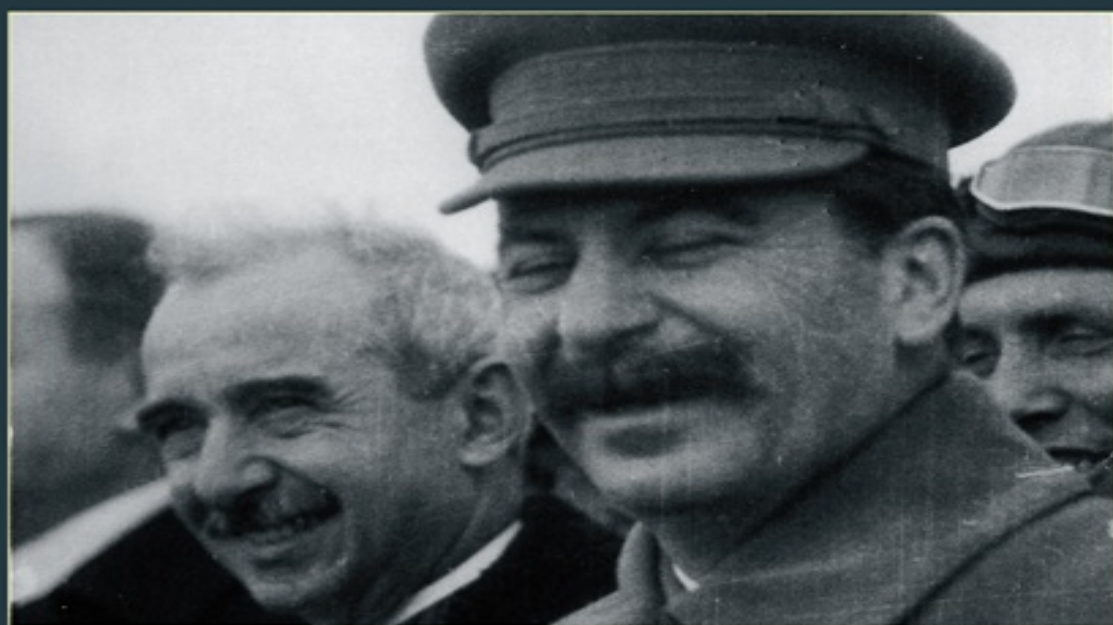


STALIN AND THE
TURKISH CRISIS OF
THE COLD WAR,
1945–1953



JAMIL HASANLI

Stalin and the Turkish Crisis of the Cold War, 1945–1953

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Introduction

Over sixty years have already passed since the end of the Second World War. Assessing the history of the postwar years, one can see that the major part of this period has been marked by the “Cold War” era that has defined the lives of the last few generations. Following international crisis in the socialist system and the collapse of the Soviet Union, academic analysis of the Cold War has become a hot topic. Previously published books and monographs, products of Soviet ideology, are now being replaced by new studies. The opening of previously unavailable secret archival documents and the collapse of old ideological stereotypes has led to the establishment of new research centers in the USA, Europe, and in Russia specializing in study of the history of the Cold War.

Numerous international conferences and academic discussions have been held since 1990, leading to the emergence of new aspects of the history of the Cold War. Fundamental research in the history of the Cold War has shed light on many obscure areas of postwar international relations, Soviet-American confrontation, and conflicts in East-West relations.¹ In that sense the achievements of Russian historical science in this area are remarkable. This can be explained by the great scientific potential of the Russian school of historiography and the unparalleled access of Russian scholars to rich Soviet archives, shaping a new view of the history of the Cold War. Without doubt, Russian historiography has made some important discoveries and refreshed old opinions on a number of major issues.²

Most research on the Cold War focuses primarily on analysis of the “European crisis.” This evidently stems from the fact that the military forces of the USA and the Soviet Union were confronting each other in Europe. Europe was turned into an arena of East-West confrontation, becoming the shared ground for the two biggest military-political blocs. It is not surprising, therefore, that the European continent has occupied the attention of many researchers.

The euphoria of the 1990s, brought about by the collapse of the totalitarian Soviet system that reigned in East European and Balkan countries for more than forty years, brought Europe to the forefront of research about the Cold War. Establishment of research centers in the USA, Western Europe and Russia also contributed to the emergence of a Eurocentric approach to the study of the Cold War. As a result, the first episodes of the Cold War in the Middle and Far East were ignored. However, new research by Russian and other historians has significantly expanded the boundaries of Cold War studies. Thus, it has become possible to shape a new understanding of the major postwar events and recreate a complete picture of the processes of the Cold War.³

Discoveries in this area have given impetus to new discussions, particularly about the starting date of the Cold War and its periodization.⁴ According to American historian Geoffrey Roberts,

“The Cold War itself broke out in 1947 with Truman’s announcement in March of a worldwide struggle against communist aggression and expansionism and then, in June, the unveiling of the Marshall Plan for the political and economic reconstruction of postwar Europe.”⁵ Some scientific debates and studies have proposed the idea of connecting the beginning of the Cold War with the Berlin crisis of the late 1940s that ended with ideological division. Such an interpretation of the beginning of the Cold War stems from the fact that the first postwar processes in Eastern Europe and the Balkans had occurred in accordance with treaties signed by the Allies. Therefore, at first, events and other processes seemed to be far from confrontational. Thus, Eurocentric historiography dates the beginning of the Cold War to a later period.

At the same time, some US and Russian researchers tend to date the beginning of the Cold War to 1917 and Woodrow Wilson’s presidency.⁶ However, study of the Cold War as an historical era and research into its context and nature demonstrates that this period was a phenomenon of the postwar era. While respecting other concepts and ideas regarding the beginning of the Cold War, it would be more realistic to think that the Cold War started with the issues and in the territories that had not been agreed on between the Allies. It include events in Iranian Azerbaijan resulting in the first confrontation between the Allies in autumn 1945 and harsh international response to Soviet claims against Turkey. In my opinion, these two major events paved the way for the Cold War. New archival documents show that it was the confrontation between the Allies over Iranian Azerbaijan and Turkey that led to the “war of nerves” and the Cold War. These two issues became a testing ground for the Cold War. Here in Asia, long before Europe, wartime cooperation had already come to an end and mutual assistance between the Allies turned into competition.

Immediately following the end of the war in Europe, secret decisions were made in the USSR regarding Iran, China, and Turkey, that envisaged serious expansionist plans, including confrontation with the Allies. On June 10, 1945, the Council of Soviet People’s Commissars decided to “organize Soviet Industrial Enterprises in Northern Iran.”⁷ On June 21, the State Defense Committee passed a decision “On Geological Prospecting Operations in North Iran.”⁸ On July 6, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union adopted a resolution “On Measures on the Organization of a Separatist Movement in South Azerbaijan and Other Provinces of Northern Iran.”⁹ On 8 October 1945, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, which recognized the situation as serious, deemed it necessary to return to the issue and edited its own earlier decision of 6 July 1945.¹⁰ Joseph Stalin, head of all three governmental bodies, signed these documents.¹¹

Besides Iranian Azerbaijan, such secret decisions were made on East Turkestan (Xinjiang Province of China). On 22 June 1945, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union passed a decision on assistance to East Turkestan’s Provisional Government.¹² On 15 September 1945, the Political Bureau again returned to the East Turkestan issue and passed a second decision on the situation in Xinjiang Province.¹³

Simultaneous with the Iranian and China decisions, in June–August of 1945, the Soviet Union formulated and then put forward its claims to Turkey. On June 7, People’s Commissar for

Foreign Affairs Vyacheslav Molotov received Turkish Ambassador Selim Sarper in the Kremlin and laid down Soviet territorial claims to Eastern Turkey.¹⁴ On June 18 1945, Molotov and Sarper met for the second time. Molotov informed Sarper of Soviet intentions to build a military base in the Turkish Straits and establishment of joint Soviet-Turkish control over the Bosphorus and Dardanelles.¹⁵ On August 18, the Soviet Commissariat for Foreign Affairs determined an area to be annexed from Turkey and officially declared that these territories would form a part of the Armenian and Georgian Soviet Socialist Republics. At the height of the euphoria over victory against Germany, Soviet leaders even established local committees of the Communist Party and nominated appropriate people to fill the leadership positions in the regions to be occupied. According to Soviet plans, this action would help to expand the territory of the Armenian SSR by 80 percent and the Georgian SSR by 8 percent.¹⁶ Historian Vladislav Zubok points out that Stalin planned to use the “Armenian card” to annex the eastern Turkish provinces around Lake Van, as well as Ardvin and Kars.¹⁷ Certainly, Soviet claims against Turkey were a surprise to the Allies. On the eve of the Potsdam conference, British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden told Molotov that nobody had earlier heard of any Soviet claims against Turkey.

These crises over Iranian Azerbaijan, East Turkestan (Xinjiang), and Turkey help answer the questions of how and where the Cold War started. Secret decisions of the Soviets on these three bordering areas of the Near East and China, as well as the steps taken by Soviet secret organs toward implementation of these decisions in practice were the first elements of the historical period that was later named the “Cold War.”

New archival documents identify Stalin as the main architect of the “Turkish crisis.” The victory of the Soviet Union in the Second World War enabled Stalin to expand the geographical limits of the intrigues that he practiced within the country in the 1930s. The USSR’s crucial role in the victory over Nazi Germany helped to turn this country into a strong power, capable of deciding the world’s fate. On the other hand, Stalin, as the head of the state negatively affected the lives of many in the USSR. During the early postwar years, Soviet foreign policy seemed to be effective. However, careful study reveals that foreign policy served the interests of Stalin’s personal ambitions. The decline of repressions in the postwar Soviet Union is explained by the fact that Stalin’s intrigues spilled over to the international arena and his decision to use repressive methods on neighboring countries. For this reason, it would be correct to consider Stalin’s doctrine of Soviet expansion as a turning point of the beginning of the Cold War. In a conversation with Felix Chuev, Molotov remembered:

A map with new borders of the USSR . . . was brought after the war to Stalin’s dacha. The map was very small—like those for school textbooks. Stalin pinned it to the wall: “Let’s see what we have here . . . everything is all right to the north. Finland has offended us, so, we moved the border from Leningrad. The Baltic States—that age-old Russian land and they’re ours again! All Belorussians live together now, Ukrainians together, Moldavians together. It’s okay to the west.” He suddenly turned to the eastern borders. “What do we have there? The Kuril Islands belong to us now, Sakhalin is completely ours—you see, well! And Port Arthur [Dalian] is ours.” Stalin moved his pipe across China: “. . . and the Chinese Eastern railway is ours. China, Mongolia—everything is in order. But I don’t like our border right here!” Stalin said and pointed to the Caucasus.¹⁸

Compared to Europe, the “expansion doctrine” clearly manifested itself in Turkey. Molotov,

Commissar for Foreign Affairs of a victorious country, called the ambassador of Turkey and demanded to seize the territories to build military bases in Turkish territorial waters; to control the Bosphorus and Dardanelles and thus encroach upon Turkey's sovereignty.

Later on Molotov put the blame on Stalin and recognized the illegality of these claims. Despite this avowal, the "hostile impression" of Turkey, created by Stalin and his apprentices, survived in the minds of the Soviet people until the end of the Cold War. It is interesting that the enemy image cast upon Turkey shows itself in current publications despite the collapse of the USSR and the efforts of some prominent Russian researchers to prove the contrary. There is hardly a single belletrist to give high praise to Turks or Turkey as a whole.

A thorough analysis of documents and materials shows that the Soviet Union prioritized Turkey in its Middle East policy. It was not mere coincidence that Turkey turned into a testing ground for the Cold War. It was here that the idea of border expansion toward the Near East and the Mediterranean resulted in the first confrontation between the USSR and the USA, with direct involvement of Great Britain.¹⁹ As historians David S. Painter and Melvyn P. Leffler conclude, "In late 1945 and early 1946, crises in Iran, Turkey, and Greece intersected with great power rivalries to increase tensions between the Soviet Union and its Anglo-American allies. These crises were part of a general restructuring of power relationships in the region, changes that threatened the Western position in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East."²⁰

Chronologically, this monograph covers the dramatic events that occurred during the period from 1945 to 1953. Compared with the five-hundred-year history of relations between the Ottoman Empire and Tsarist Russia, the period under study is not so extensive. However, Soviet-Turkish relations are of a particular importance considering the political context of wartime and postwar developments, their place and significance in the international relations system, their role in giving an impetus to the Cold War era, and their influence on the subsequent march of world history.

It was Lenin and Atatürk who laid down the principles of relations between Soviet Russia and Turkey after the First World War. Establishment of friendly relations between modernized Turkey, participant of the defeated bloc, and modernized Russia, apostate of the winners' bloc, was a necessity of that time. Beyond any doubt, national, ideological, and class interests contributed to the building of these new relations along with a new international situation. Combating the Entente and the West, Turkey attached a paramount importance to its relations with Soviet Russia. Meanwhile, Soviet Russia lost any hope of the triumph of socialist revolution in the West. So it had to shift its attention to the Eastern countries. Turkey, with its anti-imperialist war, seemed to be a comfortable ground for Bolshevik experiments. Despite the common interests of the two countries and experiencing pressure of the Entente, Russia failed to transform Mustafa Kemal into a Bolshevik leader of Turkey. Lenin, in his speech at the seventh meeting of Soviets in December of 1920, called Kemalists "Turkish October Men."²¹ Atatürk adhered to the national will of the people, rather than to class interests. So, although he was friendly to Russia, he did not let ideas of Bolshevism penetrate into Turkey. Thus, Georgi Chicherin, Commissar for Foreign Affairs, recommended to grant power to "leftist" Turks rather than to Kemolists.²² Despite giving great importance to developing

relations with Soviet Russia, Atatürk inclined, nevertheless, towards Western ideas. It was the Lausanne Conference that finally shaped the pro-Western political policy of Turkey. Despite Soviet efforts, Turkey made concessions to the West regarding the Straits. The concession yielded its results during the Montreux Conference in 1936. Turkey was returned all that it had lost in Lausanne and its sovereignty and control over the Straits was restored. That was the most important result of Atatürk's pro-Western policy.

Turkey learned a lesson from its defeat in the First World War and was very prudent during World War II. Turkish leaders and diplomats were successful in getting their country out of war with no losses. This was the great success of Turkey's foreign policy. Profiting and playing on disagreements between the great powers, Turkey focused on neutrality, taking a sober view of these happenings. But the neutrality, as Soviet leaders repeatedly stated, was in favor of the Allies. American researcher Wayne Bowen defined Turkish policy during the Second World War as that of an "allied but non-fighting country."²³

Atatürk enjoined his successors "to be mindful of the threat from the north." These apprehensions proved to be true. During the first few months of the war, the Soviets set out their claims to Turkey.²⁴ Relying on its Allies, the Soviet Union tried to implement the same plans regarding Turkey that it had previously attempted in alliance with Germany. However, the USA and Great Britain did not follow the Soviet lead. As a result, Turkey turned into an arena of confrontation between the West and the East. Several proposals of joint control over the Straits had been prepared by November 1944. On March 1945, the Turkish-Soviet Treaty on Friendship and Neutrality was terminated. Afterwards the Soviet Union put forward territorial claims violating the sovereign rights and territorial integrity of Turkey. All these grew into "the war of nerves" that was typical of the Stalin period of the Cold War.

After the end of the war, Turkey became the first country to experience the pressure, tensions and threats of the great powers. Pressured by its northern neighbor, Turkey had to seek assistance from the USA and Great Britain. Soviet pressure resulted in Turkey's transformation into the object of the Truman Doctrine. Turkey sought to obtain aid under the Marshall Plan, and joined different regional blocs and NATO.²⁵ Examining documents of that period, including diplomatic correspondence, secret materials, and the instructions of top officials, we have repeatedly dealt with expressions like "war of nerves," "demonstration of force," "bringing to knees," "atmosphere of psychosis," "destruction of the country's economy," etc. All these are components of the Cold War.

The documents state that the Turkish establishment exaggerated the Soviet threat and benefited from the situation. It also tried to further its political and military integration with the West. Meanwhile, US political circles were seeking to make use of the Soviet threat and consolidate their power in the Near East and Mediterranean.

Archives also support the fact that Armenia and Georgia actively participated in laying out and "substantiating" territorial claims towards Turkey. This was not done on the initiative of these republics, but under direct instruction from Moscow and by personal order of Stalin. As a rule, these instructions were recorded in the documents of the period in question.

At the same time, Armenia and Georgia set forth territorial claims against Azerbaijan. This

was one of the most tragic pages in the history of relations of the people of the Caucasus. Stalin's intrigues ended with the deportation of Turkic groups from their native lands. Soviet-Turkish tensions had a tragic impact on the destinies of the Turkic population of the Caucasus and Crimea. Decisions made by the State Defense Committee on the deportation of Turks from Crimea in May 1944 and southern regions of Georgia in July 1944 were not justified by war needs. It came about as a result of Kremlin-instigated pressures on Turkey. The ensuing actions included the deportation of 100,000 Azerbaijanis from Armenia, cleansing of the Black Sea coasts and South Caucasus of Turks and their exile beyond the Urals. In 1947, in order to legalize the Soviet Union's territorial claims against Turkey and to achieve his ambitions, Stalin initiated the repatriation of Armenians from abroad to Soviet Armenia. Meanwhile, Azerbaijan was held accountable for Turkey's obstinacy.

Finally, the analysis of the Turkish crisis permits us to conclude that the will of the nation and its fighting spirit in opposition to its enemies is the best guarantor of integrity of any state, the inviolability of its borders, and its sovereignty and independence.

This monograph makes use of literature published in Russia, Turkey, and the USA. The chapters of this monograph deal with various events and processes, researchers' theories, etc. It should be noted that there is an appreciable novelty in the works of Russian authors who deal with Near Eastern, specifically Turkish, war episodes.

The speeches of political figures, including Presidents of Turkey Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, İsmet İnönü, Celal Bayar, as well as prime ministers, speakers and foreign ministers, such as Refik Saydam, Sükrü Saracoğlu, Abdülhalik Renda, Kazım Karabekir, Recep Peker, Hasan Saka, Şemsettin Günaltay, Adnan Menderes, Necmettin Sadak, and Fuat Köprülü, were used along with memoirs of well-known Turkish diplomats, research materials published in Turkey, and materials from the Turkish press of the period in question.

The research work is based on new archival materials made available in the present day. To comprehensively embrace a wide range of problems within a chronological framework, correspondence and speeches of heads of states, diplomatic offices, military agencies and special services, letters, reports, etc., were reviewed. A special emphasis was put on "top secret" materials sent by the Soviet Embassy in Ankara to the Soviet Foreign Ministry, regular review of the Turkish press with commentaries of Embassy officials, secret instructions from Moscow to the Soviet Embassy, as well as the decisions of the Political Bureau on Turkey.

At the same time, documents on the foreign political activities of the United States in the Near East, diplomatic correspondence, materials of the US Department of State, correspondence, speeches, and interviews of President Truman, Secretary of State J. Byrnes, J. Marshall, D. Acheson, and reports of the US Embassy in Ankara were examined.

Documents from the Russian State Archive of Social and Political History, Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation, Archive of US National Security, Archive of the Georgian President, State Archive of the Azerbaijan Republic, Central State Archive of Political Parties and Social Movements of the Azerbaijan Republic, Archive of the Ministry of National Security of the Azerbaijan Republic, and Central State Archive of Documents of Social-Political Organizations of the Armenian Republic were used in the monograph.

The author expresses his gratitude to the management of the Archive of US National Security at George Washington University for its mediation in getting access to archival documents of the Armenian Republic and documents of some Russian archives, as well as the archival officials who rendered their invaluable services to the research.

The author recognizes that he is far from able to embrace all the issues concerning the reviewed subject. As new materials of the Russian archives are opened and documents on the Turkish foreign policy are published, it will be essential to re-examine Soviet–Turkish relations to finalize research work on this topic. Recognizing this, the author concedes that his argument that the Cold War began in Iranian Azerbaijan and Turkey is open for discussion and would welcome any opportunity to elaborate on this subject.

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Chapter One

Soviet-Turkish Relations during the Second World War: From Neutrality to Escalating Tensions

During the period between the two world wars Soviet-Turkish relations passed through an interesting path of historical development. Both countries shared identical historical destinies in the 1920s, both states took their place within the system of international relations, and both sought to maintain bilateral relations, collaborate on a wide range of issues, and consolidate their international positions. Until the mid-1930s, Soviet-Turkish relations were characterized as friendly, and in some cases as fraternal.

The Moscow Treaty on Friendship and Brotherhood, signed on March 16, 1921, between Soviet Russia and Turkey; the Kars Treaty among Turkey and Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia signed on October 13, 1921, as well as treaty between Turkey and Ukraine of January 21, 1922, laid down principles of friendship between Turkey and the Soviet Union. It eventually evolved into the treaty on Friendship and Neutrality of December 17, 1925, stipulating non-aggression and non-participation in hostile groupings in the event of military clashes. The treaty, signed for a term of three years, was automatically prolonged each year, unless one of the parties was to declare its termination six months in advance. In fact, the Treaty was extended for another two years on December 17, 1929. On October 30, 1931 the treaty was prolonged for another five years and for ten years on November 7, 1935.

