to move but she would risk a crushing defeat.²⁰⁸

Britain clearly understood that she should then not only have lost her most vital bastion in the Near and Middle East but she should also lose the possibility which she believed would occur in 1942 of using Turkey as a base for a far better prepared and possibly decisive attack.²⁰⁹ The British as she always did, regarded the Turkish Government as loyal to alliance and determined to defend themselves. However, the threat in the Aegean, British thought, conveyed Turkey the impression of powerlessness of British fleet in the waters, had introduced an entirely a new factor.²¹⁰ It was in fact true. British Foreign Minister wrote a telegram to Sir M. Palairet on April 24, 1941 marking that:

We agree that it is vitally necessary to prevent German occupation of Chios, Mitylene and Lemnos if possible and much hope that the Turks can be persuaded to occupy temporarily these islands themselves at least as much in their own interests as in ours and Greek. Please therefore urge Greek government at once formally to ask the Turkish Government to take action accordingly.²¹¹

The Turkish Government, however, was evidently impressed by German successes in Yugoslavia and Greece which made them even more cautious than before.²¹² Most probably, any attempt to use Turkey for this kind of an operation, Turks thought, would be

²⁰⁸ FO 195/2469, File: Balkans, no. 26, Part X, 1001-1100, "Minute Sheet: The Conversation Between Menemencioğlu and Hugessen," 01 April 1941.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ FO 195/2469, File: Balkans, no. 26, Part XI, 1101-1200, "From Hugessen to Foreign Office," 26 April 1941.

²¹¹ FO 195/2469, File: Balkans, no. 26, Part XI, 1101-1200, "From Eden to Sir M. Palairet," 24 April 1941. Meanwhile, the Germans were overrunning Western Thrace and wanted to use the railway to supply their forward troops and they were putting diplomatic pressure on Turkey to permit their use of the short section of this line passing through Turkish territory at Karağaç. *See also* FO 195/2469, File: Balkans, no. 26, Part XI, 1101-1200, "From Major General Arthur Smith to Hugessen," 05 April 1941. Nicholas Tamkin argued that "by the end of April 1941, Britain had retreated to a policy which acquiesced in and sought to preserve Turkish neutrality in the war against Germany and Italy." It was however nothing of the kind. *See Nicholas Tamkin, Britain, Turkey and the Soviet Union, 1940-45: Strategy, Diplomacy and Intelligence in the Eastern Mediterranean* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 51-52.

²¹² FO 195/2469, File: Balkans, no. 26, Part XI, 1101-1200, "From Hugessen to Foreign Office," 11 April 1941.

resisted by force and would be treated as a *casus belli*. Turkey decided not to be the part of an action.

9. 8. RUSSIA'S PLEDGE TO TURKEY: THE STRAITS QUESTION AND TURKISH-SOVIET DECLARATION, MARCH 24, 1941

Hitler's insistence no doubt played a significant part in persuading the Soviets an attempt to reach an agreement with Turkey. Possible German dominance in South-East Europe, ruled by a possible attack by way of Anatolia or the Dodecanese completed the encirclement of Germany from the South. The Soviet Union was becoming increasingly alarmed at German expansion but wished to see others resisting before itself passing from words to actions. The significant fact of the declaration was that peace in the Balkans depended on keeping Germany out. When the Germans entered Romania, Moscow was too timid to say more than the occupation was not with Soviet consent. Moscow reached the length of expressing its disapproval of the German occupation of Bulgaria, but only when that occupation was a *fait accompli*.²¹³ Germans were now within striking distance of the Straits. Moscow seemed to have gotten over its timidity sufficiently to take up position against the German advance or at least to issue public assurances giving Turkey *carte blanche*²¹⁴ to take any action against Germany which Turkey might consider necessary for its own defense.²¹⁵ The following is the text of the declaration:

- 1) After news had appeared in the foreign press as the effect that if Turkey were involved in war, the Soviet Union would take advantage of the difficulties Turkey would have to face to attack her in turn, the Soviet Government have informed Turkey in this connexion:
- 2) Such news does not in any way coincide with the attitude of the Soviet Government;

²¹³ An accomplished fact.

²¹⁴ Unrestricted power to act at one's own discretion; unconditional authority.

²¹⁵ Editorial, "Russia's Pledge to Turkey, A Reply to German Advance: Suspicion Dispelled," *The Times*, March 25, 1941., p. 4.

- 3) In case Turkey should resist aggression and should find herself forced into war for defense of her territory, Turkey could then, in accordance with the Non-aggression Pact existing between her and the U.S.S.R count on the complete understanding and neutrality of Turkey.²¹⁶

The Turkish Government had expressed to the Soviet Union its most sincere thanks for the declaration and had let it be known that should the U.S.S.R. find herself in a similar situation, it could count on the complete understanding and neutrality of Turkey. The declaration which the two countries exchanged was considered by Turkey to leave her a free hand to deal with any German threat.

9. 9. THE LEVANT QUESTION: BRITISH INTERVENTION IN IRAQ, MAY 2, 1941

The new situation was analyzed by planners in London, whereas the subject of Anglo-Turkish collaboration became crucial largely because as a result of the operation in Greece military situation of Britain in Mediterranean became worse.²¹⁷ When the Germans became masters of Aegean, Rashid Ali revolted in Iraq on April 1, 1941,²¹⁸ and Turkey was now in a very difficult situation finding herself cut off Britain. The fears Turkey had and the feeling of helplessness were augmented by the successes of Germany awed Turkey who being disheartened by British defeats, felt acutely that they were being shut in and cut off from any support from her allies. Also, she had an understanding that she should remain a non-belligerent at any rate until there should be established in the Near East a new balance of forces.²¹⁹

²¹⁶ **Ibid.** The Non-Aggression Pact referred to in Russian note which was signed in 1925.

²¹⁷ Y. Olmert, "Britain, Turkey and the Levant Question during the Second World War," *Middle Eastern Studies* 23/4 (1987): p. 442.

²¹⁸ Rashid Ali Al-Gaylani Coup or the Golden Square Coup was a pro-Nazi that overthrew the regime of Regent Abd al-Ilah and installed Rashid Ali as prime minister.

²¹⁹ FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part III, 201-300, "Telegram from Hugessen to Department of State," 07 July 1941.

Map 3: The Levant



Source: Marked roughly by the writer of the dissertation

The biggest problem that Turkey faced about her position was; the situation in Syria that was under control of Vichy in June and July and the anti-British upheaval in Iraq could advance if Turkey attacked through Balkans or Caucasus, there would be a crucial link between Syria and British in Palestine. In accordance with that, if Iraq were to fall to the Germans, Turkey would be enclosed and so changed her supply route, Basra. An essential element in British attitude towards these crises was guaranteeing Turkish faithfulness. Detected British incapability was noted as hazardous by Eden. “German establishment in Syria and Iraq would leave Turkey effectively surrounded and it would indeed be difficult then to count upon her enduring loyalty.” The passage of German army through Anatolia might happen because of Turkish isolation, letting armored forces to be formed in Syria and Iraq by Germany with the help of which she could attack Egypt from the east, rather than from Libya in the west. This could only be stopped with the toughness of Turkey and this toughness could only be guaranteed with the help of dealing the problem in Syria and Iraq as early as possible.²²⁰

²²⁰ Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 124.

When the Rashid Ali revolt broke out in Iraq, it was then British authorities in London and in the Middle East that started to consider an allied take-over of the Levant.²²¹ With the attack on May 2, on the RAF base at Habbaniya which located near Baghdad made an end to a stand-off over Britain's right to send troops to Palestine. Axis aircraft, taking fuel on Syria and Lebanon, helped the Iraqis; however a British relief force marched to Baghdad by May 30. After the resolution of the situation in Iraq, attention switched to Syria and German oppression was not prevented by Vichy on their nominal objectivity. Entrance in Levant was made on June 8 by allied troops and before paused with a counter attack of Vichy they fast advanced. The day before the assault of the Soviet Union, the Australians entered Damascus on June 21, yet the counteraction of French remained until July 12. Because of the length of time, it took Britain to scramble together the forces to start an assault and protect Turks from French that spread fear. However, it was not a best timing, because Turkey was being requested to finish the non-aggression treaty with Germany.²²²

9. 10. TURKEY TO STAY NEUTRAL: TURKISH-GERMAN TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP AND NON-AGGRESSION PACT, JUNE 18, 1941

For Hitler's naval leaders, a full-scale Mediterranean operation had the highest importance which included a faith through Turkey, any way at all and they were urging him that way. Hitler exaggerated British strength in the eastern Mediterranean whereas minimized Soviet powers of self-defense. Problems with the Italians and the Vichy French would be arisen due to the move that the naval leaders suggested. It was possible for Turkey to endure powerfully.²²³ Moreover, immediately before the start of the Soviet adventure of the Germans, for German neutralizing Turkey was the key point. It should be noted that both

²²¹ Y. Olmert, "Britain, Turkey and the Levant Question during the Second World War," *Middle Eastern Studies* 23/4 (1987): p. 443.

²²² Nicholas Tamkin, *Britain, Turkey and the Soviet Union, 1940-45: Strategy, Diplomacy and Intelligence in the Eastern Mediterranean* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 52-55.

²²³ Annette Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 26.

battling sides affected Turkish military-strategic potential but not through the same angles of prism.²²⁴

Indeed, the German pressure on Turkey signing the treaty had been started by the early spring but refused repeatedly by Turkey.²²⁵ Germany, however, then used great pressure on Turkey to sign the treaty after German victories in the Near East had resulted in a semi-circle of Axis forces on Turkey's borders.²²⁶ Nevertheless, "Turkey kept Britain informed of the negotiations and strove to convince them that the projected treaty was an emergency measure of mutual interest to Britain and Turkey as Turkey was from a geographical and strategical point of view completely isolated."²²⁷ The Turkish Government, in order to retain complete independence of herself, had needed to fight a continuous defensive action on the diplomatic front.²²⁸

The Germans, on the other hand, made up their minds that they were going to attack Russia, wanted to make sure of Turkish neutrality so that there should be no question of Turkey letting Britain to pass troops or naval craft through Turkey in order to support Russia. No doubt the Germans when making their overtures accompanied them by sort of threats, which induced Turkish officials to sign the agreement.²²⁹ It was then the German Ambassador Von Papen and Turkish Foreign Minister Saraçoğlu signed the treaty in Ankara with a period to be forced for ten years.²³⁰ The terms were:

²²⁴ Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 121.

²²⁵ Editorial, "German Pressure on Turkey," *Courier-Mail*, April 19, 1941., p. 2.

²²⁶ Editorial, "Turkey and Germany, Pact of Friendship: Anglo-Turkish Treaty Safeguarded," *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, June 20, 1941., p. 5.

²²⁷ Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 121.

²²⁸ Editorial, "Turkey and Germany, Pact of Friendship: Anglo-Turkish Treaty Safeguarded," *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, June 20, 1941., p. 5.

²²⁹ FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part III, 201-300, "The Opinion Paper of the Air Commodore," 22 August 1941. Cevat Açıkalın argued in his article that with the sign of the Pact, the German advance was stopped at the Turkish frontier. *See also* Cevat Açıkalın, "Turkey's International Relations," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs)* 23/4 (1974): p. 484. On the other hand, although the press on Germany changed noticeably, on July 10, *İkdam* was suppressed for publishing anti-British article within three or four months the situation had been almost entirely restored.

²³⁰ Please note: From this moment, the word "non-belligerency" was replaced by the word "neutrality." *See also* FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part III, 201-300, "Appreciation of Present Turkish position," 20 August 1941.

- a) To respect the integrity and inviolability of each other's territory; neither resorting to direct or indirect measures aimed against the other.
- b) To settle questions touching the common interests by friendly negotiations.
- c) To promote, as far as possible, a Turco-German economic structure. (A further treaty for the economic collaboration will be negotiated.)
- d) The Turkish and German Press and radio to bear in mind the spirit of friendship and mutual trust animating their nations.²³¹

The Turkish Press, on the other hand, continuously highlighted on the meaning of the treaty that Turkey was acting against Britain. On June 19, Atay commented on the treaty as "Turkey would remain neutral against all the prudence around; it would neither be an instrument to the hostility against Britain who is an ally, nor be a part of an operation against Germany that cannot be reconciled with friendship and alliance. The situation does not express any alteration in our national politics; rather presents a fortunate evolvement in the politics."²³² Ahmet Emin Yalman emphasized in *Vatan* that treaty was signed in compliance with Turkey's allies.²³³ Similarly, Ahmet Şükrü Esmer mentioned in *Ulus* that "Turkey is an ally to Britain and would never be an instrument to nay operation aimed at her, as well as stay as a friend of Germany and would refrain from any kind of operations among which no *de facto* controversy exists."²³⁴ Zekeriya Sertel in *Tan*, on the other hand, wrote that "Germany and Turkey had no problems with anyone in this war and be on good terms with all nations that would be friends with themselves and that have no eye on their territory."²³⁵ Abidin Daver expressed considering the treaty and the situation that Turkey was in between Britain and Germany that Turkey was both an ally to Britain and a friend

²³¹ Editorial, "Turco-German Pact: No Bar to British Tie," *Courier-Mail*, June 20, 1941., p. 2. However, other existing obligations of the two parties had not been affected.

²³² *Ulus*, June 19, 1941.

²³³ *Vatan*, June 19, 1941.

²³⁴ *Ulus*, June 19, 1941.

²³⁵ *Tan*, June 20, 1941.

of Germany.²³⁶ Yunus Nadi in *Cumhuriyet* clarified that “Turkey has a continuous determination to resist any intrusion with weapons and that Turkey was an ally to England and a friend of Germany.” He continued that “while making this treaty, we have not shifted from one block to another and that we are allies to England.” He also stated that the only difference was the gain of our realistic and totally national politics in providing German friendship.”²³⁷ Nadir Nadi in the same newspaper stated that “Turkey being the biggest, most homogeneous and dynamic state of close west and the Balkans was a state whose friendship has always been dignified in the sight of Germany. Germany was also the same from Turkey’s point of view.” He also underlined that “the Turkish-English treaty before had been aimed not to carry the war into our boundaries that this could be proclaimed for the final Turkish-German Pact.”²³⁸

Although, Turkey had informed Britain that signing of the treaty did not mean Turkey was shifting from the ally block to another, the British, however, were puzzled if Turkey was to back the other side. The British had already warned Turkey that it was dangerous to become party to any kind of agreement with Germany. The British, then were taken completely by surprise when they were informed by Turkey that already the latter had said that they would accept the new German proposal which was not merely a negative form of neutrality accord, but turned out to be actually more positive, a friendship treaty. The fact that Turkey could conclude a treaty of friendship with Britain’s enemy presented the occasion for a doubting of Turkey’s loyalty and impaired the prestige of Great Britain, especially in the world of Moslems. More and more, Turkey diverted the immediate peril towards their historic enemy, Turkey demonstrated tendency to insist that at no time did they ever regard Russia as anything but their primary enemy. Turkey realized that the campaign being waged by Germany in Russia meant for them a new dilemma. Turkey was very conscious that if the Russians were successful in driving back the attack, Russians

²³⁶ *İkdam*, June 20, 1941.

²³⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, June 20, 1941.

²³⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, June 20, 1941.

would then be able to go ahead with their own selfish policy without restraint because of any need for the consideration of the wishes of Turkey.²³⁹

On June 25, Hugessen wrote to Foreign Office:

- a) Signature of Turco-German treaty cannot be said to render Turkey immune in future either from attack or from further pressure on the part of Germany.
- b) In any eventuality there will be a drive to increase German influence and to establish a political and commercial hold over Turkey.
- c) Any cutting down of supplies which would be interpreted as a departure from our previous policy would create suspicion and friction, which would be unfortunate especially in present rather delicate circumstances.
- d) It is in our interests to avoid anything which might risk driving Turkey into the opposite camp, with consequent opening to Germany of the route to Middle East. I do not think this is a serious danger at present but for the reasons given in my immediately following telegrams, I think it cannot be entirely ignored.
- e) It remains therefore a British interest to make Turkey as strong and self-confident as possible.
- f) We have not been so insistent on safeguarding of Anglo-Turkish alliance that we cannot lay ourselves open to any accusation of not doing our part.
- g) Please repeat to Washington.²⁴⁰

²³⁹ FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part III, 201-300, “Telegram from Hugessen to Department of State,” 07 July 1941.

²⁴⁰ FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part II, 101-200, “Telegram from Hugessen to Foreign Office,” 25 June 1941. On June 11, Hugessen wrote to Mr. Nicholas that the expected treaty with Germans created restlessness on him. He added that “the Anglo-Turkish alliance would certainly go by the board rather than risk anything of this.” The Turkish Government he said, “have managed to put themselves in a pivotal position very advantageous for backing the winner, and this is what, they will

On July 19, the British Embassy in Ankara listed some specific points that the British interests in Turkey might be affected by the Turkish-German Pact:

1) Naval

- a) Presence of British advisors and material.
- b) Question of French ownership of ex-Danube craft.

2) Military

- a) Work of British Construction Parties (Kilia-Bulair Road, jetties in the Dardanelles and aerodromes in Anatolia). M. A. considers that degree of progress already affected renders possible gradual elimination of British personnel.
- b) Anglo-Turkish counter-espionage Bureau at Istanbul. (run by the Turks at the expense of H.M.G. and in the latter's interests.)
- c) Ordinary exchange of information between service Attaches and Turkish military authorities; not likely to be subject to pressure.
- d) Preferential treatment of British Service Attaches as regards access to Turkish military authorities.
- e) Transit of military personnel of countries hostile to Germany (including free French and our own escapes from Greece and Crete).
- f) British military training personnel (likely to be indispensable to Turks at present. But see III (a) below).

ultimately do quite regardless of their fundamental dislike of the Germans and their long-established policy of leaning towards us, both politically and economically.” He also stated that “You will see that I am a little shaken in my confidence, but perhaps these incidents are merely symptoms of the disease from which the Turks have been suffering since the collapse of Greece—namely fear of Germany.” There were also some strange expressions in his letter such that “*selfish politics of Turkey*” or “*he had been somewhat disillusioned lately*.” **See also FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part II, 101-200, “Hugessen to Mr. Nichols,” 11 June 1941.**

3) *Air*

- a) Training. – At present all Turkish Air Force training is in the hands of the R.A.F. through instructors in Turkey (whose removal might be demanded by the Germans) and admission of 80 Turkish Cadets to Flying Training Schools in England.
- b) A.A.'s liaison with Turkish Aviation League, which conducts preliminary training of Air Force pilots and state Airways which arranges travel facilities.
- c) Germans would probably demand either that permission should be given to Lufthansa to run service to İstanbul or Ankara²⁴¹ or that NISR service to Adana should be cancelled.

4) *Commercial*

C.C. is of the opinion that the agreement would tend to prevent Turks according to our preferential treatment in the commercial sphere, e.g. as regards U.K.C.C. purchases, imports from the U.K. etc. (There is also the specific point of chrome and other Turkish exports of value to the enemy).

5) *News and Propaganda Service*²⁴²

The position as regards this will probably be governed by the last paragraph of the M.F.A.'s and the German Ambassadors statements on the conclusion of the agreement to the effect that "we have agreed to express

²⁴¹ Hugessen never mentioned the city of Ankara as Ankara. In his telegrams or opinion papers, instead of saying Ankara, he called the city as Angora. Therefore, this document was probably prepared by a different diplomat.

²⁴² For example, the British Council in Turkey was used as a propaganda center. The British also tried to appoint the English department heads in Universities for propaganda measures. (İstanbul University, for instance) See BW 61/4, "Reports on Dundas' Visits," 1940.

the view that the press and broadcasting services of our two countries should reflect the spirit of friendship and mutual confidence which characterizes Turco-German relations.”²⁴³

The friendship treaty with Germany was a time saving armistice for Turkey and Turkey wanted to make the minimum compromise to Germany. Nazis had invaded all Europe and the Axis entered even the islands around Turkey by the end of April 1941, whereas Rommel advanced fast in North Africa. So Turkey had anticipated being the next target. Through Iraq and Iran or even Caucasus, Germany would manage to attack her in a strike. Because Turkey temporized during the negotiations about friendship agreement, she had weakened her blocking against German pressure in some ways. Moreover, Turkey faced with the crucial situation in this way, because the threatening great power located between her borders and kept her eye open for the weakest moment of the other small states in their region.²⁴⁴

9. 11. THE REFAH INCIDENT, JUNE 23, 1941

Turkey, now, was involved in a two-way conflict with the Germans and the British. While trying to cling on the British Alliance in line with the terms of Turkish-British Agreement, she signed another treaty with the Germans; a Non-Aggression Pact on June 18, 1941. This two-way policy was not favored by the British which was expecting to attract Turkey to her side. Yet, it had been previously decided and agreed by Turkish and British officials that Turkey be given submarines and war planes. To that end, an old cargo ship, ‘Refah’ was selected so as not to attract the attention of Italian submarines in the Mediterranean. The ship carried Turkish personnel who would receive training and be submitted the promised submarines and warplanes.

Refah set sail from Mersin, heading to Port said, on June 23, 1941. On its way, it was sunk on the 24th. It was never officially confirmed why, how and by whom the ship suffered

²⁴³ FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part III, 201-300, “British Interests in Turkey may be affected by the Turco-German Agreement,” 19 June 1941.

²⁴⁴ Annette Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), pp. 27-28.

such a tragedy. The rumors were many, though. It could have been due to being torpedoed by Italian submarines²⁴⁵ as it was almost a routine mission for the Italian Navy to patrol in the Mediterranean. A Turkish Naval Officer in his war memoirs accounts for avoiding Italian patrol ships off the coast of Akyarlar, Bodrum. He also told that some French warships took refuge in İskenderun Harbor and they were internalized.²⁴⁶ This event had happened a few months after the Refah incident. Naval disasters began to occur more in numbers. Just one year after the Refah incident, on July 14, 1942 the Turkish submarine, Atılay sank in the Dardanelles, hit by a drifting mine. Even though there was much upheaval about Refah, there was none about Atılay because everybody was sure of its fate although there was no evidence at the time. It was concluded that it was sunk by a drifting mine. Another incident in the same year was SS Strauma, which was carrying Jewish refugees. The ship was said to be torpedoed by a Russian submarine off the coast of Şile at a place where the Black Sea and the Marmara met.

As it is revealed, the war on land was carried to the seas, and both parties were in active involvement. The Italians, French, Germans, and the British were in the Mediterranean. Refah could have well been torpedoed by any that wanted to discredit her enemies, or force Turkey into the war: either by Italian submarines, or by the French ships that wanted to discredit Germany and Italy, putting the blame on them, and win Turkey on their side. It may even be the British showing her discomfort on the Turkish-German approachment. However, the tragedy was never clarified as to which party was responsible for it. The fact seems to be that Refah had been sunk by a drifting mine as the document on Refah, clarifies the fate of the ship. The document reads:

²⁴⁵ By 1941, the Axis powers were almost invincible under the seas. Besides Italian dominance, German power and presence was unignorable. Even, Hitler's hope of forcing Britain out of the war was constructed on his faith in submarines. He said as General Feld Marshall Fedor von Bock accounts, "British shipping losses are high; The *Führer* hopes that these can be maintained with our growing number of submarines. Together with the Luftwaffe's success against British shipping, this would stimulate England's desire for peace. See General Fedor von Bock, *The War Diary: 1939-1945* (Munich: Schiffer, 1996), p. 222.

²⁴⁶ Genelkurmay Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Başkanlığı et al., eds., *Türk Subaylarının İkinci Dünya Savaşı Hatıraları*, Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1999), pp. 66-67.

[illegible]

Name of Ship	Arr'd. at Destn.	Intermediate Movements	Anticipated Movements	Prospectus Gauge
Current Voyage & Cargo				
Year 1741.				
<i>Jan. 27th</i> <i>Jan. 28th</i> <i>Feb. 1st</i> <i>Feb. 2nd</i> <i>Feb. 3rd</i> <i>Feb. 4th</i> <i>Feb. 5th</i> <i>Feb. 6th</i> <i>Feb. 7th</i> <i>Feb. 8th</i> <i>Feb. 9th</i> <i>Feb. 10th</i> <i>Feb. 11th</i> <i>Feb. 12th</i> <i>Feb. 13th</i> <i>Feb. 14th</i> <i>Feb. 15th</i> <i>Feb. 16th</i> <i>Feb. 17th</i> <i>Feb. 18th</i> <i>Feb. 19th</i> <i>Feb. 20th</i> <i>Feb. 21th</i> <i>Feb. 22th</i> <i>Feb. 23th</i> <i>Feb. 24th</i> <i>Feb. 25th</i> <i>Feb. 26th</i> <i>Feb. 27th</i> <i>Feb. 28th</i> <i>Mar. 1st</i> <i>Mar. 2nd</i> <i>Mar. 3rd</i> <i>Mar. 4th</i> <i>Mar. 5th</i> <i>Mar. 6th</i> <i>Mar. 7th</i> <i>Mar. 8th</i> <i>Mar. 9th</i> <i>Mar. 10th</i> <i>Mar. 11th</i> <i>Mar. 12th</i> <i>Mar. 13th</i> <i>Mar. 14th</i> <i>Mar. 15th</i> <i>Mar. 16th</i> <i>Mar. 17th</i> <i>Mar. 18th</i> <i>Mar. 19th</i> <i>Mar. 20th</i> <i>Mar. 21th</i> <i>Mar. 22th</i> <i>Mar. 23th</i> <i>Mar. 24th</i> <i>Mar. 25th</i> <i>Mar. 26th</i> <i>Mar. 27th</i> <i>Mar. 28th</i> <i>Mar. 29th</i> <i>Mar. 30th</i> <i>Mar. 31st</i>				
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Sunk 24/6

Presumably torpedoed by S/M 40 miles of Mersin 23/6 2330. Sunk (28 survivors picked up). Casualty bit 324.

*Vessel was sunk by drifting mine. Not torpedoed as reported previously. Casualty bit 375.*²⁴⁷

²⁴⁷ BT/389/41, Image Reference: 248., 1941.

9. 12. INVASION OF THE SOVIET UNION: OPERATION BARBAROSSA, JUNE 22, 1941²⁴⁸

Germany, having realized that she could not deal a fatal blow at Great Britain either by invasion or starvation, found herself faced with the danger of being attacked, sooner or later, simultaneously by Britain and America from the west and by Russia from the east, and thus having a wage war on two fronts, the nightmare of the German General Staff. Hence, came the decision to forestall this danger by removing the Russian menace before Anglo-American cooperation beared its full fruits.²⁴⁹ The question now had been asking in the Turkish political circles was who would win; wishing the Germans or the Soviets? On August 18, one month later after the *Operation of Barbarossa*, Huggesen had a personal conversation with the Turkish Foreign Minister, Saraçoğlu and he made a description that Turkey's present attitude, namely she desired Germany to beat Russia and she wanted Great Britain to beat Germany. Saraçoğlu, Huggesen said, "interrupted him at once to say that this was not really true. What Turkey wanted was that Russia should be completely flattened out by Germany and Germany in the process should lose both legs and one arm and receive other damage so that she ceased to be dangerous." Huggesen, however said that supposing it was put to him one of the two most inevitably have an out and out victory he would prefer Germany to be the victor. Saraçoğlu admitted this. Continuing the discussion of the present phase of Anglo-Turkish relations, Huggesen said that he understood the Turkish position of whole policy was devoted to preserving the new Turkish Republic founded by Atatürk and to safeguard Atatürk's work. Turkey, he said, was not going to sacrifice that for anybody's *beaux yeux* but on the other hand if she was threatened with force she would fight and if there was a danger of her being undermined from within they would make concessions which threatened this vital interest.²⁵⁰ Saraçoğlu

²⁴⁸ "Turkey declared her neutrality in the face of German-Soviet War." *See also Cevat Açıkalın, "Turkey's International Relations," International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs) 23/4 (1974): p. 484.*

²⁴⁹ Editorial, "Turkey to Stay Neutral, Doorkeeper of the Straits: Anti-Russian Public," *The Times*, June 24, 1941., p. 4.

²⁵⁰ Indeed, this was the main principle of Turkish Foreign Policy in World War 2.

said that Huggesen had understood the position absolutely correctly and that this was the foundation of the whole Turkish position.²⁵¹

Map 4: German Successes, 1941



Source: Maps of World - <http://www.mapsofworld.com/>

Meanwhile, the Germans were taking the full advantage of the situation and whispering in Turkey that Molotov had demanded bases in the Straits and Russia had offered Bulgaria the Enos-Midia line as a reward for proposed Russo-Bulgarian cooperation. Moreover, after the stand taken by Great Britain in support of Russia, there was no telling what dangers might threaten Turkish security, dangers from which the only salvation was cooperation with Germany. In the view of the receptive state of Turkish minds, they had the desired effects. In spite of Soviet denials, there was no doubt that the Germans left a

²⁵¹ FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part III, 201-300, “Conversation between Huggesen and Saraçoğlu,” 09 August 1941.; See also FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part III, 201-300, “Conversation between Huggesen and Saraçoğlu,” 18 August 1941.

deep impression hoping that Turkey would react in a sense increasingly favorable to their plans.²⁵² Germany's original plans were on the following lines:

- a) After 1940's experience, when the unexpectedly rapid collapse of France found the German General Staff unprepared to launch an immediate attack against Great Britain and thus, as they thought, to terminate the war, their aim in 1941 summer was to exploit their expected victory over Russia to the limit. After annihilating the Russian armies within five or six weeks they would leave behind the Rosenberg and the Gestapo with the task of organizing the conquered territories, while the German armies would have pushed on through the Caucasus towards Iran and Iraq. From there, they might have turned towards India in conjunction with action by Japanese, but more probably would have advanced through Palestine and Syria towards Egypt, in combination with an attack from Libya.
- b) This grandiose scheme had one snag-the difficulty of providing the advancing armies with supplies along the enormously extended lines of communication through Russia and the Caucasus. This was where Turkey and Germany would have come into picture. Supplies would have been rushed across Turkey, first via the Black Sea-the Russian Navy having been put out of action by the capture of all Russian ports-and along the road running from Trabzon through Erzurum, Beyazıt and Karaköse towards northern Iran, with the Sivas-Erzurum railway line as an alternative route; then, as the German armies advanced southwards, the Turkish railway to Diyarbakır would have been used; and finally, when Syria was reached the Baghdad line would have become available.

²⁵² Editorial, "Divided Hopes in Turkey, Distrust of Soviet: Soil for German Intrigues," *The Times*, July 9, 1941., p. 3.; See also Editorial, "Nazi Policy in Turkey: Talks of Papen's Recall," *The Times*, August 19, 1941., p. 4.

- c) Germany's idea was to handle Turkey delicately, not to do anything to hurt Turkish susceptibilities, to avoid any encroachment on Turkish sovereignty, and to see to it that not a single German soldier set foot in Turkish territory.²⁵³

Press criticism for the ongoing events was in fact strident. Falih Rıfkı Atay in *Ulus* stated that *Führer* had explained the causes of war in a lengthy manifesto which proclaimed that despite the non-aggression pact, the goal of the Soviet Union had always been precautions against German safety and seeking for German weakness in order to crash in. He also stated that it had become a necessity for *Führer* to relieve his people from that threat.²⁵⁴ Concerning the German attack against the Soviet Union, it was written by Yalman that Hitler had proven to be a realistic person and that he would not be carried away by any course of actions and that with American help as he realized the Atlantic war was to take a long duration, he found it more functional to charge against the East and more interest to take on the role of bearer against Bolshevism.²⁵⁵ Yalçın, in *Yeni Sabah*, argued in his article that if Nazism had been a regime to be destroyed, Communism had equally been an authoritarian regime.²⁵⁶ F. R. Atay, in *Ulus*, wrote that it should be pointed out that the declaration about the proposals of Soviet Union concerning the Straits, for whom Turkey had done its best to give her an overall security for more than 20 years as a neighbor and friend, had aroused astonishment in this country.²⁵⁷ Referring the same issue, Yunus Nadi in *Cumhuriyet* that if Turkey had not defended Çanakkale (Dardanelles) in the previous public war in the best way, the Tsarism had not been collapsed and the Russian Revolution had not come into being. He added that at least this memory should be respected.²⁵⁸

²⁵³ Editorial, "German Designs on Turkey, Enforced Change of Plan: Papen's Health," *The Times*, September 2, 1941., p. 4.

²⁵⁴ *Ulus*, June 23, 1941.

²⁵⁵ *Vatan*, June 23, 1941.

²⁵⁶ *Yeni Sabah*, June 25, 1941.

²⁵⁷ *Ulus*, June 23, 1941.

²⁵⁸ *Cumhuriyet*, June 23, 1941.

9. 13. THE DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVE BY THE ALLIES: THE JOINT ANGLO-RUSSIAN DECLARATION OVER THE CONVENTION OF MONTREUX, AUGUST 12, 1941²⁵⁹

In negotiating the Turkish-German Non-Aggression Pact of June 18, 1941, made necessary by the desire of Germans to reassure Turkey that following their victorious campaigns in Yugoslavia and Greece, “they would not, themselves, attempt to seize the Straits, the Germans again exploited Turkish fears of Russia assuring Turkey that in return for co-operation in the transport of German war material to Iraq and Syria by way of Anatolia and assurances that Turkey would interpret the Montreux Convention in a sense favorable to Germany, they would guarantee Turkey’s independence and its security in the area of the Straits. At the same time, it was suggested that in any peace treaty drawn up at the end of the war, Germany might secure for Turkey a favorable revision of the Montreux Convention. The German invasion of Russia which took place just two days after the conclusion of the treaty and the German plans, mentioned above, led predictably to substantial changes in Russia’s attitude to Turkey and the Straits.”²⁶⁰

On August 12, Great Britain and Russia confirmed their joint disclaimer of any aggressive intentions or claims upon the Straits and their undertaking to observe the territorial integrity of the Turkish Republic²⁶¹; and last their offer of “every help and assistance” to

²⁵⁹ Selim Deringil had given the date as August 11 and no reference had been given. It was however in the *Times* given the date as August 12. In the Turkish chronology site of Turkey, the date was given as August 14. In the site of Ibiblio, the date was given as August 12. In many of the sources, the actual date was unclear.

²⁶⁰ A. L. Macfie, “The Turkish Straits in the Second World War, 1939-45,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 25/2 (1989): p. 243.

²⁶¹ The British Foreign Minister Eden had also made a statement in the House of Commons in early August (published in Turkey, 7th), dissipating all the apprehension felt as to the possibility of any secret agreements between Britain and Russia in regard to Turkey. The semi-official *Ulus*, for instance, stated that “Turkish people have never considered even as a remote possibility that Britain could act against Turkish interests, nor has the slightest credence ever been given in Turkey to rumors tending to sow doubt in the matter.” **See FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part III, 201-300, “Times article and the speech of Eden in the House of Commons,” 09 August 1941.** On 1st of August, The *Times* had published an article on the subject of the future organization of Europe. The article amounted to a repetition of the Axis plan except that, in case of the Axis, the organization was to be in German hands whereas Britain intend to hand it over to Russia. Turkey would have Russian instead of German domination. Article went on to point out, loyalty and support given by Turkey to Great Britain in the recent past. It spoke of the “slavery” which Russian direction would impose on Eastern Europe. In WWI, Turkey joined Germany for the very purpose of avoiding subjugation to Russia etc., etc. **FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part**

Turkey should she be attacked by a European Power – which were the three main heads of the joint Anglo-Russian declaration; published in London and Moscow. Indeed, the joint declaration met the situation created by the German attack on Soviet Union. It guaranteed Turkey, if she would stay as a friend of allies, she would be protected against the risk of her independence and territorial integrity. It also guaranteed Turkey against another danger that she had signed a pact of neutrality with Germany.²⁶²

9. 14. THE ANGLO-SOVIET INVASION OF IRAN, AUGUST 25, 1941

Over a century, Iran had been dominated by Britain and Russia and had been influenced from these countries differently and so divided into two spheres of influence. It was now in 1941, Iran was getting rid of these spheres of Britain and Russia, but this was doubtful for Iran that was actually only beneficial supply route for British and American supplies to the Soviets.²⁶³ Therefore, according to the British and the Russians, invading Iran to overthrow a government which was a possible pro-German sympathizer and to protect a crucial supply line for the Soviet military effort, was important. Just before the assault, on August 1941, although then-neutral US was requested to protect the control, Teheran was clearly alerted by Washington about the hazardous of being in a connection with Germany. Halifax guaranteed publicly that nothing had been demanded from Iran in terms of its territory by London and said: “We have no design nor have our Russian allies any design

III, 201-300, “Hugessen to Eden,” 04 August 1941. The Turkish officials were seriously disappointed and hoped that the views expressed by *Times* were not those of the British Government. Eden’s optimistic statement was made just after the criticisms of *Times* and appreciated by Turkish officials. **FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part III, 201-300, “Minutes: Conversation between Hugessen and General Celal Yakal,” 06 August 1941.** Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, referring to the *Times* criticism, pointed out that if Germany had spent millions, she could not have done Great Britain more moral and material damage than this *Times* article. **See FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part III, (201-300, “Hugessen to Foreign Office,” 04 August 1941.** On August 6th, The *Times* had published Yalçın’s article followed by a note by their diplomatic correspondent calling attention to special position held by Turkey. **See also, FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part III, 201-300, “Eden to Hugessen,” 07 August 1941.** As a consequence, The British made great effort to correct the “miscount” of *Times*.

²⁶² Editorial, “Britain, Turkey and Russia,” *The Times*, August 14, 1941., p. 4.

²⁶³ Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 126.

to annex any part of the areas which our forces have now occupied.” He also added: “We are not going to repeat the mistakes of past policy in this respect.”²⁶⁴

On August 25, the British Ambassador Huggesen and the Soviet Ambassador M. Vinogradov met with the Turkish Foreign Minister Saraçoğlu and informed him of the entry of British and Russian forces into Iran, assured him that they had no designs on Iranian territory, that the occupation of Iran would be temporary and that Turkish interests would be unaffected. Turkey, on the other hand, who heaved a deep sigh of relief when the affairs of Iraq and Syria were liquidated, were confronted now with more serious trouble arising all along the eastern frontier and they did not like at all.²⁶⁵ It was however, Turkey seemed watchful and almost sensitive on the issue. The Turkish authorities had expressed apprehension regarding the reaction in the Moslem world.

By December, an Iranian-British treaty had been drawn up. Article 5 stated:

The forces of the Allied powers shall be withdrawn from Iranian territory not later than six months after all hostilities between the Allied powers and Germany and her associates have been suspended.²⁶⁶

9. 15. GERMAN ECONOMIC PRESSURE TO TURKEY AND BRITISH COUNTERPRESSURE

The sudden German attack to Soviets created strategic material needs for the Germans. After the Turkish-Nazi Pact, Germany pressed Turkey for large quantities of the chrome which had earlier been denied despite the offer of very high prices. Besides securing further commercial agreement and while Numan Menemencioğlu, the Secretary General of the Foreign Ministry, had assured both the Americans and the British that Turkey would

²⁶⁴ Barry Rubin, *The Great Powers in the Middle East, 1941-1947: The Road to the Cold War*, (London: Frank Cass, 1980), pp. 73-74.

²⁶⁵ Editorial, “Turkey Remains Neutral, Assurances by the Allies: No Designs on Iran,” *The Times*, 27 August, 1941., p. 4.

²⁶⁶ Barry Rubin, *The Great Powers in the Middle East, 1941-1947: The Road to the Cold War*, (London: Frank Cass, 1980), pp. 74-75.

refuse to sell chrome to Germany in the future,²⁶⁷ the Germans eventually got the promise in October 1941, of a certain amount of chrome, to be delivered in 1943 and 1944. They also guaranteed the assurance of half of the total production of chrome in the next September. For this, they were to exchange arms, in addition to the war material arranged for in the earlier agreement. From the date of the agreement, only for one year Turkey kept her promise about selling chromes to the Germans when agreement with the British would not restrain Turkey. A fraction of the amount of chrome that the Germans looked forward was not supplied till the prior collection of war material and delivery in both sides had to boulder the control of the Germans. Balanced value was to be provided for all exchanges and Turkey remained her refusal to constitute an effect in Germany. Because supplying necessary materials for German production was the only way for Turkey to get war material from her, it could be announced to the British that her commercial privileges were essential to get what the allies wanted Turkey to have but could not stint.²⁶⁸

On December 9, 1941, Turkey and Germany had finalized the Chrome Agreement which involved selling of a maximum of 90.000 tons of chrome to Germany by Turkey in 1943, and 45.000 tons in 1944 in exchange for outstanding amount of military equipment. Kroll, the first secretary of the German Embassy in Ankara, reported to Berlin after the agreement had come to a conclusion that:

In almost six years of working with Turks, I have found that they are skillful enough to find a loophole in any treaty instrument. Although for propaganda purposes, the agreement should be played

²⁶⁷ This would be in exchange for war material furnished by Germany under trade agreement signed on September 6. In fact, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs had been informing the British Embassy about the trade agreement negotiations from the first day and American Ambassador MacMurray was in turn informed by the British. *See also* Gül İnanc, "The Politics of 'Active Neutrality' on the Eve of a New World Order: The Case of Turkish Chrome Sales during the Second World War," *Middle Eastern Studies* 42/6 (2006): p. 909.

²⁶⁸ Annette Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), pp. 29-31.

up, it was a failure in real terms as the Turks had made no attempt to find such a loophole in their contract with Britain.²⁶⁹

Almost life and death struggle located between two great powers wanting to be the ally of Turkey during this period, though the stillness of the war. By great mobilization, the impression that requests of Germany would be guaranteed at minimum cost through commercial exchange was grasped from Turkey.²⁷⁰ And for Britain's demands, Turkey had found some ways of ensuring its survival both politically and economically.

²⁶⁹ Gül İnanc, "The Politics of 'Active Neutrality' on the Eve of a New World Order: The Case of Turkish Chrome Sales during the Second World War," *Middle Eastern Studies* 42/6 (2006): p. 910. It was however from 1939 to 1941, Turkish exports to Britain had risen from 2.000.000 £ to 35.000.000 £ while the British exports to Turkey during the first eight years of 1941 amounted 3.600.000 £. *See also Editorial, "British Trade with Turkey, Enormous Growth in Three Years," The Times, September 20, 1941., p. 3.*

²⁷⁰ Annette Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 32. Lord Carlisle, head of United Kingdom Commercial Corporation in Turkey, for instance, informed the Foreign Office that in October, approximately 16.000 tons of goods had left Turkey for Germany via Burgas and Varna in small motor-vessels and caiques. This tonnage was run by 180 to 190 small ships, % 98 of which were owned by Turkey. Of these 150 had been chartered by German forwarding agents, Schenker and Company, at high rate up to 40 liras for the short voyage. **FO 954/28, Microfilm Collection, Document Number: N. A., The document was between the documents of 49 and 183, "From Cairo to Foreign Office," 16 November 1941.**

10. MAINTENANCE OF INDEPENDENCE, 1942

The Turkish standpoint as it was declared at Anglo-Turkish conversations on February 27, 1941 during the Secretary of State's visit was that in the circumstances of the time Turkey was not in a position to go to war owing her lack of Air Force and motorized units. Turkish politicians thought that it was better for Turkey to stay defensive.²⁷¹ President İnönü, while opening the third session of the sixth Grand National Assembly on November 1, 1941, revived the whole field of Turkish foreign and internal policy and referred only the two countries by name-Great Britain and Germany and said that Turkey was determined to remain loyal to and adhere to, her alliance with Great Britain and at the same time, to remain in friendly relations with Germany. This part of his speech was more or less a repetition of what was said when the Turkish-German Pact was signed on June, 1941.²⁷² Indeed, "the same policy had continued in 1942, as the war waged all over the world after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the German penetration deep into the Soviet Union."²⁷³ Speaking of the country's foreign policy, Saraçoğlu²⁷⁴ said on August 5, 1942:

Let us be ever watchful in making efforts to keep our country out of the war. Our hope in continuing this grand task to the end has not lessened. But if, in spite of all our care and all our vigilance, our independence or our territory should one day be attacked, our whole existence would be at the service of this ideal: "Fight to the last man." It is for this reason that we keep our army always strong and ready. It can be best described as one of continuity and stability. Turkey has sought no adventures beyond her frontiers. She will continue to seek the means of remaining outside the war;

²⁷¹ FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part III, 201-300, "Appreciation of Present Turkish Position," 20 August 1941.

²⁷² Editorial, "No Yielding by Turkey, President's Firm Statement," *The Times*, November 3, 1941, p. 3.

²⁷³ Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 133.

²⁷⁴ With a sudden death of Prime Minister Refik Saydam on July 7, 1942, the duty to form the new Government was given to Şükrü Saraçoğlu on July 9, 1942. He then became the Prime Minister of Turkey on August 1942. Numan Menemencioğlu, the Secretary of the Foreign Minister, then became, the new Foreign Minister of Turkey.

and in confident and active neutrality she has so far found them. Our treaty of alliance with Great Britain continues to show its results in the interests of both parties. The Anglo-Turkish alliance is the expression of reality itself and constitutes a fundamental factor of the political system which I have just set forth. Another clear and loyal demonstration of this policy is shown in the German-Turkish Pact, which reaffirmed the mutual understanding and friendship existing between the two countries. We have contractual or actual relations with States in both the opposing camps. Our attitude will be equally friendly and loyal towards these States. To reply to friendship with friendship, imbued with unlimited good will, and to meet unfriendliness with energetic response and unshakable courage-this is the final definition of the foreign policy of our Government. To live a strong entity, on which we are concentrating all our care and all our attention, to see our army grow stronger every day, will remain an aim for us and a programme for your Government. Faced with the scourge which has been flaying and ruining the world for the past three years, Turkey could not and cannot in the future safeguard her position by a passive neutrality. Turkish neutrality is the outcome of a system of general policy which is clear and reassuringly simple in every respect.²⁷⁵

It was very clear that İnönü and Saraçoğlu were against the idea that found Turkey militarily not ready for fighting. Their anxieties as they declared were towards strength of Germany to give great damage to Turkey, albeit her vital defeats. Moreover, the main Turkish apprehension was about Germans' withdrawal from the Balkans, because when

²⁷⁵ Editorial, "Turkey and the War, Maintenance of Independence: Fight to the Last Man," *The Times*, August 6, 1942., p. 3.

this withdrawal occurred, the Soviets would invade the region including the Turkish Straits as “liberator” or by an act of aggression.²⁷⁶

10. 1. THE CAUCASUS PROBLEM: SOVIET WORRY

Although, Germany had been forced to give up her plans to obtain a decisive victory over the Red Armies, she would make a dash for the Caucasus. Furthermore, if she had succeeded in reaching the Caucasus, she would try to sweep southwards through Persia and Iraq towards the Persian Gulf which was also practically certain and if this daring plan succeeded, the Germans would be in a position to threaten India in co-operation with the Japanese and at the same time menace the Arab countries.²⁷⁷ The tremendous preparations being made by the Germans were severely threatening Britain’s Near East and Middle East policy.



Photos: Hitler's mind was set to capture Baku's oil. Even the date of attack was scheduled (September 25, 1942). Anticipating a forthcoming victory, Hitler's generals presented him with a cake of the region - Baku and the Caspian Sea.

Delighted, Hitler chose the best piece for himself - Baku. Fortunately, the attack never occurred, and German forces were defeated before they ever reached Azerbaijan.



Source: Photos from the documentary film are courtesy of the National Archives, London: Film Division.

²⁷⁶ Mustafa Sıtkı Bilgin and Steven Morewood, “Turkey’s Reliance on Britain: British Political and Diplomatic Support for Turkey against Soviet Demands, 1943-47,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 40/2 (2004): p. 28.

²⁷⁷ Editorial, “Turkey and the War, Shadow of Japanese Imperialism: The German Menace,” *The Times*, February 26, 1942., p. 3.

The question for Turkey, however, was the German advance towards the last remaining Russian Black Sea ports that raised the question of the position of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet if all the naval bases were lost. Under the Montreux Straits Convention belligerent warships were debarred from passing through the Straits unless Turkey was belligerent, when the passage of warships were left entirely to the discretion of the Turkish Government. Her neutrality was the cardinal point of Turkey's foreign policy, also affirmed by Saraçoğlu in his speech of August 5, and there was no likelihood whatever of her departing from it unless a direct attack was made on her territory. She was also the zealous guardian of the Straits and was not likely to depart from a strict adherence to the Montreux Convention, which she fought so hard to obtain and which remained, like her neutrality, a prime factor of her foreign policy.²⁷⁸ The issue was also a serious matter for the British. On September 28, the British Foreign Minister Eden wrote to Sir A. Clark Kerr (Moscow) as:

- 1) We have been considering position of Russian Black Sea warships and merchant ships in the event of loss of Black Sea Ports.
- 2) Tankers – Important Russian tanker fleet would be a great value to United Nations but in the view of present situation over the Second front, it may be inadvisable to press Soviet authorities at this stage to pass their ships out into the Mediterranean. If circumstances arise where tankers are no longer of any use in Black Sea or you suppose that the Soviet Government will wish to pass any of these tankers into the Mediterranean for use of Northern waters, we shall be glad to make arrangements on similar lines to those of last autumn and to give them every assistance in our power. The same, of course, applies to other Russian merchant vessels in the Black Sea.
- 3) Operations of last year were facilitated by the discharge of oil at Istanbul for the Turks. Promise of similar transfer of oil might have

²⁷⁸ D. K., "Turkey Since 1940," *Bulletin of International News* 19/18 (1942): p. 785.

important effect on Turkish attitude, particularly in the case of oilers of doubtful status.

- 4) Turks have no right whatever to interfere with passage of merchant ships through the Straits but Admiral Kelly has reported that they may open fire on tankers that approach the Bosphorus without first removing their defensive armament. This attitude is intelligible for Fleet oilers but in the past Turks have always permitted genuine merchant ships to retain defensive equipment. Since retention of defensive armament is essential for passage through the Aegean, we would if Russians desire, represent to Turks the right of merchant ships to retain it.
- 5) Warships have no legal right to pass through the Straits and Admiral Kelly reports that they will not be allowed to proceed even as far as the Sea of Marmora for internment without first growing to Eregli to be disarmed and to pick up Turkish naval escort. Attempt by surface warships to force passage of Straits would almost certainly be resisted by Turks. Hostilities between Turkey and Russia which would probably result in such an attempt would have incalculable consequences, greatly outweighing advantages of passing a few vessels through to safety. We therefore much hope Soviet authorities would not contemplate it. The course least likely to lead to subsequent complications would be that the Soviet warships should be sunk in deep water. The alternative would be that they should be interned into Turkish ports until Turkey abandons her present neutral position. This would have the attraction of saving the fleet for possible use at a later date on the side of the Allies. But there is a danger that meanwhile the presence of the fleet in Turkish ports might lead to dangerous complications between Turkey and Germany. There is also the

possibility that in that case the Germans might use such pressure as to force Turkey to surrender the ships to Germany.

- 6) The following suggestion has, however, occurred to us: We are at present under obligations to deliver to Turkey towards the end of the year two Fleet destroyers and two submarines. It is conceivable that if the Russians agreed to transfer to the Turks, either before or after internment, a sufficiently attractive number of new destroyers, submarines or even a cruiser, the Turks might be ready to release us from our obligations. We in turn would transfer to the Russians for their Northern Fleet the two new destroyers and submarines at present destined for Turkey. The advantage of a sale before internment would be that the crews might be saved from internment and if necessary passed out into the Mediterranean in a Russian merchant ship to assist in manning the ships that we transfer to the Northern Fleet.
- 7) We realize that the Turks would be afraid of German reactions if they entered into such bargain. But they might be tempted to do so if the offer of Russian ships were sufficiently generous and if they felt certain that the only part of the bargain that the Germans need know was the sale of Russian ships to Turkey and not to transfer to the Russians of the ships which are under contract to give to the Turks.²⁷⁹

The third surprising incident was that the British and the Soviets had signed the Mutual Assistance Agreement on May 26, 1942 that imperatively made Turkey to think that for the future of Turkey, a secret agreement might also be signed. And ultimately, a possible

²⁷⁹ CAB 66/29/15, "Soviet Warships and Merchant Ships in the Black Sea," 28 September 1942., p. 48-(4).

domination of the Soviets in Eastern Europe made Turkey fear after the United States came into war as a complete warrior and joined Britain to support the Soviets.²⁸⁰

10. 2. SOVIET WORRY TURNED TO *PAN-TURKIST* DREAM

Hitler said more than once that without the Caucasian oil the war would be lost. In fact, the Baku oil had already been exported to Germany. Sixteen million barrels of oil were delivered to the Germans by the Soviets between January 1940 and June 1941. Although Stalin was not willing to, the Germans had desired to share in the usage of Soviet oil. In 1940, the French recognized that Baku could only be hit by aerial attack with the help of Turkish airspace. However, because Turkey was against the idea of making her airspace used and in addition to this German gained success in Norway and this caused some consequences, efficient regard of the project for an assault on Caucasian oilfields was ignored.²⁸¹

Map 5: From Berlin to Baku



Source: The War Illustrated, Vol. 5, no. 109, October 20, 1941, p. 195.

²⁸⁰ Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 137.

²⁸¹ Murat Metin Hakkı, "Surviving the Pressure of the Superpowers: An Analysis of Turkish Neutrality During the Second World War," *An Electronic History Journal* 3 (2007): p. 51.

It was now in 1942 that Germany would have been able to go ahead with her strategic plans as a step toward world domination by also reaching to Persian-Arab expanse in the Near and Middle East. Firstly, the Caucasus had to be obtained. Secondly, Central Asia would be on the list which would lead the way to India, being the object of the third step. So, the German Army would be able to reach Burma and join the Japanese Army. Meanwhile, the *Pan-Turk* publications in Turkey increased their aggressiveness following the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union and also caused its intensity to rise in line with the German victories, together with a significant increase in anti-Russian ideology. It was believed that in a short time the view of *Pan-Turkism* would soon materialize with the help of the certainly impending defeat and division of the Soviet Union. Avoiding the Turkish Government's denied policy of neutrality, *Pan-Turk* publications stated daring request for Turkey's joining the war (clearly against the Soviet Union), not always obviously, but certainly enough-as sharp for President İsmet İnönü to come to aid of Turkey in the Soviet Union. So after the German assault to the Soviet Union, one issue of *Bozkurt* both carried a map of the Turks living in Turkey and Central Asia on its cover.²⁸²

Map 6: The *Pan-Turkist* Map



Source: Jacob M. Landau, *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Cooperation*, (London: C. Hurst, 1995), p. 3.

²⁸² Jacob M. Landau, *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Cooperation*, (London: C. Hurst, 1995), p. 112.

Accordingly, a series of unofficial and semi-official meetings were arranged in Berlin and Ankara during the second half of 1941 and early months of 1942. The major participants were the German Ambassador to Ankara, Franz von Papen, and several officials of the German Foreign Office; and on the Turkish side, General H. Emir Erkilet who was Tatar origin and a regular contributor to *Pan-Turk* journals such as *Çınaraltı*; another one was General Ali Fuad Erdem; and Nuri Paşa, the brother of Enver Paşa, a charming figure for *Pan-Turkists*. While General Erkilet discussed military contingencies with the Germans, he made a visit to the Eastern front in 1941 (about these experiences he wrote a book, *Şark Cephesinde Gördüklerim*—What I saw on the Eastern front), Nuri Paşa, additionally, suggested the Germans his plans about building free countries – allies but not satellites of Turkey – out of the Turkic populations in the Crimea, Azerbaijan, Turkestan, northwestern Iran and northern Iraq. Nuri Paşa suggested making a contribution to this effect with propaganda activities. Furthermore, various senior officials working in the German Propaganda Office, especially von Henting, were excited about the probability of *Pan-Turk* propaganda in the Soviet Union and so made tangible arrangements for this, whereas others “toyed with the idea of using the *Pan-Turks* to recruit fighting units from among the Turkic prisoners of war in German camps, then numbering about 55.000, a proposal later put into practice.” Although Turkish Government knew many of these actions unofficially, she preferred to stay still.²⁸³

It was rumored, however, that the time it was declared by Berlin that Stalingrad had been captured, Turkey would implement her plan of declaring war against the Soviet Union on November 1942. It was asserted that Turkey and Germany had come up to an agreement proclaiming that Turkey would suppress the Caucasus through the uplands of Iran towards Baku. Then, when it was accomplished, what Turkey planned was to constitute a Caucasian state under its own safeguarding and the protectorate of Germany. These rumors might be real in a sense that Papen informed German Foreign Minister Ribbentrop: “As for the Eastern Turkic peoples, besides Azerbaijan, that is, the Volga Turks, Tatars, Turkmen, etc., today the Turkish political circles intend to unite these Turks into their own and seemingly independent East Turkic state in which the Western Turks into their own and

²⁸³ Ibid., pp. 112-114.

seemingly independent East Turkic state in which the Western Turks will play the decisive political and cultural role of advisors.”²⁸⁴ Indeed, von Papen said “I think open *Pan-Turk* propaganda that Berlin does, might upset the Turkish Government” and added to his words that Saraçoğlu told him that because Turkey scared Soviets to retaliate against the Turkish minorities living in Soviet Russia, Turkey could not join Germany till the Soviet Union were completely collapsed by Germany. Although the Chief of Staff, Fevzi Çakmak seemed to be dominant about some of his ideas in the negotiations, Turkey denied to be gotten in openly.²⁸⁵

In the meantime, the British were trying to convince the Turks and that there was no reason to fear from the Soviets. When the Turkish Ambassador in London, Rauf Orbay, came to visit the British Foreign Minister, Eden, Orbay asked Eden to speak about the policies of Soviet Union. Eden, made a brief statement that Turkey should really drive the Russian suspicions and fear from her mind. He stated that Russia was now at the grips with Germany and all the belligerent countries would have had enough of that when the war was over. He added that Britain was now Russia’s ally for twenty years, Turkey’s apprehensions had less justification than ever. Rauf Orbay seemed to some extent reassure but refused to be wholly comforted. He said: “We have absolute faith in Britain but we have not the same confidence about Russia.”²⁸⁶

Both Germany and Britain kept Turkey under pressure, but one can say that Turkish officials stuck their greatest hopes to lands that would have been possible to acquire and so made Germans defeat the Stalingrad and invade Caucasus. Nevertheless, the Turkish Government did not bare any vital irredentist plans for her part.²⁸⁷ Besides, the Stalingrad

²⁸⁴ Parvin Darabadi, “The Caucasus and the Caspian in the Great Geostrategic Game on the Eve of and During World War II: Geohistorical Essay” (International Conference of Conflicts in the Caucasus: History, The Present and Prospects for Resolution, Baku, Azerbaijan, October 22-23, 2012). (Also available on the http://www.ca-c.org/c-g/2008/journal_eng/c-g-1/15.shtml)

²⁸⁵ Jacob M. Landau, *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Cooperation*, (London: C. Hurst, 1995), p. 114.

²⁸⁶ FO 954/28, Microfilm Collection, Document Number: 203, “Eden to Hugessen,” 04 June 1942.

²⁸⁷ Jacob M. Landau, *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Cooperation*, (London: C. Hurst, 1995), p. 115. “The crucial exception was the *Varlık Vergisi* which was levied by the Turkish Grand National Assembly on November 11, 1942. This tax was designed to force those individuals who were amassing large fortunes on account of the war to pay taxes commensurate with their returns. It was also presumably designed to withdraw large amounts of money from circulation as a deflationary device. Prime Minister Saraçoğlu told the member of the Grand National Assembly that it was a tax designed to bear down on “people who had

Battle of summer and fall 1942 compelled Germany to ease their offensive over the Caucasus. The German Army removed a high number of its military units to Stalingrad as it was argued by General Alfred Jodl that “the future of the Caucasus will be decided at Stalingrad.”²⁸⁸ Till it was highly apparent that Germany was on the close edge of a defeat, Turkey would obtain its neutrality.

10. 3. SUCCESSES OF THE ALLIES AND BRITISH PRESSURE TO TURKEY

“The successful British counter-offensive at El Alamein in October 1942 and the successful Soviet counter-offensive at Stalingrad in November brought increased pressure to bear on Turkey. Now more than ever Turkey became a potential tool for shortening the war.”²⁸⁹ On November 25, the War Cabinet advised the British Government:

- 1) A supreme and prolonged effort must be made to bring Turkey into the war in the spring. We must expect that our naval forces and

earned a lot of money during the war,” such as merchants and property owners. He further explained that assessments would be made by local committees from which there could be no appeal except through the Assembly and that this would help to meet swollen government expenditures. However, the law occasioned strong protests. During the actual debate in the Assembly, when it was passed, objections to the *Varlık Vergisi* were raised on the grounds that it was contrary to principles of law. Nadir Nadi, for instance, had written: “according to a more specific explanation, which was whispered from ear to ear, or even at times declared out loud, a second objective of the tax was to free the market from the control of the minorities and open it to Turks.” Thus, he notes: “Our Jewish, Greek Orthodox and Catholic citizens who were proud of being Turkish citizens had to sell their property and wealth for nothing...” See Edward Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1943-1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), pp. 231-232.; Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık. Neşriyat ve Müdevvenat Genel Müdürlüğü (Office of the Prime Minister of the Turkish Republic. General Directorate of Press and Publications), *Düstur, Üçüncü Tertip* (Third Format), Vol. XXIV (Codes of Law, Third Format), 1942, p. 9.; Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık. Neşriyat ve Müdevvenat Genel Müdürlüğü (Office of the Prime Minister of the Turkish Republic. General Directorate of Press and Publications), *Resmi Gazete* (Official Record), No. 5255, Devlet Matbaası, Ankara, 11 November 1942.; T.B.M.M. *Zabıt Ceridesi* (Tutanak Dergisi) (The Proceedings of the Turkish Grand Assembly), Devre VI (Sixth Assembly), Third Session, Vol. 28, 11 November 1942, pp. 14-32.; Nadir Nadi, *Perde Aralığından* (İstanbul: Cumhuriyet Yayınları, 1964), p. 178.; Geoffrey Lewis, *Turkey* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1960), p. 117. For a detailed theoretical analysis concerning the human rights abuses of the period, see also Şakir Dinçşahin and Stephen R. Goodwin, “Towards an Encompassing Perspective on Nationalism: The Case of Jews in Turkey during the Second World War, 1939-45,” *Nations and Nationalism* 17/4 (2011): pp. 843-862.