In 1934, Lev Karakhan was appointed Soviet Ambassador to Turkey. Turks knew him very well, as far back as the signing of the Peace Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. In reality, he was the Armenian, Levon Karakhanyan. By appointing him as Ambassador Stalin demonstrated the cooling of relations between the two countries. As a participant in the Russian-Turkish talks in 1921, Stalin was well aware of the inimical attitude of Turks toward Karakhan. An eloquent testimony to this fact is given in a cipher telegram sent by Sergo Ordzhonikidze to Lenin on February 8, 1921 from Baku: "Stalin's participation in the talks with Turks is quite necessary. They do not believe Chicherin and they hate Karakhan."¹

Despite the above-mentioned episodes, both countries managed to preserve loyalty to each other throughout the mid-1930s. It was increasing international tensions in the period in question and the danger of war that encouraged Turkey to pursue a prudent and balanced foreign policy. Contributing to Turkey's increased influence in the West were the countries' joining the Kellogg-Briand Pact, signing the Moscow Protocol, joining the London Convention for the Definition of Aggression, and participating in concluding the Balkan Entente Pact and Saadabad Treaty, and Turkey's transformation into the leading actor during the Montreux

Conference on the Turkish Straits.

The Straits Conference started its work in Montreux on June 22, 1936. Turkey, the USSR, Bulgaria, Romania, France, Great Britain, Japan, Greece, Yugoslavia, and Australia participated in the conference. The first meeting discussed a draft of a new treaty on the Straits' regime developed by the Turkish government. Following stormy debates, the Montreux Convention Regarding the Regime of the Turkish Straits was signed in July 20, 1936. The Convention consisted of five sections, twenty-nine articles, four appendices, and one protocol, and was signed by representatives of Turkey, the USSR, Bulgaria, Romania, Great Britain, France, Japan, Greece and Yugoslavia. All the participants reaffirmed that "the Black Sea Straits regime was based on the security of Turkey as well as that of the Black Sea states." The Convention was signed for a period of 20 years. Two years before the termination of the Convention, any of signatories could demand to terminate it.² Thus, the International Commission was dissolved at Montreux, and Turkey was entitled to interpret the new treaty at its own discretion. In 1938, Italy joined the convention, and in 1951 Japan left it.³

In July 1937, Turkish Foreign Minister Tefvik Rüştü Aras⁴ and Internal Minister Sükrü Kaya⁵ visited Moscow. They were received by Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR Molotov and People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs Maxim Litvinov. During their talks with Molotov and Litvinov, Aras and Kaya stressed the necessity of preserving friendly relations between the two countries. The parties came to agreement on preserving friendship, allegiance to the cause of peace and principles of the League of Nations.⁶ The Moscow trip of the two Ministers contributed to improving relations between the USSR and Turkey. After the Montreux conference the Soviet special services started to collect compromising materials against Turkey. They had emigrant organizations shadowed. In turn, Turkey closely watched expansionist trends in Soviet foreign policy. Turkish political circles began focusing on the problems of fascism and Communism.

The death of Atatürk on November 10, 1938, aggravated Soviet-Turkish relations. In spite of the fact that the balanced foreign policy of Turkey started in 1936 during the Montreux Conference, the Soviets made additional attempts to revise the course of Turkey's foreign policy. On November 11, 1938, the Grand National Assembly of Turkey elected İsmet İnönü as the second President of Turkey.⁷ In November 1938, Sükrü Saracoglu was appointed Turkish Foreign Minister.⁸ With İnönü and Saracoglu's coming to power, there began a new stage in the foreign policy of Turkey. However, this change was not built on personalities. This was a foreign political doctrine that took into consideration the realities of the changing world and attempted to preserve the broad system of security laid down by Atatürk. The major factor of this stage was the intensifying alliance between German and Italy, which openly had pretensions to the southeastern parts of Europe, especially the Balkans. The occupation of Albania by Italy in April 1939 caused alarm in Turkey. In this same period, Great Britain and France guaranteed the protection of Greece and Romania, and promised that these guarantees might be granted to Turkey as well.

The Non-Aggression Pact of August 23, 1939 between Germany and the Soviet Union, paved the way for the Second World War. Shortly afterward, on September 1, German forces entered

Poland. Two days later, on September 3, Great Britain and France declared war on Germany. With the beginning of the war, a new military, political and diplomatic situation emerged.⁹

While Turkey was concerned about the Nazi leadership's designs on Europe, it was the invasion of Poland by the USSR, the occupation of West Ukraine and West Belarus, announcement of territorial claims to Romania, and the escalation of tensions in the Balkans that gravely troubled Turkey. After all, Turkey shared a border with the USSR—a border known for periodic friction and conflicts between the Turkish and Russian states dating back for centuries. After the commencement of hostilities in Europe, Turkish President İönü declared at the Grand National Assembly: “The crisis in Europe, which gave hopes for peaceful resolution of the conflict, has turned into a military tragedy. Realizing the sincerity of your sentiments, I am aware that you are experiencing upset and bitterness like me. The government of this country has always fought for peace and security as its principal objective.”¹⁰

The Soviet-German pact on the eve of the war caused great unease in the political circles of Turkey. However, the government continued to maintain relations with the USSR. The signing of bilateral declarations between Turkey, Great Britain and France in May–June 1939 and Britain's guarantees of Turkey's territorial integrity in the first days of the war were welcomed by political circles and the public of the country. However, İönü wanted to obtain identical guarantees from the Soviets.¹¹ On 24 September, Foreign Minister of Turkey Sükrü Saracoglu went to Moscow for negotiations. On 1 October he was received by Stalin and Foreign Minister Molotov. At the meeting with Molotov, the latter conveyed that the Soviet side had familiarized itself with the draft of the British-French-Turkish non-aggression pact and found it interesting:

We took great pains to study the clauses and found the purpose of the document as a whole vague; namely, it is not clear against whom the pact is directed. We would like to know the extent to which Turkey is bound by the necessity to continue talks with both the British and the French and how far it has progressed. Besides, we would like to know the extent to which the Turkish government believes itself bound by the need to sign the pact with the British and the French and whether the pact would be better left unsigned.¹²

The Turkish foreign minister replied that the documents stated that they “are not directed against any specific country but, at the same time, are directed against any aggressor.” His detailed reply required from the Soviet side an equally specific response. Molotov responded with: “Who will be the target of the Soviet-Turkish pact? We cannot conclude a pact against Germany nor Italy; the latter being an ally of Germany against Bulgaria, but the latter does not threaten Turkey.”¹³ It was clear that Molotov did not want to sign a pact on mutual assistance.¹⁴

Molotov's formulation did not satisfy Saracoglu, so he asked a specific question: “If Germany or Italy would advance on Turkey, what is the position of the Soviet Union with regard to Turkey? We think that this is not a matter of indifference to the USSR.” Though Molotov reaffirmed that he was not indifferent to Turkey's destiny, he maintained his claim that there was no real threat to Turkey. In reply, Saracoglu cast doubts on the sincerity of Germany and Italy and even its current Allies. “We cannot exclude such a possibility—Great Britain's or France's desire to attack Turkey if not today, at least tomorrow. Our pact is not directed against

any country, so it aims to protect Turkey and the Soviet Union against any eventuality.”¹⁵

Instead, Molotov believed that the Anglo-Turkish and Franco-Turkish pacts placed too many obligations on Turkey, even obliging it to ensure the security of Romania and Greece. To him, it was Turkey’s sole responsibility to solve these issues, so if the Turkish government did not consider it possible to decline an Anglo-Turkish pact, they might agree on a draft suggested to Saracog̃lu by the Soviet Chargé d’Affaires to Ankara Alexei Terentiev. Here, the point was about including a “Soviet provision” in the Anglo-French Treaty with Turkey, which would state that the pact would become invalid if Britain and France came out against the USSR.

At this moment, Stalin spoke. He said that the Turks had not asked him, but if they did, he would advise them not to conclude these pacts even though Turkey may need Britain and France as states with powerful navies.

Turkey is a Mediterranean power. The fact is that Great Britain and France could promise Turkey many things in the Mediterranean and Aegean seas (particularly, the return of islands). The USSR would be in no position to offer the same. Therefore, I understand the intentions of Turkey to avail itself of the conflict between Great Britain and France, on the one hand, and Italy, on the other, and thus to protect its interests in the Dodecanese. It is sensible. Islands may only be obtained using this method, but there are other complications. As for the Balkans, Turkey faces challenges from Greece and Romania. In this case, France and Great Britain are more interested in Turkey than vice-versa. I think that there could be disagreements with Turks, especially over Bulgaria. In my opinion, aid in the form of money and loans supplied by the British costs less than troops put forward by Turkey. The situation around Turkey may blow up everything on the continent: either in Bulgaria, or if Hungarians attack Romanians or Italians attack Greece—Turkey might be involved in a war. On the other hand, there is the issue of strained relations between the USSR and Romania over Bessarabia. We are not going to attack Romania, but still, we do not intend to divide Bessarabia. In my view, Romania, like Poland, seized too much land. The one who maintains mutual relations with Romania shall draw the sword: maybe, this will be Hungary or somebody else, and again, it is not profitable for Turkey.

Further, Stalin pointed out that his words were just a part of the problem and it would be better if the pact with the British did not include the first and second clauses. However, there was another group of questions that posed new difficulties.

Every event has its own logic: we speak of one thing, while events develop quite differently. We, together with Germany, divided Poland. Britain and France declined from declaring war on us, but this may happen any moment. We have not concluded a pact on mutual aid with Germany, but if the British and French declare a war, we would have to fight against them. What will the treaty look like then? That’s the new logic of events.

Further Stalin made an important statement:

Mr. Saracog̃lu can say that we have a provision that Turkey would cancel its obligations or that it will be neutral. In this case, we shall make another provision that if Turkey gets involved in the conflict, our pact becomes invalid. We shall not go against Germany. What is the use of this pact then? Nothing. Do we want to conclude a pact with Turks? Yes, we do. Are we friends of Turkey? Yes, we are. Yet, there are circumstances upon which I have already touched and which turn the pact into a sheet of paper. Who is to blame that things have gone so differently and made Turkey decline from the pact? No one. Circumstances, developments are to blame. The Polish actions played their own role. The British and French, particularly the former, did not want to conclude an agreement with us, believing they could do without us. They are the persons guilty of the current situation, we are guilty as well. We failed to foresee subsequent developments.¹⁶

Thus, on 1 October 1939, for the first time, Stalin recognized the part he played in unleashing the war.

After that Saracog̃lu came to address the conclusion of the pact with the USSR, specifying Turkey’s position in case of war between the Soviet Union and Britain or France:

When Soviet troops invaded Poland, I invited British and French Ambassadors and advised their governments not to urge Soviets to make a military treaty with Germany and avoid creating a harmful situation for Turkey in its relations with Britain and France . . . However, if the war breaks out, Turkey will remain neutral. I am confident that Britain and France, as comrade Stalin maintains, did not want to conclude a treaty with the Soviets. But I have learnt a bitter lesson and am sure now that the British and French are inclined to settle things with the Soviet Union. The Soviet-Turkish pact is likely to settle a misunderstanding and thus foreshadow other, broader agreements, important not only for Turkey, but for the globe as a whole. It is about an arrangement with Britain and France.¹⁷

To clarify the Turkish position, Stalin asked: “Despite our doubts, does Saracog̃lu believe that a pact with us might be concluded?” The Minister was firm: “Yes, this is my conviction!” Asked if it would be difficult to change provisions in the Anglo-Turkish and Franco-Turkish pacts, he replied:

Should a conflict arise between the Soviet Union and Romania, Turkey would not intervene. I agree to make such a proviso. Should the Soviet Government claim that any action of Turkey might be regarded by our friends as hostile action, Turkey would refrain from doing this. As for this proviso, if the Soviet Union suggests something adequate, Saracog̃lu would accept it. The British took the initiative to make a proviso, which states that Turkey can decline from assisting Romania, if a conflict arises.

Stalin declared that when you deal with the British and French it should be remembered that they perform their obligations when it is profitable for them and decline to perform them when it is unprofitable for them, as it was in the case with Poland and Czechoslovakia.¹⁸

The above-cited extracts from the minutes of the talks indicate that despite all the concessions on the side of Turkey, the Soviet side declined from signing a pact on mutual aid and performing its obligations of non-aggression against its neighbors. The Soviet government reached an agreement with Germany regarding Eastern Europe and specifically Poland, the Baltic countries, and Finland in an attempt to make Turkey refrain from any political course of action in the Balkans.¹⁹ Therefore, Stalin “advised” Turkey to decline from making serious obligations in the Balkans to Britain and France. He explained this by his desire to give free rein to Turkey in these matters, despite his apparent interest in Romania and Bulgaria. Further developments showed that the Soviet Union and fascist Germany were about to settle issues regarding Bulgaria and Romania politically. For this reason, the Soviets tried to gain the third item from the Anglo-French treaty with Turkey regarding the Balkans. In doing so, the USSR sought to marginalize Turkey in case of combat operations in the Balkans and restrict the British and French. Stalin stated: “Should Bulgaria come out against Turkey, it has to be punished. Why should we beat Bulgaria in other cases?”²⁰ Saracog̃lu believed that should Italy assault Turkey, or Bulgaria assault a Balkan country, Turkey would be involved in combat operations. To his thinking, the occupation of Greece was equal to the occupation of Turkey. Greece was a bridgehead from which to attack Turkey.²¹

To set Turkey aside from the Balkan question, Stalin put forward the following option: “A pact on mutual aid in case of attack against Turkey in the Straits and the Black Sea, without the Balkans, and consultations if things should go wrong in the Balkans.” In realizing what was behind this formulation, Saracog̃lu asked again: “When they speak about the Balkans, does European Turkey relate to the Balkan countries?” The answer was positive.²² Turkey was apprehensive that if the situation went wrong and Soviet pressure on Romania enhanced, Bulgaria would have to unite its efforts with someone else. This worry of Turkey came true

subsequently. The Soviet leadership's aspiration to separate Turkey from the Balkans was attributable to the fact that on 23 August as a supplement to the Soviet-German pact there was signed a secret protocol consisting of four items. The third item dealt with Bessarabia. The Soviet side emphasized its interest in Bessarabia, while the German party declared its disinterest in the area.²³

Finally, after long debates the details of the future Soviet-Turkish pact were identified. Molotov summed up Soviet conditions: if Britain or France attacked the USSR, all the Turkish obligations to these countries cease; if Turkey opposes Germany, the USSR would not protect it; if Germany attacks Turkey, the USSR would oppose this. Stalin specified as follows: "I understand this provision that if conflict arises, Turkey would maintain its neutrality. However, Turkey does not break off its ties with the British and French and may assist them in other aspects." Saracog˘lu welcomed these supplements, and noted Turkey's position: (1) Turkey's obligations to render assistance to Romania and Greece will be placed in the consultative section, (2) If conflict occurs between Britain and France, on the one hand, and the USSR, on the other, Turkey's obligations lose their validity. Saracog˘lu promised to immediately convey this information to Ankara and upon receiving an answer continue the talks.²⁴

During his Moscow visit, Saracog˘lu met with Kliment Voroshilov and Anastas Mikoyan. The talks yielded no positive results. Nevertheless, a communiqué prepared by Molotov and agreed on by Stalin, stressed the importance of the visit and expediency of the talks. It also concentrated on both governments' aspiration to maintain peace and consolidate friendly cooperation, particularly in terms of the war underway in Europe. The document pointed to the necessity for maintaining close contact between the parties to discuss issues of foreign policy that were of interest both for the Soviet Union and the Turkish Republic.²⁵

The Turkish foreign minister remained in Moscow until 16 October with little success; the British and French officials who were closely following the Moscow talks decided to complete their talks with Turkey (which had started in the spring of 1939) resulting in a British-French-Turkish Treaty of Mutual Assistance signed on 19 October in Ankara.²⁶ The Soviet Union demonstrated appropriate restraint, yet declassified diplomatic documents reveal that it was piqued by Turkey's independent position on many issues. Stalin, who had many interests in Turkey, was convinced that the fate of Turkey could not be settled without the Soviet Union.²⁷

By 1940, Turkey found itself in Moscow as part of a complicated diplomatic contest. In November 1940, the Soviet governmental delegation, headed by Molotov, visited Berlin. On the eve of Molotov's visit, rumours circulated suggesting that the German Foreign Ministry considered it necessary to divide Turkey and the Near East between Germany and Russia. Talks were held between him and Hitler with Ribbentrop's participation to define spheres of influence. Touching upon the secrecy of the talks, Valentin Berezhkov writes that Molotov banned him from dictating to a typist the text of a telegram regarding the course of the talks. He ordered him to do things secretly. "You can imagine how many ears would like to hear what we talked about with Hitler." He hinted at hidden microphones with wires leading to British, and American agents, or to Germans interested in the contents of the talks between Hitler and

Molotov.²⁸

The parties were interested in concealing the contents of their talks. The talks in Berlin made it possible to clarify the Soviet Union's hopes to expand its sphere of influence. Stalin's instructions to Molotov provided guidelines regarding changes to the world map. After redistributions of Eastern Europe, the next issues concerned the Balkans (Romania and Bulgaria), Turkey (Black Sea Straits) and Iran.²⁹

Stalin proposed to raise the question before Hitler on expanding Soviet interests in Europe, the Near and Middle East, as well as in Asia, and thus consolidate this position on the basis of an appropriate treaty. Soviet demands provided for bringing troops into Bulgaria, granting special powers to the Soviet Union in the Danube and its delta. As for Turkey, Stalin pursued particular goals there. He reaffirmed that the Turkish issue and the destiny of the country could not be settled without the assistance of the Soviet Union. In his instructions to Molotov, Stalin wrote: "If they ask about our relations with Turkey, you should reply that the lack of a pact on mutual aid with the USSR does not give them the right to demand any aid from the USSR." This instruction was related to the fact that Turkish Ambassador Ali Haydar Aktay informed the Soviet Foreign Ministry of his country's concern about the rise of tensions in the Balkans. On November 4, a reply came that the USSR "indicates its bewilderment regarding Ankara's inquiry on possible aid to Turkey due to the aggravation of the situation in the Balkans." Officially, Moscow reminded him that there was no pact on mutual aid between the USSR and Turkey. At the same time, the Soviet leaders preferred to ignore Saracoglu's proposal of September–October 1939 to discuss a draft agreement on September 8, 1939. It was no mere coincidence that Russian historian Lev Bezymenski labeled the Soviet reply to Turkey of November 4 as cynical. The destiny of Romania and Hungary was of a great concern to Stalin. In spite of the fact that the Straits were not specifically mentioned in Stalin's instructions, the Soviet leaders were concerned about that attitudes of Germany and Italy to the respective fates of Greece and Yugoslavia.³⁰

On November 12–13, the talks touched upon Soviet plans to join the alliance of Germany, Italy, and Japan (established on 27 September 1940) and the redistribution of the globe into spheres of influence between the four allies. The Soviets wished to seize control over the Straits. Accordingly, they attached great importance to an agreement with Bulgaria to favor access of Soviet troops to the Straits. During the talks, Molotov tried to learn Hitler's view on some issues, particularly, the so-called "Great Asia." He believed that it was necessary to clarify the Turkish issue. Molotov thought it necessary to revise the Montreux Treaty on the Straits and allow Soviet war ships free passage and return to the Black Sea. Molotov suggested that the Soviets should be entitled to maintain their military bases in the Straits. He also considered it necessary to ensure Bulgaria's access to the Aegean Sea.³¹ Molotov suggested pressuring Turkey with a view to preventing its collaboration with Britain and drawing it into alliance with the Axis powers. In doing so, he indicated his country's preparedness to sign an appropriate protocol.

While in Berlin, Molotov demanded that the Germans uphold Soviet interests in Turkey. In the first instance, this was attributable to the Straits. Stalin's additional instructions clearly

indicate that Molotov was entitled to discuss the issue of dividing Turkey. Beyond any doubt, the point was about the division of Turkey between the USSR and Bulgaria. To Stalin's thinking, the Straits issue could not be solved peacefully without pressuring Turkey regarding the introduction of Soviet troops in Bulgaria. Shown below are Stalin's words addressed to Georgi Dimitrov, Secretary-General of the Comintern Executive Committee on 25 November 1940: "We shall banish the Turks to Asia. There are 2 million Georgians, 1.5 million Armenians, one million Kurds, etc. and there are just 6–7 million Turks proper."³² There is a phrase in a Dimitrov's diary:

Stalin: We are going to put forward a proposal to the Bulgarians regarding the conclusion of a pact on mutual aid. We are backing the territorial claims of Bulgaria, including Midiya-Enos, Eastern Thrace, Dedeagac, Drama and Kavala. We also demand a base to prevent the Turks from using the Straits against us. Should such a pact be concluded, Turkey would not dare fight against Bulgaria, and the situation in the Balkans would be different.³³

Stalin suggested that Dimitrov assist in bringing this proposal to the notice of the broader strata of Bulgarian society.