²⁸⁸ Parvin Darabadi, “The Caucasus and the Caspian in the Great Geostrategic Game on the Eve of and During World War II: Geohistorical Essay” (International Conference of Conflicts in the Caucasus: History, The Present and Prospects for Resolution, Baku, Azerbaijan, October 22-23, 2012). (Also available on the http://www.ca-c.org/c-g/2008/journal_eng/c-g-1/15.shtml)

²⁸⁹ Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 141.

shipping, landing craft, etc., will be fully engaged in the Central Mediterranean, and that only minor amphibious facilities will be available in the Levant. Access can, however, be had to Turkey by the railways through Syria as well as by coastal shipping, and by a gradual build-up of Air protection, not only Adalia, but the Dardanelles itself, might become open to supplies for Turkey. Troops can move by rail and road from Syria. I wish to record my opinion that Turkey may be won if the proper measures are taken. Turkey is an Ally. She will wish to have a seat among the victors at the Peace Conference. She has a great desire to be well armed. Her Army is in good order except for the specialized modern weapons, in which the Bulgarians have been given so great an advantage by the Germans. The Turkish Army has been mobilized for nearly three years and is warlike. Hitherto Turkey has been restrained by fear from fulfilling her obligations and we have taken an indulgent view of her policy on account of our own inability to help. The situation has now changed. By the destruction of Rommel's Army, large forces may presently become available in Egypt and Cyrenaica. By a strengthened Russian resistance and a possible counterstroke in the Caucasus, which we should urge upon the Russians with all emphasis, great easement will be secured in Persia and the Tenth Army may be drawn upon. This is also the Ninth Army in Syria. From all these sources, it should be possible, on the assumption of the Russians maintaining themselves in the Caucasus, north of the mountain line, and holding the Caspian, to build up a powerful British land and air force to assist the Turks. A target date for the consideration should be April or May.

- 2) The following is the order of procedure, political and military: -
 - a) Turkey should be offered a Russian- American-British guarantee of territorial integrity and *status quo*. The

Russians have already agreed with us upon this. The addition of the United States would probably be a decisive reassurance. This should be followed by the dispatch to Turkey of a strong Anglo-American Military Mission.

- b) All through the winter from now on, Turkey must be equipped from Egypt and from the United States with tanks, A/T and A.A. guns, and active construction of airfields must be undertaken. We have been working upon airfield construction in Turkey for two years. What progress has been made so far? Now that Rommel has been beaten, there is evidently a surplus of material in Egypt. We had over 2500 tanks at the disposal of the Middle East Army. Much enemy material has been captured, both German and Italian. This is also true of A/T and A.A. guns. Experts must be provided to assist the Turks in learning to use and maintain this material. A ceaseless flow of weapons and equipment must go into Turkey. We have already promised a consignment but the moment Turkey agrees secretly with the plan above, far greater quantities must be sent. What is the capacity of the railways from Syria to the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles? It would seem a great mistake to attack Rhodes and other islands in enemy hands in the Eastern Mediterranean until we have got Turkey on our side. Any attacks can then be supported by land and sea, building up our Air as we go.
- c) In conjunction with the above, we should urge the Russians to develop their strength on their southern

flank, to try to clear the Caucasus, to regain Novorossiysk and, above all, to resume at the earliest date their intentions explained to me by Premier Stalin, of striking south-west from the region north of Stalingrad towards Rostov on the Don. An ultimate result of these operations, if successful, would be the opening of the Dardanelles under heavy air protection, to the passage of supplies to Russian Black Sea ports, and to any naval assistance the Russians might require in the Black Sea.

- d) Lastly, all being well we should assemble in Syria the British and Imperial forces mentioned in preceding paragraphs.²⁹⁰

Because block of the Axis' way to the Middle East could not be claimed by Turkey, she found herself in a very sharp position. For this difficult situation, Turkey underlined her shortage of all essential war material and insisted that Germans might want to lash out against England with a great victory, their idea being that for such an assault the ideal target was Turkey.²⁹¹

²⁹⁰ CAB 66/31/23, "War Cabinet: Plans and Operations in the Mediterranean, Middle East and Near East," 25 November 1942., pp. 141 (4)-142.

²⁹¹ Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 141. It was, however, Turkey still wishing to balance the pressure coming from the both sides. On December 31, 1942, an agreement with Germany was signed in Berlin concerning the war material which would be delivered by Germany to Turkey under the credit for 100.000.000 Reichmarks. Indeed, the history of the credit was an old one. Originally, it was granted to Turkey in 1939 in order to counterbalance the industrial credits given by Britain in 1938. However, because of the Anglo-Turkish Alliance and the start of the war, the Germans let it lapse till Papen came forward with a proposal to renew it, obviously with the intention of neutralizing the effects of the deliveries made to Turkey by Britain and America. *See also* Editorial, "Arms for Turkey: German Promises Renewed," *The Times*, January 4, 1942., p. 3.

CHAPTER V: THE THIRD PHASE OF THE RELATIONS IN WORLD WAR TWO (1943 – 1945)

11. NO EASY POLICY, 1943

The defeat of Rommel's forces in North Africa and the breaking of the siege at Stalingrad were the two events that harbingered Allied victory at the end of 1942 and during the beginning of 1943. By mid-January 1943, Anglo-American victory seemed to be guaranteed in North Africa whereas Russian forces had achieved to pin General von Paulus' army down along the Don River in the East and advanced for the final attack. The leaders of Allied Forces who had faced with positive progresses determined to meet in Casablanca, but Stalin informed that because of mighty battle with Hitler's Sixth Army, he could not be in Casablanca, with a letter of apology. Particularly for Churchill, this progress was a golden chance to negotiate the future with Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the US President.²⁹²

11. 1. THE CASABLANCA CONFERENCE, JANUARY 12-25, 1943

The future oriented meeting that was wanted to be sped up by Churchill was held in Anfa, Casablanca. Compelling Turkey to get into the war, particularly in order to protect the Mediterranean and Turkey to be assaulted by the Fascist Mussolini was one of the aims of Churchill. But the Americans, particularly General Marshall strongly did not want Turkey to enter the war and a war in the Mediterranean, because he thought that this converted the war to a never ending war in a new front. Compelling Turkey to get into the war actively was what Churchill had all the time persisted and he frequently told about the British assertion for "primacy in Turkey, [also adding that] ...most of the troops which would be involved in reinforcing Turkey would be British."²⁹³ He had declared his intention openly in a note which he had sent to British Army Headquarters on November 18, 1942, stating

²⁹² Edward Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1943-1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 119.

²⁹³ Barry Rubin, *The Great Powers in the Middle East, 1941-1947: The Road to the Cold War*, (London: Frank Cass, 1980), p. 113.

that “every effort had to be put into it.”²⁹⁴ Similarly, he did not intend to take a step back. Moreover, he had come to Casablanca having prepared for his plans about Turkish involvement. He was intending to give full support of military equipment to Turkey. To support the Southern part of Turkey against any Italian aggression was his second, and to have access to Turkish airbases and air space for full protection was his third strategy. By the end of the Conference, Churchill had taken what he had wanted so much: full authorization in conducting strategies concerning Turkey. The following points were the plans of the Allies relating Turkey:

Part I: Entry of Turkey into the War on the Side of the United Nations:

- 1) The following extract from C.C.S 135/2₂ has been taken as the basis for our further examination of the problem of inducing Turkey to join the Allies and of using that country for the development of offensive operations against the Axis.

Our motives in inducing Turkey to join us in the war would be:

- a) To use Turkey as a base for air attacks on important objectives, such as Rumanian oilfields and Black Sea communications.
- b) To close the Dardanelles to the Axis and open them to the United Nations.

²⁹⁴ Edward Weisband, *İkinci Dünya Savaşında İnönü'nün Dış Politikası*. Translated by M. Ali Kayabal (İstanbul: Milliyet Yayınları, 1974), p. 138. When Churchill met with Hopkins (The President's Special Assistant, USA) on January 19, 1943 at Casablanca, he said that he wished to push the Turkish President pretty hard on the business of getting Turkey into the war, and giving Britain some adequate air bases, and to attack Romanian oil fields. He added that Turkey should not wait until the last minute, but that if Turkey was recalcitrant, he would not hesitate to tell the Turks that in the event of their remaining out, he could not undertake to control the Russians regarding the Dardanelles and that their position would be intolerable. *See also Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States: Conferences at Washington, 1941-1942, and Casablanca United States* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1968), p. 643.

- c) To force an increased dispersal of German forces by using Turkey as a base for potential threats in the Balkans and South Russia.
- d) To deny Turkish chrome to Germany.²⁹⁵

Inducements for Turkey:

- 2) The two main factors upon which Turkey's entry into the war depend are:
 - a) Her fear of Germany now;
 - b) Her fear of Russia after the war.

In order to make Turkey enter actively into the war at an early date, we must convince her that (a) is founded, and at the same time exploit her fear of (b).

Fear of Germany:

- 3) Turkey's anxieties under (a) will only be assuaged when she is satisfied either that the Allies have so stretched the Axis as to restrict the latter's ability to hurt her or that material provision of the Allies to defend her against Axis air or land attack is forthcoming in time. The former may result from a development of our existing strategy in the Mediterranean and from continued Russian successes. The latter is examined in Part II.

²⁹⁵ Turkey undertook to supply 90.000 tons of chrome in 1943 and the same amount in 1944 in return for German armaments. She, however, interposed every kind of administrative delay, especially as regards transport and took advantage of every German failure to comply exactly with German engagements in order to delay deliveries of chrome on German account with the result that instead of 90.000 tons rather less than 40.000 was actually exported to Germany up to the 25th November last 1943. *See CAB 66/44/33, "Ferro-Alloys: The German Supply Position," 24 December 1943., p. 232 (2).*

Fear of Russia:

- 4) With regard to (b), Turkey must now appreciate that their hopes of a weak Russia are not likely to be realized. Consequently, her best chance of post-war security lies in obtaining for herself a place and support at the Peace Conference. She is particularly afraid that Russia may spread her influence through Rumania and Bulgaria and confront her with the fact of being the power in control at Turkey's western door into Europe as well as her back door into Asia. She also fears that Russia, having secured complete control of the Black Sea, will demand unrestricted rights of passage through the Dardanelles. She would look to the Allies, and especially to the British Empire, to support her in resisting exaggerated Russian claims in regard to passage of the Straits.
- 5) Whether it would be wise for Her Majesty's Government to oppose Russian desires regarding passage of the Straits seems a matter for urgent consideration, for if we thwarted Russia in that respect we should probably be confronted with a claim for rights of transit through Persia to a port on the Persian Gulf. This, from our point of view, would be most undesirable.
- 6) British and American diplomacy should be directed to exploit Turkish fears of Russia. It should be made clear that public opinion will have little sympathy, when peace comes, for a country which remained aloof when we needed her aid.

Economic and Territorial Inducements:

- 7) Guarantees of continued financial and economic assistance, of which details are given in Enclosure (A),²⁹⁶ might be a useful weapon, particularly in view of the deterioration of the Turkish position.
- 8) There are certain territorial adjustments by which Turkey sets store. Firstly, she is determined to have complete control of the railway which at present runs out in Syrian territory at Aleppo. Secondly, she requires some material facilities in, and some guarantees for, the Turkish population of the Dodecanese Islands. Thirdly, she desires a rectification of her frontier with Bulgaria. We can see no strategical objection to their realization after the war provided we can retain certain rights to use the Aleppo-Mosul railway, but we must not lose sight of the fact that there is a strong French interest in this railway. We have also guaranteed the future integrity and independence of Syrian territory. Greek interest would be directly affected by the realization of the second aim and it would be difficult for the Allies to encourage the appetite of an allied but still neutral country at the expense of a fighting ally. We doubt whether these three sops materially affect Turkey's decision on the main issue.

Summary of Diplomatic Policy:

- 9) We should exploit Turkish fears that she stands to lose if she remains out until the eleventh hour, making it clear through diplomatic channels that the extent of

²⁹⁶ Not printed.

Allied support for Turkey at the Peace Conference will be conditioned by her entry into the war without delay.²⁹⁷

11. 2. THE CONFERENCE ON THE TRAIN: THE ADANA CONFERENCE, JANUARY 30-31, 1943

After the Casablanca Conference, Churchill, having been armed with full authorization of the Americans concerning the Turkish involvement in war, decided to initiate negotiations with the Turkish authorities. Although Churchill was much hopeful that his pressure on Turkey would be fruitful, he was warned by his war cabinet and BCOS that Turkey would not reveal any positive attitude, which would end in a loss of British prestige against them. Still, Churchill was sure that he would get something substantial from the Turkish representatives²⁹⁸ whom he knew had many reservations.

While wishing to make reservations, Churchill said to President that Turkey would be able to judge any situation which might arise. He added that there might be a moment even in 1943 when Turkey was both strong and when Great Britain had her plans ready. Churchill, however, asked for no engagement but in his view it was very important for Turkey to be among the victors and to have a seat at the Council which would decide the future after the war and make arrangements to prevent attacks from one nation to another. He emphasized that it was important for Turkey to be among the victors. He stated that Turkey should decide for herself and told that the call for a decision might come in six months or in

²⁹⁷ **Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Conferences at Washington, 1941-1942, and Casablanca United States* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1968), pp. 764-766.** The Committee also agreed that Turkey lied within a theater of British responsibility, and that all matters connected with Turkey should be handled by the British in the same way that all matters connected with China were handled by the United States of America. **See also, p. 659.**

²⁹⁸ The representatives were President İsmet İnönü, Prime Minister Şükrü Saraçoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs Numan Menemencioğlu, Chief of General Staff Fevzi Çakmak. **Baskın Oran et al., eds., *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar*, Vol I (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2006), p. 451.**

eighteen. And then, he added that in 1918 the German collapse had come before it was expected.²⁹⁹

The Turkish President, İnönü, asked whether if Germany were to collapse soon Turkish co-operation would still be required! Churchill replied in the affirmative. A collapse could not be absolutely immediately. There would be further bloodshed and battles. He did not ask Turkey to act until it was in Turkey's interests to do so and that of the grand coalition. But the moment would come. A threat to Straits might make it necessary for Turkey to act. It was of great importance to destroy the Ploesti oil wells. This would be fatal to Germany. He continued that a moment would come when Turkey would be in a position to let Britain use her territory either for refueling or as air bases. Churchill suggested no special occasion but it should be at a moment when it was in Turkey's interests to join in the grand coalition.³⁰⁰

Churchill went on to say that post-war Russia might not be the same as the Russia of former years; it might be even more imperialistic. He also said that the best protection for Turkey lied in an international arrangement, perhaps accompanied by special guarantees applying to her. Russia and possibly the United States were ready to give these guarantees, he said. He then added that things did not always turn out as badly as was expected; but if they did so, it was better that Turkey should be strong and closely associated with the United Kingdom and the United States. Lastly, he came to the final point by saying that he would never propose to Turkey to come into the war if she was not ready, nor would he suggest that she should do so in any way which would involve the exhaustion of her resources. The moment, he said, would come when one push would be important, an allowing given to allowing Britain to attack Ploesti from Turkish bases. The Turkish Prime Minister, Saraçoğlu, had given a surprising answer to the question by replying as "Very good."³⁰¹

²⁹⁹ CAB 66/34/14, "The Adana Conference: Second Meeting," 30 January 1943., pp. 67 (2) – 68. The document was printed in February 13, 1943 for the War Cabinet.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 68 – 68 (4).

The Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Menemencioğlu, thought it would probably be useless to ask the Prime Minister what the United Kingdom would do if the Soviet Government did not act as he expected. For Turkey, collaboration with the Soviet Government was all right provided they collaborated also with the United Kingdom. Turkey had always wished and still wished to act as a hyphen between the United Kingdom and the Soviet Government. He wanted to know that Britain would not be ready to accept a Soviet *fait accompli*³⁰² and he asked what line would be taken by Britain if the Turkish liaison with Great Britain was affected by any Soviet action.³⁰³

Churchill, by getting full confidence, said that he would support the cause of common right against the aggressor and act in defense of common security against any power which attacked it. Dealing with the position of Germany after the war, he went on to say that there might be an early peace but a prolonged armistice and any aggressor, such as Prussia, must be absolutely broken up. He added that Germany might be broken up but some structure would be left to rebuild European order and Turkey must be part of it. There might be a moment when Turkey could strike in the war without risk of exhaustion or invasion. He, however, stated that he would not advise Turkey to enter the war at present, nor to do so until she was ready, but a moment might come when Britain should have the right to make a firm proposal to Turkey.³⁰⁴

³⁰² Means a course of events that has already been completed and cannot be undone.

³⁰³ CAB 66/34/14, "The Adana Conference: Second Meeting," 30 January 1943., p. 68 (4). The document was printed in February 13, 1943 for the War Cabinet.

³⁰⁴ Ibid.



Source: Imperial War Museums - <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205189667>

Churchill then turned the conversation to the fear of Russia and said that Russia was an immense mass of people. It was impossible to foresee the future but the surest place for Turkey was to be a member of the Council of victors in friendly association with the Soviets and with the United Kingdom and the United States. It was, he said, for Turkey to choose the moment.³⁰⁵

The Turkish Foreign Minister, Menemencioğlu observed that the Prime Minister had said the fact that Turkey was in the war on the side of the victors would be one of the best guarantees for Turkey's security. If Turkey was attached to Great Britain and had done all she could assist the Allies, Russia would be more likely to collaborate with the Allies. In that event, he said, the entry of Turkey into the war would not change the position, though she might still enter if opportunity occurred. But if Russia did not cooperate with the Allies, how would Turkish security be increased if Turkey acted with the Allies?

In reply to Menemencioğlu's question, Churchill said that Turkish action on Britain's side would place her on the side of the Great Powers and would ensure that Turkey would find herself together with the United Kingdom and the United States. Russia would inevitably join and Turkey and Britain would all co-operate together. This would furnish an absolute guarantee that Russia would not act against Turkey. Russia had had heavy losses and

³⁰⁵ CAB 66/34/14, "The Adana Conference: Second Meeting," 30 January 1943., p. 69. The document was printed in 13 February 1943 for the War Cabinet.

would not be anxious for further wars. If Russia, without any cause, were to attack Turkey, the whole international organization of which he had already spoken would be applied on behalf of Turkey and the guarantees after the present war would be much more severe, not only where Turkey was concerned but in the case of all Europe. Churchill said that Britain would not be a friend of Russia if she imitated Germany.³⁰⁶

On the other hand, the Turkish President, İnönü, expressed the opinion that now the Germans were retiring in Russia to a position still unknown. Further battles would take place when the new line had been formed and the result would be stabilization. This would leave Germany with some force with which she could seek a decision elsewhere and she might direct her attention to Turkey. Turkey, therefore, must be strengthened. On the other hand, if Germany did not attack Turkey, the only other factor which might affect the present Turkish situation would be a state of chaos in the Balkans.³⁰⁷

Afterwards, Saraçoğlu, speaking of Turkish-Russian relations, stated that for years past, Turkey had done all that was possible to improve these relations. He sketched the history of recent Turco-Russian Relations and dwelt upon the result of his visit to Moscow in September 1939, when the Soviet Government had refused to agree to the Anglo-Turkish Treaty and had suggested alterations. He said that as long as Turkey remained strong and intact, Russia would not attack her. Nevertheless, it was possible that Russia might adopt a policy out of harmony with her relations with the United Kingdom, and he asked what line Great Britain would take in that case.³⁰⁸

Churchill stated that he had seen Molotov and Stalin and his impression was that both desired a peaceful and friendly association with the United Kingdom and the United States. In the economic sphere, Great Britain and the United States had much to give to Russia and they could help in the reparation of Russia's losses... He thought Russia would concentrate on reconstruction for the next ten years. There would probably be changes; communism had already been modified. He thought Britain should live in good relations with Russia and if Great Britain and the United States acted together and maintained strong

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 67 (2).

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

air force, they should be able to ensure a period of stability. Russia might even gain by this. She possessed vast undeveloped areas, for instance, in Siberia. He mentioned the guarantees recently given by Britain and the Soviet Government to Turkey in 1941 and 1942 at the time of the entry into Persia and of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty.³⁰⁹

The Turkish President, İnönü, mentioned a different issue by asking that Turkey had asked for equipment during the last 3,5 years. The United Kingdom and the United States had decided to accelerate the supply of munitions. There had been no mention of payment. Nothing had been asked. Therefore, it was clear that the main object of the United Kingdom and the United States was to make Turkey strong, irrespective of payment. What was the object of this?

Churchill stated that the object was threefold: -

- a) It was important to secure the defense of Turkey against the passage of German forces, although now that Germany was becoming feebler this was less important.
- b) We wished to secure the association together of the greatest number of Powers.
- c) If the opportunity came and it did not prove to be too costly or dangerous, we wished Turkey to be able to enter Bulgaria and the Balkans and to assist in the general advance on the retreating German army. He did not ask for undertakings nor did he ask for impossibilities.

İnönü remarked that in all Churchill said he saw a mark of the confidence of the United Kingdom.³¹⁰ Then, İnönü said that there was one point on which they could be absolutely sure, namely, that Turkey was by no means trying to create trouble between Great Britain and the Soviets. For a long period, Turkey had been in good relations with the Soviets and so thought it was necessary to avoid doing anything to arouse Russian suspicion. The position must be looked at objectively. Turkey was friendlier with Great Britain than with

³⁰⁹ **Ibid., pp. 68 – 68 (4).**

³¹⁰ **Ibid., p. 69.**

the Soviets and everything that had been said in the present discussion with regard to the Soviets would be buried in silence and never mentioned outside this conference room. He later had explained the reasons why he did not trust the Soviets, namely –

- 1) The consultations with the Soviet Government at the time of the Anglo-Turkish alliance had resulted in the Soviet Government refusing to countenance the alliance. They had stated that once Turkey had made an alliance with Great Britain, the Soviet Government had no further interest in Turkey.
- 2) After the fall of France, the Germans had invited M. Molotov to Berlin and the Soviets had completely changed their attitude.
- 3) During Soboleff's visit to Sofia in November 1940, a proposal had been made to the Bulgarian Government for a Treaty of Mutual Assistance which would have been followed by the Soviet Government joining the Tripartite Pact. Turkey had complete understanding of British policy *vis-à-vis* Russia. Nevertheless, they had every reason to be prudent.³¹¹

Churchill said that the Soviet Government had signed the Atlantic Charter³¹² and that he felt that they were definitely desirous of having an honored place among the World Powers. They did not, however, interpret the Atlantic Charter as implying the exclusion from the Soviets of territories which were formerly Russian. Churchill went on to say that there was one question which he wished to ask – what would be the German reaction to the present meeting?³¹³

³¹¹ **Ibid., p. 69 (6).**

³¹² “The Atlantic Charter was a pivotal policy statement first issued in August 1941 that early in World War II defined the Allies goals for the post-war world. It was drafted by Britain and the United States and later agreed to by all the Allies. The Charter stated the ideal goals of the war; no territorial aggrandizement; no territorial changes made against the wished of the people; restoration of self-government to those deprived of it; free access to raw materials; reduction of trade restrictions; global cooperation to secure better economic and social conditions for all; freedom from fear and want; freedom of the seas; and abandonment of the use of force; as well as disarmament of aggressor nations.” *See M. S. Venkataramani, “The United States, the Colonial Issue, and the Atlantic Charter Hoax,” International Studies 13/1 (1974): pp. 1-28.*

³¹³ **CAB 66/34/14, “The Adana Conference: Second Meeting,” 30 January 1943., p. 69 (6).** The document was printed in February 13, 1943 for the War Cabinet.

İnönü said that the answer was very simple. He would say that Turkey was looking for arms everywhere and that now Britain was offering arms in abundance. What would the Germans have to say! They could not produce arms, neither had they sufficient force to attack Turkey. In one or two months' time, Turkey might have sufficient arms and by that time the situation in Russia might be stabilized. In that case, he added, there would be more German reserves for use elsewhere.³¹⁴

The Fourth Meeting³¹⁵ was held on January 31, 1943. Churchill said that since their last meeting he had prepared a second paper of which he would give the President a copy clarifying his views. He emphasized that he had not of course been able to consult his Government upon this and it only represented his personal ideas. His conception was that there were three possible stages. First, the reinforcement of Turkey. Second, Britain could hope that in some months' time the enemy would be considerably weaker whereas Turkey would have added to her own strength. He therefore hoped that Turkey might then be in a position to interpret rather more liberally her obligations of neutrality. It was of course, he added, for the Turkish Government to consider this matter and to make her own decision. What he had in mind was that Turkey might for instance give facilities for British and American Aircraft to bomb the Romanian airfields from Turkish bases. If Britain embarked on operations against the Dodecanese, Turkey might give Britain assistance there. Or, she might assist by opening the Straits to the Allies whilst keeping them closed against the Axis. Such steps would not amount to entering into the war and it might be that Germany would choose to ignore them as she did when the United States resorted to a number of strictly un-neutral acts during the period before she became a belligerent. Before running risks by embarking on such actions Turkey could ask for guarantees. Churchill then read to President İnönü the telegram which he had sent to M. Stalin on the 24th of November, 1942, regarding the Turkish situation, together with Stalin's reply. He stressed that these were private messages and begged the President that they should not go any

³¹⁴ **Ibid.**, pp. 69 (6) – 70.

³¹⁵ **Please note:** The first meeting was mainly a welcome ceremony and Churchill only presented a paper of which he gave it to the Turkish President. The third and the fifth meeting were made between the Generals of Alan Brooke and Marshal Fevzi Çakmak. Some other soldiers were also present at the meeting.

further; he communicated them in order to show his complete confidence in the President and to let the latter see exactly what had been in his mind.³¹⁶

Churchill then gave the President the paper which he had written and the President read it through. When he had finished reading the document, İnönü said that it had made a very good impression on him and that in general he agreed with all of it. It was difficult on first reading to appreciate all the points and different eventualities which it contemplated, but he had noted with gratification that it took good account of Turkey's particular point of view. If Churchill's confidence in him were maintained, and if they could consult as the situation developed, all would be well. There would be a period of crisis during which Turkey must be reinforced, lasting perhaps four or five months and during that time, the Turkish Government would watch the situation closely. The document contained many solid points relating the future. İnönü thought that if Europe could be organized on the lines indicated that would be ideal.³¹⁷

Churchill observed that there were three main belligerents in the European theatre; through the course there were other refugee Allied Governments who also contributed what they could. If Turkey voluntarily entered the war, she would make the fourth armed Power. This would be a great opportunity for Turkey to take her due place and to come to the Peace Conference relatively unweakened, one of the four victorious Powers. That afforded the best prospects for her security.

İnönü replied that he was in entire agreement with this line of thought. Then Saraçoğlu said that his Government had always wished to see a British victory and they had helped within the limits of their abilities. They had, for instance, as the Ambassador could confirm, constantly passed on information. They would of course continue to help in that way but he could not at the moment say whether they would be able to go so far as to take the action suggested in regard to the Straits.³¹⁸

³¹⁶ CAB 66/34/14, "The Adana Conference: Fourth Meeting," 31 January 1943., p. 72. The document was printed in February 13, 1943 for the War Cabinet.

³¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 72 – 72 (12).

³¹⁸ Ibid.

Churchill said that in any event he did not wish to ask Turkey to run any undue risk. İnönü then said that if Germany was still strong enough she would take counter measures against any infraction of neutrality. If Germany sought to impose a policy on Turkey, then Turkey, even to-day, would offer resistance. It was possible that the Germans would raise objection to Turkey accepting arms from the United Nations but in that event he would reply that Turkey had every right to do this. If a German attack came, the question would be quite simple and Turkey would, of course, resist. If Turkey took un-neutral action suggested it might be that Germany would not react and then it would be for Turkey to take her own decisions. Turkey must first increase her strength. As the situation of the Axis worsened and as it became better for the Allies, he quite saw that there were various stages which could be contemplated. He then concluded that if Churchill would put complete confidence in him, everything would be all right.³¹⁹

11. 2. 1. Agreed conclusions of the Anglo-Turkish military conferences

- 1) That the Turkish Military Representatives will furnish the British Military Representatives with the lists of the Naval, Military and Air equipment required by the Turkish forces. These lists will show-
 - a) Equipment already demanded but not yet delivered;
 - b) New requests; and will indicate for each class of equipment the order of priority to be attached to each item. These lists will be examined by the British with a view to supplying as quickly as possible such equipment as can be made available.
- 2) That the British authorities will examine the possibility of supplying merchant vessels for transfer to the Turkish flag. These vessels would be used to convey munitions and other supplies from Egyptian ports to Turkey. The Turkish authorities will furnish a statement of the type and tonnage of ships required.

³¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 72 (12) - 73.

- 3) That in view of the urgent necessity of increasing the power of the Turkish military authorities to receive modern equipment, the Turkish General Staff will prepare a scheme for the reception, utilization and maintenance of such equipment. This scheme will be implemented in conjunction with G.H.Q Middle East. The British Military authorities will also undertake to train Turkish personnel in British schools and to receive Turkish officers and men for attachment to Armored Divisions and other specialized units and will submit proposals to the Turkish General Staff. All these matters will be the subject of direct discussion between the Turkish General Staff and the British Service attaches at Ankara.
- 4) The British Staff Officers will proceed forthwith to Ankara to undertake, in collaboration with the Turkish General Staff, a study of the form and quantity of support which transportation facilities will enable the British to send to Turkey in the event of the latter being drawn into the war. The Terms of Reference of this study will be as follows: -

The British and Turkish Staffs will prepare a plan for the movement and subsequent maintenance of British forces into Turkey in the event of Turkey being drawn into the war. The plan should show for each month in 1943 the size and nature of these forces. In order to draw up this plan, the following facts will need to be established: -

- a) The present capacity of the ports, railways and roads available for the move of the forces, having regard to the requirements of the Turkish armed forces and of the civil population;
- b) The increase in this available capacity which could be secured by a programme of development of the means of communication, the dumping of supplies, the

- construction and improvement of airfields and the provision of technical assistance and material;
 - c) Assuming that the programme in (b) above is carried out, the resultant available capacity, month by month, throughout the year;
 - d) Given the resultant capacity, the composition of the land and air forces to be provided.
- 5) That the above plan, when made, will be kept continually up to date.
 - 6) That since the air plans for the support of Turkey are relatively well advanced, British Staff Officers should proceed as soon as possible to Ankara to complete, in consultation with the Turkish General Staff, the joint operational plan.³²⁰

11. 3. RUSSIA: UNCHANGED FEAR OF TURKEY AND BRITAIN'S POSITION

Because Britain believed that impartiality was useful for both sides to block Germany and thus cut her access to the oil rich Middle East, Britain did not make a pressure to Turkey to enter the war until the beginning of 1943. But from 1943, as impartial situation of Turkey hampered Anglo-Soviet plans that aimed to end the war as soon as possible and defeat fast German power in the Balkans and Mediterranean, Britain started to think that impartiality of Turkey was now giving harm to the allied. Generally because of this reason, Churchill decided to force Turkey to take her side in the fight. Eliminating all possible allegations that might be used against the interest of Britain and Turkey in the post war by the Soviets was one of the reasons why Churchill associated with Turkey. And also preventing the possibility of Soviet progress towards the Balkans with the help of Turkey was another reason of Churchill's policy.³²¹

³²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 76 (20) - 77.

³²¹ Mustafa Sıtkı Bilgin and Steven Morewood, "Turkey's Reliance on Britain: British Political and Diplomatic Support for Turkey against Soviet Demands, 1943-47," *Middle Eastern Studies* 40/2 (2004): p. 28. It was an extra-ordinary policy of which Turkey depicted in World War II. The famous speech was made by İnönü on February 23, 1943, saying that "we shall do everything possible not to become involved in

However, Britain's desire to make Turkey enter the war had weakened with the needs and potentialities of the Italian campaign when Mussolini lost his power on July 25, 1943.³²² Therefore, Britain's foreign policy towards Turkey had been under consideration by the Chiefs of Staff. At the time of the Adana Conference, Britain thought that she would want Turkey in the war during the course of the 1943 summer. Recent military developments had changed the position of Turkey. It was therefore the considered opinion of the British military experts that Britain should not approach the issue by either cutting losses in Turkey or by attempting to manoeuvre or force Turkey into the war before she was sure how and when she should make use of her. So, Britain had decided to follow an interim policy that was to maintain her policy on its present basis, continuing supplies at the level agreed upon after Adana. The British thought that no doubt should be left in the Turkish mind that ultimately demands would be made on and that a decision affecting Turkey's whole future would be required for her.³²³

During this period, on the other hand, the Turks were warned against the critical consequences if they took place in the front against the Germans who were also aware of the pressure put into the Turks. Hitler, by denying his military leaders in the area approval to retreat from imposed positions with the purpose of impressing Turkey with the presence of German forces. But what made Turks more anxious than the German threat was the Soviet Union that should not have any excuse for getting through their border to "collaborate" in the defeat of the Germans. "The Turkish leaders were aware of the Russians' ambivalent attitude toward Turkish belligerence and of the Americans' hesitations." Moreover, the Turks believed that the complete downfall of Germany would eliminate the classic counterbalance against Russian enlargement.³²⁴ Additionally, it was the Straits questions formed after elaborated studies in the summer of 1943. On July 5 of the same year, for the Cabinet, the Foreign Office made its initial report ready on Turkey.

the world upheaval." *See also* Editorial, "Turkey Hopes to Remain Neutral," *Argus*, February 25, 1943, p. 1.

³²² Annette Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 33.

³²³ FO 954/28, Microfilm Collection, Document Number: 364, "Notes for the Secretary of State at Interview with Turkish Ambassador," 03 August 1943.

³²⁴ Annette Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), pp. 34-35.

As the report stated, although Turkey, because of her impartial position, had been approached badly in the war just for her own benefits, Britain needed to defend Turkey against Russia in the future. Moreover, to raise the Straits question in inter-allied conferences and to persuade Britain and the United States about the necessity to alter the Montreux Convention for a new regime meeting the needs of Moscow, the Russians were busy with different strategies. In the beginning, the Soviet strategies were to hide their ultimate and act as if their only goal was to make the Convention revised, but to move to the final goal of turning Turkey into a satellite state.³²⁵

11. 4. THE MOSCOW CONFERENCE:³²⁶ AN ATTEMPT BY RUSSIA TO BRING TURKEY INTO THE WAR, OCTOBER 9-30, 1943

A major diplomatic victory for the Allied cause had been achieved at the Moscow Conference. In their first direct consultations, the Governments of Britain, Russia and the United States had found themselves able to join in an agreement that extinguished for the enemy all hope of dividing them.³²⁷ And, in their other direct consultations, agreements were signed by Britain, the United States, Russia and China for the prosecution of the war until all enemies had laid down their arms and for united action after the war for the organization and maintenance of peace and security. Provision would be made, the

³²⁵ Mustafa Sitki Bilgin and Steven Morewood, "Turkey's Reliance on Britain: British Political and Diplomatic Support for Turkey against Soviet Demands, 1943-47," *Middle Eastern Studies* 40/2 (2004): pp. 28-29.

³²⁶ Throughout the war, the Allies held conferences, in *Placentia Bay* (9-12 August 1941), *Washington* (22 December 1941 to 14 January 1942; 19-25 June 1942; 12-27 May 1943), *Casablanca* (12-25 January 1943), *Quebec* (17-24 August 1943; 12-16 September 1944), *Moscow* (9-30 October 1943), *Cairo* (22-26 November 1943; 2-7 December 1943), *Tehran* (27 November to 2 December 1943), *Malta* (30 January 1945 to 2 February 1945), *Yalta* (4-11 February 1945) and *Potsdam* (July-August 1945), to discuss their war strategies. See also Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Conferences at Washington, 1941-1942, and Casablanca United States* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1968).; Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Conferences at Cairo and Tehran, 1943* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961).; Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: The Conferences at Malta and Yalta, 1945* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1955). "During the Quebec Conference and the first Conference held in Cairo, Churchill defended the view that a second front had to be opened in the Balkans through Turkish participation to the war. Nevertheless, on each occasion the view that the second front had to be opened through Normandy in Western Europe prevailed amongst the other Allies." Murat Metin Hakki, "Surviving the Pressure of the Superpowers: An Analysis of Turkish Neutrality During the Second World War," *An Electronic History Journal* 3 (2007): p. 58.

³²⁷ Editorial, "Moscow Conference is a Victory," *Courier-Mail*, November 3, 1943., p. 2.

agreement said, for all peace loving nations to be included in a broad system of international co-operation after the war.³²⁸

However, Molotov, as chairman, quickly presented three demands to Hull and Eden in the Conference. As usual, the Soviets wanted to be guaranteed the opening of the Second Front whether be in the spring of 1944 as planned. The second plan included a request about compelling Turkey into the war as soon as possible by the three powers. Molotov finished the meeting immediately after he had presented three demands, the third out of which was about the usage of Swedish air bases. Molotov, again, underlined the anxiety of Soviets about Turkey in the second meeting. He stated that if the British, Americans and the Soviet Union were friends and if they wished to lighten the burden being carried by Russian Armies, they would certainly bring the Turks into the war. Eden answered, "Between them, there was not any disagreement because they all wanted Turkey to join the war." The immediate need of Turkey in the war was accepted by the British, in effect. He underlined the obstacles about not letting Turkey join the war, without mentioning the difficulties related to its policies, particularly *vis-à-vis* the Soviet Union, but only mentioning those about Turkey's military preparedness. Eden knew that British interest in Southeastern Europe was seen as a threat to the cross-Channel assault by the Americans and so he tried to be seemed neither too worried nor too reckless. He desired to associate with the Russians without gaining the opposition of the Americans. On the other hand, he was anxious to be seemed as concerning its own political reasons by wanting Turkey in the war by Russians. So, when Eden approved the principle that Turkey should enter the war, he sincerely told that the complete question was about logistical and practical subjects and these subjects had to be dealt with a view to guarantee the success of the cross-Channel assault.³²⁹

To decide the best way how to force the Turks into the war, Molotov and Eden met again on October 31, immediate after the formal meetings of the Conference had ended. Because Eden wired Churchill, during the conversation said over and over "that if the three Great

³²⁸ Editorial, "Moscow Conference Success," *Sydney Morning Herald*, November 3, 1943., p. 1.

³²⁹ Edward Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1943-1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 168-170.

Powers agreed that Turkey should enter the war, she would have no alternative choice...” For his part, Churchill who was encouraged at the offset of the Conference, had long time ago determined to start a new campaign to make Turkey join the war. Churchill and Russians seemed to have determined about the benefits of the entrance of Turks into the war while American planners were not willing or able to give efficient support to a Turkish front and so had not advised the attendance of the Turks into the war. Churchill seemed to be less pessimistic than the Americans about the chances of the survival of Turks; they were dragged into the war with the supplies that were already ready for use. “This marked the beginning of the nadir in Anglo-Turkish relations during the war.” Turkish policy makers, especially Foreign Minister Menemencioglu, a little later decided that the British and Russia did not care the sufficient protection of Turkish cities or the needed supply and empowerment of Turkish troops but they only cared the entrance of Turkey into the war. It was then Eden that informed Molotov about his preparation to meet the Turkish Foreign Minister in Cairo to submit his request, in the name of the big three, about the urgent usage of Turkey’s airfields and the need of submarines to be sent through the Straits.³³⁰ On November 1, 1943, they agreed on the following secret protocol:

- 1) In order that Turkey may take her part with the United Nations in hastening the defeat of Hitlerite Germany... the two Foreign Secretaries think it most desirable that Turkey should enter the war on the side of the United Nations before the end of 1943.
- 2) It is agreed between the Foreign Secretaries that on behalf of the United Kingdom and the Soviet Governments it should be suggested to Turkey at the earliest possible date, to be agreed upon them, that before the end of 1943 Turkey should enter the war.
- 3) It is further agreed that a request should immediately be made of Turkey to give to the United Nations all possible aid by placing at the disposal of the Allied Forces Turkish air bases and such other

³³⁰ **Ibid., pp. 172-173.**

facilities as may be agreed upon as desirable by the two Governments.³³¹

The declared points of the Moscow Conference were as follows:

- 1) The conference discussed definite military and other operations about which steps have already been taken to create a basis for military co-operation between the three countries (Russia, Britain and USA) in the future.
- 2) The Governments of the United States, Great Britain, Russia and China jointly declare that they will continue to wage war against their respective enemies until those enemies have surrendered unconditionally.
- 3) The four Powers recognize the necessity for setting up as early as possible a general international organization of all peace-loving States and for the maintenance of peace and security.
- 4) So as to secure the closest cooperation as the war develops, the conference decided to set up a European Advisory Commission to co-ordinate approach to problems.
- 5) An Advisory Council will also be set up to deal with matters relating to Italy which will be composed of the Allies and the French Committee of National Liberation; and Greece and Yugoslavia will be invited to join the council in view of the special interests touching them.
- 6) Great Britain, Russia and the United States pledge themselves to the restoration of an independent Austria that much will depend on her own efforts to that end.
- 7) A declaration was issued by Marshal Stalin, Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt giving a solemn warning that any German who had had anything to do with atrocities against the population of

³³¹ Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Conferences at Cairo and Tehran, 1943* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), p. 148.

occupied countries would be taken back to the scenes of their crimes and there by punished according to the law of those countries.³³²

11. 5. MENEMENCIOĞLU AND EDEN AT CAIRO: TURKEY FORCED TO TAKE VITAL DECISIONS, NOVEMBER 5-8, 1943

The first of the meeting was held on November 5, 1943. Eden reported to Churchill that he had had a long tough day with Menemencioğlu.³³³ “The situation was probably helped by the fact that the two men disliked each other. Eden quite simply thought that Menemencioğlu was pro-Axis and Menemencioğlu saw Eden as a “theatrical man” who was “full of himself.”³³⁴

During the first meeting, Eden requested Menemencioğlu to furnish air bases for the use of the Allied forces. He also brought up the question of Turkey’s full entrance into the war. Menemencioğlu refused to agree that there would be any difference between these two courses of action, contending that to furnish air bases to the Allies would be tantamount to entering the war. In this connection, he said that Germany would not dare not to react if Turkey furnished bases. Eden argued that Germany was in such a position that it could attack only by air and apparently argued that the Allied air forces could handle any such attacks. Eden reported that although Menemencioğlu did not refuse to discuss the question of air bases or formal entry into the war, it was obvious that he was deeply suspicious of the Russians and greatly concerned about their possible penetration into the Balkans. Eden argued that Turkey would be in a much stronger position in the post-war world if it furnished bases now or entered fully into the war. Eden made it clear; however, that what

³³² Editorial, “Vital Decisions, Moscow Conference: Conference Result,” *Northern Times*, November 5, 1943., p. 3. A special declaration on Italy had also been announced, mainly stating that the Italian Government should be more democratic and should last the fascist principles of the Government. *See also* Editorial, “Declaration on Italy, Measures Announced: From Moscow Conference,” *Cairns Post*, November 3, 1943., p. 3.

³³³ Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Conferences at Cairo and Tehran, 1943* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), p. 164.

³³⁴ Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 154.; *See also* Edward Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1943-1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), pp. 177-178.

was really wanted was air bases on an all-out basis. Menemencioğlu asked what good it would do the Allies if at the end of the war Turkey was militarily exhausted. Eden contended that it was extravagant to talk about exhaustion. Eden said that it was interesting to note that the Turks made no request for fulfillment of requests made at the Adana Conference for supplies. Menemencioğlu had inquired as to whether the Allies would continue to furnish supplies if Turkey refused to supply bases and the British Foreign Minister replied that he could give no assurance as to that.³³⁵

On the following day, the discussions were continued and Eden strongly restated the case of furnishing air bases and stressed the urgency of the need. He expressed the view that the Germans would not dare to declare war on the Turks if bases were furnished and added that if the bases were refused, the British would have to consider the question of furnishing supplies to the Turks. Menemencioğlu said he could give an immediate answer to the question of air bases. The Turks could not accept such a demand and they would be unable to grant the facilities requested. Eden continued with the same arguments he had used on the previous day, but without success. The discussions then turned to the broad issue of Turkey's formal entrance into the war. Menemencioğlu pointed out at Adana, Churchill had given the Turks the impression that they would be free to make an independent decision as to whether and when they should enter the war. He then asked did the British now feel that the Turks now had enough equipment with which to put up a fight? In any case, he said, if Turkey was to be involved in the war, it would wish to be active collaboration with its allies and was not content to play a passive role by merely furnishing air bases. If the Turks were to go into the war and take an active part, where would the Allies want them to fight? In the Balkans? If the British really felt that the Turks were ready, the Turks would want to know the precise part they were to play. Again and again, Menemencioğlu repeated that Turkey would never agree to play a passive part. He said that if the British Foreign Minister had brought from Moscow such decisions as the future

³³⁵ Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Conferences at Cairo and Tehran, 1943* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), pp. 164-165.

treatment of Persia, Iraq and the Balkans, it would be much easier for him to meet the British views.³³⁶

Eden replied that so far as Persia was concerned, The Russians and the British had a treaty under which they undertook to withdraw from Persia after the war. So far as Iraq was concerned, the British had a bilateral treaty which made things perfectly clear. So far as the Balkans were concerned, it would be obvious to the Turks that they would gain more by cooperating with the Allies than by standing aloof. Menemencioğlu asked if it were not true that the Russians had withdrawn their demand for a second front in Europe in return for a free hand in Eastern Europe. Eden denied this and pointed out that the Americans, in particular, both in public and in private, had made it clear that they could not discuss frontiers until the end of the war. Menemencioğlu then inquired why the British had not accepted Rumania's peace offer. What more could the Rumanians do than offer to discuss peace? Eden retorted that the Allies would discuss peace with the Rumanians only on the basis of unconditional surrender. Menemencioğlu replied that the Turks would never suggest to the Rumanians that they surrender unconditionally to the Russians.³³⁷

Summing up, the negative reply that he had received from the Turkish Foreign Minister was bound to have a deplorable effect among the Allies. Menemencioğlu replied that to the first request for air bases he was bound to give a negative reply, for the reasons he had mentioned. As to the second request for formal Turkish entry into the war, he would have to report his Government. Eden reported that he had given a severe warning as to the possible consequences of the Turkish refusal to meet the British request. Eden also pointed out the unenviable position in which Turkey would find itself *vis-à-vis* the Russians in the event it declined to meet British wishes. He stressed, on the other hand, the far better position in which Turkey would be placed if it went along with the British request. Menemencioğlu answered that he must know more of Russian intentions before he could allow Turkey to play the part requested by the British. Furthermore, he did not believe that Germany was stretched as far as the British contended. In order to reassure the Turks on this point, Eden said that he was having General Wilson send one of his military

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 165-166.

³³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 166.

intelligence experts to Ankara in an endeavor to convince the Turks that the Germans were over-extended. Eden also agreed that he would take up with the Russians and the Americans the precise role that Turkey might be expected to play if it entered the war and that a paper on this point would be passed through military channels.³³⁸

On November 8, Menemencioğlu had a further conversation with Eden during which he showed himself considerably more receptive. Eden said that the Soviet desires and the present discussions seemed to him to offer an opportunity to establish Turkish-Soviet relations on a sound basis for the next twenty five years. Menemencioğlu replied that he realized this was so; he thought the Soviet question was being well handled and that he had entirely welcomed the Moscow decisions, which were much more favorable than could have been expected. However, he said that a decision as regards the demands on Turkey could of course only be taken by the Government. He said that the Turks had been very disturbed by Stalin's references to Moldavia and Transylvania.³³⁹ It would be hard to explain to the National Assembly if Turkish assistance aided the establishment of Russia in Rumania and Bulgaria under the claim that such establishment was in the interests of those peoples. Menemencioğlu continued that he had been upset by Eden's threatening tone, which had been used for the first time in the long relations between the two countries; and that he had the impression that Eden was acting as spokesman not just for Britain, but for Russia. Eden had asked Turkey to give bases and to come into the war without specifying exactly what would be expected for her, what Allied cooperation could be depended upon, and what assurances there would be as to the political results or implications. He said that today for her own safety Turkey must be as concerned about the situation in the Balkans as she was previously about the freedom of the Straits alone.³⁴⁰ Eden replied that they must face the facts; that Britain was an ally of Turkey but she was also an ally of Russia. He said

³³⁸ **Ibid., pp. 166-167.**

³³⁹ In a number of his addresses, Stalin had indicated his intention to regain Moldavia (Bessarabia) from Rumania. *See also Andrew Rothstein, Soviet Foreign Policy During the Patriotic War (London: Hutchinson, 1946).*

³⁴⁰ Correspondence on Turkish policy respecting the Straits, the Montreux Conference of 1936 for Revision of the Regime of the Straits, and related matters is printed *Foreign Relations, 1936, vol. III, pp. 503 ff.* For a brief summary of pertinent developments in the early years of World War II *See Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States: The Near East (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1947), p. 36.*

that if Turkey came into the war she would inevitably become stronger through the supply of Allied arms. Menemencioğlu recognized that this was so. Eden then drew a balance sheet on the familiar lines of the advantages and disadvantages to Turkey of participation. He suggested that the Turkish Government might wish to consider the matter and that its reply might well pose questions which it wanted cleared up regarding the military and political conditions of its collaboration. He said that a favorable reply would require conversations which could not very well be handled through usual diplomatic channels, and asked if Menemencioğlu had any views as to where such conversations might be held. Menemencioğlu said that if the Turkish reply should be favorable, conversations could be held anywhere and that Turkey would be more interested in political than in military talks. He had thought that it was a wise decision to hold the recent Allied conversations at Moscow and he would have no objection to holding the conversations there again. He added that if the Turkish response were negative he could only ask that it be received with the fullest understanding.³⁴¹

11. 5. 1. British expectations and Turkish attitude after the meeting

When returning back from Cairo to İstanbul, Menemencioğlu had been in continuous sessions with the President and the Cabinet and he had difficulty with some members of the Cabinet who were opposed to Turkey's abandoning its neutrality. He said, for instance, he was being embarrassed by insistent demands from various members of Parliament for information as to his talks with Eden and the course which the Government proposed to pursue. However, it was not only some members of the Cabinet criticizing of Turkey's abandoning its neutrality but also the Turkish Government who criticized the consequences of Eden-Menemencioğlu meeting. While Menemencioğlu gave a detailed account of his conversations with Eden, he emphasized some points to the American Foreign Minister Steinhardt³⁴² as:

- 1) The Turkish Government prefers to discuss Turkey's entry into the war rather than the mere granting of air bases as in its opinion the

³⁴¹ Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Conferences at Cairo and Tehran, 1943* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), pp. 180-182.

³⁴² Laurence Steinhardt was appointed to Ankara in 1942.

granting of air bases would inevitably involve Turkey's entrance into the war.

- 2) Eden, although proposing action by Turkey tantamount entry into the war, failed to indicate what if any assistance the Turks might expect from the Allies.
- 3) The Turkish Army is not equipped for offensive action and in consequence the Turkish Government must anticipate the devastation of İstanbul and İzmir, their only two large cities, with a substantial part of the population of these two cities homeless during the winter, its railroad system paralyzed by the destruction of innumerable bridges and trestles with the resultant demoralization of the transportation system leading to starvation in many areas and a general economic breakdown, unless its satisfied that adequate aerial protection will be made available by the Allies.
- 4) The readiness of the Turks to sanction Turkey's entry into the war has been adversely affected by the failure of the British to send adequate forces to take over and hold the islands in the Aegean.
- 5) In the absence of strong allied forces in or immediately available to Turkey, particularly aviation, the Turkish Government must consider the probability of a violent Axis reaction to the granting of air bases or other acts of war which might lead to an invasion of Turkey and the devastation of the country to no advantage, while at the same time the Allies would presumably be obliged to send large forces to stem a German drive into the Near East. Should the Germans desire an easy victory to restore their prestige the foregoing probability would become a certainty.
- 6) The request of Eden that Turkey grants air bases or enters the war prior to December 3, affords insufficient time to make the necessary military preparations and to prepare public opinion.

- 7) It was unreasonable for Eden to ask for air bases or for Turkey's entrance into the war without at least a partial disclosure of Allied military plans in respect of the Near East and the Balkans.
- 8) There would not be the slightest hesitation on the part of the Turkish government to enter the war were Anglo-American forces to land in the Balkans as this would imply the availability of adequate Allied forces to support Turkey.³⁴³

After summarizing the points, Menemencioğlu said that it would be necessary for him to reply publicly to these questions and that in so doing so, he intended to refer to Turkey's obligations under the Turkish-British alliance and would endeavor to make a non-committal statement. He added that to avoid undesirable repercussions in the Turkish or Anglo-American-Soviet press the Turkish newspapers would be severely restricted in what they would be permitted to print and that the Turkish censors would scrutinize the dispatches of the foreign correspondents with the utmost care.³⁴⁴

Meanwhile the Turkish Government was not also backward in informing the Germans. In reply to a question by Von Papen as to whether Eden requested that Turkey grant air bases to the Allies or that Turkey enter the war, Menemencioğlu said that he had denied that there had been a request for air bases but had admitted that Eden had sought Turkey's entry into the war. As an indication that the Germans were already giving consideration to the possibility of Turkey's entry into the war, the German authorities had instructed their commercial representatives in Turkey to cease all purchases of Turk products and to dispatch all goods on hand as quickly as possible.³⁴⁵ On the other hand, Von Papen, overconfidently asserted that Turks would not enter the war. For instance, Ankara reports on November 17 that Von Papen told the Finnish Minister that the Turks would not declare war.³⁴⁶ It is quite obvious that by stating these certain words, Von Papen knew something

³⁴³ Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Conferences at Cairo and Tehran, 1943* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), pp. 190-191.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 191-192.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 193.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 262.

very specific about Turkish attitude. Justified Von Papen with the best, Ankara declared on November 17 that Turkey had now decided *just in principle* to enter the war.³⁴⁷

11. 6. THE TEHERAN CONFERENCE, NOVEMBER 27 TO DECEMBER 2, 1943

Churchill's main objective in Teheran Conference was to force Turkey take active part in the war. Churchill's insistence to make Turkey do so became too predominant that it domineered over Molotov's desires. On the other hand, Turkey's wish was towards establishing a secure front in the Balkans, which was in contrast with the Soviet Plans. Such a secure front would not be in accordance with the Soviet expectations to play a leading and overpowering role in the region. Their strategy was to divorce Turkey from a possible British alliance and have a weak neighbor in the future political map of the Balkans. Churchill first took direct action in preventing or cooling the Soviet wish concerning Turkey's entry into the war. He, then, turned against Stalin, who openly stated that Turks were unwilling to enter the war, and called them "crazy" in such insistence. His American counterpart, on the other hand stated that if the Turkish side had ever been persuaded in participating the war, they would surely have demanded much from the Allies, such as military equipment, which could not be met by the Allied economy of the war.

With reference to Turkey, General Brooke, from Britain, for instance, said that looking at Turkey from a military point of view and omitting all political considerations, Britain saw great military advantage in getting Turkey into the war. By this, he said, Britain had an opportunity of opening sea communications through the Dardanelles. By doing this, the position of Bulgaria and Rumania would become more difficult and the chances of getting them out of the war would be greatly increased. He also said that there would also be opening up the possibility of establishing a supply line to Russia through the Dardanelles.³⁴⁸ On the other hand, in the second plenary meeting on November 29,

³⁴⁷ **Ibid., p. 261.** Menemencioğlu informed the Ambassadors and Ministers accredited to Ankara of the line of policy which was adopted by the Turkish Government after his meeting in Cairo with Eden and was approved on November 17 by the Parliamentary group of the People's Party. *See also Editorial, "Turkey's Alliance with Britain: Reported Discussions," The Times, October 24, 1943., p. 3.*

³⁴⁸ **Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Conferences at Cairo and Tehran, 1943* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), p. 516.** For the records of the minutes in Teheran, *See*

Churchill said to Stalin that all were agreed on the question of Turkey's entrance into the war. If she refused, he added, then that was the end of it and if she would not join the war, the military needs would be slight and it would give Britain the use of the Turkish bases in Anatolia and the taking of the island of Rhodes which he felt could be done with one assault division. Once Rhodes was taken, the other Aegean islands could be starved out and the way opened to the Dardanelles. Churchill concluded that if Turkey declared war against Germany, it would be a terrible blow to German morale, would neutralize Bulgaria and would directly affect Rumania which even now had been seeking someone to surrender unconditionally to.³⁴⁹ Indeed, the British were very anxious to bring Turkey into the war and to undertake the Rhodes operation. They stated that this would result in opening the Straits.³⁵⁰

On November 28, Churchill also asked to his counters Roosevelt and Stalin that how should the Allies persuade Turkey to enter the war and in what manner? Should she provide the Allies with bases or should she attack Bulgaria and declare war on Germany or should she move forward or stay on the defensive on the fortified lines in Thrace? He later stated that it would not be necessary to consider how far the Allies could meet Turkey's request in the event that she agreed to enter the war. Stalin replied that Turkey was an ally of Great Britain and at the same time had relations of friendship with the United States and the Soviet Union who as friends could ask Turkey and indeed bring pressure to bear on her to carry out her obligations as an ally of Great Britain. He said that all neutrals considered belligerents to be fools and it was up to the countries represented here to show that the neutrals were the ones that were fools and that the Allies should prove to Turkey that if they stayed out of the war on the winning side that they were indeed the fools.³⁵¹

Churchill then came to his last point, which was again in reference to Turkey. He said that the British were ally of Turkey and that the British had accepted the responsibility of

also CAB 66/45/8, "Records of the Anglo-American-Russian Conversations in Tehran and of the Anglo-American-Turkish Conversations in Cairo," 7 January 1944., pp. 27 – 37.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 537-539.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 477.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 496. Stalin probably missed the fact that the Soviet Union had also been neutral from 1939 to mid-1941.

endeavoring to persuade or force Turkey into the war before Christmas. He said that he should certainly want all possible help from the U.S. and U.S.S.R. in accordance with the agreements made at the Moscow Conference. Churchill said that the British would go far in warning Turkey that her failure to enter the war would jeopardize her territorial and political aspirations, particularly with reference to the Dardanelles, when these matters were being discussed at the peace table. Churchill indicated that staffs had already discussed the military aspects of Turkey's entry into the war. He said, however, that the question was largely political since only two or three divisions of soldiers were involved. He again posed the question as to how the U.S.S.R. would feel about Bulgaria that if Turkey did enter the war against Germany, and Bulgaria helped Germany, the U.S.S.R. would regard Bulgaria as a foe? He felt that such a statement might have a great influence on Bulgaria's attitude because of her relationship with the Soviets. He suggested that the Foreign Secretaries study this matter, also particularly as to the methods to be used and the results which might be expected. He said that he personally felt that the results might well be decisive, particularly in their moral effect. He added that Turkey, being an ally of Germany in the last war and now turning against her, would have a profound effect on the remainder of the Balkans. He pointed to Rumania's desire to present an unconditional surrender at this time and to other indications of unrest in the Balkans, as evidence of the fact that Turkey's entry into the war would have a great effect. Stalin replied, as far as the question of the U.S.S.R. versus Bulgaria was concerned, as soon as Turkey came into the war, Russia could consider that the matter was closed. The U.S.S.R. would take of Bulgaria. He stated that if Turkey declared war against Bulgaria, the U.S.S.R. would declare war against Bulgaria. He, however, concluded very dramatically that even under these circumstances Turkey would not enter the war.³⁵²

By the end of Teheran Conference, no solid step had been taken. Only Britain spoke for transferring 17 air fleets to Turkey, but none of the participants spoke about supplying armed forces. Yet, all three was sure that Turkey would not let her air bases and space be used by the Allies. The Conference terminated with a common declaration, stating that:

³⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 544-545. *See also* CAB 65/40/18, "W.M. (45) 174th Conclusions: Report by Chief of the Imperial Staff," 22 December 1943., p. 92.

1. The Allies wish to see Turkey among them as the new ally by the end of the year 1943.
2. If Turkey finds herself in war with the Nazi Germany, and if, to that end, Bulgaria declares war against Turkey, the Soviets will declare immediate war against Bulgaria.
3. Therefore, Turkey's immediate entrance into the war on the side of the Allied forces will be her last chance to take part in the peace talks at the end of the war.³⁵³

In fact, for Turkey's positioning, the Teheran Conference was a turning point. Compelling Turkey to join the war was not only insisted by the British but also now adopted by the Soviets; they believed that the war would be finished sooner with the attendance of Turkey. "This was obviously a Soviet plan to force Turkey in yielding to a common Allied decision." But then Churchill started to reassess the Soviet interests about the Straits and declared that "If Turkey would enter the war, it would open up the Aegean Sea and assure an uninterrupted supply route to Russia into the Black Sea." Therefore, if Turkey opened up the Straits, the Soviets would become another menace to the British interests in the Mediterranean and the Suez Channel. Since the Soviet intention was openly revealed, the British intention in forcing Turkey into the war turned out to have been British strategies in making Stalin confess his ambition.³⁵⁴

11. 7. THE SECOND CAIRO CONFERENCE, DECEMBER 2-7, 1943

At the Teheran Conference, the Allied Powers having agreed "that from the military point of view, it was most desirable that Turkey should come into the war on the side of the Allies before the end of the year," a joint invitation was extended to the President of the Turkish Republic to attend a meeting in Cairo. President İnönü accepted this invitation and this acceptance implied a radical change in the attitude which had been adopted till then by

³⁵³ Baskın Oran et al., eds., *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar*, Vol I (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2006), p. 461.

³⁵⁴ Barry Rubin, *The Great Powers in the Middle East, 1941-1947: The Road to the Cold War*, (London: Frank Cass, 1980), p. 117.

Turkey; although technically and juridically she was still allied only to Britain, Turkey entered officially into direct contact with other allies, the United States and Russia and by so doing, she tacitly recognized that her relations with them were virtually on the same footing as those with Britain.³⁵⁵ As a result, İnönü went there on December 3, 1943 to meet the American President Roosevelt and Churchill. The Soviet representative, it was said, had been delayed and prevented from attending the meeting. So, discussions at first began between the three statesmen only.³⁵⁶

The first meeting started on December 4, at 5 p.m.³⁵⁷ After a brief interval, Churchill pointed out that he had assured the Turkish President and Government that the British Government would not invoke the alliance or ask the Turks to join the war unless and until such action could be taken without unfair risk for Turkey, for whom he had great regard. He now thought the moment had come when Turkey should very seriously consider associating herself with the great Allies. The dangers which had been present at the time of the Adana Conference had now very largely passed away. The advantages to Turkey from joining in the war would be permanent and lasting more particularly from the point of view of Turkish relations with Russia. He said that these were causing anxiety for Turkey but if Turkey accepted the invitation being put to her, Turco-Russian relations would be put on the best possible footing. Turkey would sit on the bench with Russia, America and the United Kingdom and the other United Nations. Turkey's great friend and ally felt, it would be a pity if she now missed her chance. In a few months, perhaps six, German resistance might be broken and Turkey if she did not accept the invitation now, might then find herself alone, not on the bench, but wondering about in Court. It would be dangerous if Turkey now missed the chance of joining the English speaking peoples numbering,

³⁵⁵ Editorial, "Turkey as an Ally, Significance of Cairo Talks: Steps to Fuller Partnership," *The Times*, December 11, 1943., p. 4.

³⁵⁶ Cevat Açıkalın, "Turkey's International Relations," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs)* 23/4 (1974): p. 486.