Another incident in April 1941 provoked pressure on Turkey. On 5 April pro-German protégé Rashid Ali al-Gaylani stirred up rebellion against the British in Iraq and succeeded in seizing power. Germany wanted to help al-Gaylani via Turkish territory; however, the Turkish government refused this request. Then, the Vichy government desired to recover its lost positions in Syria via Turkish territory, but was turned down as well. Finally, Turkey refused Britain's request to transport arms via its territory. It was a non-interference policy and refusal to grant its territory for military purposes that helped Turkey to halt the Axis Powers' advance eastward.³⁴

Turkey's unswerving stand on the issue helped Britain to restore its authority in Iraq. Germany's Near East plans were a failure, so Ribbentrop had to initiate talks with Turkey on non-aggression. On 17 June, the German Ambassador to Ankara reported to Berlin that a text of the German-Turkish treaty on friendship and non-aggression was ready to be signed. On 18 June Saracoglu and Ambassador Franz von Papen signed the treaty. The parties committed themselves to respecting territorial integrity and the inviolability of national borders and declining from direct or indirect attempts to carry out hostile activities against each other.³⁵ The treaty of 18 June did not cancel Turkey's obligations to other countries—in the first instance, Britain. At Turkey's request, this provision was included in the text of the treaty. The Turkish statesmen, particularly Saracoglu, explained that the friendship between Turkey and Germany was not adverse to its alliance with Britain. Touching upon the treaty, İnönü pointed out that relations between Turkey and Germany during the Balkans events were subject to serious scrutiny: "In realizing Turkey's concern, Hitler wrote me a personal letter, which assured friendship to my country. On our government's recommendation, I wrote him back, and our further correspondence helped create an atmosphere of mutual confidence that manifested itself in the Turkish-German Friendship Treaty of June 18, 1941."³⁶

The German-Turkish treaty caused dissatisfaction in the United States. Deliveries of arms and ammunition immediately ceased. Later on, these deliveries resumed on Britain's request.³⁷ Not only the USA and Britain but also the Soviets disapproved of this step. In August 1939, the

Soviet Union signed a similar treaty with Germany. However, as it is well known, the pact was violated, and the war broke out between the two signatories. In retrospect, one may conclude that the German-Turkish treaty was the last step before attacking the Soviet Union. Secret Soviet diplomatic documents say that “the conclusion of the pact on friendship with Germany on June 18, 1941 gave Germany a free hand to assault the Soviet Union.”³⁸

Four days before the conclusion of the German-Turkish treaty, on 14 June *Pravda* newspaper published a statement from TASS (Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union), which noted that the USSR and Germany strictly complied with the non-aggression pact, so, rumors about possible war between them were groundless. The statement added that the USSR was also delivering strategic raw materials, foodstuffs, etc., to Germany.³⁹ This placatory statement of TASS encouraged the Turks to conclude a treaty of neutrality with the Germans. A week later, on June 22, 1941, Germany attacked the Soviet Union; the world war entered a new stage. Combat operations on battlefields were accompanied by diplomatic battles with both belligerent and neutral countries involved.

Germany immediately publicized Molotov’s plans regarding Turkey in the Berlin talks of 1940. By these actions, Germany was trying to please Turkey and concurrently aggravate Soviet-Turkish relations. In order to mitigate this propaganda action and mollify Turkish public opinion, the Soviet government made a special statement which said that the USSR did not have such intentions. The anti-Soviet campaign was very strong and on 27 June, TASS officially rejected Hitler’s provocative statements about Soviet claims to the Bosphorus and Dardanelles and its desire to occupy Bulgaria.

During the first week of the war, on 26 June, Turkey made a special note declaring neutrality with respect to Germany and the USSR. Despite the officially declared neutrality of Turkey, Stalin called Ankara’s stance into question. During his meeting with the heads of Transcaucasian Republics on 4 July (M. J. Bagirov, Kandid Charkviani and G. Arutyunov, Communist Party leaders of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia, respectively), Stalin stated: “Notwithstanding that the front line is far away from you, you are in the danger zone. We cannot be confident of Turkey’s neutrality.”⁴⁰ Molotov, Voroshilov, Lavrentiy Beria, and Georgi Malenkov attended the conversation.

Late in August 1941, Soviet and British troops entered Iran, which stirred up anxiety in Turkey. Two weeks before, on 10 August Britain and the Soviet Union had made a joint statement that they would respect the Straits regime and territorial integrity of Turkey. Turkey was also assured that aid would be rendered if it fell prey to aggression. In order to weaken the effectiveness of German propaganda, the Soviet government reaffirmed its loyalty to the Montreux Convention and assured the Turkish government that it had no aggressive intentions or claims to the Straits. The Soviet side underlined that it realized Turkey’s desire to remain neutral, so it would assist Turkey should it fall prey to an attack by a European state.⁴¹ The joint statement by Great Britain and the Soviet Union on Turkey aimed to diplomatically ensure the country’s neutrality and weaken the German influence in Turkey.⁴²

But as soon as April 25, 1942, after discussing the situation, Stalin and General of the Army Ivan Tulenev, commander of the Transcaucasian military region, agreed to fortify the military

district with weapons and hardware as a follow-up to the directive of the Soviet General Staff of April 26. Soon after that, on 5 May, commanders of the forty-fifth and forty-sixth armies were ordered to prepare to enter Turkish territory. This can be described as real preparations of trained armies for action in Turkey.⁴³

From May 1942, the situation on the German-Soviet front was increasingly aggravated and heavy losses in Crimea and in Kharkov forced the Soviets to postpone military preparations against Turkey, which, in turn, strengthened the latter's position on the border. The approach of German troops towards the Caucasus led Turkey to strengthen its defensive line. The intelligence service of the Transcaucasian front reported that as of July 29, 1942, armed forces of Turkey stationed on the Soviet border numbered four corps, sixteen infantry, and two cavalry corps. In July, two more divisions and a motor regiment were brought to the border. Soviet intelligence services had to concede that the preparatory work on the border with Turkey was unsatisfactory. Reconnaissance flights and skirmishes in the border zone became more frequent with the access of German units to the Black Sea coast.⁴⁴

Recently declassified correspondence of the Allies shows that agreements were made with the intention of drawing Turkey into combat operations in 1943. During the Casablanca conference on January 19, 1943, the British and Americans decided to create the Balkan front in order to deliver a blow to Germany from the southern flank and open a new transport line to Russia. Winston Churchill wrote that Turkey was a key for implementation of these plans. It took scores of months to draw Turkey into the war on the side of the Allies. Now expectations for the implementation of the project increased. Note that Stalin and Roosevelt agreed with Churchill, and the latter in a private conversation with President İ'nönü wanted to solve the issue.⁴⁵ With that end in mind, British Prime Minister Churchill, accompanied by Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen, Alexander Cadogan, Air Marshal R. M. Drummond, Air Vice Marshal R. A. George and Generals Alan Brooke, Sir H. Alexander, Sir Wilfried Lindsell and Maitland Wilson, Commodore J. G. Dundas arrived in Adana.⁴⁶ The delegation was received by İ'nönü, Saracog'lu and Menemenciog'u, Secretary-General, Ministry for Foreign Affairs Feridun Erkin, Chief of General Staff Fevzi Çakmak and Air Adviser to the Turkish General Staff Şefik Çakmak.⁴⁷ From January 30 to February 1, 1943, stormy debates took place between them on two issues: postwar reconstruction of the world and the future of Turkish-Russian relations. Churchill said that during his talks with Stalin and Molotov he concluded that they both wanted to live in peace and friendship with Great Britain and the USA. In the coming decade, Russia would do its utmost to recover from military devastation, so it was essential to maintain friendly relations with this country.⁴⁸ Should the USA and Great Britain act jointly and preserve the required quantity of air forces, they could secure stability worldwide. Churchill believed that Turkey should take part in the war and thus become active an participant of postwar reconstruction. While at Casablanca, Churchill told Anthony Eden that he was very anxious about Turkey, since it might miss its only chance.⁴⁹ Roosevelt's spokesman Harry Hopkins stated that if Churchill failed to persuade Turkey, it would be difficult to control the USSR with regard to the Straits. The point was that Saracog'lu had said in an interview for *The Times of London* newspaper that Turkey would try to maintain its neutrality.⁵⁰

During the talks in Adana, Churchill demanded that Turkey observe the terms of the Ankara pact. However, Saracog̃lu said: “The country has no army, properly trained and equipped, so joining the war would mean an unavoidable defeat. The Turkish army is deprived of modern weapons and ammunition. If Great Britain succeeds in supplying us with the necessary means we shall join the war.”⁵¹ Prime Minister Saracog̃lu added that the military victories of Russia might turn it into an imperialistic state. This was an expression frequently used by Churchill during the talks. As viewed by Saracog̃lu, it was the imperialist ambitions of the USSR that made Turkey prudent. Churchill stressed that the League of Nations would be replaced by another, more effective and stronger organization, capable of preserving peace in the world, and that he, Churchill, was not afraid of Communism any longer. Saracog̃lu replied that he preferred to be more realistic about the current developments. The whole of Europe was full of Slavs and Communists. If Germany was defeated, all the defeated countries would be slavized and Bolshevized. To ease Turkish public opinion, Churchill promised that if Russia attacked Turkey, all international organizations would rise to protect it. In the postwar period, not only Turkey but other European countries as well would be secured against Russia’s possible assault. He added that he would stop maintaining friendly relations with Russia if the latter tried to follow Germany. If Russia took such a step, all countries would rise against Russia, and Churchill would openly tell this to Stalin.⁵² However, all efforts of the British Prime Minister were a failure, and Turkey remained adamant. The main reason was mistrust in Turkish political circles of the Soviets and confidence that after Germany’s defeat, the USSR would follow in its footsteps.⁵³

The Adana talks did not persuade Turkey of the necessity of changing its policy of neutrality. It should be noted that Turkey did not fully trust the Allies, including Great Britain. However, the Adana meeting had its effect.⁵⁴ On January 31, 1943, after the talks between top British and Turkish military officials, it was decided to start delivering arms to the Turkish army. A decision said that in case of Turkey’s joining the war, Britain would protect separate regions, including Istanbul and Izmir, from air raids; also, Britain undertook to send military units to the region.⁵⁵

On 1 February, Churchill sent a telegram to Stalin, which detailed the discussions of the Adana meeting. In particular, he wrote that he did not insist on specific dates and obligations, but it seemed to him that Turkey would join the war before the end of the year. It was probable that before joining the war, Turkey, like the United States, would allow British-American bomber attacking the oil area of Ploiesti to refuel at Turkish aerodromes. Further developments demonstrated that the Turks thought differently, so Churchill had to agree with İnönü’s position on Turkey’s neutrality. On 2 February Churchill declared that Turkey’s neutrality met the interests of Turkey and its allies and that Great Britain accepted this position.

The Soviet Union also made active attempts to involve Turkey in the war. On July 16, 1943, Ambassador Vinogradov proposed to Molotov that he step up pressures on Turkey. He wrote: “Owing to the changing international situation . . . neutral Turkey has turned into an unfavorable factor, for it is an obstacle to the Allies’ attempts to transfer combat operations to the Balkans.” Sergei Vinogradov suggested all the Allies concurrently pressure Turkey and use its territory

as springboard for combat operations. “Should Turkey refuse, this would be profitable for us, since it enables us to press our claims against Turkey.”⁵⁶

In August 1943, the Allies landed in Sicily, and the Turkish issue was included in the agenda of the Quebec Conference. President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill adopted a decision to avoid making Turkey change its course of neutrality. It should not be forgotten that the Allies were in no position to supply Turks with promised arms and ammunition.⁵⁷ However, the Quebec Conference decided to inform the Turkish government that Turkish aerodromes were necessary to open the second front in the Balkans. However, the Soviet government did not share this decision of the Allies and preferred to see Turkey as a belligerent party. As viewed by the Soviets, Turkish neutrality was advantageous to Germany, not the Allies.⁵⁸ Molotov therefore suggested putting on the agenda of the Moscow Conference of Soviet, American, and British Foreign Ministers the issue of Turkey’s joining the war. He argued that this was necessary to facilitate the movement of Soviet troops across Europe. In to Molotov’s thinking, an appropriate decision should have been adopted in the form of an order, not a recommendation. In his view, Germany would then have to withdraw fifteen divisions from the Soviet front.⁵⁹ American and British foreign ministers opposed Molotov’s proposal, but, in the end, a compromise settlement was adopted, under which it was necessary to get permission for the use of Turkish aerodromes and then involve Turkey in the war. The final document of the Moscow Conference—a top secret protocol—provided for Turkey’s joining the war on the suggestion of the three states. The protocol signed by Molotov and Eden requested that Turkey immediately join the war before the end of 1943 and render all necessary assistance to the Allies through use of Turkish airbases.” Several days later, US Ambassador to Moscow Averell Harriman notified Molotov in writing that the USA was to join the Anglo-Soviet protocol on Turkey.⁶⁰

The question of Turkey’s involvement in the war was at the center of debates at the Teheran conference. At the first plenary session of November 28, 1943, Winston Churchill noted: “Another important issue is to persuade Turkey to join the war. This would enable the opening of communications via the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, so we could send our supplies to Russia via the Black Sea. Additionally, we could use Turkish aerodromes to combat the enemy.”⁶¹ Churchill added that in case of Turkey’s involvement in the war, it might be supplied with weapons, air forces and two to three divisions. In case of Turkey’s refusal, the latter would be deprived of British aid and would not be admitted to the postwar peace conference. Churchill warned Turkey that its policy might have a serious impact on the destiny of the Straits. He said: “We shall tell Turkey that we do not protect the Turks and that the Turks should settle their problems with the Soviet Union.”⁶² During debates the Soviet and US representatives did not back the British idea of rendering aid to Turkey. They believed that this aid would hold up preparations for “Operation Overlord” and the opening of the second front. Stalin strictly adhered to the principal line of his concept and avoided focusing on issues of minor importance.⁶³ Stalin said:

As for the two divisions Mr. Churchill wants to grant to Turkey and guerillas in Yugoslavia, there are no disagreements between us on this course of action. We consider this a rather important action; yet we do not consider important neither

Turkey's joining the war, nor aid to guerrillas and the occupation of Rome. We have come here to discuss war problems, so the most important thing, as we see it, is Operation Overlord. I would like to focus on the main issue, not minor ones.

In doing so, Stalin attributed Turkey's joining the war to the issues of minor importance. When the opening of the second front was put on the agenda, Stalin backed the idea of Operation Overlord, while Roosevelt noted that if he were the Turkish President he would not join the war until he received the promised aid and weapons.⁶⁴

The Teheran conference also touched upon the Straits issue. The British Prime Minister agreed with the necessity for the Soviets to get access to warm seas. Previously the British had objected to this, but now there were no objections. Using the moment, Stalin noted that it was necessary to revise the Straits regime: "Such a great country as Russia is restricted by the Black Sea. . . . If the British do not want to suffocate Russia, it would be appropriate to facilitate the Straits regime." All the parties came to the conclusion that they would still have time to discuss the issue of ports in warm seas and the Straits. Churchill noted that the Straits regime should be revised because Japan was a participant of the Montreux Convention. In turn, Roosevelt advocated a principle of free passage through the Straits of warships and commercial vessels of all countries, provided the powers establish their control over the Straits and exercise police functions.⁶⁵ This exchange of views aimed to sound positions over the Straits.

Participants of the Teheran conference agreed that it was necessary to arrange a meeting between Roosevelt, Churchill, and İ'nönü. Stalin asked disingenuously: "But if İ'nönü falls ill?" Churchill replied: "He may easily fall ill. If İ'nönü declines from going to Cairo to meet with me and the President, I am ready to use a cruiser to see him in Adana. İ'nönü will come over there, and I shall promise him an unpleasant picture in case the Turks decline from the war; and a pleasant picture if they do not." The meeting took place on December 4–6, 1943 in Cairo. During the talks, the Soviet Union was represented by Vinogradov, Ambassador to Ankara. In accordance with the conference decision, Churchill stressed the necessity of Turkey's involvement in the war and informed participants of the arrival of British-American air forces in Turkey on 15 February 1944. Otherwise, Churchill threatened to break off relations with Turkey. In principle, İ'nönü agreed with the argument of the Allies, though he tried to clarify some aspects. For instance, İ'nönü tried to explain that if the "Allied" Red Army arrived in the Balkans, it would never leave the area. Turkish statesmen were not apprehensive of German but rather of Soviet imperialism. In reply, Churchill informed that the future international organization would take additional measures to drive Russians away from Turkey.⁶⁶

In Cairo, İ'nönü stated that the Turkish army was not ready for the war for lack of weapons promised. Turkey needed large-scale aid. İ'nönü talked about the possibility of further debates between chiefs of general staffs and the leaders of the Allied powers gave their consent. An official press-release on the Cairo conference by the leaders of the United States, Britain, and Turkey stressed the necessity of strengthening alliance relations between Turkey and Britain, as well as attaching great importance to growing friendship between Turkish, American, and Soviet peoples.

Commencing from spring 1944, the toughening of Soviet policy toward Turkey resulted in the amassing of documents in the Soviet Foreign Ministry archives that reflect disputable aspects of the relations between the two countries. One of the documents prepared by A. Fedosov, head of the Near East department, was entitled “Report on Current Political Treaties and Agreements between the Soviet Union and Turkey as of January 1, 1944.” The report provides a detailed analysis of the Moscow Treaty on Friendship and Brotherhood concluded between the Russian Federation and Turkey on March 16, 1921. Soon after, clauses of the Treaty, especially the first appendix, regulating the northeastern borders of Turkey, would be revised by the Soviets. The report also touched upon the Kars Treaty between Turkey and South Caucasian Republics of October 13, 1921. It pointed out that neither treaty indicated a date of expiry. It added that the Turkish-Ukrainian Treaty of January 21, 1922, especially Article 5 [on rivers flowing into the Black Sea] was more specific by comparison with the above-mentioned treaties.

Of interest in the report is a treaty between Turkey and the USSR signed on December 17, 1925 in Paris. The report recommended raising Article 2 and additional protocols at the second set of discussions due to changes in the course of the world war. Besides the above-mentioned treaties, there were protocols of December 17, 1929, March 7, 1931, October 30, 1931, November 7, 1935 and a “gentleman’s agreement concluded in Moscow between the Turkish Ambassador and Soviet Foreign Minister.”⁶⁷

One more secret document, prepared on April 3, 1944, was a report on existing economic, border, trade, transport and other treaties and agreements between the USSR and Turkey as of April 1, 1944. The reappraisal of these documents stemmed from desire to review Soviet Turkish relations. An economic section of the report included a protocol on US\$8 million worth of credit in 1934, and a treaty on trade and navigation dating from 1937. A section of the report which discussed borders included a general protocol of the International Mixed Boundary Commission on state border and posts of 1926, a convention on water use, on border rivers, small rivers and springs of 1927 and a convention on consideration and resolution of border incidents and conflicts of 1937. A transport and communication section included a mail-telegraph convention of 1922, a railway convention of 1922, an exchange of notes between political representatives of the Soviet Union and the Turkish Foreign Ministry on categories of warships to visit each other’s ports of 1930. The legal section of the report included a 1928 agreement between the political representatives of the Soviet Union and the Turkish Foreign Ministry on the illegality of the sequestration of the property of Soviet citizens in Turkey and a 1936 exchange of notes between the Soviet Foreign Ministry and the Turkish Embassy in Moscow granting consuls the power of attorney to register inheritances.⁶⁸

Of interest is another document prepared on 22 April and entitled “Memorandum on Unresolved Issues between the USSR and Turkey as of April 15, 1944.” The report was prepared by A. Fedosov and executive Secretary General Vasili Kornev; it consists of twenty-one pages and is notable for the recommendations of the Soviet Foreign Ministry after each “unresolved” issue. All the recommendations are typical: to use the incident to pressure Turkey.⁶⁹ These recommendations preceded subsequent Soviet claims to Turkey.

After the rout of German troops in Crimea, the Soviet government launched a mass deportation of the native Turkic population of Crimea in May 1944. The Soviet Black Sea coast was purged of a possible fifth column against the background of worsening relations with Turkey. The order for deportation was given on April 2, 1944. In connection with this, Head of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD), Lavrentiy Beria, sent a three-page report to Stalin on May 10, 1944, which said:

Commissariats of Internal Affairs and State Security carried out an operation in Crimea to reveal and liquidate enemies of the people, accomplices of German-fascist occupants and other anti-Soviet elements. As of 7 May, 5,381 were arrested, 5,995 rifles, 337 machine guns, 250 submachine guns, 31 mortars and numerous grenades and cartridges were commandeered. Prior to 1944, over 20,000 Tatars betrayed their native land and deserted to Germans.

Further, Beria wrote that fascists, using the aid of Muslim White Guards from Germany and Turkey, arranged an intelligence network entitled the "Tatar National Committee" to operate in Tatar regions of Crimea. This organization sent 50,000 Soviet citizens to Germany, collected funds for the German army, persecuted the non-Tatar population, and stirred up various provocations. Taking into consideration the anti-Soviet activities of Crimean Tatars and the undesirability of their further inhabiting the border regions of the Soviet Union, the Ministry of Internal Affairs sent a decision of the State Defense Committee to Stalin on the banishment of all Tatars from Crimea.