³⁵⁷ The participants were President Roosevelt, Mr. Hopkins, Mr. Stenhardt (USA), Prime Minister Churchill, Foreign Secretary Eden, Sir Alexander Cadogan, Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen, Air Vice Marshal George, Mr. Helm (United Kingdom), President İnönü, Foreign Minister Menemencioğlu, Mr. Anderiman (Turkey). Mr. Anderiman acted as an interpreter. See Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Conferences at Cairo and Tehran, 1943* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), 690. For the records of the minutes in Cairo; See also CAB 66/45/8, "Records of the Anglo-American-Russian Conversations in Tehran and of the Anglo-American-Turkish Conversations in Cairo," January 7, 1944., pp. 38 – 51.

excluding colored races, some two hundred million souls. There were risks either way. But if Turkey associated herself with the United Nations, she would also be associated with Russia, one of the strongest military Powers in the world, if not the strongest, at any rate in Europe and Asia. He added that President Roosevelt and he had been authorized by Stalin to assure President İnönü that if Turkey entered the war against Germany or if Germany attacked Turkey and Bulgaria took action, Russia would at once declare war against Bulgaria. President Roosevelt also remarked that Stalin had been very clear about that. The moment Bulgaria acted, he said, Russia would declare war.³⁵⁸

President İnönü replied that since the beginning, his country had taken a clear decision to stand beside those who were fighting the cause of the United Nations. She had been one of the first so to state her position clearly. The war had shown great fluctuations and difficulties but throughout Turkey had remained firmly anchored to her alliance with Great Britain and to the ideas which she postulated for the future of humanity. In this decision, Turkey had not been moved by any egotistical or personal interest. In connection with the object in view, it was equitable to think of the method which those who had provoked this war had used to convince their peoples-vengeance, etc. Turkey had been one of the greatest victims of the last war. From the first moment, however, she had decided firmly and seriously to collaborate with those who were fighting for the fraternity of peoples, and she had remained faithful throughout the years. These had not been without risks for Turkey. She had been alone and isolated. Great Britain had gone through a hard time and had fought gallantly. In her own way, Turkey had done her best and she sacrificed none of her principles. President İnönü continued that the situation had totally changed. He stated that so long as Turkey was not in the war, she was not in danger. He could not accept the thesis that there would be danger for Turkey in staying out. Turkey's attitude was not a matter for discussion. He added that Turkey knew her engagement and she had replied to the invitation. She wished to collaborate with her allies. She remained faithful to the principles which she had embraced from the first moment. The points which President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill had disclosed were of great importance. The Soviet engagement about Persia

³⁵⁸ Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Conferences at Cairo and Tehran, 1943* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), pp. 691-692.

and collaboration in connection with Bulgaria were of appreciable value. The Turkish reply of November 17th³⁵⁹ had re-affirmed Turkey's desire to collaborate. Naturally, Turkey had to state conditions, political and otherwise. But practical considerations, i. e., military needs etc., came before all others. Turkey was alone. If Germany declared war against her, the situation would be dangerous. Turkey was not prepared, he said. From the beginning of the war, there had been talk of preparation and help had come along sometimes quickly and sometimes more slowly. To a certain extent, this was fair. The Turks had asked for aero planes and tanks but these had often been refused. He then dealt with the past in order to arrive at one point. He had wanted to explain Turkey's entirely loyal attitude. The war might finish with or without Turkey's collaboration. In neither event would egotistical factors dominate. He had, of course, to pay attention to the interests of his country but Turkey remained faithful to her original decision of association with the common cause. Turkey wished to be with The Allies. But there was the practical side, and the practical difficulties must be resolved. Turkey was not prepared. He concluded that if the Allies were prepared to meet the minimum essential requirements of Turkey and if after these had been met, Turkey could be useful to the Allies, "We will come with you." He also said, however, that for him there was one practical point, i. e., the capacity to defend herself with the minimum indispensable requirements. It was essential that in the period of preparation the Germans should not be provoked. If the Allies had no confidence in Turkey, they would discuss future developments until the period of preparation was over. If they had confidence, they could discuss plans now.³⁶⁰

Roosevelt remarked that this was reasonable. Roosevelt enquired the position as regards anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns and was told that so far about 800 of the latter had been provided. Churchill immediately said that this was more than the United Kingdom had at the outbreak of war. İnönü replied that no doubt Turkey's allies sometimes asked themselves why they should go on sending supplies to Turkey if she was never going to come into the war. The Turks for their part complained that although they were not given

³⁵⁹ Here, the date refers to the Turkish declaration of entering the war in principle. See the aftermath events of the Eden-Menemencioglu meeting.

³⁶⁰ Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Conferences at Cairo and Tehran, 1943* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), pp. 692-695.

supplies, they were still asked to come into the war. It was a vicious circle. But Turkey could be gotten in for the last stage of the war if there were collaboration. He would be glad if the war were over in two months without Turkey acquiring any glory. He thought, however, that the war would last another year and there was therefore plenty of time for Turkey to help. Churchill said that it was most important that Turkey should decide to enter the war when her influence would be greatest and so take her place among the victorious nations. It was essential to shorten as much as possible the conflict which was costing so much in blood and treasure.

President İnönü said he could contemplate two things, (1) a plan of preparation involving supplies to Turkey and (2) a plan of collaboration. It was naturally essential that effective collaboration should be studied by the military experts and he hoped it would be studied on a big basis. What would suit Turkey best would be that she should fight side by side by British and American contingents in her own part of the world. The President and Mr. Churchill could however say that they had made their plans embracing the whole field of world operations and that Turkey's role was so and so. That he would understand. What he would not accept was a background of suspicion of Turkey's intentions and a demand to come into the war blindly with a statement that when Turkey had entered the war she would be told what her part was to be.

President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill vigorously disclaimed any such intention. Discussions could start now on the two stages indicated and Roosevelt said there was no question of Turkey being asked to come in and wait for a month or six weeks without any air protection. They contemplated building up that protection at once. When that had been done by a certain date, Turkey could come in without the risk of having İstanbul bombed to the ground. If President İnönü could accept this principle, the military authorities could take up the question and get ready. Churchill pointed out that this work was already in hand and he hoped that in a few weeks the preparations would be complete so that the air

bases could then be used for attacks on the German held islands. A programme could be arranged.³⁶¹

İnönü said that the period of preparation would be a delicate one in spite of all precautions. These precautions must, however, be taken and preparations made sincerely and seriously. He did not think that four or five or six weeks would be enough for the preparations but if in that time the anti-aircraft preparations were got ready, that would be something.

Churchill said that in six or seven weeks the anti-aircraft defenses could be in a good state. Moreover, in that time the strategic situation might have changed appreciably. There might, for instance, be a considerable change in the strategic situation as a result of the Russian advance towards Romania. He then said that he contemplated a programme somewhat in the following lines:

- 1) A declaration after the present Conference that Turkish policy had not changed.
- 2) A period of approximately six weeks during which material especially for anti-aircraft defense would be pushed into Turkey.
- 3) Immediately thereafter, the placing of British and American combat squadrons on the prepared air fields.
- 4) German protests and Turkey's diplomatic reply but steady continuation of reinforcement and preparation.
- 5) Reactions in the satellite countries-Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary. These reactions would be very important as they would dominate the attitude of Germany. Throughout this period, Turkey would continue to send supplies including chrome (but only a little) to Germany. The Germans would be afraid to push things too far. They would be afraid of the Turkish advance towards belligerency having the effect on Bulgaria of making her change sides.³⁶²

³⁶¹ **Ibid., pp. 695-696.**

³⁶² **Ibid., p. 697.**

The second tripartite meeting of the Heads of Government had been made on December 5, 1943, 3 p.m.³⁶³ Prior to the full meeting, President Roosevelt had been in Conference with the Turkish representatives.³⁶⁴ On the arrival of the British Ambassador at Ankara, but before the arrival of Churchill and Eden, President Roosevelt had explained what he had been saying to the Turks. Though he did not know what Churchill might say, it seemed to him that there could be three stages. He saw objection to dates for these stages though there should be a general date. In the first phase, he felt that the delivery of the Adana material,³⁶⁵ which he understood was considerably behind should be gotten on with as quickly as possible. Also in the first phase, the airfields and other defenses should be completed and mechanics etc. got into place. The aero planes themselves would only arrive in the last twenty four hours of this phase. Roosevelt's second phase would overlap the first. It was what he would call the cooperative period, during which he regarded as a real necessity the establishment of a small Anglo-Turkish-American Military Committee of three. General Wilson would be the obvious British representative and with him would be some American general and a high Turkish officer, probably an air officer. This committee would take care of many military developments for the next three four or five months. They would know all that was going on as regards military plans and activities, e. g., as regards Crete, Rhodes, etc. Then, according to President Roosevelt, there was the third phase-political. It was not necessary to have full conversations with the Americans or the British. But it was very necessary with the Russians. Roosevelt thought it would be a mistake to defer the political phase until everything else had been tied up. Now was the time to talk.³⁶⁶

³⁶³ The participants were President Roosevelt, Mr. Hopkins, Mr. Stenhardt (USA), Prime Minister Churchill, Foreign Secretary Eden, Sir Alexander Cadogan, Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen, General Wilson, Air Chief Marshal Douglas, Air Vice Marshal George, Mr. Helm, (United Kingdom), President İnönü, Foreign Minister Menemencioğlu, Mr. Açıkalın, Mr. Anderiman, Mr. Kavur, Mr. Turgut Menemencioğlu (Turkey). Mr. Anderiman acted as an interpreter. *Ibid.*, p. 711.

³⁶⁴ No minutes of this meeting have been found. The information set forth above is from the Log of the Conference. *Ibid.*, p. 658 and p. 711.

³⁶⁵ Presumably the material agreed upon at the Churchill-İnönü Conference of January 30, 1943 at Adana, to be furnished to Turkey; *See also Winston Churchill. The Second World War: The Hinge of Fate* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1950), p. 704 ff.

³⁶⁶ In a copy of these minutes in the Bohlen Collection, this sentence reads: "The Russians were now in a good mood and now was the time to talk." *See Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United*

President İnönü remarked that the practical side must be envisaged. If the Allies³⁶⁷ continued to insist on dates Turkey would be in the war in four or five weeks. It was not practical for Turkey to come into the war and for discussions then to start. He very much regretted that the Russians were not at the Conference. The Soviet Ambassador was helpless and it would have been most useful if the Russians could have been there so that they could realize that everybody was trying to help but that the method of fixed dates was impracticable.³⁶⁸

Churchill said that there was another factor. The Turks had not taken full advantage of the school and tuition opportunities offered to them and this had affected their ability to absorb the available material. İnönü reminded Churchill of his mark at Adana when inspecting newly arrived Hurricanes that they no longer regarded those as the most modern. They were in fact out of date. No doubt, imperative considerations had made it impossible to supply better planes. Churchill replied that the situation had greatly changed since Adana. In the interval, Italy had fallen and it had been necessary to take military supplies for the battle-fields in the Central Mediterranean. As a result, the Eastern Mediterranean had not received full supplies. Even so Turkish sea and railway transport had been fully engaged since Adana and the greater part of the Adana supplies had been delivered. The result was that today the Turks were much stronger than they had been at Adana.³⁶⁹

İnönü said that the position taken up by Churchill at Adana had been generous and comprehensible. The situation today was not so clear and in fact was not known. Frankly, he did not know what was required. Was it not possible to get out of the impasse? If a date was fixed for pushing Turkey into the war in the near future, e. g. in a matter of weeks, there would be an impasse. Was not the decision of Turkey to come into the war of some importance?

States: Conferences at Cairo and Tehran, 1943 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), p. 712.

³⁶⁷ The Bohlen Collection copy reads "If the Russians" instead of "If the Allies." *See Ibid.*, p. 712.

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 712-713.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 713-714.

Churchill said that it was fundamental and represented a new stage. The principle had been established and remained to study the method. İnönü remarked that the question of when Turkey would be ready was a practical one. It depended on preparation. Just before lunch, he had received a plan. (Eden remarked that this plan had been based on a telegram from Teheran).³⁷⁰ President İnönü went on to say that since Adana, 250 medium anti-aircraft guns had been delivered; of these about half were in use and the other half had arrived in recent months. The Turks were agreeable to giving them to British personnel to handle. He continued that the *Teheran Plan*, though something by itself, was not a sufficient preparation for the army. He had thought it a complete plan and it seemed to him to be only a semblance of preparation.³⁷¹

Churchill remarked that it was not as bad as that. It seemed to Churchill that first of all there should be the period of preparation. He hoped that this could begin at once. Throughout it transport facilities should be utilized to the maximum extent. Perhaps a period of six weeks would be required. Throughout this period everything would be camouflaged though the flow would steadily grow. But Turkish policy outwardly would be unchanged. No doubt the Germans would be suspicious but the development would go steadily on. Within six weeks, it ought to be possible to make considerable preparations against air attack. The second stage would then come; i. e. British and American aircraft would come to the fields prepared for them.³⁷²

İnönü said that the Turks must regard the day of the arrival of the aircraft as the declaration of war. They must regard the arrival of the Allied aircraft with the utmost seriousness and must count it as the beginning of a state of war with Germany.³⁷³

Later on, Menemencioğlu raised an issue by saying that there was one small point on which he hoped for agreement, namely that there were two questions: that of the period of

³⁷⁰ The plan and the telegram, presumably of British origin have not been found in the British Archives and in the United States files. However, the nature of the British plans for the infiltration of military personnel and supplies into Turkey is indicated in **Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Conferences at Cairo and Tehran, 1943* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), pp. 727, 751, 782.**

³⁷¹ **Ibid., p. 714.**

³⁷² **Ibid., pp. 714-715.**

³⁷³ **Ibid.**

preparation and that of the declaration of war. He considered that the entry of personnel would provoke war. The second stage would come with the arrival of squadrons for within a few days thereafter Turkey would be at war. It was necessary to separate these two points now. At the same time, it was, however, also necessary to begin preparations now.

Churchill remarked that the discussion seemed to have gotten into a difficult circle. He said that they were satisfied that no preparation could be effective without the introduction of personnel because of the danger of provoking Germany. Thus no preparation could be made against Germany being provoked. At this stage, the meeting was adjourned and on the resumption it was suggested that, before a further plenary meeting was held, a discussion should take place between small committee headed by Menemencioğlu, Eden and Hopkins.³⁷⁴



Source: <http://www.history.army.mil/books/wwii/sp1943-44/chapter16.htm>
President Roosevelt, President İnönü and Prime Minister Churchill.
Churchill seems to be a bit disappointed of the result.

³⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 718.

The third tripartite meeting of Heads of Governments had been made on December 6, 1943, at 6 p.m.³⁷⁵ The Turkish President said that he had been in contact with Churchill during the afternoon³⁷⁶ when essential points had been made. He thought however that one feature governed the solution of the whole question, namely the period for material preparation. After that, there came other phases. As the President now understood it, however, such a period of preparation was not envisaged, or rather that a mixed method was contemplated. This was a cardinal point.

Roosevelt thought in the first period Turkey would commit only neutral acts. She would receive equipment and material and men in mufti. Churchill remarked that in these conditions the Germans would not want to break up with Turkey. President İnönü said that for months Turkey would face the German army alone. He had not contemplated this. He had thought that when the Germans declared war, the Turks would be in touch with some Anglo-American forces. But in this period of months, the Turks would be alone with the Germans. This was a great question and İnönü did not think he could decide upon it.

Roosevelt remarked that he did not think that the Germans would declare war in the first period. İnönü replied that their record showed that the Germans always attacked for prevention. When they saw after a certain time that Turkey had taken her place openly with the Allies, they would use this argument and attack. Roosevelt pointed out that the Turks had already been receiving supplies on a considerable scale without the Germans taking exception thereto. Why then should the Turks worry now? In the first period, there would be no question of the Turks taking the kind of action which would justify the Germans

³⁷⁵ The minutes give the time of the meeting as 5 p.m. The Log, indicates that the meeting took place at 6 p.m. The participants were President Roosevelt, Mr. Hopkins, Mr. Stenhardt (USA), Prime Minister Churchill, Foreign Secretary Eden, Sir Alexander Cadogan, Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen, General Wilson, Air Chief Marshal Douglas, Vice Admiral Willis, Air Vice Marshal George, Mr. Helm, (United Kingdom), President İnönü, Foreign Minister Menemencioğlu, Mr. Açıkalın, Mr. Anderiman, Mr. Kavur, Mr. Turgut Menemencioğlu (Turkey). Mr. Anderiman acted as an interpreter. **Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Conferences at Cairo and Tehran, 1943* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), p. 740.**

³⁷⁶ There had also been a quadripartite meeting on the same day at 2:30 p.m. However, no official record of the conversation at this meeting has been found. The name of the participants were listed as: President Roosevelt, Mr. Hopkins, Colonel Elliott Roosevelt (USA), Prime Minister Churchill (United Kingdom), President İnönü (Turkey), Mr. Vinogradov (Soviet Union). **Ibid., p. 739.**

attacking them. Surely, the work on airfields and the introduction of material, flak, etc., i.e. the same sort of thing as had been going on in the past, could continue.³⁷⁷

İnönü said that the Turks had replied to Eden's request for air bases for the Allies. It has been said that the provision of these would not provoke war. The Turks had replied that they must regard the matter as very serious because they were convinced that it would provoke war. This meant contemplating Turkey's entry into the war. The Turkish army was not ready and the country was exposed to enemy air attack. They must therefore have assistance and there would have to be a period of preparation. According to the plan, action would begin at the end of this phase. He added that they were now in the first phase and he understood it was thought that preparation would take too long at a time when the Allies could not wait. The Allies seemed to think that the Turkish Government should act in spite of risks. This was difficult.

Eden said that a German attack was most improbable especially in view of the warning which Russia had promised to give to Bulgaria. İnönü replied that Turkey would be exposed to air attack and also to land attack by the Bulgarian army fortified by the Germans. Roosevelt doubted whether Bulgaria would face a hostile Russia. İnönü said that perhaps a hostile Russia would induce Bulgaria to hold back, perhaps it would not. He added that the present Bulgarian Government was completely committed to Germany. Roosevelt did not think that Bulgaria would declare war against Turkey and he doubted whether the Germans had enough men to stage a German land offensive against Turkey by the way of Bulgaria. İnönü thought, however, that the Germans would be able to get to İstanbul.³⁷⁸

During the last part of the conversations, President İnönü then said that the situation seemed to be that Turkey would intervene on 15th February (Roosevelt and Churchill at once contested this). There would be a period of preparation. What could the Allies give Turkey in two months? What could be carried? The Turkish General Staff would study

³⁷⁷ **Ibid., p. 741.**

³⁷⁸ **Ibid., p. 742.**

these points. But what would happen after February 15th? That, he presumed, would be the period of action.

Roosevelt said that it would not necessarily be the period of action. But from February 15th the Turks would be expected to do things which were no longer neutral. It meant that there would be two months before Bulgaria or Germany would attack and Churchill remarked that in that time Bulgaria might well be out of the war. İnönü wondered at what the level of preparations would be in two months. It could not be determined without study. Churchill said that this would be gone into in the further conversations. To the Turkish President's remark, he had no military experts with him. However, Churchill said that the Allies would say what they could put in.

President İnönü said that he would wait for this information. He could not say that whether it would be enough but he would take the information and return to Ankara. He also added that in three or four days he would be ready to reply. The decision would be taken on all facts. He stated that they found themselves in a situation which was fixed by time but he would see what could be provided within two months and the Turkish staff would offer their observations, including modifications and additions. And he concluded that he was forcing himself to try to find a possible situation in the Allied programme. He was doing so with the best will in the world. But he must make the position clear. So far the Turks had no material. A preparatory period of two months was now proposed to him. He had not said that this was enough. The Allies had the material and transport but he did not know how much was going to be available. He understood however that the main effort was to be concentrated on aviation material and personnel.³⁷⁹

And finally, the last meeting was held on December 7, 1943, in the morning.³⁸⁰ The agreed steps in the conference are in the following:

- 1) British experts should go to Ankara. This was agreed by the Turks.³⁸¹

³⁷⁹ **Ibid., p. 746.**

³⁸⁰ The participants were Prime Minister Churchill, Foreign Secretary Eden, Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen, (United Kingdom), President İnönü, Foreign Minister Menemencioğlu, Mr. Açıkalın (Turkey). **Ibid., p. 751.**

- 2) General Kazım Orbay and General Şefik Çakmak and a naval representative of the Turkish General Staff should come to Cairo. The Turks reserve their final answer to this question till their return to Ankara
- 3) Matters should then be followed up by the dispatch of more British officers to Ankara to continue the conversations.

15th February. Allies ask permission to “fly in”.

If reply negative.

Allies direct all resources to another theatre and must abandon hope of wartime cooperation with Turkey.

If reply “Yes”.

- 1) Continuation at fullest speed programme of import munitions for army and air.
- 2) Opening of the sea route to Turkey.
- 3) Reinforcement by British anti-tank and armored units.
- 4) Execution of agreed plan with full force of Allies and Turkey.³⁸²

Nevertheless, it appeared that the Turkish leaders were not completely disinterested to the discussions of the Allies. But the Turkish President generally underlined that to bear the indispensable combined German-Bulgarian assault, it was necessary to get a minimum supply of weapons for the first or three months and also highlighted that joint operations

³⁸¹ “In keeping with the arrangements made in Cairo, a British military mission arrived in Ankara in early January 1944, headed by Air Marshal Linnel. Linnel, however, soon reported that the Turks were not going to give up their claim to any of the material asked for in December 1943.” Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 166.

³⁸² Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Conferences at Cairo and Tehran, 1943* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), pp. 755-756.

and close cooperation were the needs. Cevat Açıkalın, for instance, stated that because of both the total insufficiency of the offered supplies for Turkey's main needs and the impossibility to enlighten the secret surrounding the joint military operations and cooperation, the results of the Cairo Conference were unfavorable. What the Turks wanted to know was simply where, when and how they would fight.³⁸³

Although some analysts usually argue about the Turkish attitude in the Cairo Conference that the Turkish strategy to warn the Western Allies of future Russian designs on Eastern Europe, now turned into concentration on purely logistical and military-tactical arguments to resist Allied demands while leaving their perceptions of the Soviet threat quietly in the background,³⁸⁴ seems to be contentious. The minutes of the conversations show that the Turkish authorities mentioned the Russian threat several times in the meetings. It is quite obvious that the lack of sufficient armament in the Turkish Army was also a valid reason for the Turks to disagree the American and British counterparts. As Cevat Açıkalın stated for instance:

At least seventeen divisions surrounded our borders, in the islands and in the Balkans (Bulgaria), equipped with the most up-to-date material. If, instead of combined operations, Turkey had declared war and entered it alone on this front without being equipped with a minimum standard of modern weapons, the destruction of the principal Turkish centers and towns would have been a question of minutes and the invasion of Thrace and Constantinople would have followed. Even in spite of the resistance of the Turkish Army which would have had to withdraw behind a strategic line of defense somewhere in Anatolia, the occupation by the Axis of Constantinople and the Straits, even temporarily, could only serve the interests of the German invader and eventually those of the

³⁸³ Cevat Açıkalın, "Turkey's International Relations," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs)* 23/4 (1974): p. 486. He was a famous Turkish diplomat.

³⁸⁴ See for example Edward Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1943-1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 185.

Power which would come as a liberator. Indeed, it seems that the question of joint operations in the Balkans was a very intricate problem at that time.³⁸⁵

The discussions mainly failed to give any positive results. There were “hard and sometimes bitter discussions,”³⁸⁶ each maintained his own point of view but the prevailing feature was an outstanding frankness.

³⁸⁵ Cevat Açıkalın, “Turkey’s International Relations,” *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs)* 23/4 (1974): p. 486.

³⁸⁶ Cevat Açıkalın said: “British soldiers never use ambiguous words, they never promise anything that they will not or cannot give. This is a very great virtue. In the excited and passionate atmosphere of those times, there were many who raised critical voices about Turkey’s attitude. Despite the failure of the negotiations to give the desired positive results, the existing machinery of Anglo-Turkish collaboration continued as before and I dare say that certain very substantial satisfactory results were recorded.” *Ibid.*, p. 487.

12. TURKEY IN THE FEAR OF ISOLATION, 1944

Upon İsmet İnönü's return from Cairo to Ankara, thousands in which there were Prime Minister Şükrü Saraçoğlu, the Council of Ministers, most of the members of the Grand National Assembly and a proportionate number of the Turkish bureaucracy that joyfully greeted him. A news conference was arranged soon after his arrival which carefully excluded Axis and pro-Axis newsmen, Menemencioğlu stated that they had returned to Ankara really very satisfied. He stressed the importance of being in cooperation with Allies, and he also confessed this cooperation was not all the time effective but "still valuable as we see at Cairo." A journalist suggested that without becoming a warrior, Turkey had entered the Allied Camp, and the Foreign Minister agreed. Another newsman asked about the relationship between Turkey and Russia. Menemencioğlu answered that the matter of Russia was on the top of the agenda in Cairo and the relationship started to be reinforced. He also said that the relations between Turkey and the Soviet Union was not different from the relation with Great Britain, they were both fine.³⁸⁷

However, this was true to the extent that; as the Turkish Government showed no signs of entering the war, the Allies raged more.³⁸⁸ Sir A. Clark wrote to Foreign Office on February 3, 1944, stating that he saw Stalin and told his strategies related to Turkey about which Stalin thought as right and justified. He asserted that no country knew the Turks better than his government. For instance, it was known that Von Papen was recently informed about what passed between it and the British Government.³⁸⁹ It was much afraid of being stampeded into a war against Germany. It feared too that British aircraft might

³⁸⁷ Edward Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1943-1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), pp. 219-220.

³⁸⁸ "The Ankara Embassy of Britain reported on February 21 that Menemencioğlu was encouraged to the point of telling Axis representatives in Ankara that, as long as he was at the Turkish Ministry, Turkey would not abandon neutrality." See Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 167. However, the Turkish Ambassador in London, Rauf Orbay, had told about Menemencioğlu that he was only a faithful servant and he did not determine policy. He stated that the final decisions would be taken by the Turkish President İsmet İnönü in conjunction with Marshall Fevzi Çakmak. See also FO 954/28, Microfilm Collection, Document Number: 419, "From Foreign Office to Angora," 21 December 1943.

³⁸⁹ "For example, on February 10th, S. Bennet reported from Ankara that it was felt that Menemencioğlu had given the Axis extensive information about Turco-British military talks." Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 167.

take a surprise landing on Turkish airfields. To prevent this, motor cars had been dotted about the airfields. That was the kind of Allies the Turks were. At the time when Turkey had thought Germany was going to win the war they had bound themselves not to fight against her. They could not now escape from this pledge. Stalin wondered whether it was enough to stop supplies and to tell the Ambassadors to become recluses. He thought as no explanation was to be given to Turkey, it would be better to recall the Ambassadors on leave of absence for a month or two for they would be embarrassed by questionings. Molotov, on the other hand, added that the screw should have been put on the Turks long ago, suggested the stopping of supplies would not make much difference. With this Stalin disagreed, saying that this would show that Russia were in earnest. He ended by saying that if the British Ambassador were recalled on leave of absence; he would get the Soviet Ambassador back to Moscow.³⁹⁰

12. 1. AN UNUSUAL BRITISH COOLNESS

Nevertheless, the recommendations by Stalin were not accepted by the British. However, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs issued a memorandum, dated the 4th April. The Memorandum concluded by making the following recommendations:

- 1) Britain should maintain her attitude of aloofness and the ban on arms supplies in order that the present satisfactory state of uncertainty in Turkish minds should continue. For this purpose, it was essential that no statement should be made in public or to the Turks about Britain's Turkish policy.
- 2) Britain should institute a rigorous economic warfare campaign aimed at the disruption of Turco-German trade. This policy would consist of (I) blockade measures, (ii) preemption, (iii) generous supply facilities for goods to the supply of which there was no economic warfare objection or which could exclude the Germans

³⁹⁰ FO 954/28, Microfilm Collection, Document Number: 422, "Sir A. Clark Korr to Foreign Office," 03 February 1944.

from the Turkish market or enable the Turks to ban exports of their goods to Germany.

- 3) We should strive to interrupt communications between Turkey and Germany.
- 4) We must obtain a due measure of agreement from the Soviet and United States Governments in this policy.³⁹¹

Eden said, in a meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street, that there had been important developments since the memorandum had been written. The Turkish Government had conducted commercial negotiations with Axis satellites and it had been decided that the British Ambassador at Ankara, acting in consultation with the United States Ambassador, should deliver a note to the Turkish Government to the effect that, in view of the rapidly approaching crisis in the war, when it was essential that the enemy should be deprived by all means of resistance, the two governments must revise their attitude towards Turkish trade relations with enemy powers. He also stated that it had been made plain that if the Turkish Government renewed existing agreements with Germany or her satellites or entered into fresh agreements on the same lines, the British would apply blockade measures such as had been applied throughout the neutral countries. He remarked that the Turkish Government, in reply, stated that collaboration on the lines now requested fitted in with Turkish Foreign Policy; and that within the limits of their material possibilities, they would give British the help for which she asked. The Minister of State said that in order to give effect to this policy; one of the main objects of which was to deprive Germany so far as possible of supplies of Turkish chrome; the British had to do two things: First, Britain had to buy Turkish products which would otherwise have gone to Germany. Secondly, Britain had to furnish Turkey with certain supplies essential for her economic life.³⁹²

³⁹¹ CAB 65/42/10, "Conclusions of a Meeting of the War Cabinet held at 10 Downing Street: Policy Towards Turkey," 19 April 1944., p. 240.

³⁹² Ibid., p. 240.

Indeed, the other reason behind this policy was the military advances in Italy, so the need was no longer so pressing.³⁹³ The British, instead, tried to find ways for a non-belligerent Turkey to shorten the war. With this purpose, making a start with an embargo on chrome, they tried to make all relations between Turkey and Germany end. For a while, the British presumed an unexpected coolness to Turkey. They cancelled their military mission and war supplies early in 1944. They warned Turkey in April 1944 that they would impose an embargo same as the ones imposed on other impartial ones if Turkey insisted to send strategic materials to Germany. The British was not alone in this warning, also the United States agreed with her.³⁹⁴

12. 2. TURKEY WAS NOW TAKING THE VITAL DECISIONS

This was the moment that Turkey feared about economical breakdown because of her tough endurance against meeting the demands of the Allies. Furthermore, her biggest concern was the empowering Soviet Union and United States, and their main hope of protection against it was support from the Western Allies in whose willingness they must remain.³⁹⁵ So, the first enforcement came with the cease of the all chrome export to

³⁹³ By the end of summer, the Soviets still expected Turkey to come into war. When the Soviet Ambassador in London, Fedor Tarasovich Gusev, gave an enclosed aide-memoire to Eden wishing that Turkey should join the war, Eden explained to him that the expected breaking off of relations between Turkey and Germany would be at least be a long step towards the entry of Turkey into the war and that once Turkey had committed herself so far, the British, the Americans, and the Russians could then consider whether they wished Turkey to take the next step and, if so, whether they were prepared to pay any price in order to induce her to do so. He added that the advantage of inducing her to break off relations was that the Allies could get this at once without any of the long haggling about the supply of air squadrons and war material and military co-operation, which would certainly ensue if and when they asked Turkey actually to go to war. On the other hand, he said, the rupture of relations would, they hoped, produce an important moral effect throughout the Balkans. He also warned Mr. Gusev that they must face the fact that if the Turkish Government were asked to come into the war, the Allies, in view of their commitments in Italy, be unable to give the Turks an appreciable assistance either in men, aircraft or war material and it was in these circumstances might indeed lead to disappointing results. **FO 954/28, Microfilm Collection, Document Number: 450, "A Briefing Telegram from Eden to Sir A. Clark Kerr," 08 July 1944.** Churchill had also written a personal letter to President Roosevelt saying that the British, in fact, had no weapons to supply and to meet Turkey's demands. **FO 954/28, Microfilm Collection, Document Number: 457, "From Prime Minister Churchill to President Roosevelt," 14 July 1944.** Indeed, the British arguments that were now used against the Soviets and the Americans, corroborates İnönü's words in Cairo. *See also the Second Cairo Conference.*

³⁹⁴ Annette Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 37.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.

Germany. On March 18, President Roosevelt sent a telegram to Churchill saying that he had sent a message to the Turkish President and warned him by emphasizing:

By the capture of Nikopol the Russians, as you are aware, have succeeded in denying to the Germans an important source of manganese. The Turkish chrome ore for many purposes can be substituted for manganese and the denial to the Germans of manganese from Nikopol therefore multiplies the importance to the German war key. It is obvious that it has now become a matter of grave concern to the United Nations that large supplies of chrome ore continue to move from Turkey to Germany. How the Germans can be denied further access to Turkish chrome ore can best be decided by you. I know of your inventive genius and I hope you will find some method of accomplishing this. It is my firm belief that you will recognize this opportunity for a unique contribution to what really is the welfare of the world to be made by Turkey. There is no need to tell you how very happy I was in your talks in Cairo,³⁹⁶ and I feel that now you and I can talk to each other as old friends. Please accept all my good wishes. I am counting on our meeting again in the near future. A similar telegram is being sent by me to Marshall Stalin.³⁹⁷

Finally, on April 20, 1944, just after Huggesen and Steinhardt confronted Menemencioğlu with notes of protest against the chrome shipments to Germany on April 19, the Turkish Foreign Minister announced that all chrome exports to Germany would stop. “It was the first time that the Allies had twisted Turkey’s arm on this issue and the reason was clearly

³⁹⁶ In Cairo, Roosevelt was strongly impressed by İnönü’s personality – although the English for their part did everything to prevent a special personal exchange of views between İnönü and Roosevelt. *See for example* FO 195/2594, “File: German Reports, Report by Dr. Leverkuehn on the Discussions between Churchill, Roosevelt and İnönü,” 1944.

³⁹⁷ FO 954/28, Microfilm Collection, Document Number: 429, “A Briefing Telegram from Foreign Office to Washington,” 18 March 1944.

related to the fact that Turkey's export to Germany had increased from 23 percent to 78 percent within a single year."³⁹⁸

While Turkey-British relations thus weakened and the Turks started to try to grasp something about Soviet purposes and to succeed better relations with Russia, as it was persisted at the Cairo meeting by Roosevelt and Churchill.³⁹⁹ Thus, a secret organization in Turkey that acted according to the *Pan-Turkist* movement was officially revealed and prosecuted.⁴⁰⁰ To satisfy especially the Soviet Union, the Turkish Government saw it as a necessity to take some precautions to exclude some Nazi sympathizers from official duty. Fevzi Çakmak was the first one who was forced to resign from the post of Chief of General Staff by İnönü. And then same situation happened to Numan Menemencioğlu,⁴⁰¹ the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The two open letters about corruption of the Saraçoğlu Government written by a leading *Pan-Turkist* Nihal Atsız made it possible for the Turkish Government to capture all leading figures of Turkism on May 1944.

In accordance with this policy, on March 15, 1944 the *Varlık Vergisi* was repealed and all related penalties were abolished. Moreover, after the passage of some small German warships disguised as commercial vessels were protested by the British, Turkey was agreed that the Straits was closed to all German ships written off.⁴⁰² And finally, when it

³⁹⁸ Gül İnanç, "The Politics of 'Active Neutrality' on the Eve of a New World Order: The Case of Turkish Chrome Sales during the Second World War," *Middle Eastern Studies* 42/6 (2006): p. 913.

³⁹⁹ Edward Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1943-1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 228.

⁴⁰⁰ Annette Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 39.

⁴⁰¹ For a while, Prime Minister Şükrü Saraçoğlu acted as a Foreign Minister. Then, Hasan Saka became as the new Foreign Minister of Turkey on September 13, 1944.

⁴⁰² "Early in April 1944, the departure from İstanbul of two Merchant ships likely to be used for the evacuation of German troops from the Crimea, was prevented; in June the passage of unarmed German barges, which in previous instances had been armed on entering the Aegean, was forbidden; and in the same month, following the resignation of Numan Menemencioğlu, suspected of facilitating the passage of German transport vessels containing concealed holds filled with guns, mines and munitions, assurances were given by Saraçoğlu, who took over as Foreign Minister, that Turkey would do nothing further to help the Germans." A. L. Macfie, "The Turkish Straits in the Second World War, 1939-45," *Middle Eastern Studies* 25/2 (1989): p. 245.; See also Annette Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 39.

was demanded from Turkey to stop all diplomatic relations with the Nazi Germany by the American and the British, Turkey made the crucial decision achieved on August 2, 1944.⁴⁰³

Prime Minister and Acting Foreign Minister, Saraçoğlu, stated in his speech in the Grand National Assembly on August 2 that the break in diplomatic relations merely reflected the established lines of Turkish policy. He said throughout the war, Turkey had never led an impartial policy but had been on the side of Great Britain. The British and the United States Governments had now demanded the specific step on Turkey's part that she would consent. Saraçoğlu underlined that it was "only" a demand and a recognizance that the British had accepted to help the Turks overcome the economic losses that still continued as a result of the break in relations. Assembly was informed about the happiness of the British about the decision of Turkey by Prime Minister and it was assured to the delegates that this was not a decision for war. 411 delegates out of 492 in the Assembly voted for the resolution that the leading members of the Parliamentary Group of the RPP moved.⁴⁰⁴

Perhaps, the success of Allies in the war was the other reason for Turkey to take action. For example, the cross-Channel assault had finally started and British and American penetration into Northwestern Europe seemed undoubtedly achieved by September. Furthermore, by November 1, the British establishment in Greece had been made and contribution to partisans under Tito to remove German troops had been made. Also Soviet advances were as effective as this. By late September, both Finland and Romania had capitulated. Hungary was assaulted by the Soviet army in early October and Hungarian

⁴⁰³ Murat Metin Hakkı, "Surviving the Pressure of the Superpowers: An Analysis of Turkish Neutrality During the Second World War," *An Electronic History Journal* 3 (2007): p. 59.; See also Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 173.; Interestingly, Cevat Açıkalın had given the date as February 1944. Cevat Açıkalın, "Turkey's International Relations," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs)* 23/4 (1974): p. 487. On the other hand, Von Papen warned Turkey by saying that: "In very serious terms that such a breaking of relations as is planned under pressure of the United Kingdom would deprive Turkey, finally, of her freedom of action which up to now has been jealously guarded by her as a proud nation. The United Kingdom undoubtedly means that this step shall force Turkey to enter the war, as demanded by Britain, which would bring with it momentous consequences for the country." Editorial, "Balkan Satellites and Turkey: Dread of a Rupture," *The Times*, August 1, 1944., p. 3.

⁴⁰⁴ Edward Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1943-1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), pp. 272-273.; See also T.B.M.M. Zabıt Ceridesi (Tutanak Dergisi) (The Proceedings of the Turkish Grand Assembly), Devre VII (Seventh Assembly), 02 August 1944, pp. 1, 5, 6.

Government immediately called for cease firing whereas the fight for Poland did not end quickly. Soviet forces tarried along the Vistula for three months; September, October, November while Poles and Germans were in bloody battle. Almost no resistance left in Poland when Soviet occupation forces came to Warsaw in December.⁴⁰⁵

12. 3. RUSSIA: LEAVE TURKEY ALONE

On the other hand, because the hatred increased in Russia, an agreement including the guarantee in Balkans was suggested to Russia by Turkey to provide closer political association. But Russians were not influenced by any of these precautions.⁴⁰⁶ Perhaps, the reason for the Russian anger would be best understood by Stalin's letter to Churchill on July 15th, 1944. Stalin said:

The question of Turkey should be considered in the light of those facts which have been well known to the Governments of Great Britain, the Soviet Union and the United States of America from the time of the negotiations with the Turkish Government at end of last year. You, of course, will remember how insistently the Governments of our three countries proposed to Turkey that she should enter the war against Hitlerite Germany on the side of the Allies as long as on November and December of 1943. Nothing came of this. As you know, on the initiative of the Turkish Government in May – June of this year, we again entered into negotiations with the Turkish Government and twice we proposed to them the same thing that the three Allied Governments had proposed to them at the end of last year. Nothing came of this either. At the present time, I see no benefit in them for the Allies. In view of the evasive and vague attitude with regard to Germany adopted by the Turkish Government, it is better to leave Turkey in peace and to her own free will and not to exert fresh pressure on

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 274.

⁴⁰⁶ Annette Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 39.

Turkey. This, of course, means that the claim of Turkey who has evaded war with Germany, to special rights in post-war matters also lapse.⁴⁰⁷

12. 4. THE MOSCOW CONFERENCE, OCTOBER 9-18, 1944

Increased Soviet hostility toward Turkey had been readily apparent in the 1944 summer.⁴⁰⁸ In July 1944, for instance, “the Russians had complained the Western Allies’ proposal for Turkey merely to break off diplomatic relations with Germany and did not confirm to the earlier agreement at Moscow.” It was stated that without Russian consent the British had broken an agreement and from now on it was not a responsibility of the Soviet Union to act jointly with Turkey related Western Powers. All counter offers to an obvious announcement of war came too late and Turkey would be left on its own by the Russians.⁴⁰⁹ In particular, Stalin was also against Turkey to have power to decide upon the closure of the Straits in time of threat of war.⁴¹⁰ What precisely the Russians wanted regarding the Straits was the revision of the Montreux Convention.

Between Churchill, Stalin and Molotov, an attempt of achieving movement on the Straits matter came to the table at the meetings in Moscow between 9 and 18 October. It was not an issue any more after Nazi Germany ended because the Allies competed against one another to Berlin. In the first discussions, Stalin stated Russian assertion for a new regime more forcefully than he had a year before,⁴¹¹ and it was accepted that “it was a right and

⁴⁰⁷ FO 954/28, Microfilm Collection, Document Number: 458, “A Briefing Telegram from Foreign Office to Moscow,” 17 July 1944.

⁴⁰⁸ “By the time, Romania and Bulgaria were invaded by the Soviet Union and the Greece was occupied by the British. At the end of October, Bulgarian forces were finally withdrawn from occupied Salonika and Eastern Yugoslavia. The command to depart was issued by the Soviets as a result of an agreement between them and the British that was arranged during the Churchill’s visit to Moscow, October 9-18. Churchill and Stalin agreed that the Bulgarian Government would evacuate its troops and that the Russians would be given the dominant voice in Bulgarian affairs. What particularly alarmed the Turks was the possibility of a synthesis between Bulgarian irredentism and Soviet supported communist aggression.” Edward Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1943-1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), pp. 278-282.

⁴⁰⁹ Annette Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 38.

⁴¹⁰ A. L. Macfie, “The Turkish Straits in the Second World War, 1939-45,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 25/2 (1989): p. 245.

⁴¹¹ See Teheran Conference.

moral assertion that Russia did” by the British Prime Minister. Churchill wanted Eden to tell the changes he kept in mind on Montreux and also wanted Stalin to tell Washington the things that he kept in mind. Stalin answered that for the moment he had not any specific thoughts, however in good time constructive suggestions would be made. As it seemed, arbitrator attitude of Churchill on the Straits subject did not make the British Foreign Minister, Eden glad. After the initial discussion, Eden drew up a minute for Churchill and mentioned that there were two negotiating sides to maintain her position in South-Eastern Europe – the first one was the Anglo-Turkish Alliance and the other one was the age-old British opposition to Russian passion about the Straits. One of the main elements in the alliance was the resemblance of interest between Britain and Turkey in the issue of the Straits, and so giving up this issue would mean, in some ways, giving up the Anglo-Turkish Alliance. Consequently, in the second meeting on 17 October, Churchill was more attentive about the subject and stated that it was a necessity to compromise between Russian desires and Turkish territorial integrity and freedom.⁴¹²

Contemporaneously, long lasting British defense necessities against the possible Soviet threat was what the CoS drew attention to in their report on June 1944. The CoS reported that when the war ended, the Russians would be the main land power in Europe and Asia. They also stated that crucial British strategic benefits after the war could be endangered by the Soviets: first, oil supplies of Middle East in Iraq and Persia; second, British communication in the Mediterranean over Turkey; last, important sea communications. So, the CoS deduced that to guarantee US’ support against such threats in the region, the British policy should be directed.⁴¹³

Moreover, the JIC believed that post-war Russia would try to preserve the Black sea as a Russian lake and to keep the movement through the Straits under control to protect Ukraine and Soviet shipping. Only, spreading largely on the either sides of [the Straits] *and*

⁴¹² Mustafa Sıtkı Bilgin and Steven Morewood, “Turkey’s Reliance on Britain: British Political and Diplomatic Support for Turkey against Soviet Demands, 1943-47,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 40/2 (2004): p. 30. Referring to the Moscow Conference, Selim Deringil ends his chapter, *The Turkish Gambit: 1944*, with a strong argument by stating, “now Turkey had to prepare to deal with the results of his mistakes.” See Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 177.

⁴¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

of base controlling the sea routes through the Aegean could guarantee the full control. Despite the fact that FO still attributed those ambitions to German propaganda, Molotov had sought these bases in 1940. Opposition of Britain to Russia about her assertion for bases had been suggested by the Joint Planners and PHPS. However, they were also suspicious about the necessity for the security of Russia to have such a large territory; if she had air and naval dominance over the Black Sea and if Turkey had not got any close relation with any other power or powers. It was now a contradiction that Soviet passage through the Straits could be confined by the British air and naval bases, however British shipping notwithstanding the status of Turkey, was threatened in the same way by Soviet bases in Bulgaria, whereas both sets of bases were open to attack.⁴¹⁴

⁴¹⁴ Nicholas Tamkin, *Britain, Turkey and the Soviet Union, 1940-45: Strategy, Diplomacy and Intelligence in the Eastern Mediterranean* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 169-170.

13. TURKEY DECLARES WAR, 1945

13. 1. THE CRIMEAN (YALTA) CONFERENCE, FEBRUARY 4-11, 1945

The three powers had arranged some meetings in 1945 in order to constitute the postwar political structure after years of massacre. The first meeting was arranged at Yalta⁴¹⁵ (the Crimean Conference; as it was officially called), that has obtained the public imagination. “It is immortalized by the photograph of Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin, taken in the Livadia Palace on February 10, 1945 – Churchill smoking his cigar, Roosevelt haggard, a cigarette in his left hand, Stalin composed, with folded hands.”⁴¹⁶



Source: Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: The Conferences at Malta and Yalta, 1945* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1955), reproduced after p. 546.

Folded hands of Stalin are obviously the sign for his willingness about the revision of the Montreux Convention. It was irresistible for Stalin as he strongly stated “a small state like Turkey could keep a hand on the throat of a large country like Russia.” Stalin was now telling that it should not be the initiative of Turkey to let ships of Russia to pass through

⁴¹⁵ However, Churchill remarked beforehand, “If we had spent ten years on research, we could not have found a worse place in the world.” See Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: The Conferences at Malta and Yalta, 1945* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1955), p. 39.

⁴¹⁶ Robin Edmonds, “Yalta and Potsdam: Forty Years Afterwards,” *International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-), 62/2 (1996): p. 197.

the Straits. He discussed that a new regime similar to the Suez Canal should be constituted.⁴¹⁷

In response, Churchill explained that Britain was in sympathy with the revision of the treaty and added that the British certainly felt that the present position of Russia with their great interests in the Black Sea should not be depended on the narrow exit. However, he proposed the matter be taken up at the next meeting of Foreign Ministers. He also suggested that Turks be informed that this was being considered and that they be given an assurance that their independence and integrity would be respected. With regard to the proposal that they immediately informed the Turks of what was afoot, Stalin remarked that it was impossible to keep anything secret from the Turks and that such assurance should be expressed.⁴¹⁸ In the end, “it was agreed that the revision of Montreux should be discussed in London at the first meeting of foreign ministers.”⁴¹⁹

The other matter that Stalin drew attention to was the admission of States into the United Nations. President Roosevelt proposed that the status of an Associated Nation should be given to only those nations that had already declared war on Germany and set a deadline, March 1945, for states that had not decided whether or not to declare war. Stalin approached Turkey’s situation by saying, some nations were “hesitated and speculated on being on the winning side.” Churchill, on the other hand, supported Turkey by saying that if a declaration was made by a large group of uncommitted nations at this time, Germany would be affected morally. Turkey’s candidacy would not be adopted with unanimous approval and insisted that Turkey had accepted to be ally with them at a very troubling time but after the war had adopted an attitude that she would not keep up with modern war and her attitude had been friendly and more cooperative, even though she had not taken the

⁴¹⁷ A. L. Macfie, “The Turkish Straits in the Second World War, 1939-45,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 25/2 (1989): p. 245.; See also, *Foreign Relations of the United States: The Conferences at Malta and Yalta, 1945*, United States Government Printing Office, Washington, 1955, p. 903.

⁴¹⁸ Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: The Conferences at Malta and Yalta, 1945* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1955), pp. 904, 910, 916.; Also see Edward Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1943-1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), pp. 300-301.

⁴¹⁹ Mustafa Sıtkı Bilgin and Steven Morewood, “Turkey’s Reliance on Britain: British Political and Diplomatic Support for Turkey against Soviet Demands, 1943-47,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 40/2 (2004): p. 31.

opportunity given a year ago to join the war. As Stalin said, if by the end of February, she declared war on Germany, she would be invited to the Conference. Churchill greeted this contently.⁴²⁰ On February 20, 1945, Sir Maurice Peterson informed the Turkish Foreign Minister Hasan Saka of the Yalta Decision on March 1, deadline for a declaration of war on the Axis, if she was to be invited to the United Nation Conference. Accordingly, on February 23, 1945, Turkey declared war on Germany and Japan.⁴²¹ Making a participation in the United Nations Conference on International Organization at San Francisco and giving placate to the Allies were the actual reason of the decision.⁴²²

13. 2. THE SOVIET NOTE OF MARCH 19, 1945

Surprisingly on March 19, 1945, the Turkish-Soviet Treaty on Friendship and Neutrality of December 17, 1925 was announced on the day which Molotov received Selim Sarper and told him that he was highly content with the treaty of 1925 and added that the treaty played a key role in the friendship between the two countries and contributed to the process as well. However, he also stated that during the Second World War important changes took place; therefore the treaty needed a revision to keep up with the changes. The treaty was concluded in 1925, so Molotov pointed out and during that time, the Soviet Union had no treaty with Great Britain, or did not have any diplomatic affairs with the United States. The Turkish Government applied to USSR with a suggestion including work on the preparation of a new mutually beneficial treaty on April 4, as a reply to Molotov's statement of March 19. A promise was made by the Turkish Government that they would thoroughly consider proposals from the Soviets and they showed readiness for cooperation.⁴²³ Moreover, she showed restraint regarding this step of the Soviets. At first, the Turkish Government counted on insignificant changes in the treaty and some amendments to the Montreux

⁴²⁰ Edward Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1943-1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), pp. 299-300.; Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: The Conferences at Malta and Yalta, 1945* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1955), p. 774., for the provisions concerning Turkey, see p. 944.

⁴²¹ Selim Deringil argues that at this date, the Turkish declaration of war was clearly symbolic as the Soviet Armies were within 50 kilometers of Berlin and the Anglo-American forces were nearing Cologne. Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 178-179.

⁴²² Edward Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1943-1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 303.

⁴²³ Jamil Hasanli, *Stalin and the Turkish Crises, 1945-1953* (Marland: Lexington Books, 2011), p. 45.

Convention. American Ambassador Stenhardt wrote to the Secretary of State Byrnes on March 21, 1945 about the information he had gained from a senior official of the Turkish Ministry. He said to the Ambassador that the Turks did not want to condemn Russia for its unwillingness to see Japan being the participants of the Straits Convention. The Ambassador believed that the Straits regime would be reconsidered by the Russians at the appropriate time and that the Turkish Government would not accept their approaches otherwise. The Soviet *demarche* as preparation for the next meeting of the allied Ministers of Foreign Affairs,⁴²⁴ and also means of making pressure on Turkey about the issue of the Straits were justly evaluated by Steinhardt. This political pressure was deliberate “Russian tactics” according to the Ambassador.⁴²⁵

However, no further deterioration in relations indicated in a meeting at San Francisco between Molotov and Turkish Foreign Minister Hasan Saka, and Saka believed that no solid propositions belonged to the Soviets for a new Soviet-Turkish treaty or Straits convention. Preventions showed that anxieties about Iran continued and the war gave damage to the nerve on Turkey. With the replacement of Roosevelt by President Truman, on the other hand, the international role played by the USA encouraged Turkey. Although the American approaches during 1944 created fright among the Turks, for Açıklan, United States undertook the leadership of resistance. Doubts of British interests were still there, yet Açıklan assumed that on certain questions, Britain would adopt an uncompromising attitude and was sure that according to their thought Turkey was an essential link among the States that formed a chain of solidarity in the Mediterranean. With these puzzling out, it was shown that Turkey relied on Anglo-American support and made an assist to the careful British reaction when Soviet claims on Turkey were advanced in June 1945.⁴²⁶

⁴²⁴ See Crimean (Yalta) Conference.

⁴²⁵ Jamil Hasanli, *Stalin and the Turkish Crises, 1945-1953* (Marland: Lexington Books, 2011), pp. 45-46.

⁴²⁶ Nicholas Tamkin, *Britain, Turkey and the Soviet Union, 1940-45: Strategy, Diplomacy and Intelligence in the Eastern Mediterranean* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 174.

13. 3. SOVIET DEMANDS ON TURKEY AND BRITAIN'S REACTION, JUNE 1945

Stalin saw an opportunity and took advantage of the Turkish *demarche* to further advance his maximum or ideal terms for a Soviet-Turkish treaty, getting back to the ambition being inactive since 1941. On June 8, Molotov and Sarper met **and it** was stated bluntly by Molotov that for the sake of the Soviet Union and Soviet military bases in the region of the Straits, Straits' reconsideration was to compel a new regime. "This had been Molotov's demands of Hitler and Ribbentrop in November 1940, the revival of which had been suspected by the Turks since the autumn of 1944. Molotov also sought the return of Kars and Ardahan, ceded to the Ottoman Empire under the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk⁴²⁷ and retained by Turkey following protracted negotiations in 1921.⁴²⁸ "The Turks, on the other hand, noted that the Soviet demands were well timed. American and Soviet troops were embracing on the Elbe and the Soviets were the heroes of Stalingrad. Turkey, by contrast, was cast in the role of a selfish country imputing evil intentions to the Russian heroes."⁴²⁹

However, the Turks were not deserted and unexpectedly almost immediately after the war the problems between the British and the Turks were removed. The British Government discussed that "explicit promises" given by Stalin at Yalta to respect the sovereign integrity of Turkey were remised by Russians and forced the United States to make "firm representations" to the Soviet Government on June 18, the day of the second Sarper-Molotov conversation. One of the unrealized fears that Turks bore was to be sacrificed by Great Britain to split up Europe with the Russians into spheres of influence did not materialize. The Soviet purposes were known by the British and so the British growingly supported Turkish interests.

⁴²⁷ A peace treaty signed on March 3, 1918, at Brest-Litovsk (now Brest, Belarus) marking Russia's exit from World War I. Kars, Ardahan and Batum (later given to Russia again) were to be returned to the Ottoman State.

⁴²⁸ Nicholas Tamkin, *Britain, Turkey and the Soviet Union, 1940-45: Strategy, Diplomacy and Intelligence in the Eastern Mediterranean* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 175.

⁴²⁹ Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 180.

The disagreements between Soviet and American-British about their interest and policies became quickly drawn at Potsdam. “By the time, the Truman Doctrine was enunciated; Greece and Turkey had become the focal point of East-West confrontation.” So the United States was compelled to adopt the leading role in protecting Western interest against Soviet expansionist aims. And these aims were much clearer about the Turkey. Although “hand with the Turks” was demanded and received at Casablanca by Churchill, now there was no one except from the Americans to share this role.⁴³⁰

13. 4. CONFERENCE OF BERLIN (POTSDAM), 16 JULY TO AUGUST 2, 1945

The “Tripartite Conference of Berlin” (as it was officially called in the Conference Communiqué), otherwise known as “Terminal,”⁴³¹ the Berlin Conference, and the Potsdam Conference, was in reality a complex of bilateral, tripartite, and quadripartite meetings, both formal and informal, involving United States, British, Soviet, and Polish officials of various levels and in various combinations.⁴³² It was again in Potsdam that the Soviet demands concerning the Straits, bases in Turkey and the Eastern border of Turkey were brought to the negotiation table. This time, the Soviets were definitely expecting to be given the right of opening her bases along the Straits. Such an attempt was evaluated by the Great Britain and the USA as Russia’s intention to descend to the Mediterranean, which would be a disaster. Moreover, Stalin was also demanding Kars and Ardahan which were ceded to Turkey in 1921. It was obvious that the Soviets were pushing their intentions of descending to the south, to the Mediterranean through the Straits in the west, and to the Middle East through Kars and Ardahan in the east. These demands were ringing the bells of oncoming crises.

⁴³⁰ Edward Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1943-1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), pp. 316-318.

⁴³¹ The code name for Potsdam suggesting the termination of the war with a declaration of ‘Unconditional Surrender’ of the Axis. See Stephen E. Ambrose, *The Good Fight: How World War II Was Won* (New York: Atheneum Books, 2001), p. 80.

⁴³² Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Conference of Berlin, 1945* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1960), p. XIII.



Source: <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/photographs/view.php?id=13342> *Left to right: Prime Minister Churchill, President Truman, Marshal Stalin.*

At Potsdam, in detail, the Soviets presented a proposal providing for the revision of Montreux Convention, for the control of the Straits by the Soviet Union and Turkey alone and for the establishment of Soviet bases on the Straits. Stalin said that they considered the Montreux Convention to be inimical to Russia in that it left Turkey free to block the Straits whenever she thought she was threatened. This meant that a small state had a great state by the throat and was a situation which would not be permitted by the United States in Panama or by Britain in the Suez. It was essential that Soviet shipping be able to pass to and from the Black Sea safely and Turkey was too weak to guarantee such passage in case complications arose. If it was thought that the Soviet naval bases in the Straits would be unacceptable to the Turks, then the Soviets should have some other nearby base where the Russian fleet could refuel and where in cooperation with its allies it could protect the Straits. He did not consider a mere international guarantee of the freedom of the Straits to be adequate and was not sure that Turkey would accept such international control. The Soviets pointed out that international control of this kind was not applied to the Suez Canal. As to other phases of Soviet-Turkish relations, the Soviets maintained that the Turks had taken the initiative in seeking a treaty of alliance since such a treaty would involve a mutual guarantee of frontiers. The Soviets have replied that they could not enter into such an alliance as long as Kars and Ardahan, which had been snatched from the

Soviet Union, remained part of Turkey. This would not have raised this territorial question if the Turks had not asked for a treaty of alliance. They insisted that the Turks had no reason to be alarmed as to Soviet intentions. They maintained that they had only 30.000 troops in Bulgaria which were far less than the Turks had on their European frontier. The one point on which the Soviets seemed to be adamant in connection with Turkey was for some arrangement which would give them effective control of passage through the Straits in time of war or emergency.⁴³³

The British exhibited grave anxiety in regard to Soviet intentions vis-à-vis Turkey. They first raised the question at the Conference and asked the Soviets for a statement of their intentions. Churchill expressed himself as quite willing to support a revision of the Montreux Convention with the participation of all the parties to that Convention except Japan. He stated that he felt it perfectly proper that there should be free passage of the Straits for Russian as for all other ships in time of war as in time of peace. He appeared to be strongly opposed to the establishment of Soviet bases on the Straits, though he couched his argument chiefly in terms of his belief that the Turks would never consent to such bases. He made it clear that the British would support the Turks in protection of their legitimate rights. He urged strongly that the Soviets not to take any action which would frighten the Turks, pointing out that the recent conversations in Moscow coupled with the presence of large numbers of Russian troops in Bulgaria had served to frighten the Turks. He seemed willing to support some form of international control of the Straits if that should prove to be a satisfactory means of settling the difficulty. In response to a remark by Molotov that there was no such international control of the Suez Canal, Churchill replied that the Suez was open to all ships of all nations at all times and that protection was maintained in accordance with a treaty freely concluded between Britain and Egypt.⁴³⁴

⁴³³ Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Conference of Berlin, 1945* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1960), pp. 1439-1440.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 1440.

Map 7: The New Map after the War, 1945-1950



Source: Map from the documentary of the National Archives, London: Map Division, National Archives

Consultations at Potsdam, regarding Turkey reached inconclusive end on July 24. On that day, discussion was mainly concerned with the proposal of President Truman that freedom of Straits be under approval and guarantee of an international authority which would include US, Britain and USSR. Stalin did not agree that this could be regarded as substitute for Soviet bases in Straits. He said finally he thought that the question was not ripe and that interrupted talks between USSR and Turkey would be resumed. While discussion on July 24 did not mention Kars and Ardahan, Stalin had indicated previous day that Turkey could not expect alliance with USSR unless there were territorial concessions. President Truman at the end of the session undertook the endeavor to make Turkish Government see advantage of international control. British hoped very great importance of President's proposal would be understood by Turks and that they would reflect carefully upon this

proposal under which United States itself would join in guarantee of freedom of Straits. Advice from British to Turks was to keep their heads and in reply to Russian approaches maintain firmly that question must be settled on international basis.⁴³⁵

Once again Churchill opposed to the idea that the Soviets be given privileges concerning her establishment of bases on the banks of the Straits. He also stressed that Turkey could not be forced to accept it. To the Soviet demands on the Eastern border, both Britain and the USA insisted that this issue should be settled between Turkey and the Soviets. The Straits issue was decided a year later on behalf of Turkey, who would have full sovereignty concerning the Straits as an international water way. However, The Soviets began to feel uncomfortable with the American and British attitude. This uneasiness would finally end in a complete break among the Allies after the war, when the world would be dragged to a bipolar formation, namely the capitalist and the communist.

⁴³⁵ **Ibid., p. 1437.**

CHAPTER VI: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

In the first part of this study, it was suggested that “the defeated state may move to recover its’ losses from an earlier war.”⁴³⁶ Applying this criterion to the interwar period, Schweller’s analysis of this period nicely summarizes the essence of World War II. Schweller states that Britain, France and the U.S. won the last major power war, established the new order and thus were stated *status quo* powers. By contrast, Germany and Russia were both defeated in the First World War and saw the map of Europe redrawn largely at their expense.⁴³⁷ Germany also suffered the loss of its colonies, huge reparation payments and severe limitations on the size and equipment of its armed forces. Italy and Japan, though technically victors in the First World War, felt so betrayed by the Versailles peace settlement that they could not be relied upon to defend the new order. By the 1930s, both states had substantially increased their military power and sought to expand beyond their present territorial borders. As expected, Rome and Tokyo pursued naked revisionist aims: Mussolini tried to create a second Roman Empire, while imperial Japan strove for hegemony over East Asia (the so-called Co-Prosperity Sphere, which it announced in 1938).⁴³⁸

On the other hand, in order to understand stance of Turkey during interwar period, it is required to thoroughly evaluate the years of Independence War and postwar period. Although the Ottoman Empire was defeated in the World War I and lost important portions of its territories, the Turkish nation fought for its national independence between 1919 and 1923 under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, invalidated the Treaty of Sevres and managed to hold the frontiers of National Pack (*Misak-ı Milli*) through the Treaty of Lausanne. Later on, they founded a republican national state as modeled on western

⁴³⁶ See Chapter I: Theory

⁴³⁷ Claiming the Soviet Union as a revisionist power; see also Louis Fischer, *Russia’s Road from Peace to War: Soviet Foreign Relations, 1917-1941* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p. 349.; Anton W. Deporte, *Europe between the Superpowers: The Enduring Balance* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979), pp. 31-32, 40.; Edward Hallett Carr, *German-Soviet Relations between the Two World Wars, 1919-1939* (New York: Harper & Row, 1951), p. 123.; Michael Mandelbaum, *The Fate of Nations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 104.; Jiri Hochman, *The Soviet Union and the Failure of Collective Security, 1934-1938* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984).; Nevile Henderson, *Failure of a Mission: Berlin, 1937-1939* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1940), p. 258.