Beria recommended using Crimean Tatars in agriculture, *kolkhozes* and *sovkhozes*, in industry and construction sites of the Uzbek SSR, saying,

The settlement of Tatars in Uzbekistan has already been agreed with the Uzbekistan Communist Party Secretary, comrade Yusupov. According to initial data, there are between 140,000 and 160,000 Tatars in Crimea now. They are expected to be removed between May 20–21 and 1 June. In this respect the State Defense Committee has submitted a draft decision. I kindly ask you to express your opinion.⁷⁰

A day after Beria's appeal, Stalin signed an order on the deportation of Crimean Tatars. On 20 May, Deputy Commissar of the Ministry of Internal Affairs Ivan Serov and First Deputy Chairman of the National Security Committee Bogdan Kobulov informed Beria of the completion of the operation in Crimea. On 4 July, Beria informed Stalin of the end of the deportation. It was reported that total 225,009 people were deported from Crimea, of them 183,155 were Tatars, 12,422—Bulgarians, 15,040—Greeks, the rest—other nationalities. In accordance with the decision of the State Defense Committee (SDC) of May 21, 1944, 151,604 Tatars were exiled to Uzbekistan, and 31,551 Tatars—to different regions of the Russian Federation. From the late nineteenth century until the deportation of 1944, an interesting picture was observed in the demography of Crimean Tatars. Published in 1922, the *Statistical-Economic Atlas of Crimea* indicated that 186,212 Turks lived in Crimea according to the 1897 census, and 186,715 in 1921. Tatars numbered 183,155 in 1944. This indicates a permanent outflow of the Turkic population from the peninsula.⁷¹ After this action, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CC CPSU) adopted a decision on June 30, 1945 on renaming the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic the Crimean region as a part of the Russian Federation. Of interest is that this decision was not published in the mass media.⁷²

Despite tight control of the Soviet special services and the Ministry of Internal Affairs over Crimean Tatars exiled, the latter contrived to secretly return to Crimea. In 1944–1948, internal bodies arrested 644 Tatars in Crimea. Owing to the increased number of these incidents, the Political Bureau of the CC CPSU passed a special decision on November 24, 1948, entitled “On Deportees,” demanding a criminal persecution for “flight.”⁷³

Prior to Political Bureau discussions, the question of returning Crimean Tatars was raised at a bureau of the Crimean regional party committee on September 13, 1948. It was decided that incidents arising from “flight” of Tatars came as a result of the violation of the passport regime and infringement of the law on special settlers. This contributed to the growth of tensions in Crimea, since the newly returned Tatars reappropriated their own homes, sold them, and evicted the residents. Leaders of the Crimean region entrusted the Ministry of Internal Affairs and security services to send settlers back. At the same time, they asked Minister of Internal Affairs of the USSR, Sergei Kruglov, to stop issuing permits for the return of special settlers to Crimea.⁷⁴

In November 1944, the Turks-Metskhetians residing on the Georgian territory bordered by Turkey suffered the same fate. By a decision of the State Defense Committee of July 30, 1944, 69,869 (15,568 families) from bordering regions of Adygea, Akhaltsikhe, Akhalkalaki, Aspindza, Bogdanovsk and Ajaria were resettled in Central Asia, of these 59,780 (13,434 families) were Turks; 8,627 (1,830 families)—Kurds; and 1,462 (304 families)—Khemshils.⁷⁵

A memorandum from Molotov and Malenkov of November 28, informing Stalin of the completion of the operation to exile Metskhetian Turks, said that the operation had been carried out in the period from 20 September to 15 November. The number of exiles totalled 91,095, of which 79,201 were Metskhetians. Beria wrote: “A considerable part of this population, related to the residents of border regions of Turkey, was engaged in smuggling, expressed their wish to emigrate and served as a recruitment ground for spies and gangsters.”⁷⁶

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, information about repressed Soviet peoples emerged. According to the Soviet State Security Service third Department, 400,478 Chechens and Ingush were deported during the war; 60,139 Karachays; 32,817 Balkars; 81,673 Kalmyks; 193,959 Crimean Tatars, Bulgarians and Greeks; 774,178 Germans; 92,374 Turks, Kurds and Khemshils (from the Georgian SSR); the total number of the Soviet citizens exiled amounted to two million.⁷⁷

New victories of the Soviet army in early 1944 were accompanied by increasing Soviet pressure on Turkey. From then on, Soviet special services engaged in collecting materials to strengthen pressure on its southern neighbor. In summer 1944, Trans-Caucasian front special services drew up detailed maps of the deployment of Turkish armies near Istanbul, Izmir, Ankara, Erzurum, Synop, Hatai, Eastern Anatolia, the Straits and Western Anatolia. Maps of such type were usually drawn up on the eve of an attack on a probable adversary. A map of Turkish army deployments, made of eight parts, was approved on 15 May by Chief of the Trans-Caucasian Front General Staff, Lieutenant General Ivanov and sent by head of Trans-Caucasian Intelligence Service, Colonel Gorshkov on June 6, 1944 to the First Secretary of the Azerbaijan Communist Party Mir Jafar Bagirov.⁷⁸

At the same time, the General Staff of the Soviet Army prepared a special map of the disposition of the Kurdish tribal communities on the territories of Iran, Iraq and Armenia along the Turkish border. The names of 42 tribes, their heads and number of each tribe were shown in the left corner of the map.⁷⁹ The collection of information and preparation of such a map by the Soviet General Staff, as well as the description of eastern provinces of Turkey, surrounded by militant Kurdish tribes, are indicative of hidden intentions of the Soviets with respect to Turkey.⁸⁰

In July 1944, the Soviet Ambassador to Ankara, Vinogradov sent a letter and attachment of twenty-eight pages to Deputy Foreign Ministers of USSR Sergey Kavtaradze and Solomon Lozovsky. The letter revealed Soviet plans in respect to Turkey. In particular, Vinogradov wrote: "I am sending you a translation of a report of the American Bureau of Military Information in Turkey about German propaganda in Turkey. I think that we could avail ourselves of the opportunity to disseminate appropriate propaganda and counter-propaganda in Turkey."⁸¹

The document analyzed the forms and methods of German propaganda in Turkey, sources of information and financing, network of agents, etc. It laid a special emphasis on the activity of German Ambassador von Papen. It was pointed out that on his deathbed Atatürk asked to take care of friendly relations between Turkey and Russia. Atatürk was apprehensive that von Papen would be able to sow discord between Russia and Turkey, for this reason six months before his death he disagreed with the candidacy of von Papen for the post of ambassador. Today, despite the Anglo-Turkish alliance, both İnönü and Numan Menemencioglu are under the influence of von Papen.⁸²

The document underlines the activities of the magazines *Çınaraltı* and *Akbaba* in disseminating German propaganda. It pointed out that the magazines were issued by Nuru Pasha, owner of the Turkish munitions factory in Zeytinburnu (near Istanbul), and brother of Enver Pasha, who as head of the Turkish army in the First World War had been killed by Russians. The document pointed out that the magazine *Çınaraltı* appeared after Germany's assault on the USSR and disseminated propaganda against Russia on behalf of the Turkish population in the south of Russia. The magazine aimed to unite all the Turks "under one and the same plane-tree." Note that *Çınaraltı* magazine was edited by Yusuf Ziya Ortaç and *Akbaba* magazine by Orhan Seyfi.⁸³

As Allied troops approached the borders of Germany, pressures on Turkey assumed a specific nature. A joint Anglo-American note was handed to Turkey on 14 April demanding that it cease deliveries of chrome to Germany; otherwise, the Allies threatened to impose an embargo on Turkey. Turkey did not risk disobeying, and ceased chrome deliveries to Germany on 21 April. After that two German ships masquerading as trade ships crossed the Straits, which caused a great stir. Speaking at the British Parliament, Foreign Secretary Eden condemned the passage of warships through the Straits and put the blame on the Turkish government. Meanwhile, the British press launched a campaign against Turkey. On 15 June, the Turkish government discussed the incident. Turkish Foreign Minister Menemencioglu had to resign.⁸⁴ Prime Minister Saracoglu acted as Foreign Minister. On 17 June, Soviet Ambassador

Vinogradov handed over a note to Saracogʻlu, which indicated the Soviet Union's concern with some episodes where German warships tried to cross the Straits under the mask of trade ships.⁸⁵ In reality, the events proceeded differently. Germany asked the Turks to let their ships cross the straits to Romania. The Military Attaché of Germany assured that these were not warships. Two of the ships went to the Black Sea. When the Allies protested, Menemenciogʻlu informed that a permit might be given to the remaining ships, if von Papen would personally assure that these were not warships. Ambassador von Papen gave his assurance, and the Turkish Minister considered that to be enough. However, the Turkish special services discovered weapons, radars and uniforms on board the ships. Though the ships were not let through the straits, Menemenciogʻlu was found guilty for the violation of the Montreux Convention.⁸⁶

On 23 June British Prime Minister Churchill informed the United States that changes in Turkish foreign policy were insufficient. Churchill pointed out that Turkey should break off all diplomatic and economic relations with Germany. The same letter was sent to Stalin.⁸⁷ After that, the British Ambassador to Moscow told Molotov that over the past few days “the situation has essentially changed, and the question of the passage of German ships through the Straits was officially and publicly settled to comply with the demands of the Allies. The Turkish Foreign Minister resigned, and the Prime Minister gave his assurances with respect of Turkey's aspiration to sincere collaboration.”⁸⁸

At the height of the June crisis former Turkish Foreign Minister and Ambassador to London Rüs,ti Aras published an article in *Vatan* newspaper entitled “Our great neighbor and friend.” The very title of article indicated that its subject was the Soviet Union. Aras elaborated on the history of the Soviet-Turkish friendship, which had experienced thousands of tests. From time to time, there were misunderstandings between them; however, “these disputes helped them understand each other better and come to agreement” Aras noted that the security of each country was closely attributable to global security, and “establishment of durable peace calls for long-term obligations.” At the end of his article Aras infers that “progressive development of our relations with the Soviet Union up to and including an alliance would meet the interests of the two countries and a new durable basis would be laid for international cooperation.”⁸⁹ It should be recalled that as far back as December 26, 1943 in an interview with the *New York Times*, Aras defended the Soviet position. In his words, prior to the war the Soviet Union stood up for collective security. Aras declared: “The Soviet Union realizes that its hostile neighbors hoped that Germany would annihilate the Soviet Union. . . . Now Russians are welcomed as great heroes that try to save Britain, and the Red Army keeps on fighting against aggressors and thus liberating Europe from the Nazis.”⁹⁰

As the war was coming to an end, Soviet foreign policy focused on the creation of “friendly governments” in neighboring countries. This was vividly reflected in Eastern Europe and the Balkans, in Iran where the Soviet army was deployed, and in Turkey, which was strongly pressured by the Allies, especially the Soviets.

On June 13, 1944, the Allies demanded that Turkey break off relations with Germany. To their thinking, this step would enable Soviet aviation to fly over the Turkish territory and the Allies

could use air and sea bases in Turkey. However, in this period the Soviets' attitude toward Turkey was strained. In early July, Stalin considered it insufficient to break relations between Turkey and Germany; he demanded that Turkey declare war on Germany. In reply, Churchill said that in this case Turkey would ask the Allies to protect its towns from the air and to help with arms and ammunition. On July 15, Stalin wrote to Churchill:

You remember that the governments of our three countries urgently asked Turkey to enter into war against Germany on the part of the Allies in November and December 1943. However, this was a failure. On the initiative of the Turkish government in May–June this year we started talks with the Turkish government and twice requested the same thing. . . . However, this time it was also a failure. As for half-measures from Turkey, I see no benefit for the Allies owing to the evasive and unclear position of Turkey with respect to Germany, so it would be better to leave Turkey in peace and avoid pressuring. That is to say that Turkish claims to particular rights in the postwar settlements would be rejected as well.⁹¹

Such a formulation of the issue by Stalin introduced further tensions into Soviet-Turkish relations. Stalin's position was attributable to the fact that in May–June 1944 the Turks tried to reestablish harmonious relations with the Soviets, but failed. The main condition of the rapprochement was Turkey's joining the war. Owing to the deterioration of Germany's position in the front in summer 1944, and the strengthening of Allied pressures, Turkey had to revise its foreign policy. The extraordinary session of the Grand National Assembly of August 1, 1944 raised a question of breaking off relations with Germany. In explaining the government's position, Saracog˘lu underlined that throughout the war Turkey had sided with Britain. The Grand National Assembly decided to break off political, economic and diplomatic relations with Germany from 2 August and with Japan from 6 August. Thus, relations between Germany and Turkey came to end. It was Turkey's skillful diplomacy in 1939–1944 that helped it remain an ally of Britain, on the one hand, and comply with Turkish-German non-aggression pact and preserve neutrality, on the other.⁹²

It was efforts of Saracog˘lu and well-known journalist Fatih Rifki Atay that helped the Grand National Assembly break off relations with Germany and from August 3, this topic was in Moscow from the Turkish press. Newspapers that sympathized with Germany, the *Turkish Post* and *Beyog˘lu* were closed by order of the Turkish government.

In appreciating the historical decision of the Grand National Assembly, President İ˘nönü pointed out that Turkish foreign policy had now entered into a new stage. Maintaining allied relations with Great Britain, the Turkish government decided to break off economic and diplomatic relations with Germany. This historical decision yielded positive results and, according to İ˘nönü, was a manifestation of the national will.⁹³

On September 5, 1944, with the Soviet Union's declaration of war against Bulgaria, the threat of the Soviet army's appearance in the Balkans near the Turkish borders reemerged. It was no mere coincidence that Communist organizations in the Balkans stepped up their activity and aspired to seize power, a set of events that troubled Turkey very much.

The Soviet army's advance on the Balkans troubled their Allies as well. The British Prime Minister instructed the relevant institutions to study possible conflict situations with the Russians in Italy and the Balkans. Churchill was told that the Russians had decided to support Communists in the Balkans and Italy. If this were indicative of a long-term strategy in the area, further developments would be accompanied by conflicts.⁹⁴

From mid-1944 each ally had tried to draw up its own concept of the postwar structure of the Near and Middle East to comply with its own national interests. At the end of the war differences emerged in the previously united program of the three great powers, which for long years had held Iran and Turkey on a leash. A secret geopolitical struggle for the region, for fuel and energy resources was reflected in some projects drawn up by official bodies of the Allies. With the burden of the war on their shoulders, the Allies, guided by their national interests, gradually turned into rivals. From mid-1944, it was oil and aspirations for dominance in the Near and Middle East that began to corrode previously close collaboration. The impressive victories of the Soviet army against Nazi Germany, and the might of the USSR and its growing international authority became a crucial factor that determined its foreign policy. It was the threat of Soviet domination that made the USA and Britain attempt to push the Soviet Union away from the energy reserves of the Near and Middle East and from the strategically important Mediterranean, however, the presence of the Soviet troops in Northern Iran and penetration of the Soviets into Bulgaria laid the foundations for the USSR's consolidation in these regions. On the basis of the above-mentioned document—"On Desirable Principles of the Future World" submitted to Molotov by Ivan Maysky, the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR adopted on March 6, 1944, a resolution "On Measures to Strengthen Cultural and Economic Aid to the Population of South Azerbaijan."⁹⁵ In accordance with this resolution, Soviet diplomatic offices in Iranian Azerbaijan, military commandant's offices, trade and transport representations were staffed with citizens of Soviet Azerbaijan. To enhance influence on Iran and Turkey, with the permission of the Soviet leaders, the Bureau of the Azerbaijan Communist Party Central Committee adopted a decision on March 20, 1944, on the establishment of the Religious Board of Caucasian Muslims.⁹⁶ A little earlier, on October 20, 1943, the Soviet Political Bureau, with a view toward establishing relations between the Catholicos of all Armenians and the Soviet government, decided to set up a council for the Armenian-Gregorian Church under the Council of People's Commissars of the Armenian SSR. This step aimed to step up the work abroad, especially among Armenians of the Near and Middle East.⁹⁷

Contributing to the intensification of work in neighboring countries was the establishment of commissariats for foreign affairs within the Union Republics, including Trans-Caucasian ones, in 1944. The same was true of the opening of the House of Culture in Tabriz on March 19, 1944, as a branch of the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, as well as a secondary school with Azeri as the language of tuition.⁹⁸

As for this first period of Near East policy of the Soviet Union, it is very interesting to retrace the reactions of US and British diplomacy. The US Council for Foreign Relations in its special memorandum of January 18, 1944, entitled "Great Britain, Russia and the United States in Iran" assigned the USA the role of "the third external force" between traditional rivals in the Middle East—Russia and Britain. The US Department of State made steps to establish Anglo-American cooperation to counterbalance Soviet policy in Iran. US Undersecretary of State Edward Stettinius, during his visit to London in April–May 1944, discussed with Deputy Foreign Secretary Sir Maurice Peterson the situation in all the countries of the Near and

Middle East, except for Turkey. Following the talks, the parties agreed that American firms, negotiating for oil concessions in Iran, would enjoy “equal opportunities” with the British firms. The parties agreed that the British and American companies were unlikely to display interest in getting concessions in North Iran near the Soviet borders. The Soviet Union was apprehensive of this.⁹⁹ To prevent possible complications, Stalin in March 1944 gave instructions to appropriate bodies to prepare necessary materials for carrying out intelligence work in the north of Iran and negotiations on oil concessions. For this to happen, Beria prepared on August 16, 1944, a report for Stalin and Molotov, which alleged that the British and Americans were engaged in a secret deal to frustrate the granting of oil concessions to the Soviet Union in Northern Iran. The same document unmasked a US policy aimed at seizing oil-rich regions in the Near East and extending its influence over as yet undeveloped areas. Beria linked the Roosevelt-initiated Petroleum Administration for War to the US desire to exert control over the energy resources of the Near East. In his thinking, US expansion in the Near East would, in the immediate future, encounter the resistance of Britain, therefore Beria recommended taking advantage of this discord and joining the British-American oil talks in order to pursue Soviet interests.¹⁰⁰

To intensify activities in this direction, Soviet leaders gave instructions to appropriate bodies. Indeed, a large delegation headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Kavtaradze left urgently for Iran on September 10, 1944, to identify rivals, on the one hand, and take the initiative, on the other.¹⁰¹ On August 4, 1944, Molotov managed to intercept a secret document of the US Department of State submitted to him by Ilichev. The document consisted of five sections and included a list of US interests across the world. The fifth section was entitled “Regional Policy of the Soviet Union” and detailed Soviet attempts to create a security zone. The document pointed out that in order to strengthen its security and expand access to the sea, the Soviet Union was directly interested in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Finland, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Germany, Greece), in Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan. Analyzing the situation in the Near East, the Department of State came to the conclusion that Turkey and Iran as objects of interest to the other great powers are of particular importance for the Soviet security zone.¹⁰²

A difference of strategic interests of the USSR and the USA was apparent in Maysky’s recommendation of earlier 1944, as well as in a secret part of the memorandum made by the department for the Near East and Africa in September–December 1944, which said that “a strong Turkey will, perhaps, be a useful friend for us and for Great Britain, when problems of the Eastern Mediterranean are discussed in the postwar Soviets.”¹⁰³

From autumn 1944, the Allies eased pressure on Turkey, which immediately echoed in increased tensions between the Soviets and Turkey. From then on, the Soviets began accusing the Turks of pro-German sentiments and whipping up their contacts with Germans.¹⁰⁴ On September 30, 1944, Molotov received Turkish Ambassador to Moscow Huseyin Baydur and tersely informed him about Soviet claims.¹⁰⁵ Baydur replied that he would like to see more cordial relations between Turkey and the USSR in the near future. As for Turkey’s alleged fault, the Ambassador referred to a certain misunderstanding and asked Molotov to avoid a

hasty conclusion. Instead, he insisted that the Soviet Union should remember, “Turkey was and is the Soviet Union’s best friend.” As for some cases of divergence of views, Baydur explained that this was due to the lack of warm relations between the two countries. Molotov replied: “There are things which cannot be concealed. It should be admitted that the Soviet stance with regard to Turkey has been defensive. . . . During the war we witnessed how neutral states behaved towards Germany and the Soviet Union and in Turkish-Soviet relations there were moments that we now remember with resentment.”¹⁰⁶

Baydur agreed that some newspapers and individuals might have perpetrated blunders. In his view, if the governments of the two countries maintained regular contact, no differences between them would ever take place. It has to be kept in mind that Turkey made some practical steps to curry Soviet favor and normalize relations with this country. For instance, in August 1944 the Grand National Assembly adopted a special law, under which two Soviet special agents, Georgi Pavlov and Leonid Kornilov, were released. These agents had been tried and imprisoned for disguising themselves as press-attachés to the Soviet Embassy in Ankara and making an attempt on German Ambassador von Papen’s life. A participant of the operation, Soviet security officer Rashid Kurbanbekov, eye-witnessed these events and said in a recent interview that:

To drive a wedge between German-Turkish relations, the Kremlin decided to liquidate German Ambassador to Ankara von Papen. A Turk would have had to commit this act. Officers Pavlov and Kornilov were responsible for the operation. My and other officers’ task was to secure our comrades. In the quest for a killer, the officers scoured the dregs of the city and in one eating-house a certain Abdurrahman, a gambler up to his neck in debt, agreed to shoot von Papen down during a hunting trip, as if by a stray shot.¹⁰⁷

Foreign citizens who collaborated with Germans were prohibited from entering Turkey. Former Bulgarian Foreign Minister Jarovsky, who sought asylum in Turkey after the entry of Soviet troops onto Bulgaria, was sent back to his native country on 19 September. Former Soviet citizens who had collaborated with fascists and were in hiding in Turkey were also extradited to the Soviets. An estimated 30–40,000 Crimean Tatars who took refuge in Romania and sought to settle in Turkey were also refused entry in order to avoid provoking the Soviet Union.