⁴³⁸ Randall L. Schweller, “Tripolarity and the Second World War,” *International Studies Quarterly* 37/1 (1993): p. 86.

democracy, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Even more, they scored important diplomatic successes like the Lausanne and the Montreux during the period of 1923-1939.

Therefore, so as to see to which side Turkey was closer during the World War II, it will be highly useful to correctly understand the years of Independence War and then the interwar period. However, this is not sufficient alone, and the legacy of Atatürk in Turkish foreign policy needs to be examined thoroughly as well. It is because the cadres which governed Turkey during the World War II were deeply affected from the principles of Atatürk and remained loyal to his legacy. As Cooper describes it:

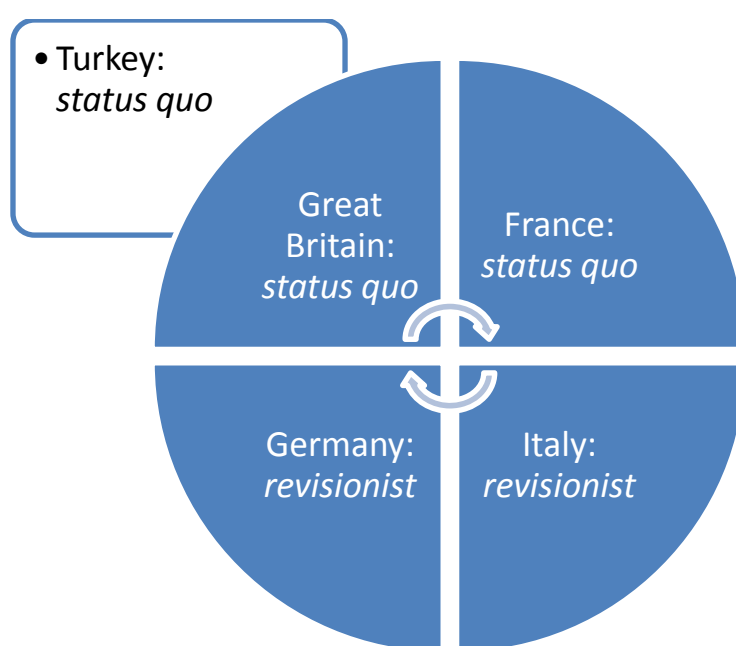
In many ways, the most significant institution in Turkey is Atatürk himself... The founder of modern Turkey died in November 1938, but his image quite literally on every office wall and there is little evidence that to suggest that the influence of his views over the political priorities of the Turkish state has weakened. The image of the man remains a powerful symbol of the enduring principles on which he built the modern republic.⁴³⁹

In the core of the foreign policy of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk lays the principle of “Peace at home, peace in the world,” with his own expression. Cadres who founded the Republic of Turkey, and notably Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, made close cooperation with the west democracies pursuant to the conclusion of Lausanne Treaty, and as a priority of the Turkish foreign policy, they aimed to protect the territorial integrity of the Republic of Turkey and the republican regime by establishing good relations with the neighbors, great powers and nearby countries. In brief, during the prewar period, the basics of the Turkish foreign policy were built to protect the current situation, in other words, *status quo*. Turkey succeeded the desired revision between 1919 and 1923 and remained prudent after 1930s, towards the countries which requested revision. The most concrete example of the said anxiety stands out in the meeting held by Atatürk in 1936 with English Ambassador, Sir

⁴³⁹ Malcolm Cooper, “The Legacy of Atatürk: Turkish Political Structures and Policy Making,” *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 78/1 (2002): pp. 118-123.

Percy Loraine. During this meeting, while they talked about aggressive and revisionist policies of Italy and Germany, Atatürk expressed his anxiety about the policies pursued by these two countries and suggested strict measures for them; especially for Italy. The memorandum also reveals that Mustafa Kemal agreed that Fascistic Dictatorships were common threat to world peace and order.⁴⁴⁰ So, it would not be a wrong approach to claim that Turkey, on the eve of the Second World War, took side with Great Britain that was supporting *status quo*.

Figure 4 specifies the interests of the states in the interwar period:



Source: The figure is prepared by the writer of the dissertation.

In Chapter I, it was also suggested that “the competition for power becomes a natural state of affairs in international politics.” If a single state or a coalition of states acquires supremacy, it would likely presume to impose its will on others. Weaker states could lose their security and in rare instances, cease to exist. So, weaker ones gather together to form

⁴⁴⁰ FO 954/28, Microfilm Collection, Document Number: 49, “Memorandum of a Conversation between Atatürk and Sir Percy Loraine,” 12 April 1936.

coalitions in the face of a probable threat and the possibility of domination and elimination from the stronger side. States, particularly small ones, are often unable to maintain their own security. Moreover, “the driving forces behind a rising or dominant state could compel it to search for hegemony or rule out the weaker ones. States that are under threat could also internalize balancing strategy of building up arms, to procure equalizing capacities so to balance the military strength of the rising power.”⁴⁴¹

The logic is consistent and convincing. Moreover, the theory successfully explains the Turkish and the British case in World War 2. Here come the research questions to be analyzed. “Had Britain been deviated from her traditional principles of foreign policy during the period?; Did Turkey follow absolute neutrality and preserve her positioning as equidistant to all belligerents?; What were Turkey’s foreign policy principles in terms of balance of powers and Western democracies after her experience with World War II?”

Even though some analyzers interpret the appeasement policy of Chamberlain or Munich Conference⁴⁴² of 1938 as evidence of Britain’s separation from the traditional principles of foreign policy, this is not the reality. The essence of the matter is well hidden in World War I. For instance, despite being defeated in World War I, Germany disrupted economic and military power of Britain profoundly. Moreover, empirical analyses show us that Britain went through a recovery process during the interwar period. So the main question here is as follows: Did Britain pursue the appeasement policy during the interwar period out of obligation or because Chamberlain desired so? According to the economic and military analyses, Britain did not adopt the appeasement policy just because Chamberlain desired it. For instance, figure 5, validates the power capability of Britain in 1938.⁴⁴³

⁴⁴¹ **See Chapter I: The Balance of Power Theory**

⁴⁴² “Chamberlain thought that the League was a nice idea but it was essentially impractical. Neither the United States nor the Soviet Union could be counted on to help with Britain’s difficulties. The United States was in the grip of isolationism and the USSR could not be trusted while it was in turmoil as a result of Stalin’s purges. Instead, Chamberlain favored a four-power pact (Britain, Germany, France and Italy) to solve Europe’s problems and indeed put his ideas into action at the Munich Conference of 1938. He persisted in his belief that a deal with Hitler could be achieved and thought that if only he could sit down with Hitler could be achieved and run through all his grievances with a blue pencil, peace would then follow.” **See Paul W. Doerr, *British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), p. 207.**

⁴⁴³ **Randall L. Schweller, “Tripolarity and the Second World War,” *International Studies Quarterly* 37/1 (1993): p. 85.**

<i>USSR</i>	<i>U.S.</i>	<i>Germany</i>	<i>U.K.</i>	<i>Japan</i>	<i>France</i>	<i>Italy</i>
25.0	22.7	20.2	10.4	9.4	6.9	4.9

Source: Compiled using the "Correlates of War" capability data-set printout (December 1987) made available through the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research at the University of Michigan.

However, pursuant to the invasion of Poland by Germany and war declarations of Britain and France against Germany, Britain made a sharp return to its traditional security principles. These principles can be summarized as below:

- 1) The defense of all parts of the British Commonwealth and Empire, and of the means of communication between them;
- 2) The defense of certain states or territories outside the British commonwealth and Empire, to which defense Great Britain is committed by word or tradition;
- 3) Other, and more general objects in the field of security, such as those set forth in the Atlantic Charter (disarmament of aggressors), and whatever may be the precise objectives of the "wider and permanent system of general security" envisaged in Article 8 of the Charter.⁴⁴⁴

British foreign policy can also be interpreted as securing its outward periphery by occupying strategic locations there. Occupation may not always mean a military occupation; it sometimes refers to political occupation in sustaining allied and mutual interaction with possible hostile invasions from outside the periphery. Before and during the World War II, Turkey was on the periphery, through which both German and Italian infiltrations could have become potential threat to the security of the allies. Moreover, since it has been a basic position of Britain in sustaining its dominant role in international relations by consorting to 'balance of power,' it had to sustain its strategy of 'supporting

⁴⁴⁴ Reviewed Work(s), "The Problem of British Security," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 20/3 (1944): p. 390.

the weaker coalition,' which was then Turkey. Therefore, Britain had to reinforce Turkey by supplying military, economic and political backup. Even more, the basic principle of Britain to 'seek alliances with powers outside the region,' it had to establish alliance with Turkey against the Nazi threat and Italian fascism.⁴⁴⁵

The events in 1939 and 1940 practically reflect the foreign policy behavior of Britain: coalition. Britain assessed that establishing an alliance with Turkey would be the most accurate to strengthen her position in the Mediterranean and the southwest Europe against a foreseen German and Italian aggression in early 1939. Britain could rely on the support of Turkey in all circumstances in case she was attacked in the West but not in the Mediterranean.⁴⁴⁶ Actually, it meant that Britain could trust Turkey in case of a war with Italy. Britain would be obliged to adjust its political relations in the Mediterranean according to the conditions if it accepted the risk of disagreement with Italy. The states which may be potential allies according to war plans of Britain in Mediterranean would have a significant place. The most significant potential ally for Britain was Turkey. Actually, Eden's policy was the indicator of a harmony with Turkey by accepting a possible conflict with Italy; reluctant sanctions, Montreux and Nyon; and many other thoughts. This was the strategy that Britain applied.⁴⁴⁷

Moreover, Britain was required depth to defend these interests. Depth could be obtained in Turkey and Iraq. Turkey was, in fact, the first line of the Suez Canal against aggression from the north. Similarly, it was from Iraq that Britain might first check a Russian advance from the Caucasus or the Caspian to the Persian Gulf. The defense of Turkey and Iraq therefore was of the greatest military importance to Britain, quite apart from considerations arising from her treaty obligations and the need to maintain her prestige in the Moslem world.⁴⁴⁸

⁴⁴⁵ See Chapter I: Introduction

⁴⁴⁶ Frank G. Weber, *The Evasive Neutral: Germany, Britain and the Quest for a Turkish Alliance in the Second World War* (St. Louis, University of Missouri Press, 1979), p. 21.

⁴⁴⁷ CAB 23/86, CAB 63(36), 4 November 1938.

⁴⁴⁸ CAB 66/3/48, "Review of Military Policy in the Middle East," December, 1939., p. 340.

It was also a question that what the value of the guarantee to Romania and Greece can be without the full cooperation of Turkey, as keeper of the Straits, and of the U.S.S.R.⁴⁴⁹ So, it would be possible to say that Britain was in direct need of Turkey's alliance and would not hesitate to propose taking the actions which might be useful for Turkey. France also accepted that Turkey's alliance was very precious in war with Axis powers. For France, Turkey's alliance was important for a strong French position in Syria and it would make it easy to obtain the islands under Italian possession in the Dodecanese and put an end to the threat pointed at the naval position of allies in the Aegean. The allied forces would be able to use Turkey's harbors and air bases in order to boost their control over the Eastern Mediterranean. In addition to that, Turkey would play the role of supply route to the Soviet Union and the Balkans and put an end to Italian commerce in the Black Sea.⁴⁵⁰

On the other hand, if the Turkish foreign policy of the same period is put under examination, it will be clearly seen that the Turkish decision-makers deemed it a mistake to ally with Germany during World War I and did not want to repeat the same mistake in the World War II. As of the eruption of World War II, the Turks had presumed the allies would triumph and shaped their foreign policy principles based on this assumption. This explanation itself is not sufficient, without doubt, to grasp the Turkish foreign policy of the said period. To be more precise, aggressive policies of the axis powers, in particular that of Italy, in the East Mediterranean highly disturbed the Turkish government, which forced Turkey to cooperate with Britain. During the same period, the Turkish decision-makers got extremely suspicious about the policies pursued by the Soviet Union and concerned about probable occupation of Turkish territory as a result of a German-Soviet alliance. Furthermore, expansionist policy followed by Germany on the Balkans as of the eruption of the war, made Turkey more prudent toward Germany. Consequently, all these developments and anxiety forced Turkey into a close cooperation with the allies at the beginning of the war. In other words, being highly weak in terms of economic and military power, Turkey, faced with the prospect of possible elimination, flock together with Britain to form balancing a coalition, for it was the stronger side that threatened them. This

⁴⁴⁹ Editorial, "Turkey and Britain: Balkan Pledges Welcomed," *The Times*, April 15, 1939., p. 12.

⁴⁵⁰ Lynn H. Curtright, "Great Britain, the Balkans and Turkey in the Autumn of 1939," *The International History Review* 10/3 (1988): p. 436.

coalition theory was put into practice with Anglo-Turkish Mutual Aid and Assistance Agreement of 12 May 1939, Franco-Turkish Mutual Aid and Defense Agreement of 23 June 1939 and Turkish-English-French Declaration of Agreement of 19 October 1939.

At this point, it will be highly useful to emphasize a fact. Even though Turkey developed her economic, military and diplomatic cooperation with Britain and France, she acted very carefully not to harm her relations with Germany. To give an example, the Turkish decision-makers always defined Germany as a friendly country in every opportunity and never abstained from expressing this before public. In addition, Turkey had strong economic and cultural reasons to avoid a hostile relation with Germany. As Vanderlippe states:

As World War II began, Turkey's strongest economic relations were with Germany and many Turkish leaders, including Fevzi Çakmak, the chief of General Staff, were firmly pro-German. Throughout the 1930s, Turkey's economic ties to Germany increased and by 1938, Germany took 44 percent of Turkish exports and supplied 11 percent of its imports. While Turkey's main exports to Germany were agricultural commodities and chromite, an ore used to manufacture artillery; Turkey's imports from Germany consisted mainly of machinery and machine parts, manufactured goods and armaments. However, after the alliance with Britain in 1939, Turkey's trade with Germany dropped about 10-15 percent of the total. The Allies were unwilling to purchase the surplus exports with the result that prices of Turkish exports dropped and imports grew scarce, forcing shortages and factory shutdowns. With no other customers, Turkish leaders worked to restore trade with Germany and by 1943, for instance, Germany

accounted for 28-38 percent of Turkey's imports and 23-25 percent of its exports.⁴⁵¹

However, Turkey evaded concluding an alliance agreement with Germany, as was the case with Britain and maintained her relations only on the basis of friendship. The first breaking point in the relations with Germany was the agreements made between Turkey and Britain on 1939. In addition, Turkey's statement about stopping chrome export to Germany and her decision to sell all produced chrome to Britain until 1943 played a great role in regression of relations with Germany.

Nevertheless, the arguments which claim that Turkey pursued a balance policy between Britain and Germany in 1939 are not well founded. Because Turkey got closer to Britain in 1939 more than ever since proclamation of the republic. For example, convergence of Turkey-Britain in 1939 resulted in suspension of all military aid of Germany in Turkey and on the same date, Britain began to make significant economic and military aids to Turkey. In addition to this, Turkey always felt the immediate Soviet threat and this threat forced Turkey to return to the traditional foreign policy which was pursued for almost 150 years since the Ottoman Empire: that was British political and diplomatic support against the Soviet threat.

Without doubt, it is not enough to limit the threat perception of Turkey with only Soviet Union and Germany. As mentioned above, Italy itself was also a threat factor for Turkey. In particular, Italy's intention to have the naval control in the East Mediterranean and concessions it claimed regarding Aegean worried the Turkish decision-makers. This threat perception can be said to have a great effect in the Turkey-Britain alliance. To be more precise, Italy not only threatened the interests of Turkey in the East Mediterranean but also directly threatened the interests of Britain due to Suez Canal and Red sea.

Despite all cooperation and collaboration established with Britain, an unexpected development took place in 1940 and Turkey declared her non-belligerency on the same day Italy entered the war. However, as per the agreement concluded with Britain in 1939,

⁴⁵¹ John M. Vanderlippe, "A Cautious Balance: The Question of Turkey in World War 2," *The Historian* 64/1 (2001): p. 64.

Turkey was bound to render to Britain and France all the assistance in power. Although some historians and researchers claim that Turkey's declaration caused serious harm to Turkey-Britain relations, this is not the reality. Because Britain mostly justified Turkey's behavior. It was because "the full extent of the damage done by France's collapse became known, and Britain's position in the Middle East and India became threatened, Turkey's value as a friendly neutral at the crossroads was more than appreciated. But the British also saw that Turkey's position was precarious. On July 17, Major General Cornwall-Evans estimated that the Germans could conquer Turkey and reach the Iraqi border in sixteen weeks. Once the Germans were across the Straits, the Turks, he said, could offer little resistance. The British now stated that they had hardly expected Turkey to do otherwise when she declared non-belligerency and fully reorganized the difficulties in which she found herself. The treaty was valuable as a potential rather than actual asset. It was feared that any other attitude would force Turkey to throw herself into the arms of Germany."⁴⁵² Huggesen somewhat grudgingly admitted on August 21 that "Turkey at this stage would prove more of a liability than an asset."⁴⁵³

Maybe the most important event which documents the Turkey-Britain alliance in 1940 took place following the invasion of France by Germany. Now the issue came to the defeat of the French which resulted in the collapse of the namely delicate balance of power in the Mediterranean. Turkey feared that on condition that the French fleet would proceed to the Axis, this would generate a serious threat against her from the sea. The report of Huggesen on 25 June revealed no shift in the Turkish approach and underlined the two issues that were constantly questioned as: "a) what will happen to the French fleet? b) Is the aircraft strength in the UK up to dealing with the expected attacks?" Saraçoğlu replied Huggesen that a possible surrender of the French fleet would be the biggest historical fault. A recording of the Foreign Office of July 1, 1940 noted down by Sir O. Sargent emphasized that:

⁴⁵² Selim Deringil, "The Preservation of Turkey's Neutrality during the Second World War: 1940," *Middle Eastern Studies* 18/1 (1982): p. 43.

⁴⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

Enormous importance the Turks attach to the issue [French Navy]. It is in fact, abundantly clear that on the answer to the question whether or not we are to lose the French fleet, we may be able to argue that it was not our fault. But this will not cut much ice with the Turks... The Turks may well take the loss as finally disposing of our sea power in the Mediterranean, and as depriving us of any value as an ally. It might even afford them the occasion to make terms with the Germans...⁴⁵⁴

The Foreign Office had doubted that Turkey would choose to take side with Germany given that Britain failed to safeguard her against possible Russian hostility. The Foreign Office was concerned that:

What means we have of convincing Turkey that it is in her own interest to continue to collaborate with us? ... The first thing is clearly to convince her that if she refuses to compound with Germany and Italy she is safe from being attacked by sea... It all depends, therefore on whether we can assure her that the Germans and Italians will not be able to use the French fleet to establish a complete preponderance in the E. Med.⁴⁵⁵

In his explanation regarding this issue, Selim Deringil said “securing Turkey’s loyalty was a major factor in the British decision to destroy the French fleet,”⁴⁵⁶ and contradicted with the title of his own article. Because explaining the bombing of French fleet by Britain as “securing Turkey’s loyalty,” actually means verification of Turkey-Britain alliance.

Quite the contrary, what actually happened in 1940 was as follows: invasion of France and Romania by Germany, attack of Italy in Greece and outstanding successes of the axis powers in almost all front lines caused increase of serious criticism in public opinion of Turkey towards government of İsmet Paşa. For instance, even Kazım Karabekir asked

⁴⁵⁴ **Ibid., pp. 36-37.**

⁴⁵⁵ **Ibid., p. 37.**

⁴⁵⁶ **Ibid.**

Saraçoğlu what the meaning of joining a war on the losing side was, as Italy would join after the allies were clearly seen to be losing. So, it would be a more correct approach to say that the same anxiety was also deeply felt by the government of İsmet Paşa itself. Thus, it can be put forward that Turkey gradually started to balance Britain as of the mid-1940s.

The first halves of 1941 and 1942 were the years when balance policy of Turkey was realized in the most clearly manner. To give an example, in January 1941, Britain suggested Turkey to declare war on Italy. The suggestion was not limited to Italy, which was followed by another request to wage war against Germany in case Yugoslavia and Bulgaria were invaded by German troops. This suggestion is deemed to be articulated during the Turkey visit of British Foreign Minister Eden and General Sir John Dill. However, Turkish decision-makers refused to enter the war by putting forward such reasons as attitude of Russia and military deficiency. If we accept these reasons as independent variables – and some historians are only concerned about independent variables and find it difficult to get to the core of the matter – then what is the main dependent variable that forced Turkey to stay out of war in 1941 and 1942?

The balance of power theory clearly applies to Turkey's attitude and does not make any contradiction. Having been both impressed and perturbed by the military success of Germany, Turkey decided to revise her close relations with Britain in 1941 in order to protect her national interests and aimed not to frighten Germany which was superior in 1941. Thus, Turkey in 1941 was contented to use all features of state aspirations which "beared a relation to the permanent and enduring needs of the state which was mainly based on the decisiveness to survive" by maintaining the national territorial integrity. As the "Balance of Power Theory" also rationalizes on the notion that states seek to survive as independent and national entities; during this phase, Turkey built all her policies on security and physical survival of her independence.

Involvement of Italy in the war and perceivable effects of this war near the borders of Turkey resulted in the creation of physical survival strategy which is a sub-principle of the balance of power theory. At this point, instead of following an aggressive policy to meet the threat coming from the west, Turkey preferred to establish good relations with the

states which might cause potential threat. To this aim, Non-Aggression Pact was signed with Bulgaria on February 17, 1941.⁴⁵⁷ Even more, Turkey made it clear to Britain that she would not declare it *casus belli* in case the axis powers attacked Greece. Britain remained silent about the Non-Aggression Pact signed with Bulgaria but found the statement of Turkey about behaving timid about Greece quite odd. For instance, the British had tried a lot to convey to Turkish Government that in the light of the developments some more positive policy than Turkish Government had hitherto been prepared to declare war and would best serve interests of Turkey herself and the allies.⁴⁵⁸ However, it was now the time that forced Turkey to keep aloof from the allies. In other words, national interests of Turkey withheld Turkey from taking common action with Britain. Especially, the German offensive in Bulgaria, Greece and Yugoslavia starting in 1941 spring, seemed to confirm Turkey's most fears. Even when Britain offered Turkey to invade Chios, Mitylene and Lemnos temporarily, Turkey did not see this as an opportunity and preferred to decline such offers considering the results. The only aim of Turkey was to protect Turkey and Turkish nation from a probable destruction at all costs. Inducing Turkey for almost two years under the pretext of German and Italian threat, even Britain lost its power after the letters of good mission written by Hitler and addressed to İnönü.

Aside from this, the real intriguing issue is that being ally with Britain against the German and Italian threat in 1939; Turkey started to balance two great powers surprisingly on her own in 1941. In other words, a balancer (or a holder of the balance), like Turkey, was another type of role for some states located in geographically significant positions.⁴⁵⁹ Thus, as Martin Wight said: "Sometimes a small power, through the accident of the strategic

⁴⁵⁷ From this moment, the word "non-belligerency" was replaced by the word "neutrality." *See also* FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part III, 201-300, "Appreciation of Present Turkish position," 20 August 1941. Rothstein states why some states want to be neutral as: "One reason is that small powers tend to rely on the hope that they can be protected by their own insignificance. If they can appear detached enough, and disintegrated enough and if they can convincingly indicate that they are too powerless to affect the issue, they hope the storm will pass them by." Robert L. Rothstein, *Alliances and Small Powers* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), p. 26.

⁴⁵⁸ FO 195/2469, File: Balkans, no. 26, Part VIII, 801-900, "Telegram from Sir Miles Lampson to Huggesen," 13 March 1941.

⁴⁵⁹ Insu Choi, "Small States and the Balance of Power" (Master's thesis., Naval Post Graduate School Monterey, California, 1995), p. 23.

position or the energy of its ruler, can contribute useful if not decisive strength to one side another, ...”⁴⁶⁰

This is a rare example⁴⁶¹ which does not have much precedent in the balance of power theory and history of international relations and a very challenging method to reach success. Because during such a destructive period when the world was bipolarized as Ally and Axis powers, efforts of Turkey, which is neighbor to the Balkans, has coastal line in Black Sea, Aegean and Mediterranean and acts as a strategic and cultural bridge for Middle East, Caucasia and Asia, to treat equally to each party, and actually succeeding this is an issue which needs to be examined academically and theoretically. Sure, there comes out another question at this point: “Did İnönü follow a passive and coward policy during World War II?” In the parts ahead of the analysis, we will give more detailed answers to this question. Nevertheless, for Turkey which was deprived of economic and military sources in 1941 to try to balance two great powers is even enough to refute the “coward” criticisms. Implementing such a policy during this destructive period would be like an acrobat on a tightrope without a net.

The Turks built the balance so skillfully that they made steps to please the British on the one hand and started to wink at the German on the other. For instance, after invasion of Bulgaria by Germany, they promised to help the British about Greece but signed a non-aggression pact with Germany in the summer of 1941. But despite all efforts of Turkey, the non-aggression pact signed with Germany became enough to frighten the British. The fact for the British that the treaty of friendship with Britain’s enemy presented the occasion for a doubting of Turkey’s loyalty and impaired the prestige of Great Britain, especially in the world of Moslems. More and more, Turkey diverted the immediate peril towards their

⁴⁶⁰ **Martin Wight, *Power Politics* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1978), p. 161.** On the other hand, Morgenthau said, “By making it impossible for any nation or combination of nations to gain predominance over the others, [the balancer] preserves its own independence as well as the independence of all other nations, and is thus a most powerful factor in international politics.” **Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973), p. 194.**

⁴⁶¹ For instance, “Colonel Beck of Poland between Germany and Russia, Tito of Yugoslavia between the West and the East, Sedat of Egypt between the United States and the Soviet Union and Kim Il Sung of North Korea between China and the Soviet Union. All these politicians understood and utilized the environment by trying to hold the balance between the two opposing great powers.” **Insu Choi, “Small States and the Balance of Power” (Master’s thesis., Naval Post Graduate School Monterey, California, 1995), p. 24.**

historic enemy, Turkey demonstrated tendency to insist that at no time did they ever regard Russia as anything but their primary enemy.⁴⁶² Moreover, it was for the first time that the British now called Turkey as neutral rather than a non-belligerent ally.⁴⁶³

The balance policy pursued by Turkey during this period has another aim which is unfortunately not stated in other sources. What Turkey exactly wanted was that she desired Germany to beat Russia and she wanted Great Britain to beat Germany.⁴⁶⁴ While balancing Germany and Britain on her own, Turkey expected her traditional enemy, Russia to lose the war. We also should not forget that by the end of April 1941, Nazis had invaded all Europe and the Axis entered even the islands around Turkey, whereas Rommel advanced fast in North Africa. So Turkey had anticipated being the next target. Through Iraq and Iran or even Caucasus, Germany would manage to attack her in a strike. Because Turkey temporized during the negotiations about friendship agreement, she had weakened her blocking against German pressure in some ways. Moreover, Turkey faced with the crucial situation in this way, because the threatening great power located between her borders and kept her eye open for the weakest moment of the other small states in their region.⁴⁶⁵

Another aspect of 1941 to be emphasized is, without doubt, Rashid Ali coup which erupted in Iraq and invasion of Iran by Britain and Soviet Union. These two developments are really important in order to understand the Turkey-Britain relations correctly. In the same year, the German troops gained victory continuously and allies suffered heavy losses almost in all front lines. Even during such a challenging period of the war, the allies could not venture occupation of Iran or Iraq by the Germans. In Iraq, Rashid Ali coup which supported Germany was repressed within one month and Iraq was invaded as soon as it was understood that it fell under the influence area of the German. Then, in the same year

⁴⁶² FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part III, 201-300, “Telegram from Hugessen to Department of State,” 07 July 1941.

⁴⁶³ FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part III, 201-300, “Appreciation of Present Turkish position,” 20 August 1941.

⁴⁶⁴ FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part III, 201-300, “Conversation between Hugessen and Saraçoğlu,” 09 August 1941. *See also* FO 195/2469, File: Great Britain – Turkey: Political, no. 2, Part III, 201-300, “Conversation between Hugessen and Saraçoğlu,” 18 August 1941.

⁴⁶⁵ Annette Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), pp. 27-28.

when German-Turk relations hit the top, why did not allies leave Turkey untouched? However hard it seems, the answer is actually quite clear and simple. The Turkish decision-makers calculated very well when to stop and when to act and repeatedly emphasized the smooth continuation of Turkish-British alliance. Probably the words of Şükrü Saraçoğlu in 1942 best describe the situation:

Our treaty of alliance with Great Britain continues to show its results in the interests of both parties. The Anglo-Turkish alliance is the expression of reality itself and constitutes a fundamental factor of the political system which I have just set forth.⁴⁶⁶

On the other hand, the year of 1942 refers to a fluctuating period in the internal and external policy of Turkey. When the British and the Soviets had signed the Mutual Assistance Agreement on May 26, 1942, Turks thought that a secret agreement might also be signed for the future of Turkey. And ultimately, a possible domination of the Soviets in Eastern Europe made Turkey fear after the United States came into war as a complete warrior and joined Britain to support the Soviets.⁴⁶⁷ This anxiety caused progressive animation of anti-Soviet nationalist movements in the public opinion of Turkey. It was believed that in a short time the view of *Pan-Turkism* would soon materialize with the help of the certainly impending defeat and division of the Soviet Union. Avoiding the Turkish Government's denied policy of neutrality, *Pan-Turk* publications stated daring request for Turkey's joining the war (clearly against the Soviet Union), not always obviously, but certainly enough-as sharp for President İsmet İnönü to come to aid of Turkey in the Soviet Union.⁴⁶⁸

However both President İsmet İnönü and Turkish government approached such calls with prudence. It is true that the Turkish government wanted the removal of Soviet threat but with the expression of Şükrü Saraçoğlu: "Turkey has sought no adventures beyond her

⁴⁶⁶ Editorial, "Turkey and the War, Maintenance of Independence: Fight to the Last Man," *The Times*, August 6, 1942., p. 3.

⁴⁶⁷ Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 137.

⁴⁶⁸ Jacob M. Landau, *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Cooperation*, (London: C. Hurst, 1995), p. 112.

frontiers.”⁴⁶⁹ Besides, the Turkish Government did not bare any vital irredentist plans for her part.⁴⁷⁰

On October 1942, another breaking point took place in the relations of Turkey-Britain. “The successful British counter-offensive at El Alamein and the successful Soviet counter-offensive at Stalingrad in November brought increased pressure to bear on Turkey. Now more than ever Turkey became a potential tool for shortening the war.” Because block of the Axis’ way to the Middle East could not be claimed by Turkey, she found herself in a very sharp position. For this difficult situation, Turkey underlined her shortage of all essential war material and insisted that Germans might want to lash out against England with a great victory, their idea being that for such an assault the ideal target was Turkey.⁴⁷¹ Moreover, Turkish participation in the war could serve as a pretext to Soviet invasion in the name of protection against the Germans.⁴⁷² Therefore, Turkey refused to be involved in the war again but outstanding success of the allies in almost all front lines triggered the third and last phase and Turkey got closer to Britain one more time.