Baydur also expressed his concern over Soviet press attacks on Turkey. He believed that the stand of Soviet newspapers was erroneous. Molotov replied that materials in the Soviet press about Turkey would hardly constitute one-tenth of what the Turkish press wrote about the Soviets. He stressed that articles against the USSR appeared every day in Turkey. In difficult days, the Turkish press stressed the defeats of the USSR. Over the twenty-seven years of the USSR’s existence, Baydur could hardly mention an article that called for the annihilation of Turkey. In reply, Baydur noted that 90 percent of articles in the Turkish press were positive about the Soviet Union and just 10 percent negative, and nobody paid attention to articles of this kind. For example, there was a newspaper issued by one person only. This could not be termed a “newspaper,” just “a cabbage leaf.” Such newspapers could not be put on the same plane with *Izvestiya*. Baydur suggested that several Soviet journalists visit Turkey and see the Turkish reality with their own eyes. Molotov slyly noted that all the Soviet journalists were

now in the front line to cover the war.¹⁰⁸

After the meeting with Molotov in October 1944, Baydur, the most experienced diplomat, returned home after a year of work in Moscow.¹⁰⁹ He was replaced by new Ambassador Selim Sarper who left Ankara on October 16, via Tbilisi for Moscow.¹¹⁰ Presenting his credentials to Molotov on November 3, Sarper indicated his confidence in the quick victory of the Soviet Army and the Allies. Molotov replied that Turkey stood aside the war, yet it experienced certain hardships. Sarper reaffirmed this, saying that credit goes to the Soviet army and its successes in neighboring countries. During the meeting Molotov highly appreciated the opening of the second front.¹¹¹

From 1944, the Soviet political line with respect to Turkey was guided by the revision of the Montreux Convention regarding the Straits regime. Stalin and the Prime Minister discussed the issue in detail in Moscow in October 1944. It should be kept in mind that the Soviet delegation had addressed this issue on the eve of the Teheran Conference. On November 26, 1944, Soviet Foreign Ministry Officials Adamov, Garmash and Koblyakov prepared a twelve-page report “The Question of the Straits at the Montreux Conference” on the basis of Moscow archival documents. The said report reflected principles advocated by Soviet Russia at the Lausanne Conference, preparation for the Montreux Conference and the Soviet stance at this stage, a correspondence with the Turkish Foreign Ministry to agree upon Soviet proposals, notes on the opening and course of the Montreux Conference, confrontations with the British delegation, a text of the Straits regime treaty, and, finally, incidents of treaty violation and their analysis.¹¹² Note that eight years after the signing of the Convention the Soviet Foreign Ministry returned to the issue, examined the situation at the conference, and retraced Soviet dissatisfactions—all these revealed the USSR’s hidden desire to revise the Convention. In October 1944 during the talks between Churchill and Stalin the Soviet party was ready to discuss the Straits’ issue. Attending the talks were Foreign Secretary Eden, Ambassador to Moscow Sir Archibald Clark Kerr, and Churchill’s interpreter J. Byers from the British side, and Molotov and Pavlov from the Soviet side.

On 9 October Churchill and Stalin discussed the situation on the front, Polish issue and spheres of influence in the Balkans. Then Churchill put a sheet of paper on the table with the personal monogram W.S.C., saying that “this dirty document contains a list of the Balkan countries and the proportional interest of great powers in them. . . .” Then Churchill proposed to divide “spheres of influence” in the Balkans as follows: Romania—90 percent fall to the share of Russia, 10 percent—others; Greece—90 percent to Great Britain (in collaboration with the United States), 10 percent—others; Yugoslavia and Hungary —50 percent/50 percent; Bulgaria— 75 percent to Russia; 25 percent to others. The “percentages” as suggested by Churchill came as no surprise to Stalin, equally with the key Greek issue.¹¹³ As a matter of fact, Soviet ambitions in the Balkans were satisfied, except for Greece. Stalin noted that a 25 percent allocation of Bulgaria to Britain was inconsistent with other figures on the list; rather it would be appropriate to make amendments, specifically 90 percent for the USSR and 10 percent for Britain in Bulgaria.

During the discussions Molotov asked, if the Turkish issue was on the agenda. A shorthand

record says that Churchill did not answer the question; he just “wanted to show what the British had in the back of their mind” and that he, Churchill, “was very pleased with proximity of both parties’ standpoint. He believes that the parties may meet again to finalize the issue.” However, Stalin did not want to digress from the topic and noted that “if the point is about Turkey, he must admit that Turkey has every right to the Straits under the Montreux Convention, while the Soviet Union has a few of them. Under the Montreux Convention the Soviet Union has the same rights as the Japanese Emperor. Stalin believed that it was necessary to revise the Montreux Convention, as it was contrary to present realities.” Churchill replied, “Turkey has lost its right to join the war. It did not join the war earlier for fear of Germany and had no modern arms. Besides, the Turks cannot handle modern arms, nor dispose of properly trained troops.” Stalin pointed out “The Turks dispose of twenty-six divisions in Thrace. It is unclear, against whom they are going to use these divisions.” Churchill explained this as being due to the fact that the Turks were apprehensive of the Bulgarians, since the Germans gave the Bulgarians arms seized from the French.¹¹⁴

Russian historian N. V. Kochkin compared the wait-and-see position of Churchill on the Straits issue at the Teheran conference and his statement of 9 October that “Turkey has lost the right to hope for British support in the matter of the Straits.” Stalin could conclude from this statement that Britain was ready to display “a cool attitude to Turkey.”¹¹⁵ Besides, Churchill added that the British policy did not aim to prevent Russia’s access to warm seas and the oceans. Instead, this was a component of the Russian-British friendship. No policy of Disraeli or Curzon is pursued now. He asked what changes, in Stalin’s view, should be made in the Straits Convention. Stalin declined from specifying the subject. He replied that “he cannot say, what changes are required and how the Convention can be changed, but he feels that the Convention is contrary to modern requirements and directed against Russia.” Stalin wanted, in the first instance, that the Straits issue would be put on the agenda, so he would like to know Churchill’s view on changes to the convention in principle. Stalin stated: “Indeed, such a great country as the Soviet Union should not be afraid that such a small country as Turkey may close the Straits and cast doubts on our export, import and defense.” Stalin added that he did “not want to infringe Turkey’s sovereignty, yet, it is inadmissible that Turkey is catching the Soviet trade and navigation by the throat.” Churchill declared that he shared Stalin’s point of view in principle, but it would be better to write it down on paper a little later, for Turkey may be frightened that they want to take Istanbul away from the Turks. Churchill agreed that Russia should have access to the Mediterranean both for warships and trade vessels. He expressed his confidence in friendly cooperation with the Soviets on this track and explained the British point of view as follows: “We would like to be careful to avoid frightening Turkey. If the Soviet Union and Turkey sat at the one table to sign an armistice and if Russians asked the British to agree with granting permission for Soviet ships, both war and trade, to enter the Mediterranean, he, Churchill, would say that Great Britain does not object.” Stalin replied that he did not wish to press Churchill with this question; yet, he would like to warn him that the Soviet Union was concerned about this and he wanted Churchill to recognize the legality of this question. Churchill answered that he agreed with this not only in principle, he believed

that “the Soviet Union should begin to stress its view on changes in convention and inform the United States about its standpoint on the subject. In turn, the British government believes claims of the Soviet Union fair and morally grounded.”¹¹⁶

Thus, during the Moscow talks Churchill backed Soviet claims on revising the Montreux Convention and changes in the Straits regime. However, research into this shorthand report and analysis of the terminology used show that Churchill agreed to change just a few articles of the Convention, while Stalin counted on replacing the document fully.

Immediately after the Churchill’s departure, the Commission for Peace Treaties and Postwar Order, headed by Maxim Litvinov, and respective departments of the Soviet Foreign Ministry drew up a large document entitled “On prospects and a possible basis for Soviet-British cooperation,” which was sent 15 November to Stalin, Molotov, Dekanozov, Lozovsky, and other officials. The document retraced the history of Anglo-Soviet and Anglo-Russian relations. An emphasis was laid on the British-Russian collaboration and rivalry in the Near and Middle East, and on the analysis of crucial aspects of these relations.¹¹⁷ The document said that division of the Ottoman Empire in accordance with British interests eased tensions in the so called “Eastern question” and it added that Great Britain was discontent with friendly relations between the Soviets and Kemalist Turkey.¹¹⁸

In connection with the Straits, the document noted that this issue, though having lost its acuteness, did still exist. Britain was pleased with the current situation, but the Soviet Union was not. This issue has to be considered, and Britain would not oppose it. The Soviet Union should insist on the revision of the Convention in its own favor and then transfer control over the Straits to the Black Sea countries. There are no grounds to think that Britain would disagree with the Soviets on this track.¹¹⁹ Thus, the document historically substantiated the necessity of revising the Montreux Convention in the interests of the USSR and proposed to conclude “a gentleman’s agreement” with Great Britain on the division of these spheres of influence. The document pointed out:

The only serious controversy inherited in British-Soviet relations from the past, is the necessity of a balance of power in Europe. This controversy may intensify if the Soviets would intensify their military might after the defeat of Germany and weakening of France and Italy and thus turning into the single powerful continental European Empire. The acuteness of the issue would urge Britain to enter into agreement with us. This agreement is realizable on the basis of friendly division of security spheres in Europe. The Soviet Union considers Finland, Sweden, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania, the Slav countries of the Balkan Peninsula, as well as Turkey, as the “maximum sphere” of its interests.

The document added that Britain might object to some provisions of the agreement regarding Norway, Yugoslavia, and Turkey as spheres of its own interests, though “Norway and Turkey are geographically closer to the USSR than to Britain.”¹²⁰ A note was made in the margin of the document, which said that proposals regarding the revision of the Montreux Convention would be substantiated independently. The Soviet Foreign Ministry indicated its confidence in the postwar British-Soviet cooperation in Iran, Afghanistan, and even China.¹²¹ There were also marks in the document, read by Molotov, which demonstrated the greatest interest in the provisions of the document concerning spheres of influence.¹²²

The second document drawn up by Litvinov’s group and entitled “On the Straits” is a supplement to the first document and contains specific proposals directed at depriving Turkey

of its exclusive rights of control over the passage regime of ships via the Straits. This was the document whose appearance was announced in the third item of the final part of the previous report. On 15 November this four-page document containing recommendations and proposals of the USSR on the Straits as sent to Stalin, Molotov, Dekanozov, Lozovsky, Manuilsky, Maysky and Surits. The report was based on previously prepared historical materials. The report stressed that the period of the Straits Convention comes to an end in 1956, so it was impossible to raise a question on changes profitable to the USSR while ignoring Turkey.

However, Litvinov believed that it was necessary to discuss the Montreux Convention ignoring some formalities in view of changes caused by the consequences of war. In doing so, Litvinov stressed the necessity of withdrawing Japan from membership of the convention, as well as mention of the League of Nations in several articles of the convention. In his thinking, Turkey would oppose the revision of the convention, so the issue should be preliminarily agreed on by most participants and, most important, with Great Britain and after that it would be possible to revise the document anew.¹²³

Then Litvinov shifted to the analysis of the articles that gave preference to Turkey. He singled out an article under which functions of control over the Straits would be transferred to Turkey. At the same time he recalled that the Soviet Union, during and after the Lausanne Conference, as well as at the Montreux Conference championed this right together with Turkey. Litvinov conceded that practically always, if the Straits are fortified and armed, the country whose coasts are washed by these Straits controls them. To substantiate his idea, he referred to a phrase used by the Russian government in a memorandum of March 4, 1915:

The course of the latest events suggests an idea that the issue of Constantinople and the Straits should be solved finally to comply with the century-long aspirations of Russia. Any decision is unsteady and insufficient, unless the city of Constantinople, the western coasts of Bosphorus, Marmara and Dardanelles, as well as Southern Thrace along the Enos-Midia line would be included in the composition of the Russian Empire. Equally, in considering strategic necessities, a part of the Asian littoral between the Bosphorus, River Sakarya and a settlement on the coast of Izmir bay, and the islands of Marmara—Imbros and Teledos—should form a part of the Empire.¹²⁴

At the same time Britain and France gave their consent to the proposal in principle, leaving the final decision of the issue to the date of conclusion of a peace treaty. According to Litvinov, if Turkey had fought against the Allies, this decision might be thrust upon it as loser in the war. Litvinov wrote that there was no necessary provision to deprive Turkey of actual control over the Straits with concurrent demilitarization of the coasts by diplomatic steps only. “A question may arise regarding the transfer of formal control to us; however, it is hardly practicable without the use of force or the threat of force, even if our proposal would be backed by Britain.”

Litvinov stood in favor of the variant of joint control over the Straits by the USSR and Turkey. However, this would only yield positive results in the case of very friendly relations between the two countries and only if Turkey agreed on this step. Beyond any doubt, no use of force could persuade Turkey to agree with this idea, since Turkey would oppose any Soviet proposal on the passage of ships. “Even in this case, joint control is more attractive than the current regime of control by Turkey only.”¹²⁵ The commission recommended that the Soviet leadership desist from the principle of internationalization of control between Lausanne and

Montreux. However, control by the Black Sea powers seemed to be quite admissible, provided the Soviet influence in Romania and Bulgaria was great. In this case, the Soviet Union would dispose of three-quarters of votes and even five-sixths of votes in the event that Ukraine and Georgia would become members of the commission. The Soviet Foreign Ministry experts came to the conclusion that the regime of passage via the Straits was of no less importance than the control over the Straits. In connection with this Litvinov wrote: "We should seek changes in the regulations as set forth in the Montreux Convention regardless of whether Turkey controls the Straits, or a joint Soviet-Turkish control be imposed, or Black Sea Control Commission set up."¹²⁶

Owing to the issue, the Soviet Foreign Ministry held consultations with the navy, which considered Section 1 of the convention regulating the passage of trade ships via the Straits as "fully consistent with our interests, so no changes are required." Litvinov suggested canceling Article 6, which stipulated a special procedure for trade ship passage in cases where Turkey considered itself under direct military danger.¹²⁷

As for the passage of warships via the Straits, the Soviet Navy insisted on granting the Black Sea states the right, both in peace and war, to the passage of any warships via the Straits in both directions. Litvinov backed this proposal and proposed to cancel items which restricted or suppressed this right.

Further, the Soviet Navy suggested restricting the right to bring the warships of non-Black Sea states into the Black Sea in cases of official visits with the total tonnage of these ships set at 10,000 tons, as well as some other insignificant changes. As a continuation of this idea, Litvinov suggested Article 21 be canceled, which provides special rights to Turkey, with respect to foreign warships in the case that it considers itself under the threat of direct military danger. From the Soviet point of view, it was also desirable to change Article 19, which draws distinctions between countries having concluded a treaty on mutual aid with Turkey and those that have not. Furthermore, it was considered necessary to interpret Article 20 in the sense that the point was about restrictions for ships of the countries fighting against Turkey. At the end of the document Litvinov came to the conclusion that it was necessary to preliminarily agree with Great Britain or conclude an appropriate agreement with Turkey to implement these proposals.¹²⁸ In the meanwhile, the Soviet Foreign Ministry was engaged in changing the Straits Convention and canceling special rights of Turkey to the Bosphorus and Dardanelles. On November 17, 1944, a new two-page report entitled "The Question of the Straits" was sent to Stalin, Molotov, Dekanozov, Lozovsky, and others.¹²⁹

In March 1944, Republican Foreign Ministries were formed to consolidate opportunities for the Soviet Union to build the postwar world and consolidate its influence on neighboring countries, including Turkey. As is known, in the course of the creation of the Soviet Union in 1922 the Union Republics delegated a part of their functions to Moscow, especially in issues of foreign policy and defense. The return of these rights to the Union Republics in 1944 was not a manifestation of growing democratization of the USSR or expansion of the rights of its subjects, nor was it related to changes in the national policy or on the international arena at the end of the war. Rather, the USSR effected these changes in order that it might more effectively

realize its military, political and strategic ambitions. The Soviet press presented the step as strengthening of sovereignties of the Union Republics, establishment of direct relations between these Republics and foreign countries to comply with their national interests, economic and cultural requirements. Beyond any doubt, these laudatory analyses were far-fetched.¹³⁰ In fact, this step was designed with long-term aims, specifically to dispose of a greater number of votes in the future United Nations Organization (UN), and to ensure the participation of Ukraine and Georgia in the commissions of Black Sea countries on the control over the Straits, as recommended by Litvinov in his report of November 15. It was also planned to promote territorial claims of Armenia and Georgia to Turkey; Azerbaijan to Iran; Ukraine and Belarus to Poland; the Baltic Republics to Germany; Uzbekistan to the East Turkestan region of China, etc. All these were meant to meet the interests of the USSR. With that end in mind, the Soviets watched closely all the events and political processes going on in the bordering countries. However, the issue of the Straits and the struggle for changes in the Straits regime were openly discussed in the relations between the Allies. At the same time, there were hidden attempts to deprive Turkey of the right to control the Straits or have a share in this control. Note that this work was very intensive on the eve of the Yalta Conference of 1945 and in the course of its work. On the eve of the Yalta Conference, Stalin told Bulgarian Communist leader Vasil Kolarov “there is no place for Turkey in the Balkans.”¹³¹

In the first days of 1945, Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Dekanozov instructed expert in the Turkish history Anatoli Miller to draw up his proposals. On 15 January, everything was ready. This five-page document included not only proposals on the Straits regime but also touched upon some interesting aspects in Soviet-Turkish relations. As distinct from Litvinov’s report, Miller believed that inadmissibility of the Straits regime for the USSR stemmed not from the convention of July 20, 1936 but from the practice of its application by Turkey. As viewed by Miller, crucial provisions and clauses of the document were satisfactory. Thus,

the Convention contains principally important recognition of the security interests of not only Turkey but of all Black Sea powers, including the USSR; admission of warships of non-Black Sea countries to the Black Sea is restricted in peacetime by their type, tonnage and period of stay so that it is unlikely to pose a threat for us; Soviet warships are entitled in peacetime to unlimited passage via the Straits; in case of war and Turkish neutrality, warships of any belligerent are prohibited to cross the Straits, which seems to be rather more advantageous than not from the Black Sea security standpoint. To judge by the text of the Convention, the Montreux regime provides us considerable advantages as compared with the previous international regulations, starting with the London Convention of 1841.¹³²

At the same time, Miller points out that when implementing the Convention it became evident that the Turkish government proved to be the single and exclusive interpreter of its resolutions. It was supposed in 1936 to link the convention realization, especially in case of war confrontation, with the system of collective security and possible decisions of the League of Nations, concerning aid to the victims of the aggression. To Miller’s thinking, the disintegration of the League of Nations made some articles of the convention senseless and gave the Turkish government a free hand in arbitrarily interpreting some provisions of the Convention and even violating them to the prejudice of the Soviet Union. Miller considered it necessary to remove these shortcomings in the first instance. He wrote: “No power, including Turkey, may deny that implementation of the Montreux convention provisions regarding the

security of the Black Sea (not only the Straits zone) should not depend on the will of the Turkish government only.” Therefore Miller believed that the bankruptcy of the League of Nations, as well as precedents of the wartime gave grounds to the USSR, as the most interested state, to demand appropriate guarantees. Thus, on the eve of the Yalta Conference the Soviet expert considered it possible to transfer responsibility for evaluating Turkish decisions from the “non-existent League of Nations to the UN Security Council.”¹³³ Acquaintance with Miller’s proposals gives grounds to argue that on January 15, 1945 he was more impartial on the matter of the Straits than in his numerous works of the postwar period, where he tried to ideologically substantiate Soviet pressures on Turkey.¹³⁴ Miller’s proposal on the Straits control was close to the Litvinov’s document. Miller also believed that a bilateral Soviet-Turkish treaty on the Straits protection would be more expedient. In his view, the treaty could be concluded with the consent of Great Britain and the USA, and then its open part would be brought to the notice of convention participants, except for Japan and possibly Romania, Bulgaria and Italy. Miller proposed that a bilateral treaty would be more useful for the Soviet Union than a multilateral one. He explained this by the fact that it was unnecessary to invite all participants of the Montreux Convention to the conclusion of a bilateral treaty and thus avoid raising questions on collective control over the Straits, and the Turkish government would be bound by its obligations directly to the USSR.¹³⁵ Miller sent his proposals to Dekanozov; however, the question of the Black Sea Straits was so important and interesting that a copy of the document was also sent to Molotov, Vyshinsky, and Kavtaradze.