Indeed, there is nowhere clearer than in the body of research and theory that attempts to relate lasting the turbulence of the second phase. It is evident that if there is a conflict between any nations, there is also a direct relationship between power and victory. Further, the rational decision makers are assumed to be able to reach the same conclusion⁴⁷³ so as the Turks did. In writing about conflict strategy in the balance of power system, George and Smoke note in their classic work that “without apparent allies was to have one’s deterrent capabilities undermined and to isolate one’s opponent was to pre-requisite of

⁴⁶⁹ Editorial, “Turkey and the War, Maintenance of Independence: Fight to the Last Man,” *The Times*, August 6, 1942., p. 3.

⁴⁷⁰ Jacob M. Landau, *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Cooperation*, (London: C. Hurst, 1995), p. 115. The crucial exception, as it is said by some of the historians, was the *Varlık Vergisi* which was levied by the Turkish Grand National Assembly on November 11, 1942.

⁴⁷¹ Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 141.

⁴⁷² John M. Vanderlippe, “A Cautious Balance: The Question of Turkey in World War 2,” *The Historian* 64/1 (2001), p. 68.

⁴⁷³ Randolph M. Siverson and Michael R. Tennefoss, “Power, Alliance and the Escalation of International Conflict, 1815-1965,” *American Political Science Review* 78/4 (1984): p. 1057.

going to war against him.”⁴⁷⁴ It is the realization that Turkey in isolation was in danger which is hypothesized to lead for Turkish decision makers into a search for alliance with Great Britain again. Hence, beginning from the last period in 1943, Turkish decision makers avoided initiating or escalating any conflict with the British.

Sure, examining the Turkish-British alliance only in the context of power and victory will not be sufficient to grasp the integrity of the matter. It is also “the decision to pursue Germany’s unconditional surrender alarmed Turkish leaders, who feared that Germany’s total defeat, along with the failure of the Americans to extend their strength to Southeastern Europe, would result in the “Bolshevization” of Europe after the war.”⁴⁷⁵ The Turkish wish for Germany to beat Russia did not happen and now she had to reface with the Russian threat. Thus, the following questions now arise: “Could Turkey maintain an isolationist policy and survive?” or “Could the British maintain complete isolationist policy against Turkey?” These two questions can hardly be answered theoretically and respectively without referring to the events. Therefore, the questions will be answered pragmatically on a case by case basis.

In his theses, “Small States and the Balance of Power,” Choi states that “with some degree of exaggeration, one might argue that geography decides the fate of a state.”⁴⁷⁶ To some extent, this is indeed accurate for the Turkish case in World War II. It appears that when one of the strong powers concerned is a sea power, a *barrier zone*⁴⁷⁷ may lie directly

⁴⁷⁴ Alexander L. George and Richard Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice* (Columbia University Press, 1974), pp. 16-17.

⁴⁷⁵ John M. Vanderlippe, “A Cautious Balance: The Question of Turkey in World War 2,” *The Historian* 64/1 (2001), p. 68.

⁴⁷⁶ Insu Choi, “Small States and the Balance of Power” (Master’s thesis., Naval Post Graduate School Monterey, California, 1995), p. 19.

⁴⁷⁷ Some use the concept as a “Buffer State.” The term “buffer state,” for instance, is defined as a small independent state lying between two or more larger powers. A.F.K. Organski defined “buffer state” as a “weak nation located between two large and not to friendly nations. Its function to keep the two giants apart and thus reduce the chances of friction between them.” A. F. K. Organski, *World Politics* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960), p. 276. Martin Wight defines as: “A buffer state is a weak power between two or more stronger ones, maintained or even created with the purpose of reducing conflict between them. A buffer zone is a region occupied by one or more weaker powers between two or more stronger powers; it is sometimes described as a power vacuum.” Martin Wight, *Power Politics* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1978), p. 160. Nathalie Tochi, for example, describes how the Great Powers saw Turkey as a *buffer* against Soviet expansionism. Nathalie Tochi, *Turkey’s European Future* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2011), pp. 25-27. However, the term *buffer state*, I believe, is a very strong expression

between its territory and that of a land power or merely between the land power and the sea, access to which would bring the land power into conflict with the sea power, as did Turkey during the 19th century, early in 20th century and in World War 2, especially in the last phase of the war, when Great Britain supported to keep İstanbul and the Straits out of Russian hands.⁴⁷⁸ It was not easy at all for the British to meet the endless requests of the Russian about the straits. Trying to convince Turkey to involve in the war on the one hand and moderating Russia about the straits on the other stood out as questions to be dealt with by the Britain. It was extremely a difficult task to achieve.

The objectives of this task were discussed in Casablanca Conference on January 1943. Churchill came to Casablanca having prepared all for his plans about Turkish involvement. He was intending to give full support of military equipment to Turkey. To support the Southern part of Turkey against any Italian aggression was his second, and to have access to Turkish airbases and air space for full protection was his third strategy. By the end of the Conference, Churchill had taken what he had wanted so much: full authorization in conducting strategies concerning Turkey. The British, at the Casablanca Conference, decided that they must convince the Turks to enter actively into the war by exploiting their fear of Russia after the war.

After the Casablanca Conference, Churchill, having been armed with full authorization of the Americans concerning the Turkish involvement in war, decided to initiate negotiations with the Turkish authorities. Although Churchill was much hopeful that his pressure on Turkey would be fruitful, he was warned by his war cabinet and BCOS that Turkey would not reveal any positive attitude, which would end in a loss of British prestige against them. Still, Churchill was sure that he would get something substantial from the Turkish representatives whom he knew had many reservations.

describing Turkey's role in international relations. Since, Turkey, together with her history, has had a very long, complicated and a very prominent part in international relations, I prefer to say that: "Great Powers sometimes see Turkey as a *barrier* against Soviet expansionism."

⁴⁷⁸ Nicholas J. Spykman and Abbie A. Rollins, "Geographic Objectives in Foreign Policy I," *The American Political Science Review* 33/3 (1939): p. 407.

While wishing to make reservations, Churchill said to President that Turkey would be able to judge any situation which might arise. He added that there might be a moment even in 1943 when Turkey was both strong and ready and when Great Britain had her plans ready. Churchill, however, asked for no engagement but in his view it was very important for Turkey to be among the victors and to have a seat at the Council which would decide the future after the war and make arrangements to prevent attacks by one nation another. He emphasized that it was important for Turkey to be among the victors. He stated that Turkey should decide for herself and told that the call for a decision might come in six months or in eighteen. And then, he added that in 1918 the German collapse had come before it was expected.⁴⁷⁹

Churchill went on to say in Adana that post-war Russia might not be the same as the Russia of former years; it might be even more imperialistic. He also said that the best protection for Turkey lied in an international arrangement, perhaps accompanied by special guarantees applying to her. Russia and possibly the United States were ready to give these guarantees, he said. He then added that things did not always turn out as badly as was expected; but if they did so, it was better that Turkey should be strong and closely associated with the United Kingdom and the United States. Lastly, he came to the final point by saying that he would never propose to Turkey to come into the war if she was not ready, nor would he suggest that she should do so in any way which would involve the exhaustion of her resources. The moment, he said, would come when one push would be important, an allowing of Britain to attack Ploesti from Turkish bases.⁴⁸⁰

In Adana, Churchill conducted negotiations with the Turks really skillfully and while inducing Russian fear of the Turks, he left the final decision to them about entering the war and managed to conciliate with them. But Churchill kept his ace in the hole until the end of the negotiations and said: "If Turkey voluntarily entered the war, she would make the fourth armed power. This would be a great opportunity for Turkey to take her due place

⁴⁷⁹ CAB 66/34/14, "The Adana Conference: Second Meeting," 30 January 1943., pp. 67 (2) – 68.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid., pp. 68 – 68 (4).

and to come to the Peace Conference relatively unweakened, one of the four victorious Powers. That afforded the best prospects for her security.”⁴⁸¹

In fact, the Casablanca and the Adana Conferences show us how important Turkish involvement in the war was for Britain. It was time as impartial situation of Turkey hampered Anglo-Soviet plans that aimed to end the war as soon as possible and defeat fast German power in the Balkans and Mediterranean, Britain started to think that impartiality of Turkey was now giving harm to the allied. Generally because of this reason, Churchill decided to force Turkey to take her side in the fight. Eliminating all possible allegations that might be used against the interest of Britain and Turkey in the post war by the Soviets was one of the reasons why Churchill associated with Turkey. And also preventing the possibility of Soviet progress towards the Balkans with the help of Turkey was another reason of Churchill’s policy.⁴⁸²

When the Allies began to raise the question of belligerency, the Turks were less perilously situated than earlier. The Allies were gaining the upper hand; Germany was losing. Nevertheless, dangers remained. “Germany was being defeated in the east by a great power known to be hostile to Turkey. The Nazis were still on Turkey’s border and capable of inflicting serious damage. Furthermore, the Allies were divided as to pursue strategy and tactics involving Turkey and their policies were changing rapidly with changing military events. The post war plans being prepared by the winning partners would certainly affect Turkey, particularly because of Russia’s traditional desire to control the Turkish Straits.”⁴⁸³

Besides, “the Russian were engaging different tactics to raise the Straits question in inter-allied conferences and tried to convince Britain and the United States that there was a need to change the Montreux Convention for a regime which would satisfy Moscow. The Soviet tactics were, in the beginning, to disguise their ultimate and pretend that their only aim was to revise the Convention, but by mounting pressure move to the ultimate aim of bringing

⁴⁸¹ CAB 66/34/14, “The Adana Conference: Fourth Meeting,” 31 January 1943., p. 72.

⁴⁸² Mustafa Sıtkı Bilgin and Steven Morewood, “Turkey’s Reliance on Britain: British Political and Diplomatic Support for Turkey against Soviet Demands, 1943-47,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 40/2 (2004): p. 28.

⁴⁸³ Annette Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 36.

Turkey into the position of a satellite state.” When the Russians asked at the Moscow Conference in October 1943, that the Allies needed Turkey’s participation in war, the British replied as: “There was no disagreement between them as to the desirability of bringing Turkey into the war.”⁴⁸⁴

At the first Cairo Conference, following the Moscow, the British gave a severe warning to the Turks that they must immediately join the war. The Teheran Conference on November 1943, on the other hand, marked a turning point in Turkey’s positioning. Compelling Turkey to join the war was not only insisted by the British but also now adopted by the Soviets; they believed that the war would be finished sooner with the attendance of Turkey. This was obviously a Soviet plan to force Turkey in “yielding” to a common Allied decision.⁴⁸⁵ By this time, Churchill was also anxious to have the Turks engaged; he took the lead at the Second Cairo Conference in trying to persuade President İnönü to bring Turkey in. The Americans acquiesced in this move, although, like some of Churchill’s own compatriots, they thought the chance of Turkey’s agreement small and the advantage not “worth diverting” any effort from more important fronts in Western Europe and the Pacific.⁴⁸⁶ The Soviet representative, it was said, had been delayed and prevented from attending the meeting. So, discussions at first began between the three statesmen only. The discussions mainly failed to give any positive results. There were “hard and sometimes bitter discussions,” each maintain his own point of view but the prevailing feature was an outstanding frankness.⁴⁸⁷

The minutes of the Second Cairo Conference proved arduousness and toughness of the negotiations. Churchill clearly stated to the Turkish decision-makers that they wanted Turkey to enter war in the front line of Bulgaria. He also added that Stalin had promised to help Turkey in case Turkey entered war. Many political historians who research World

⁴⁸⁴ Edward Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1943-1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 169.

⁴⁸⁵ Barry Rubin, *The Great Powers in the Middle East, 1941-1947: The Road to the Cold War*, (London: Frank Cass, 1980), p. 117.

⁴⁸⁶ Annette Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 33.

⁴⁸⁷ Cevat Açıkalın, “Turkey’s International Relations,” *International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs) 23/4 (1974): p. 486.

War II claim that İsmet İnönü used the military deficiency argument, in other words excuse, to avoid entering the war. It is true that İsmet İnönü used the military deficiency argument during the Cairo negotiations. However, we should not forget that this argument was not an excuse but the reality itself. For instance, When Churchill said that the Turks had not taken full advantage of the school and tuition opportunities offered to them and this had affected their ability to absorb the available material, İnönü replied as “when inspecting newly arrived Hurricanes that they no longer regarded those as the most modern. They were in fact out of date. No doubt, imperative considerations had made it impossible to supply better planes. Moreover, the Turks had asked several times for aero planes and tanks but these had often been refused.”⁴⁸⁸ It is meaningful that Churchill did not give any satisfactory answer to the words of İnönü.

It is quite obvious that the lack of sufficient armament in the Turkish Army was also a valid reason for the Turks to disagree the British and American counterparts. Now we can return to the question of “Were the Turkish decision makers of the period passive and coward?” In the letter of July 1944 written by Churchill and addressed to the American President Roosevelt, he expressed that they could not provide sufficient armaments and ammunitions to meet the needs of Turkey if the latter entered the war and in fact put the confession in the words.⁴⁸⁹ During World War II, the British tried to convince the Turks to

⁴⁸⁸ **Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Conferences at Cairo and Tehran, 1943* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), pp. 713-714.; Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Conferences at Cairo and Tehran, 1943* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), pp. 692-695.**

⁴⁸⁹ By the end of 1944 summer, the Soviets still expected Turkey to come into war. When the Soviet Ambassador in London, Fedor Tarasovich Gusev, gave an enclosed aide-memoire to Eden wishing that Turkey should join the war, Eden explained to him that the expected breaking off of relations between Turkey and Germany would be at least be a long step towards the entry of Turkey into the war and that once Turkey had committed herself so far, the British, the Americans, and the Russians could then consider whether they wished Turkey to take the next step and, if so, whether they were prepared to pay any price in order to induce her to do so. He added that the advantage of inducing her to break off relations was that the Allies could get this at once without any of the long haggling about the supply of air squadrons and war material and military co-operation, which would certainly ensue if and when they asked Turkey actually to go to war. On the other hand, he said, the rupture of relations would, they hoped, produce an important moral effect throughout the Balkans. He also warned Mr. Gusev that they must face the fact that if the Turkish Government were asked to come into the war, the Allies, in view of their commitments in Italy, be unable to give the Turks an appreciable assistance either in men, aircraft or war material and it was in these circumstances might indeed lead to disappointing results. **FO 954/28, Microfilm Collection, Document Number: 450, “A Briefing Telegram from Eden to Sir A. Clark Kerr,” 08 July 1944.** Churchill had also written a personal letter to President Roosevelt saying that the British, in fact, had no weapons to supply and

get involved in the war and gave various promises about provision of sufficient armaments and ammunitions in case they entered the war. However, the said letter proves that even Turkey entered the war; Britain would not fulfill the given promises. So they approached the matter not cowardly but wisely.

However, for a while, the British assumed an attitude of unusual coolness toward Turkey. They cancelled their military mission and war supplies early in 1944. They warned Turkey in April 1944 that they would impose an embargo same as the ones imposed on other impartial ones if Turkey insisted to send strategic materials to Germany. The British was not alone in this warning, also the United States agreed with her.⁴⁹⁰ This was the moment that Turkey feared about economical breakdown because of her tough endurance against meeting the demands of the Allies. Furthermore, her biggest concern was the empowering Soviet Union and United States, and their main hope of protection against it was support from the Western Allies in whose willingness they must remain.⁴⁹¹ So, the first enforcement came with the cease of the all chrome export to Germany. The Turks then started to try to grasp something about Soviet purposes and to succeed better relations with Russia, as it was persisted at the Cairo meeting by Roosevelt and Churchill.⁴⁹² Thus, a secret organization in Turkey that acted according to the *Pan-Turkist* movement was officially revealed and prosecuted.⁴⁹³ To satisfy especially the Soviet Union, the Turkish Government saw it as a necessity to take some precautions to exclude some Nazi sympathizers from official duty. Fevzi Çakmak was the first one who was forced to resign from the post of Chief of General Staff by İnönü. And then same situation happened to Numan Menemencioğlu the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The two open letters about corruption of the Saraçoğlu Government written by a leading *Pan-Turkist* Nihal Atsız

to meet Turkey's demands. **FO 954/28, Microfilm Collection, Document Number: 457, "From Prime Minister Churchill to President Roosevelt," 14 July 1944.** Indeed, the British arguments that were now used against the Soviets and the Americans, corroborates İnönü's words in Cairo. *See also the Second Cairo Conference.*

⁴⁹⁰ Annette Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 37.

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.

⁴⁹² Edward Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1943-1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 228.

⁴⁹³ Annette Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 39.

made it possible for the Turkish Government to capture all leading figures of Turkism on May 1944.

In accordance with this policy, on March 15, 1944 the *Varlık Vergisi* was repealed and all related penalties were abolished. Moreover, after the passage of some small German warships disguised as commercial vessels were protested by the British, Turkey was agreed that the Straits was closed to all German ships written off.⁴⁹⁴ And finally, when it was demanded from Turkey to stop all diplomatic relations with the Nazi Germany by the American and the British, Turkey made the crucial decision achieved on August 2, 1944.⁴⁹⁵

Increased Soviet hostility toward Turkey had been readily apparent in the 1944 summer. In July 1944, for instance, “the Russians had complained the Western Allies’ proposal for Turkey merely to break off diplomatic relations with Germany and did not confirm to the earlier agreement at Moscow.” It was stated that without Russian consent the British had broken an agreement and from now on it was not a responsibility of the Soviet Union to act jointly with Turkey related Western Powers. All counter offers to an obvious announcement of war came too late and Turkey would be left on its own by the Russians.⁴⁹⁶ In particular, Stalin was also against Turkey to have power to decide upon the

⁴⁹⁴ “Early in April 1944, the departure from İstanbul of two Merchant ships likely to be used for the evacuation of German troops from the Crimea, was prevented; in June the passage of unarmed German barges, which in previous instances had been armed on entering the Aegean, was forbidden; and in the same month, following the resignation of Numan Menemencioğlu, suspected of facilitating the passage of German transport vessels containing concealed holds filled with guns, mines and munitions, assurances were given by Saraçoğlu, who took over as Foreign Minister, that Turkey would do nothing further to help the Germans.” A. L. Macfie, “The Turkish Straits in the Second World War, 1939-45,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 25/2 (1989): p. 245.; See also Annette Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 39.

⁴⁹⁵ Murat Metin Hakkı, “Surviving the Pressure of the Superpowers: An Analysis of Turkish Neutrality During the Second World War,” *An Electronic History Journal* 3 (2007): p. 59.; See also Selim Deringil, *Turkish Foreign Policy During the Second World War: An Active Neutrality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 173.; Interestingly, Cevat Açıkalın had given the date as February 1944. Cevat Açıkalın, “Turkey’s International Relations,” *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs)* 23/4 (1974): p. 487. On the other hand, Von Papen warned Turkey by saying that: “In very serious terms that such a breaking of relations as is planned under pressure of the United Kingdom would deprive Turkey, finally, of her freedom of action which up to now has been jealously guarded by her as a proud nation. The United Kingdom undoubtedly means that this step shall force Turkey to enter the war, as demanded by Britain, which would bring with it momentous consequences for the country.” Editorial, “Balkan Satellites and Turkey: Dread of a Rupture,” *The Times*, August 1, 1944., p. 3.

⁴⁹⁶ Annette Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 38.

closure of the Straits in time of threat of war.⁴⁹⁷ What precisely the Russians wanted regarding the Straits was the revision of the Montreux Convention.

It was now the time, both the British and the Turks had to stand out against the Soviet demands. In June 1944, The CoS reported that when the war ended, the Russians would be the main land power in Europe and Asia. They also stated that crucial British strategic benefits after the war could be endangered by the Soviets: first, oil supplies of Middle East in Iraq and Persia; second, British communication in the Mediterranean over Turkey; last, important sea communications. So, the CoS deduced that to guarantee US' support against such threats in the region, the British policy should be directed.⁴⁹⁸

Moreover, the JIC believed that post-war Russia would try to preserve the Black sea as a Russian lake and to keep the movement through the Straits under control to protect Ukraine and Soviet shipping. Only, spreading largely on the either sides of [the Straits] *and of base* controlling the sea routes through the Aegean could guarantee the full control. Despite the fact that FO still attributed those ambitions to German propaganda, Molotov had sought these bases in 1940. Opposition of Britain to Russia about her assertion for bases had been suggested by the Joint Planners and PHPS. However, they were also suspicious about the necessity for the security of Russia to have such a large territory; if she had air and naval dominance over the Black Sea and if Turkey had not got any close relation with any other power or powers. It was now a contradiction that Soviet passage through the Straits could be confined by the British air and naval bases, however British shipping notwithstanding the status of Turkey, was threatened in the same way by Soviet bases in Bulgaria, whereas both sets of bases were open to attack.⁴⁹⁹

On the other hand, in 1945, the Soviet Union started to express its demands about the Straits more strictly. Even more, their demands were not limited to the revision of

⁴⁹⁷ A. L. Macfie, "The Turkish Straits in the Second World War, 1939-45," *Middle Eastern Studies* 25/2 (1989): p. 245.

⁴⁹⁸ Mustafa Sıtkı Bilgin and Steven Morewood, "Turkey's Reliance on Britain: British Political and Diplomatic Support for Turkey against Soviet Demands, 1943-47," *Middle Eastern Studies* 40/2 (2004): p. 31.

⁴⁹⁹ Nicholas Tamkin, *Britain, Turkey and the Soviet Union, 1940-45: Strategy, Diplomacy and Intelligence in the Eastern Mediterranean* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 169-170.

Montreux Convention, they also sought the return of Kars and Ardahan, ceded to the Ottoman Empire under the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and retained by Turkey following protracted negotiations in 1921.

However, the Turks were not deserted and unexpectedly almost immediately after the war the problems between the British and the Turks were removed. The British Government discussed that “explicit promises” given by Stalin at Yalta to respect the sovereign integrity of Turkey were remised by Russians and forced the United States to make “firm representations” to the Soviet Government on June 18, the day of the second Sarper-Molotov conversation. One of the unrealized fears that Turks bore was to be sacrificed by Great Britain to split up Europe with the Russians into spheres of influence did not materialize. The Soviet purposes were known by the British and so the British growingly supported Turkish interests.

The disagreements between Soviet and American-British about their interest and policies became quickly drawn at Potsdam. “By the time, the Truman Doctrine was enunciated; Greece and Turkey had become the focal point of East-West confrontation.” So the United States was compelled to adopt the leading role in protecting Western interest against Soviet expansionist aims. And these aims were much clearer about the Turkey. Although “hand with the Turks” was demanded and received at Casablanca by Churchill, now there was no one except from the Americans to share this role.⁵⁰⁰

In order to form any conclusions, however, general and tentative, regarding the goal of Great Britain, must be viewed over very long periods; going back in time to the Ottomans that it was all discussed in Chapter I. Indeed, the goal was simple and clear cut – to prevent Russian expansionism. “Within two hundred years, Russia fought no less than seven wars with Turkey in an attempt to reach the Mediterranean by the way of İstanbul; but, when Turkey was not strong enough herself to oppose Russia, England came to her aid.”⁵⁰¹ The historical mission of Great Britain, once again, continued with a greater realism. First,

⁵⁰⁰ Edward Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1943-1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), pp. 316-318.

⁵⁰¹ Nicholas J. Spykman and Abbie A. Rollins, “Geographic Objectives in Foreign Policy II,” *The American Political Science Review* 33/4 (1939): p. 599.

Britain wanted to maintain her influence in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. Second, British commercial interests in Turkey were to be protected. Third, the policy guaranteed the entrance of the British fleet into the Black Sea. And finally, Britain, throughout the war, endeavored to protect the territorial integrity of Turkey.

Turkey had been one more time, protected because of her geo-strategic importance.

CHAPTER VII: CONCLUSION

Throughout the years between 1939 and 1945, World War II, as the new paradigm established its own dynamics and realities. Even when compared to its precedents, World War I, it was by far the most devastating, traumatic and violent of all wars. When this was the case, therefore, the second Great War forced especially the European states at the core of boiling Europe to pursue new strategies in the international arena. As the war expanded to an enormous boundary, the hot war at the core began to threat the utmost periphery, thus becoming a World War. The minor and comparatively insignificant or weaker states helplessly strived to preserve their sovereignty by consorting to whatever international maneuvers they could develop, some forming alliances with the warring parties, some signing treaties of mutual assistance and friendship, while others like Turkey became more visible in the international platform of tasty cake of the new post-war world order.

Situated at the heart of a geo-politically and geo-strategically significant center of the world, Turkey, some fifteen years after World War I, found herself at a multilateral dilemma. Only when she was getting organized as a new republic, after her foundation in 1923, Turkey had to survive another examination on the razor's edge:

Because of these conditions, the horrible prospect loomed in Ankara that Turkey could become a battleground from almost any direction. To prevent this from happening, the Turkish government was following a very delicate policy of neutrality.⁵⁰²

Turkey became a vital but possibly a fatal choice whether to remain fully neutral like Switzerland, develop some internationally acceptable discourse to maintain a form of neutrality or to establish some kind of alliance with the Great Britain, the Soviet Russia or the Nazi Germany. Turkey had had much enmity with the Great Britain in World War I. The Soviet Russia had many times declared her interest in the Straits, and she was a border neighbor that claimed Kars and Ardahan, and considered eastern Turkey a passageway to Middle-East oil.

⁵⁰² Richard E. Osborne, *If Hitler Had Won* (Indianapolis: Riebel & Roque Publishing Company, 2004), p. 181.

The related literature concerning Turkey's stance in World War II reveals many efforts of labeling, naming, or defining what it was. It was coined as 'neutrality,' 'agreement of mutual assistance,' 'agreement of friendship and good relations,' 'impartiality and self-containment,' 'passivism and cowardice,' and 'neutral Ally.' Despite the fact that all of the phrases tell an aspect of the Turkish stance, some appear to be not satisfactory and complete in its depiction. As Turkey with her unique geo-strategical location could not be left alone, she was not let alone. Moreover, she was also not willing to stay isolated and alone.

Therefore, this study coins the Turkish stance in World War II as: "During the period between 1939 and 1941, Turkey had established a close alliance relationship with Britain, then in 1941 and 1942, she first concluded non-aggression pact with the Third Reich (Nazi Germany) and got gradually closer to the fascist Germany, induced by vitalization of Germany-supported nationalist and anti-Soviet movements. During that period, the English politicians adopted an updated 'appeasement' policy based on the principles to raise long-lasting negotiations. In third phase, comprising the period between 1943 and 1945, Turkey re-approached England in line with increasing achievements by England and the Allied forces." This rationality was rather complex and based on a delicate calculation. Edward Weisband has an explanation:

Consequently, Turkish neutrality, although a policy of self-abnegation, was interventionist in that it tried to work toward the creation of a balance of power between the belligerent coalitions. The Turkish operational code, therefore, consisted of two principles each of which suggested the advisability of opposing diplomatic positions, a neutrality that was noninvolved and one that was 'activist' in purpose if not in style.⁵⁰³

Admiral Sir Howard Kelly's⁵⁰⁴ statement also supports this point:

⁵⁰³ Edward Weisband, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1943-1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 5.

⁵⁰⁴ He was the British Naval Representative in Turkey and served this duty from 1940 to 1944.

People have possibly thought that it would have been nice if Turkey had come into the war in the earlier stages, but it was not as simple as that. The entry of Turkey into the war would have been for us a diplomatic victory but it might have also proved to be a military disaster. We only have to remember how much better our situation would have been if any of our European allies had been able to remain neutral instead of serving as bases for the enemy. Throughout the whole war, Turkish influence in the Moslem world has benefited us far more than has ever been recognized.⁵⁰⁵

Therefore, Great Britain came to the point of establishing a confidential alliance with Turkey because her policies of international relations urged her to do so. When examined, Britain had always been a state which pursued 'Realism' and 'Liberalism' in her international policies. As of Realism, Britain's traditional instinct is survival by any means. Having accepted the reality that it is so for all states, the British have ever taken the risk and obligation to pursue their own interests and benefits throughout their history. Imperialism was the period when Realism proved to be a good choice. Moreover, to sustain such a policy, the British believed in 'mutual trust' between her and smaller states with whom she had formed alliances against Great Powers. She has consorted to forming alliances with Great Powers only relying on International Organizations, having superior authorization over each involved state. Britain's alliance with Turkey, is therefore, established on collaboration.

British Liberalism in international relations was a decisive policy in her stance against the Nazi and Italian war machine. Believing that both Germany and Italy were under the bewitching impact of their "evil" leaders, Britain considered both regimes and their inhuman treatment of humanity as the ultimate threat. To this, Japan, the third "evil" was included. In order to cope with the "evil," Britain had to consort to establishing alliance with the lesser "evil," the communist Soviet Union, which in the post war became a threat for world democracy taking her part in a bipolar world. The Russian involvement, as

⁵⁰⁵ Editorial, "Turkey's Neutrality to Our Benefit: Admiral Sir H. Kelly's View," *The Times*, March 15, 1945., p. 2.

Britain regarded, can best be neutralized by bringing Turkey continuously to the foreground of conflict:

The signing of the 1939 Treaty with Britain and France was a turning point in Turkish history, since the Turkish Republic thus made the first step towards an alliance with the “West.” This first step was followed by a transitional period (1939-1945) for Turkey’s integration into the liberal international order of the postwar era.⁵⁰⁶

The conflict was cooked over and over and brought onto the table of negotiations. Since the major concern for the Soviets was the Straits, which would confine her navy in the Black Sea, her continuous demands and expectations were towards being given the right to establish naval bases on the banks of the Straits. This was used by Britain, especially Churchill, as a trump card. Turkey also took her part in this game of prolonged uncertainty.

The prolonged uncertainty was Britain’s only hope to survive the War. Although it was only projected onto Turkey, Britain was also too insignificant in shaping the destiny of the War. The British weakness forced Churchill to sustain prolonged diplomacy with Turkey as well as her Allies, the USA and the Soviet Union, which fought the hot War more than Britain did.

The Russian contribution to victory was, of course, overwhelmingly the greatest. Between June 1941 and June 1944, 93 per cent of German Army battle casualties (4.2 million men) were inflicted by the Red Army. Even after D-Day, the Russians were facing about two-thirds of the Wermacht...At the end of the war, 65 per cent of the 4 million Allied soldiers in Western Europe were American, only 20 per cent were British.⁵⁰⁷

⁵⁰⁶ Dilek Barlas, *Etatism & Diplomacy in Turkey: Economic & Foreign Policy Strategies in an Uncertain World, 1929-1939* (New York: Brill, 1998), p. 197.

⁵⁰⁷ Michael Dockrill and Brian McKercher et al., eds., *Diplomacy and World Power: British Studies in Foreign Policy, 1890-1950* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 209.

As it is seen, the British active contribution to the hot war was comparatively too less when American and Russian contribution is regarded. In other words, Britain, as equal as fighting, sustained talks, negotiations and blurred the muddy waters of the war period finally to attain a handful of drinking water to survive.

Turkish activism, on the other hand, was mostly interpreted as passivism. However, her activism was based on dynamic relations with the warring states, provided it was completely the survival of Turkey and was definitely decisive in not to become a party of the war, unless the territorial integrity was under threat, as she encountered the threat by the Second World War.

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File: Balkans (256-400)

File: Balkans (401-500)

File: Balkans (501-600)

File: Balkans (601-700)

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Özgeçmiş

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