Besides the recommendations of Litvinov and Miller, there is one more interesting document on the Straits. This document is anonymous and came to Kavtaradze’s secretariat in early 1945. The document repeated some aspects of the previous documents, yet there were original decisions on the working regime of the Straits and the USSR’s participation in exerting control over the Bosphorus and ensuring Dardanelles security. The author of the project wrote to Kavtaradze that the use of military force against Turkey as well as internationalization of the Straits was inexpedient. He wrote: “This is to say that instead of one Turkey there will be several owners of the Straits. Such a resolution to the issue does not suit us.” The author recommended concluding a bilateral treaty with Turkey on joint control over the Straits, similar to the one suggested by the Soviet Union to Turkey as far back as in 1939, but Saracog̃lu rejected this.¹³⁶

All three documents were used when drafting proposals of the Foreign Ministry. In an effort to raise some issues related to Turkey at the Yalta Conference, the Soviet leaders called Ambassador Vinogradov to Moscow. Two days after the opening of the Yalta Conference, on February 6, 1945 the proposals on the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, signed by Kavtaradze and Vinogradov, were placed before Molotov. With references to the history of Russian-Turkish relations and the experience of the Second World War, this note substantiated the necessity of annulling the Montreux Convention. Noteworthy is the fact that the document proposed to refuse international control over the Straits regime with the participation of the Western powers. Kavtaradze and Vinogradov argued that the most profitable option for the USSR was to combine a bilateral Soviet-Turkish treaty on the Straits with the treaty between the three

great allied powers, stipulating non-opposition by Great Britain and the USA to the above-mentioned bilateral Soviet-Turkish treaty. It was intended that the USA and Britain would recommend that Turkey agree on granting air and military bases in the Straits to the Soviet Union. It was explained as being due to the necessity of effective control over observance of the articles of the new treaty. In case this project could not be realized, there was a reserve option that provided for consent between all Black Sea countries on placing bases in Romania and Bulgaria.¹³⁷

Though dissatisfied with Turkey, Great Britain and the United States preferred to act carefully in the matter of the Straits. On the eve of the Yalta Conference, British Prime Minister Churchill declared his country's preparedness to withdraw Japan from convention membership and substitute the League of Nations with UN structures and other minor changes. The US opinion was echoed in a joint memorandum of the Department of State, Ministries of Defense, and navy, which had been in preparation since October. Before the Yalta Conference this memorandum was handed to Roosevelt. It alleged that any changes in the Straits regime would result in the violation of the Turkish sovereignty and negatively affect the balance of political and strategic forces. Following all-round analysis of the issue, the memorandum suggested that the best guardian of the Straits was Turkey. The Americans explained the impossibility of transporting US aid via the Straits during the war in the presence of German satellites in the Aegean Sea—Romania, Bulgaria, and Greece. The document stressed that the US government agreed with the Soviet proposals on small changes in the convention, yet it insisted that all these corrections be made within the framework of the convention. To judge by the available documents, proposals and reference materials, on the eve of the Yalta Conference there were serious differences between the Allies regarding the Straits regime.¹³⁸

By the beginning of the Yalta Conference Turkey opened the Straits for the Allies to transport military cargo to the Soviet Union. Though this step ran counter to an appropriate article of the Convention, it aroused no surprise against the background of political changes. At the same time, political circles in Turkey were preoccupied with Britain's cold attitude and often remembered Churchill's phrase: "If you decline from joining the war, you will stay isolated after the war." However, at the Yalta Conference Churchill made a more effective move. On February 8 during the Yalta talks, Stalin indicated his dissatisfaction with Turkish policy during the Second World War, saying that Turkey was maneuvering between belligerents and profiting from the interests of the winning party. However, Churchill did not back Stalin's declaration that he would not recommend that Turkey be granted UN membership; he instead pointed out that throughout the war period Turkey had been friendly to the Allies.¹³⁹

First Secretary of the Soviet Embassy in Ankara Vasiliy Grubyakov wrote to Kavtaradze that the Turks were apprehensive that the Yalta Conference would produce secret agreements. They feared that criticism of the decisions of the conference would cause Allied dissatisfaction and Turkey would be isolated.¹⁴⁰

Even upon completion of the Yalta Conference the Soviet Foreign Ministry continued to seek resolution to the Straits issue in February 1945. Materials prepared on February 20, 1945 by the Near East Department of the Ministry, entitled "On the Straits Regime", stressed that the

most profitable for the USSR would be a combination of the bilateral Soviet-Turkish treaty on the Straits as secured by guarantees from Great Britain and the USA. Slightly less profitable but also admissible would be the regulation of the Straits regime by all Black Sea countries. This treaty was to be combined with the one between the three great allied powers. On 24 February, a conversation took place between Ambassador Vinogradov and Foreign Ministry expert V. N. Durdenevsky. The conversation made it clear that “it would be undesirable on the part of the UN Security Council to impose measures on Turkey if the latter declares the threat of military danger.”¹⁴¹ Beyond any doubt, this came as the consequence of Soviet leaders’ displeasure with the position of the other Allies at the conference. The same day Stalin received Ambassador Vinogradov and briefed him for an hour. This once again confirms the seriousness of Soviet plans regarding Turkey and particularly the Straits. Testifying to the importance of these instructions is the composition of the meeting participants: Molotov, Beria, Malenkov, Vyshinsky, Kavtaradze, chairman of the Soviet chief command in Romania, Lieutenant General Leonid Vinogradov and head of the Foreign Ministry, V. Pavlov.¹⁴²

The first information about the Yalta Conference appeared in the Turkish press in late January to early February 1945. In doing so the Turkish press referred to sources in Bern and Cairo; however, Soviet diplomatic bodies reported to Moscow that the materials were prepared on the basis of German sources. The Turkish press put forward different versions on the agenda of the Yalta Conference. Pro-governmental newspapers indicated their concern about events in the Balkans and Eastern Europe. Well-known journalist N. Sadak wrote on 12 January in *Aksham* newspaper: “Are not Romania, Bulgaria, part of Yugoslavia, Poland and Hungary under Soviet occupation due to the war? Tomorrow, it may be the turn of Austria and Czechoslovakia. It is natural that if the Allies fail to break the Siegfried Line in the West, the same thing would occur with Germany.” The Turkish government was not interested in publications of this sort. For this reason, the Department of Press and Propaganda recommended that pro-government newspapers publish articles to defend the Allies. During the Yalta Conference the Turkish press was apprehensive of the Soviet Union. In the early February, a series of articles appeared in the Turkish press that promoted Turkey’s services to the Allies. They also pointed out that Turkey had not let Germany into the Caucasus and Iran, nor had it allowed the Iranian fleet into the Black Sea, and had thus rendered a great service to the Soviet Union. Ahmet S,ükrü Esmer, considering the Anglo-Turkish union to be the keystone of Turkish foreign policy, noted: “Turkey with its foreign policy line has never ignored the Soviet Union and remembers long ties of friendship with this country. Nothing could have disturbed the Soviet Union and Turkey in their peace-loving and sustainable rapprochement, which started in the most critical days of the two revolutions.”¹⁴³

A day before the end of the Yalta Conference Stalin informed the Allies about the Soviet stance on the issue. This point of view was different from the one prepared by the Soviet Foreign Ministry before the conference. In all probability, Stalin was aware of the plans of the Allies on the subject. Besides, he did not want to start debates over unprepared issues at the final stage of the war in Europe. He decided to postpone the debates to better times and instead put forward issues that had already been discussed with Prime Minister Churchill. These were

issues previously agreed on by the Allies. Stalin touched upon the liquidation of the League of Nations and Japan's exclusion from membership of the Straits regime. Stalin laid special emphasis on the Montreux Convention on the Straits. He said:

At present the talks on this issue have become obsolete. Central to this question is the Japanese Emperor, though he forms no part of our argument. The Montreux Convention is related to the League of Nations, which no longer exists. Turkey has been entitled to close the Straits whenever it so wishes. It is essential to change this procedure without prejudicing Turkey's sovereignty. It would be expedient to entrust three ministers with considering a question of the Montreux Convention and the Straits.

Churchill recalled that during his stay in Moscow in October 1944 Stalin during his talks with Eden and him had mentioned the Montreux Convention. Churchill replied to Stalin that the British were positive about the revision of the convention, so he recommended that the Soviet government put forward specific proposals on the issue. Churchill believe that Russia as a Black Sea power could not be satisfied with the current situation. He agreed with the suggested procedures for considering the question. It was necessary to tell Turkey that the Montreux Convention has to be revised. Churchill reiterated that the British government pledged to inform Turkey about issues that affected its interests. Churchill asked if it was possible to assure Turkey that its independence would not be damaged if the United Kingdom and the USA agreed with Soviet proposals.

Stalin replied that it was necessary to give such guarantees.¹⁴⁴

Yalta proved to be a symbol of disgrace from the standpoint of shaping a postwar world image, Henry Kissinger wrote in his "Diplomacy." When the conference was held, the Soviet troops overstepped the borders of 1941 and were in a position to unilaterally foist Soviet political control on the rest of East Europe. Stalin was uncontrollable: he refused Roosevelt's demand to consider Lvov as a part of Poland, refused Churchill's request that emigrant Polish political figures in exile form part of the current government, and forced both Allies to adopt the Soviet borders of 1941. From now on, each ally was independent in its views. Therefore Churchill replied that the revision of the Straits Convention affects the interests of the United Kingdom in the Mediterranean to a greater degree than those of the United States. The parties reached an agreement that the three ministers of foreign affairs at their nearest meeting in London would discuss the proposals of the Soviet government on the Montreux Convention and inform their governments about progress on this matter. The Turkish government would be informed about this at a proper moment. The above-mentioned protocol was approved and signed by three foreign ministers at the Yalta Conference on February 11, 1945.¹⁴⁵

It would be appropriate to recall that the Yalta Conference had invited countries that had declared war on the enemy prior to March 1, 1945, to attend a constitutive conference of the United Nations to be held on April 25, 1945.

Also, the parties exchanged views on Turkey. Churchill defended the idea of inviting Turkey, though this idea was likely to be disapproved of by many countries. Turkey concluded an alliance with Great Britain before the war. When the war broke out, the Turks believed their army was insufficiently armed for this type of war. Nevertheless, Turkey's position was friendly and useful in many respects. However, Turkey did not avail itself of the proposal

made a year prior to join the war. Churchill asked: “Should Turkey be given a chance to remedy the situation?” Stalin answered that it was essential to invite Turkey if it declared war on Germany by the end of February. Roosevelt and Churchill voiced their consent.

Results of the Yalta Conference were widely discussed in the Turkish press and political circles. All newspapers of the country published official materials of the conference. Journalist circles exaggerated rumors that the Soviet point of view had gained the upper hand over those of the other Allies. A lengthy article by Necmettin Sadak in *Akşam* and ones by Falih Rifkî Atay and Ahmet S,ükrü Esmer in *Ulus* commented on the decisions of the conference. Atay considered the concerted policy of three powers based on the democratic principles of the Declaration on Liberated Europe to be the greatest achievement of the conference. In his opinion, this would prevent the thrusting of alien regimes on the liberated countries. Esmer wrote, “The most important essence of the communiqué is that the Yalta conference achieved unity amongst the three states regarding victory and peace-building issues.”

Turkish journalists were not informed about debates over the Turkish issue. However, there was a phrase in the communiqué—“a general overview of other Balkan issues was made”—that excited Turkish public opinion. Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın wrote in *Tanin* newspaper of 14 February: “We realize that the conference discussed issues we are concerned about. However, the communiqué was confined to a general declaration of the Balkan issues.” In his publications Yalçın touched upon the alliance of Slav peoples in the Balkans, which “feeds aggressive spirit” and urges “the Turkish-Greek bloc to be always ready to secure itself against the Slav bloc.” And more: “We do not see the way for the establishment of an independent Balkan federation, based on peace and collaboration among Balkan peoples, beyond any influence of the big powers.”¹⁴⁶

The Soviet Embassy in Ankara prepared a report on the reaction of the Turkish press and public to the Yalta Conference, which noted the Turks’ jealousy regarding the development of Soviet-American and Anglo-Soviet relations. The appearance in the mass media of a report that the US was to grant a large long-term credit to the USSR, and the Soviets were to join the war against Japan aroused stormy discussions in Turkey. A report of the Soviet Embassy pointed out that “the Turks are apprehensive that in case of Soviet’s demands to Turkey, they will be able to rely on the British only, while the US will, at best, come out as a mediator to reconcile the Soviet and British points of view, not protect the Turks.”¹⁴⁷

Churchill’s speech was very impressive. Upon his return from the conference, the British Prime Minister made a statement in the House of Commons concerning Turkish policy. In doing so, he drove his country out of political depression. The foreign press shouted from the rooftops that Turkey was late in joining the war and that the country would not be able to join the United Nations. The Turkish press and political circles referred to Churchill’s speech to Parliament as a deserved response to the issue.

On February 20, 1945, British Ambassador to Ankara, Sir Maurice Peterson met with new Foreign Minister Hasan Saka and confirmed that by decision of the Yalta Conference, unless Turkey declares war on Germany and Japan before 1 March, it will be deprived of the

opportunity to attend the Conference in San Francisco. Note that Saka was an experienced diplomat and clearly realized what this meant.¹⁴⁸

Negotiations between Peterson and Saka yielded a desirable result, and an extraordinary session of the Grand National Assembly was held on 23 February at 6 p.m. to discuss the government's proposal on declaration of war on Germany and Japan, as well as Turkey's joining the UN declaration. It was fear of being helpless before the Soviet threat and change of political scenery in the end of the war that contributed to the right decision. Saka told the Assembly about his meeting with the British Ambassador:

Ambassador of our ally Great Britain in Ankara, Sir Maurice Peterson visited on 20 February the Foreign Ministry, had talks with me and on behalf of his government handed me a memorandum. Sir Maurice Peterson said that if the Turkish Republic declares war before March 1, 1945, it would indicate its desire to join the declaration of the allied nations under the United States of America. The last proposal made to the government by Great Britain within the framework of decisions adopted by the Allies at the Yalta Conference would enable the nation to help our allies. Our government having thoroughly considered the proposal has come to the conclusion that the adoption of the proposal is fully consistent with our alliance and meets the interests of our long-term policy.

This statement of the Foreign Minister was followed by speeches by parliamentarians Ali Rıza Tahran, Şemsettin Günaltay, Mümtaz Ökmen, Rasih Kaplan, Faik Öztrak, and Mehmet Emin Ereshegil, who backed the government's proposal. In his speech Ökmen stated: "Though our great neighbor resisted the enemy alone at Stalingrad, in this heroism there is a little bit of glory for our people as well who, like a fortress, defended the Straits and our southern and Caucasian borders." At the end of the debates Prime Minister Saracoglu took the floor, saying that it was necessary to adapt to the quickly changing international situation:

Over the past few years, some people have emerged in the history of mankind that decorated their banners with crazy ideas of "the supreme race" and "*Lebensraum*." They did not confine themselves to these and, infringing all the rules of law and justice, began seizing small and innocent nations. Facing this deplorable sight, great states took up arms to save mankind, civilization, freedom and democracy. From the very outset, the Turkish Republic sided with all democratic nations. Today, we are making one more step in this direction in an effort to save humanity, civilization, freedom, independence and democracy and properly punish war criminals. With that end in mind, we declare war on Germany and Japan, believing that our step is consistent both with interests of the world and humanity and our national interests.⁴⁹

After his statement Member of Parliament unanimously (401 votes) voted to pass a decision on declaring war on Germany and Japan and on joining the UN declaration. The next morning, on 24 February a treaty was signed between Turkey and the United States to regulate a law on land lease. On 5 March, Turkey was officially invited to attend the conference in San Francisco, and took its place among the co-founders of the United Nations.

This decision of the Grand National Assembly was echoed in the Turkish and Anglo-American press. As a whole, press organs positively evaluated this step of Turkey as guaranteeing the right to attend discussions over the future fate of the Balkans and the Aegean basin. The Soviet Embassy in Ankara informed Moscow that the Turkish press had a good chance to discuss "services" of this country to the Allies. The press received the Allied appeal to Turkey to join the war against Germany and Japan and join the UN declaration as recognition of Turkey's services to the general struggle of democratic countries. The report noted that many journalists persistently claim that this step was a result of the recognition of Turkey's aid to the Allies and an indicator of the correct political line pursued by Turkey so

far. They wrote that Turkey had the right to be among UN members. The Soviet Embassy drew attention to the media claims that not all neutral states were invited to the Crimea to join the United Nations. Turkey's inclusion was interpreted as recognition of its services to the Allies. Many journalists linked it to the Anglo-Soviet allied treaty. For instance, in *Cumhuriyet* on February 24, 1945 Nadir Nadi wrote: "The treaty of alliance with Great Britain, both in its spirit and contents, paved the way among freedom-loving nations, and nobody objects to it."¹⁵⁰

The date of declaration of war on Germany and Japan incidentally coincided with the Day of the Soviet Army; however, the Turkish press presented this as sincere loyalty to the Soviet Union. *Yeni Sabah* newspaper wrote:

The fact that the decision concurs with the Day of the Soviet Army is a lucky chance. Ankara is closely tied with Soviet Russia, this great neighbor in the East; equally Ankara maintains close friendly relations with Great Britain and the United States. The Turkish people did not forget the aid the Soviets rendered during our war of liberation. Our joining the war will, beyond any doubt, enable democratic countries to render broader aid to our Russian friends. From now on, the Straits will be fully at the disposal of the Soviets. An agreement has also been reached concerning communication by short route instead of a longer one via Basra or Vladivostok. This is the first favorable result of our decision to join the war.

Some newspapers explained Turkey's joining the war by the possibility of using its resources, power, influence, historical and geographical location and rich potential in the postwar period. The Embassy reported to Moscow that these articles were published with the consent of the government. Beyond any doubt, some countries received the news of Turkey joining the war at the very end with diffidence. The French and Soviet mass media commented on this belated step of Turkey with sarcasm. Turkish journalists properly responded to such an attitude of their foreign colleagues. Well-known journalist Hüseyin Yalçın wrote in *Tanin* on 14 March that "Turkey could not join the war against Germany in 1941 since it feared that this might lead to conflict with the Russians, who were at that time close to Germany. After the Teheran conference Turkey did not join the war, since the single zone for combat operations of the Turkish army was Bulgaria. Bulgaria was a friend of Russia. Did Russia guarantee us that it would not object to our entering this Slavic country? If we entered Bulgaria without such a guarantee, how could we be confident that we would not offend Russia." The Soviet Embassy believed that Yalçın's attack was a peculiar response to Moscow radio's statement regarding Turkey's joining the war.¹⁵¹

As the war was nearing its completion, the Soviet Union began to implement its Near East policy, in the first instance, in respect to Iran and Turkey. Successful combat operations against Germany and victories of Soviet troops in Europe were accompanied by an increase in the methods of violence and pressure in Moscow's diplomacy. On February 23, 1945, Molotov received Iranian Ambassador Majid Ahi and openly declared that the Soviets were pursuing their claims through pressuring and blackmailing. Ahi pointed out that after the adoption by Grand National Assembly of the law on non-granting oil concessions in the course of war, no granting of oil concessions to the Soviet Union was possible, and added that the USSR might get oil from Iran in a different way. Molotov rejected these projects, profitable for Iran and unprofitable for the USSR, saying that the Soviet government had just one proposal, specifically, a proposal on a concession in Northern Iran. The Iranian government's proposal on a joint Soviet-Iranian oil company did not meet the interests of the USSR.¹⁵²

Whereas the oil issue accounted for Iran's attitude toward the USSR, aggravation of Soviet-Turkish relations was dependent upon Turkey's joining the war and the UN declaration. The Soviets were apprehensive that Turkey's joining the war would change Britain's attitude toward the Straits and Turkey as a whole. On 2 March, Yugoslav Ambassador to Ankara Dr. Ilija Sumenkovic secretly informed US Ambassador Laurence Steinhardt that according to reliable sources following the Yalta Conference, Molotov had told the Turkish Ambassador to Moscow about the Soviet government's intention to discuss with the Turkish government a revision of the Straits Convention. The Turkish Ambassador had replied that the Montreux Convention is "an international affair."¹⁵³

All secret documents drafted by Soviet experts from autumn 1944 provided for the resolution to the Straits issue within the framework of a bilateral Soviet-Turkish treaty. Unexpectedly on March 19, 1945 the Soviet-Turkish Treaty on Friendship and Neutrality of December 17, 1925 was announced. The same day Molotov received Ambassador Sarper and told him that he highly appreciated the treaty of 1925 was announced, which had made so great a contribution to the friendship between the two countries. However, profound changes occurred during the Second World War, so the treaty had become antiquated, did not meet modern requirements, and had to be updated.¹⁵⁴ Molotov pointed out that when the treaty was concluded in 1925, the Soviet Union had no treaty with Great Britain, similar to the current one, maintained no diplomatic relations with the United States.

Changes in international relations were a poor excuse. The Soviet-Turkish treaty expired on November 7, 1945, so the several remaining months did not matter, which is why a premature termination of the treaty was meant to threaten the opposite party. In examining this fact, Russian historian Nikolai Kochkin wrote: "Noteworthy is the fact that Soviet Foreign Ministry documents of late-1944 to early-1945 mention views on the undesirability, under a current alignment of forces, of adopting a decision on termination of the treaty." It has to be noted that the Soviet leaders did not lend an attentive ear to more careful proposals and warnings that "the Turkish government is apprehensive that after the termination of the war the Soviet Union may raise the question of cancellation of some agreements between the USSR and Turkey as containing unprofitable provisions for the Soviets, and insist on the adoption of new treaties, less profitable for Turkey than the existing ones."¹⁵⁵ The suppositions of the Soviet experts proved to be correct. Turkey considered the Turkish-Soviet treaty throughout twenty years as a basis of its foreign policy, so the treaty turned into a symbol of friendship. In reply to Molotov's statement of 19 March the Turkish government appealed on 4 April to the USSR with a proposal to start work on the preparation of a new mutually advantageous treaty. The Turkish government promised to carefully consider Soviet proposals and showed preparedness for collaboration.¹⁵⁶

The Turkish government showed restraint regarding this step of the Soviets. At first, they counted on insignificant changes in the treaty and some amendments to the Montreux Convention. On March 21, 1945, American Ambassador Steinhardt wrote to Secretary of State Byrnes that a certain senior official of the Turkish Foreign Ministry had informed him that the Turks did not want to accuse Russia for its unwillingness to see Japan among participants of

the Straits Convention. The Ambassador believed that the Russians would revise the Straits regime at the right moment and that their approaches would not be acceptable to the Turkish government. Steinhardt fairly evaluated the Soviet *démarche* as preparation for the forthcoming meeting of the allied Ministers of Foreign Affairs, as well as means of applying pressure on Turkey over the matter of the Straits. The Ambassador referred to this political pressure as deliberate “Russian tactics.”¹⁵⁷

Turkish Foreign Minister Saka met on 21 March with British Ambassador Peterson and told him about the latest change in Soviet policy and the contents of talks between Molotov and Sarper. Saka noted that Molotov explained his actions as follows: in considering the departure of the Turkish Ambassador to Moscow, the Soviet party announced its stand on the Soviet-Turkish treaty. The Ambassador’s arrival from Moscow was scheduled for April 2, and it was necessary to draw up a statement for the Soviet government. Peterson pointed out that the Turkish government might discuss any statement with the British government. Saka added that the Soviet government wanted to hold bilateral talks with Turkey to change the Montreux Convention. But Moscow should not treat Turkey like Romania and Bulgaria. Further Saka informed the British Ambassador about a report he obtained from Greek Ambassador R. Raphael that his Moscow counterpart Vinogradov was instructed not to give in to the Turks. In reply, Peterson declared that the British government disposed of no data on Russian intentions to hold bilateral talks.¹⁵⁸

On 31 March Saka received the US Ambassador and told him that the Soviet Union wanted to put the Straits issue on the agenda of Black Sea countries. It became apparent that US leaders attached no great importance to this circumstance. At the same time, some changes in Eastern Europe and the coming to power of pro-Soviet elements made the US administration think of possible developments. US Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal indicated his concern about Soviet behavior in Poland, writing that the Polish case is an example of isolated actions of Russians. The same is true of their actions with respect to Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, and Greece.¹⁵⁹

In turn, the United States began collecting information about Soviet-Turkish relations through its diplomatic representations in the Balkans and Moscow. With that end in mind US Representative to Bulgaria Maynard Barnes met 10 April with Foreign Minister Petko Stainov. The talks between them touched upon toughening the Soviet policy with respect to Turkey. Stainov conceded that he could not understand the intentions of the Russians. As for Turkey, the Minister assured that no changes were expected to take place in the Bulgarian-Turkish relations. He added that Antonov, the new Bulgarian Ambassador to Ankara, was instructed to assure the Turkish government that Bulgaria did not intend to curtail friendly relations with Turkey and the presence of the Soviet armed forces on its territory could not negatively affect Bulgaria’s goodwill to Turkey. Stainov added that Bulgaria did not increase its troops in the southeastern borders and was aware that the quantity of the Soviet armed forces there remained the same. Barnes wrote to the US Secretary of State: “In the Minister’s words, it is obvious that Bulgaria does not want to risk anything at the expense of Turkey.”¹⁶⁰

Political circles of the USA and Great Britain were awaiting a Soviet reply to Turkey’s note

of 4 April. US Chargé d’Affaires Packer met on 7 April in Ankara with the Deputy Foreign Minister and learned that no response had so far come from the Soviet party. He added that prior to Molotov’s return from San Francisco he did not receive any proposals from the Soviets. Then the American diplomat met with Sarper who had returned from Moscow. Though the Soviet party made no specific demands, after Molotov’s statement of 19 March some newspapers supposed that the USSR intended to lay territorial claims to Turkey regarding the latter’s eastern provinces. Sarper told Packer that he did not believe in Soviet claims to Kars or Ardahan but it was apparent that the Russians would pressure Turkey concerning the Montreux Convention. At the same time, Sarper noted that the Turkish Embassy in Moscow conducted an investigation regarding critical articles against Turkey and found out that “this criticism was qualitatively and quantitatively directed against the USA and Great Britain.” In doing so, Sarper demonstrated his awareness of the political processes going on in the USSR and correctly assessed the main directions of Soviet policy in the beginning of this confrontation between West and East. Sarper paid attention to the fact that the Soviets sent “a delegation of minor importance” to San Francisco and thus emphasized that this conference was inferior to the one in Yalta. He doubted that Molotov stayed in San Francisco until the end, since he was needed in Moscow. Finally, Turkey did not give in to the Russians and Germans in 1939, and nobody will be in position to make it give in. In connection with this Packer wrote to the Secretary of State: “In all probability, he [Sarper] feels that no aggression comes from the USSR.”¹⁶¹

Molotov’s statement of 19 March on termination of the Soviet-Turkish treaty was unexpected in both Turkish political circles and the Turkish press. As a rule, any actions with respect to documents of this type were accompanied by preliminary consultations and then a final decision was adopted. This time, the USSR openly rejected a treaty that had for twenty years regulated relations between the two countries, which meant these relations entered a complex stage of their development and marked the seriousness of Soviet claims to Turkey. So long as the government had not made its position clear, the press was only allowed to publish official information and foreign press commentaries published in the bulletin of the Anatolian press agency. Journalists and editors were strictly prohibited from publishing their own commentaries. All newspapers placed an article published in the Polish emigrant newspaper *Dzennik Polski*, which noted that the Soviet Union returns to the policy of Tsarist Russia in the matter of the Straits. Well-known journalists Atay, Esmer, Ahmed Emin Yalman, and Yalçın left on 5 April for San Francisco, while the newspapers *Ulus*, *Cumhuriyet*, *Yeni Sabah*, *Tasvir*, *Vakit*, and *Tan* continued to praise the previously friendly relations over the past twenty-five years and reminded how Soviet Russia helped Turkey to gain independence. The Turks also alleged that over this same period “they strictly complied with all their obligations to the USSR and avoided any step to spoil the Soviet-Turkish friendship.” Journalist Asim Us wrote that Turkey was trying to create a system of collective security in the Black Sea and Mediterranean via the Anglo-French Treaty with Turkey, on the one hand, and the Turkish-Russian, on the other. If it had been successful, Hitler’s army could not have come to the Balkans and dared to attack the USSR. The Moscow government sought its security in signing

an agreement with Berlin. At the same time, Asim Us reaffirmed that Turkey chose a correct political line in the war years, and the Anglo-Soviet note handed to the Turks in 1942 acknowledged this. The note claimed that “the policy of neutrality of Turkey has caused great satisfaction to the Allies.”¹⁶² As for the “changed situation” mentioned in Molotov’s note, Faik Fenik wrote in *Ulus* that the position of not only the Soviet Union but of Turkey as well had changed on the international stage. It should be recalled that in 1925 Turkey opposed Great Britain over Mosul, and then became Great Britain’s ally in 1939.

Engaged in preparing a review of the Turkish press regarding the termination of the treaty, the Soviet Embassy reported:

Comments of the Turkish press on the termination of the Soviet-Turkish treaty are illustrative that the Turks instructed their press organs to present materials showing Turkey’s aspirations for friendship with the USSR and its intentions to strengthen this friendship. In considering that the Soviet Union raised this question, specific proposals on the subject should also come from the Soviets, while the Turks should assess their compliance with the principles of friendship.

To sum up the results of his analytical work, First Secretary of the Soviet Embassy Vasili Grubyakov wrote: “Turkish propaganda is seeking to put responsibility for the future of Soviet-Turkish relations on the Soviet Union.”¹⁶³

On April 30, head of the Turkish delegation at the San Francisco conference, Foreign Minister Saka delivered a speech that endorsed Turkey’s future position. He defended the idea of delegating the widest powers to the UN Security Council to support peace and security around the globe:

As viewed by the Turkish delegation, the new Charter should specify that the way to settle disputes has to be searched in accordance with principles of law and justice. Under the principle of the sovereign equality of all member-states, the General Assembly, this genuinely representative body of the new organization, should be endowed with greater powers as set forth in the Dumbarton proposals. These, in particular, include control over decisions adopted to maintain peace and security; this cannot restrict authorities initially granted to the Security Council. I highly appreciate the great importance and indubitable effectiveness of international forces to ensure legality and justice and thus prevent aggression.

The Turkish delegation insisted that a greater number of non-permanent members be included in the Security Council to decide all problems by voting and a majority of votes. It was also proposed to expand the rights of the UN General Assembly. Saka believed that the former League of Nations did not have power enough to settle problems. Therefore the Turkish representatives stood up for the expansion of the rights of the General Assembly, including those in the field of global security.¹⁶⁴

In the first days of May 1945, Germany capitulated, and the war ended. Turkey celebrated victory together with other countries. On 8 May 1945, acting Foreign Minister Nurullah Sümer congratulated Molotov on the occasion of the victory, and on 9 May, Saracog˘lu congratulated Stalin. Saracog˘lu noted: “In this historical day, where forces seeking to establish world domination have been defeated, I cordially congratulate the greatest leader, and the greatest victory of the Soviet army.” Later on İ nönü congratulated Mikhail Kalinin on the occasion of the victory over Japan. A copy of this telegram was handed to Stalin, Molotov, Anastas Mikoyan, Beria, Georgi Malenkov, Andrei Vyshinsky, Vladimir Dekanozov, and Sergei Kavtaradze.¹⁶⁵ The victory over Germany filled the whole of Turkey with enthusiasm. Nearly all public organizations and offices held festivities and hung out national flags; newspapers

published stories on Turkey's great services to the Allies. However, the joy did not last long. The hardships and misfortunes of the Cold War had just appeared on the Turkish horizon.

NOTES

1. S. Ordzhonikidze to V. I. Lenin. 08.02.1921. RSPHSA, f. 5, r. 1, v. 1247, p. 3.
2. Adamov, Garmash, Koblyakov. The Question of the Straits at the Montreux Conference. 26.11.1943. Azerbaijan Republic Central State Archive (hereafter AR CSA), f. 28, r. 4, v. 3, pp. 10–11.
3. M. B. Potskhveria. Chernomorskie prolivy v rossiysko-turetskikh otnosheniyakh. // Rossiysko-Turetskie otnosheniya: istoriya, sovremennoe sostoyaniya i perspektivi. Moskva, 2003 (B. M. Potskhveria. "Black Sea Straits in the Russian-Turkish Relations." In *Russian-Turkish Relations: History, Current State, and Perspectives.*) p. 80.
4. Note that Tevfik Rüşdü Aras came from Atatürk's entourage. From 1925 to 1938 he was Turkish foreign minister. A secret file of the Soviet Embassy on Aras said that he was a well-known political figure in modern Turkey. During his term in office, he skillfully combined the policy of rapprochement with the USSR and orientation toward the West, mainly Great Britain. In 1936–1938 he openly adhered to a pro-British political line. The file stressed that he followed a two-faced political line with respect to the USSR. On the one hand, he expressed his country's good feelings to the USSR; on the other hand, he took an anti-Soviet position during international diplomatic actions, for example, in Montreux, Nion, etc. Aras adhered to Turkish neutrality in the struggle against fascism and communism. A member of the Atatürk's entourage, Aras was among three Turkish leaders—Celal Bayar, Şükrü Kaya, Rushdu Aras—who fought against İsmet İnönü. (see Political Dossier of Rüşdü Aras. 29.12.1944. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 4, p. 96). A report on R. Aras said that he was an active participant of the Young Turk revolution and prominent member of "İttihad ve Terakki" Party and that he first met Mustafa Kemal in 1909 in Thessalonica during the Congress of İttihad ve Terakki. The report further said that Aras, as Kemal's representative, arrived in Moscow and attended the Comintern Congress. In September 1922, due to the military victories, he and his friends Nadi and Mahmut Esat congratulated Kemal Pasha. Note that R. Aras was a supporter of home reforms and the first to have signed a resolution of Rıza Nuri on the liquidation of the sultanate and backed up the Lausanne Treaty at the Grand National Assembly. In March 1925 Aras was appointed foreign minister in the cabinet of İnönü. On December 17 of the same year, Aras and Chicherin signed a pact that regulated relations between Turkey and the USSR. The document said that it was Aras who permitted the White Guard opposition to remain in Turkey until February 1928. The report said that "Aras was supportive of peaceful co-existence with Europe, refusal of active policy in the countries of the East, normalization of relations with the USSR and promotion of foreign capital" (see Tevfik Rüşdü Aras. 29.12.1944. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 3, pp. 162–168).
5. A brief biographical report on Turkish political and public figures prepared by the Middle East Department of the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs dealt with Interior Minister of Turkey Şükrü Kaya, saying that he studied political and economic sciences in Paris, finished Faculty of Law and was member of "İttihad ve Terakki." After the armistice of 1918 he was arrested by the British and exiled to Malta and returned to Ankara just in 1922. In 1923, Kaya was elected to the Grand National Assembly; in 1924 he was appointed Minister of Agriculture; in 1924–1925—Foreign Minister; and in 1925–1927 Chairman of the Parliamentary Commission on Foreign Affairs. From 1927 to 1938 was Minister of Internal Affairs. The report said that in 1937 he visited Moscow together with Aras. (See, Brief biographical report on Turkish Political and Public Figures. 12.09.1942. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 3, p. 121).
6. A. F. Miller. Ocherki noveyshey istorii Tursii. Moskva-Leningrad, 1948 (A. F. Miller. *Essays on Recent Turkish History.* Moscow, 1948), p. 183.
7. A report on İnönü prepared by the Head of the Near Eastern Department of the Soviet Foreign Commissariat N. Novikov says that İnönü was a representative of a radical faction of Kemalists and supporter of statism and domestic self-reliance. As for foreign policy, he backed the independence of Turkey, prudently treated the West, and supported the development of friendly relations with the USSR. Novikov's report pointed out that tensions between Atatürk and İnönü arose from orientations in the foreign policy. İnönü allegedly tended toward the USSR (see N. Novikov. Brief Dossier of İsmet İnönü. 21.10.1940. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 3, p. 97).
8. A secret message from the Soviet Embassy in Ankara to the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs said that Saracog˘lu graduated from the Faculty of Political-Economic Sciences in Geneva and headed the Ministries of Justice, Education and Finance during the national liberation movement. Before coming to the Turkish Foreign Ministry, he served as the Minister of Justice. A report of the Soviet Embassy pointed out that in 1923 Saracog˘lu, as a member of the Turkish delegation, attended the Lausanne Conference, and in 1926 took part in the work of the Joint Commission for the Exchange of the Greek-Turkish populations. First Secretary of the Soviet Embassy A. Zhegalova wrote that Minister of Education Saracog˘lu jointly with Mahmut Esat managed to adopt a law on translation of the Koran into Turkish. In 1932, he represented Turkey at the Paris talks on repayment of Ottoman debts and achieved good results. As a result, Atatürk officially thanked the government of İnönü for

great services to the nation. The Soviets negatively received the appointment of Saracog̃lu as Foreign Minister. The Soviet report pointed out that Saracog̃lu as adherent to the İ'nönü line did his utmost to strengthen relations between Turkey and Great Britain/France to counterbalance Germany. A. Zhegalova wrote as follows: "In his attitude to the Soviet Union Saracog̃lu reflects not only ill-disposed feelings to our country on the part of most Turkish leaders, but he also demonstrates his personal dislike to us" (see Brief Biographical Report on Turkish Political and Public Figures. 12.09.1942. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 3, pp. 86–89, 131).

9. For more details on the Soviet-Nazi Pact of 1939, see A. O. Chubaryan. Kanun tragedii: Stalin i mezhdunarodniy krizis (A. O. Chubaryan. *The Eve of Tragedy*), pp. 25–34; Dzh. G. Nadzhafov. Sovetsko-germansky pakt 1939 goda i ego istoricheskoe posledstviya. // *Voprosy Istorii*, No: 12, 2006 (J. H. Najafov "Soviet-German Pact of 1939 and its Historical Consequences." *Issues of History*, No. 12, 2006); Geoffrey Roberts. "The Soviet Decision for a Pact with Nazi Germany." *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 1, 1992, pp. 57–78.

10. İ'smet İ'nönü'nün TBMM'deki Konuşmaları. 1920–1973. Cilt II (1939–1960), Ankara, 1993 (*Speeches of İ'smet İ'nönü at the Turkish Grand National Assembly, 1920–1973, Second Volume (1939–1960)*). Ankara, 1993), p. 2.

11. See: A. A. Danilov, A. B. Pyzhikov. Rozhdenie svrkhderzhavy: SSSR v pervye poslevoennye gody. Moskva, 2001 (A. A. Danilov and A. B. Pyzhikov. *Rebirth of superpower: USSR in the First Postwar Years*. Moscow, 2001), p. 12.

12. Talks between J. Stalin, V. Molotov and S., Saracog̃lu. 01.10.1939. RSPHSA, f. 558, r. 11, v. 388, pp. 14–15. For more detailed information on the conversation between I. Stalin, V. Molotov, and S., Saracog̃lu, see A. O. Chubaryan. Kanun tragedii: Stalin i mezhdunarodniy krizis (A. O. Chubaryan. *The Eve of Tragedy: Stalin and the International Crisis*) pp. 172–179; J. Hasanli. "The 'Turkish Crisis' of the Cold War Period and the South Caucasian Republics." *The Caucasus and Globalization*, Vol. 2, Issue 4, 2008, pp. 115–116.

13. Talks between I. Stalin, V. Molotov, and S., Saracog̃lu. 01.10.1939. RSPHSA, f. 558, r. 11, v. 388, p. 20.

14. See A. A. Danilov, A. B. Pyzhikov. Rozhdenie svrkhderzhavy (A. A. Danilov and A. B. Pyzhikov. *Rebirth of Superpower*), pp. 12–13.

15. Talks between I. Stalin, V. Molotov and S., Saracog̃lu. 01.10.1939. RSPHSA, f. 558, r. 11, v. 388, p. 21.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 22–24.

17. Talks between I. Stalin, V. Molotov and S., Saracog̃lu. 01.10.1939. RSPHSA, f. 558, r. 11, v. 388, pp. 25–27.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 27–28.

19. Adım Adım İ'kinci Dünya Müharibesine Gidis. Görünmeyen Yanlarıyla Ribbentrop—Molotov Anlaşması // *Belgelerle Türk Tarih Dergisi. Dün/Bugün/Yarın*. Mayıs 2001, Sayı 52 "Step by step toward the Second World War: Hidden Sides of Ribbentrop-Molotov Agreement." *Journal of Turkish History with Documents: Yesterday/Today/Tomorrow*, Issue 52, May 2001, pp. 104–105.

20. Talks between I. Stalin, V. Molotov and S., Saracog̃lu. 01.10.1939. RSPHSA, f. 558, r. 11, v. 388, p. 29.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 29–30.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

23. Ağustos 1939 Tarihli Alman-Sovyet Saldırmazlık Paktına Ek Gizli Protokol // *Belgelerle Türk Tarih Dergisi. Dün/Bugün/Yarın*. Mayıs 2001, Sayı 52 ("Secret Protocol to the German-Soviet Non-Agression Pact of 23 August 1939." *Journal of Turkish History with Documents: Yesterday/Today/Tomorrow*. Issue 52, May 2001, p. 105.

24. Talks between I. Stalin, V. Molotov and S., Saracog̃lu. 01.10.1939. // RSPHSA, f. 558, r. 11, v. 388, pp. 31–32.

25. About the stay of Saracog̃lu, Turkish Foreign Minister, in Moscow. October 1939. RSPHSA, f. 82, r. 2, v. 1329, p. 23.

26. Judging by Soviet reports, İ'nönü's entourage consisted of Kazım Karabekir, Fevzi Çakmak, Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, Hüseyin Rauf Orbay, Ali Fuat Cebesoy, Ali Fethi Okyar, and other "reactionary figures" holding top positions in the government and Parliament of Turkey. For this reason, Turkey tended to maintain close relations with Britain. Owing to the conclusion of the alliance treaty, General Kazım Orbay went to London in 1939 as a representative of the Turkish General Staff to discuss with representatives of Britain and France tasks arising from the military convention. Note that Soviet diplomatic bodies assessed Orbay as one of the best and most talented commanders of the Turkish army. At the same time, they stressed that Orbay had once been on a business trip in Afghanistan where he quelled an anti-governmental revolt (see S. Mikhaylov. General of Army Kazım Orbay. 09.02.1944. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 3, p. 94).

27. As a whole, the Soviet Embassy in Ankara appraised the autumn 1939 developments as a result of a balanced political line of Turkey having been adapted to the international situation. It was İ'smet İ'nönü who inspired the policy of balance between belligerents; however, credit goes to S., Saracog̃lu, who did much to implement this policy. The document said as follows: "Suffice it to say that Saracog̃lu contrived to establish friendly relations with Britain's opponent and its representative to Ankara von Papen in terms of alliance with Britain as a basis of the Turkish foreign policy and friendly relations with the local British Ambassador." The Soviet Embassy linked growing anti-Sovietism of Saracog̃lu to the frustration of Moscow talks and the non-signing of the pact Turkey was interested in. The document added the following: "Saracog̃lu is not sparing of praise and friendship to the Soviet Union during his talks with Soviet diplomats; at the same time, Saracog̃lu is the organizer and executor

of all anti-Soviet actions of the Turkish government over the past few years” (see A. Zhegalova. Dossier of Foreign Minister S., Saracog˘lu. 16.06.1942. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 3, pp. 88–89).

28. V. Berezhev. Ryadom so Stalinom. Moskva, 1999 (V. Berezhev. *Nearby Stalin*. Moscow, 1999), p. 184.

29. A. A. Danilov, A. B. Pyzhikov. Rozhdenie sverkhderzhavy (A. A. Danilov and A. B. Pyzhikov. *Rebirth of Superpower*), p. 13.

30. For more details, see Direktiva I. V. Stalina V. M. Molotovu pered poezdoy v Berlin v noyabr 1940 g. // *Novaya i Noveyshaya Istoriya*, 1995, No 4 “I. V. Stalin’s Directives to V. M. Molotov before His Departure to Berlin in November 1940.” *New and the Newest History*, No. 4, 1995, p. 78; R. A. Bezimyansky. Vizit V. M. Molotova v Berlin v noyabr 1940 g. v svete novykh dokumentov. // *Novaya i Noveyshaya Istoriya*, 1995, No 6 (R. A. Bezimyansky. “Visit of V. M. Molotov to Berlin in November 1940 in the Light of New Documents. *New and Newest History*, No. 6, 1995) p. 134; A. O. Chubaryan. Kanun tragedii: Stalin i mezhdunarodnyy krizis (A. O. Chubaryan. *The Eve of Tragedy: Stalin and the International Crisis*), pp. 319–351.

31. Feridun Cemal Erkin. Türk-Sovyet İlişkileri ve Boğazlar Meselesi. Ankara, 1968 (Feridun Cemal Erkin. *Turkish-Soviet Relations and the Issue of the Straits*. Ankara, 1968), p. 167.

32. G. Dimitrov. Dnevnik (9 mart 1933–6 fevruari 1949). Sofiya, 1997, p. 203; *The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov, 1933–1949*. CT: Yale University Press, 2003, p. 137; Odd Arne Westad. *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*. Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 59.

33. G. Dimitrov. Dnevnik (9 mart 1933–6 fevruari 1949), p. 203; *The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov, 1933–1949*, p. 137.

34. Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Tarihi. Cilt II, Ankara, 2002 (*History of the Turkish Republic*, Volume 2., Ankara, 2002), p. 455.

35. For the text of the German-Turkish treaty, see *British and Foreign State Papers*, Vol. 144, Her Majesty’s Stationery Office. London, pp. 816–817; Türk Dış, Politikası. Kurtulus, Savasından Bugüne. Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar. Cilt 1 (“Turkish Foreign Policy. In From Salvation War until Today.” *Events, Documents, Comments*, Volume 1), pp. 442–445.

36. İsmet İnönü’nün TBMM’deki Konuşmaları. 1920–1973. Cilt II (*Speeches of İsmet İnönü at the Turkish Grand National Assembly*, Volume 2), p. 20.

37. İ. Soysal. Tarihçeleri ve Açıklamaları İle Birlikte Türkiye’nin Siyasi Atlasları. Cilt I (İsmail Soysal. *Turkey’s Political Treaties with Its Historians and Explanations*, Vol. 1), p. 639.

38. A. Zhegalova. Dossier of Foreign Minister S., Saracog˘lu. 16.06.1942. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 3, p. 89.

39. *Pravda*, June 14, 1941.

40. Y. Gorkov. Gosudarstvenniy komitet oborona postanovlyayet (1941–1945). Moskva, 2002 (Y. Gorkov. *State Defense Committee Resolves (1941–1945)*. Moscow, 2002), p. 230; Kavkaz vystoyal, kavkaz pobedit. Veterany vspominayut. Tbilisi, 1973 (*Caucasus Held-out, Caucasus Will Win: Veterans Recall*. Tbilisi, 1973), pp. 130–131.

41. Statement of the Soviet Government. 10.08.1941. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 9, fol. 69, v. 1071, p. 29.

42. O. A. Rzheshesky. Stalin i Cherrchill. Vstrechi. Besedy. Diskussii: Dokumenty, kommentarii. 1941–1945. Moskva, 2004 (O. A. Rzheshesky. *Stalin and Churchill: Meetings. Talks. Discussions*. Nauka. Moscow, 2004), p. 15.

43. Y. Gorkov. Gosudarstvenniy komitet oborona postanovlyayet (Y. Gorkov. *State Defense Committee Resolves*), p. 287.

44. A. Y. Bezugolnyy. Ni voyny, ni mira. Voëno-istoricheskyy arkhiv, 2003, No 5 (A. Y. Bezugolnyy. “Neither War, Nor Peace.” *Military-Historical Archive*, No. 5, 2003), p. 62.

45. W. Churchill. Vtoraya mirovaya voyna. T. 3 (W. Churchill. *The Second World War*, Volume 3.), p. 244.

46. Zehra Önder. II. Dünya Savası’nda Türk Dış, Politikası. Bilgi Yayınevi, Ankara, 2010, s. 350 (Zehra Önder. *The Turkish Foreign Policy in the Second World War*. Bilgi Yayınevi, Ankara, 2010, p. 350).

47. A secret report of the Soviet special agents pointed out that Head of the Turkish General Staff F. Çakmak was an opponent to the war. According to the Soviet information, Çakmak enjoyed great authority in the army and was in position to influence the Turkish foreign policy. The Soviet side explained peaceful intentions of Çakmak by the weakness of the Turkish army. Nevertheless, in fact, such sentiments of the Turkish generals came because of correct assessment of the international situation (see S. Mikhaylov. Marshal Fevzi Çakmak. 29.12.1944. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 3, p. 161).

48. Zehra Önder. II. Dünya Savası’nda Türk Dış, Politikası, s. 356 (Zehra Önder. *The Turkish Foreign Policy in the Second World War*, p. 356).

49. Gothard Jaechke. I ve II Dünya Savasında Türkiye’nin Dış, Politikası // Türkler, Cilt 16 (Gothard Jaechke. “Foreign Policy of Turkey during I and II World Wars.” In *The Turks*, Volume 16), p. 800.

50. Rossiya i Chernomorskie proliivy (*Russia and Black Sea Straits*), p. 455.

51. Ramazan Çalık. Türk-Alman İlişkileri. (1925–1945) // Türkler, Cilt 16 (Ramazan Çalık. “Turkish-German Relations (1925–1945).” In *The Turks*, Volume 16), p. 820.

52. Zehra Önder. II. Dünya Savası’nda Türk Dış, Politikası, s. 356–357 (Zehra Önder. *The Turkish Foreign Policy in the Second World War*, pp. 356–357).

53. R. Denniston. Churchill’in Gizli Savası. Diplomatik Yazışmalar. İngiliz Dış, İşler Bakanlığı ve Türkiye (1942–1944).

Istanbul, 1998 (R. Denniston. *Secret War of Churchill: Diplomatic Correspondence, English Foreign Office, and Turkey (1942–1944)*. Istanbul, 1998), p. 143.

54. For records of conversations of the Adana Conference, see Zehra Önder. II. Dünya Savaşı'nda Türk Dış Politikası, s. 408–434 (Zehra Önder. *The Turkish Foreign Policy in the Second World War*, pp. 408–434).

55. For more detailed information, see Edward Weisband. *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1943–1945: Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics*. Princeton University Press, 1973, p. 136; E. Weisband. İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nda İ'nönü'nün Dış Politikası. Istanbul, 1974 (E. Weisband. *I'nönü's Foreign Policy during the Second World War*. Istanbul, 1974), p. 160; E. Athanassopoulou. *Turkey-Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945–1952*, p. 3; Necdet Ekinci. İ'nönü Dönemi ve II. Dünya Savaşı yılları. Türkler, Cilt 16 (Necdet Ekinci. *I'nönü's Period and the Years of the World War II*, Volume 16.), p. 711.

56. Rosiya i Chernomorskie proliivy (*Russia and Black Sea Straits*), p. 458.

57. Gothard Jaechke. I ve II Dünya Savaşı'nda Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası (Gothard Jaechke. *Foreign Policy of Turkey during I and II World Wars*), p. 800.

58. F. Armaoğlu. 20. Yüzyılın Siyasi Tarihi. 14. Baskı. Ankara, 1994 (F. Armaoğlu. *Political History of the Twentieth Century*. Extended, 14th edition. Ankar, 1994), p. 412.

59. K. Gürün. Türk-Sovyet İlişkileri (1920–1953), Istanbul, 1991 (G. Kamiran. *Turkish-Soviet Relations, 1920–1953*. TTK Publications. Istanbul, 1991), pp. 257–258; F. Armaoğlu. 20. Yüzyılın Siyasi Tarihi (F. Armaoğlu. *Political History of the Twentieth Century*), p. 413.

60. Moskovskaya konferensiya ministrov inostrannykh del SSSR, SShA i Velikobritanii (19–30 oktyabrya 1943 g.), Moskva, 1978 (*The Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers of the USSR, USA, and Great Britain (19–30 October 1943)*. Moscow, 1978), pp. 365–367.

61. Tegeran. Yalta. Potsdam. Sb. dokumentov. Moskva, 1967 (*Teheran, Yalta, Potsdam: Collected Documents*. Moscow, 1967), p. 10.

62. Tegeranskaya konferensiya rukovoditeley trekh soyuznykh derzhav SSSR, SSHA i Velikobritanii (28 noyabrya–1 dekabrya 1943 g.), Moskva, 1984 (*The Teheran Conference of the Heads of Three Allied Powers—USSR, USA, and Great Britain (28 November–1 December 1943)*. Moscow, 1984), p. 141.

63. Tegeran. Yalta. Potsdam. Sb. dokumentov. Moscow, 1967 (*Teheran, Yalta, Potsdam.*), p. 13.

64. Ibid., p. 16.

65. O. A. Rzheshesky. Stalin i Cherrhill. Vstrechi. Besedy. Diskussii (O. A. Rzheshesky. *Stalin and Churchill*), pp. 141.

66. H. F. Gürsel. Tarih Boyunca Türk–Rus İlişkileri. Istanbul, 1968 (H. F. Gürsel. *History of Turco-Russian Relations (in Turkish)*. Istanbul, 1968), p. 218; Necdet Ekinci. İ'nönü Dönemi ve II. Dünya Savaşı yılları. Türkler, Cilt 16 (Necdet Ekinci. *I'nönü's Period and the Years of the World War II*, Volume 16), pp. 711–712.

67. A. Fedosov. Report on Existing and Operating Political Treaties and Agreements between the USSR and Turkey as of January 1, 1944. 25.01.1944. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 3, pp. 3–6.

68. A. Fedosov. Report on Existing Economic, Border, Transport, and Other Treaties and Agreements between the USSR and Turkey as of April 1, 1944. 03.10.1944. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 3, pp. 28–37.

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70. The National Security Committee Archive at the George Washington University (hereafter, referred to as The NSCA at the G. Washington University), Doc. 3069.

71. A. Toptygin. Neizvestniy Beria. Moskva, 2002 (A. Toptygin. *The Unknown Beria*. Moscow, 2002), p. 165; The NSA at the G. Washington University, Doc. 9077; Statistiko-ekonomichesky atlas Kryma. Vypusk 1. Simferopol, 1922 (*Statistical-Economic Atlas of Crimea*. Issue 1. Simferopol, 1922), p. 9.

72. On Transformation of the Crimean ASSR into the Crimean Region as a Part of the RSFSR (without publication of the decree in press). 30.06.1945. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 3, v. 1053, p. 9.

73. Decision of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party on Deportees. 24.11.1948. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 162, v. 39, p. 141.

74. Decision of the Crimean Regional Communist Party on the Return of Tatars to Crimea. 13.09.1948. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 162, v. 39, p. 178.

75. From P. Kovanov to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. September 1957. Georgian Presidential Archive (hereafter, GPA), f. 14, r. 39, v. 219, p. 1.

76. Stalinskie deportasii. 1928-1953. Dokumenty. Moskva, 2005 (*Stalin Deportations, 1928–1953: Documents*. Moscow, 2005), p. 534.

77. A. Toptygin. Neizvestniy Beria. (A. Toptygin. *Unknown Beria*), p. 167.

78. Gorshko to M. J. Baghyrov. Stationing of the Turkish Army. 06.06.1944. APDPARA, f. 1, r. 89, v. 154, No. 1–8.

79. Ibid., No. 9.

80. J. Hasanli. "The 'Turkish Crisis' of the Cold War Period and the South Caucasian Republics." *The Caucasus and Globalization*, Vol. 2, Issue 4, 2008, p. 119.
81. From S. Vinogradov to S. Kavtaradze and S. Lazovsky. 14.07.1944. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 128, v. 9, p. 1.
82. German Propaganda in Turkey. 15.07.1944. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 128, v. 9, p. 6.
83. German Propaganda in Turkey. 15.07.1944. // RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 128, v. 9, p. 23.
84. In spite of the fact that Soviet secret documents termed Menemenciog̃lu as a Germanophile and chief supporter of economic collaboration with Germany, he remained supportive of the Alliance Treaty with Great Britain. At the same time, Menemenciog̃lu always found an excuse to avoid complying with the treaty (see G. Shulumba. A Report on Numan Menemenciog̃lu. 29.12.1944. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 4, p. 75.)
85. Rosiya i Chernomorskie proliivy (*Russia and Black Sea Straits*), p. 464.
86. For more details, see A. L. Macfie. "The Turkish Straits in the Second World War, 1939–1945." *Middle Easter Studies*, Vol. 25, No 2, 1989.
87. E. Necdet. I'nönü Dönemi ve II. Dünya Savası Yılları. The Turks (E. Necdet. *I'nönü Period and the World War II*, Volume 16), p. 718.
88. Rosiya i Chernomorskie proliivy (*Russia and Black Sea Straits*), p. 465.
89. Ibid., p. 81.
90. Rüs,tü Aras on the Soviet-Turkish relations. 16.06.1944. // AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 3, p. 38.
91. Perepiska predseatelya Soveta Ministrov SSSR s prezidentam SSHA i primer-ministrom Velikobritanii vo vremya Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny 1941–1945 gg. T. I (*Correspondence between Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and US Presidents and British Prime Ministers during the Great Patriotic War 1941–1945*, Volume I. Moscow, 189), p. 241.
92. Yavuz Özgüldür. Türk-Alman İlişkileri. 1923–1945. Ankara, 1993 (Yavuz Özgüldür. *Turkish-German Relations, 1923–1945*. Ankara, 1992), p. 163.
93. İsmet İ'nönü'nün TBMM'deki Konuşmaları. Cilt II (*Speeches of İsmet İ'nönü at the Turkish Grand National Assembly*, Volume 2), p. 51.
94. The NSA at the G. Washington University, Doc. R9478, pp. 1–2.
95. Resolution of the Council of People's Commissariats of the USSR on Measures to Strengthen Cultural and Economic Aid to the Population of South Azerbaijan. 06.03.1944. APD PARA, f. 1, r. 89, v. 84, pp. 3–5.
96. Decision of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan. 20.03.1944. APD PARA, f. 1, r. 129, v. 80, p. 2.
97. Decision of the Political Bureau on the Creation of the Council on Armenian-Gregorian Church. 20.10.1943. / RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 9, v. 1049, p. 21.
98. APD PARA, f. 1, r. 89, v. 79, p. 7.
99. N. I. Yegorova. Istoki Sovetsko-Amerikanskogo sopernichestva v Irane I Tursii, 1944–1945 (N. I. Yegorova. *Sources of the Soviet-American Rivalry in Iran and Turkey, 1944–1945*), pp. 133–134.
100. From L. Beria to J. Stalin and V. Molotov World Output and Reserves of Oil. 16.08.1944. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 6, fol. 37, v. 461, pp. 13–18.
101. Dzh. Gasanly. Yuzhniy Azerbaydzhan: nachalo kholodnoy voyny. Baku, 2003 (J. Hasanli. *South Azerbaijan: Beginning of the Cold War*. Baku, 2003), pp. 54–71; Dzh. Gasanly. SSSR-Iran: Azerbaydzhansky krizis i nachalo kholodnoy voyny (J. Hasanli. *USSR-Iran: Azerbaijan Crisis and Beginning of the Cold War*), pp. 65–83; J. Hasanli. *At the Dawn of the Cold War: The Soviet-American Crisis over Iranian Azerbaijan*, pp. 44–60.
102. From M. Yunin to V. Molotov. 04.08.1944. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 9, fol. 69, v. 1071, pp. 27–29.
103. N. I. Yegorova. Formirovanie konsepsii nacionalnykh interesov SShA na Blizhnem i Srednem Vostoke, 1944–1946 // SShA i vneshney mir. Materialy IV nauchnoy konferensii assosiasii izucheniya SSHA. Moskva, 1997 (N. I. Yegorova. *Formation of the concept of the US National Interests in the Near and Middle East, 1944–1946: The USA and Foreign world*. Materials of the Fourth Scientific Conference of the Association of USA Studies, Moscow, 1997), p. 23.
104. See E. Weisband. *Turkish Foreign Policy*. pp. 304–309; G. Kirk. *The Middle East, 1945–1950*. London, pp. 21–37.
105. A testimonial of the Soviet Foreign Ministry said that Baydur was ambassador to the USSR in 1929–1934, during the development of the Soviet-Turkish relations. In the period in question, İsmet İ'nönü and Rüs,tü Aras visited the USSR. During his stay in Moscow and later in Rome "Baydur presented himself as ardent supporter of the Soviet-Turkish friendship and admirer of the USSR, and ironically spoke of the Italian army and negatively of the Italian foreign-political orientation towards Germany." According to Soviet Ambassador Gorelkin's statement, Baydur regularly visited the Soviet Embassy, and Gorelkin came to the conclusion that Baydur adhered to the pro-British orientation. A Soviet secret report said that in his reports to the Turkish Foreign Ministry, Baydur "gave a negative assessment to the Italian foreign policy." It said that Baydur enjoyed great authority in the Turkish Foreign Ministry and is reputed as the most experienced Ambassador (see G. Shulumba. *A Report on*

Hüseyin Ragıp Baydur. 30.06.1944. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 3, pp. 181–182, 185–186).

106. From diary of V. M. Molotov. Reception of Turkish Ambassador Baydur. 30.09.1944. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 6, fol. 51, v. 700, p. 4.

107. Birja PLUS, January 14, 2005. For more details on the attempt against von Papen, see N. G. Kireev. *Istoriya Tursii XX vek. Moskva, 2007* (N. G. Kireev. *History of Turkey, XX Century*. Moscow, 2007), pp. 248–250, 267; Yuriy Baturin. *Dose razvedchika; opyt rekonstruksii sudby. Moskva, Moloday Gvardiya, 2005* (Yuriy Baturin. *A File of intelligence officer: An experience of Destiny reconstruction*. Molodaya Gvardiya. Moscow, 2005), pp. 390–426. The book presents previously unknown facts about the activities of Soviet intelligence officers in Turkey.

108. From Diary of V. M. Molotov. Reception of Turkish Ambassador Baydur. 30.09.1944. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 6, fol. 51, v. 700, pp. 5–7.

109. G. Shulumba. Report on Hüseyin Ragıp Baydur. 30.06.1944. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 3, p. 182.

110. It was known that Sarper had formerly worked in the USSR. Five years before he ran the Turkish consulate in Odessa, then in Moscow as embassy official. For some time Sarper worked as adviser to the Turkish Embassy in Bucharest and as general director of the Turkish press before his appointment to Moscow. Special services particularly focused on his visit to Berlin with a group of journalists on July 16, 1942 (see Brief Biographical Report on Turkish Political and Public Figures. 12.09.1942. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 3, p. 131.)

111. From diary of V. M. Molotov. Reception of Turkish Ambassador S. Sarper. 03.11.1944. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 6, fol. 51, v. 700, pp. 9–10.

112. Adamov, Garmash, Koblyakov. *The Question of the Straits at the Montreux Conference*. 26.11.1943. // AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 4, pp. 1–12.

113. O. A. Rzheshesky. *Stalin i Cherrchill. Vstrechi. Besedy. Diskussii* (O. A. Rzheshesky. *Stalin and Churchill*), p. 417.

114. *Ibid.*, pp. 423–424; AFP RF, f. 06, r. 9, fol. 73, v. 1129, pp. 1–2.

115. N. V. Kochkin. SSSR, Angliya, SShA i “Turetsky krizis” 1945–1947 (N. V. Kochkin. “USSR, Great Britain, USA, and ‘Turkish crisis,’ 1945–1947”), p. 60.

116. O. A. Rzheshesky. *Stalin i Cherrchill. Vstrechi. Besedy. Diskussii* (O. A. Rzheshesky. *Stalin and Churchill*), p. 424; AFP RF, f. 06, r. 9, fol. 73, v. 1129, pp. 2–3; E. Athanassopoulou. *Turkey-Anglo-American Security Interests*, p. 39.

117. From M. Litvinov to J. Stalin, V. Molotov, V. Dekanozov, and S. Lozovsky, on Perspectives and Probable Basis of the Soviet-British Collaboration. 15.11.1944. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 9, fol. 69, v. 1071, pp. 31–88; f. 06, r. 6, fol. 14, v. 149, pp. 1–59. There are several versions of the document and all of them, with small exceptions, are identical.

118. From M. Litvinov to J. Stalin, V. Molotov, V. Dekanozov, and S. Lozovsky on Perspectives and Probable Basis of the Soviet-British Collaboration. 15.11.1944. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 9, fol. 69, v. 1071, pp. 84–85.

119. *Ibid.*, p. 87.

120. From M. Litvinov to J. Stalin, V. Molotov, V. Dekanozov, and S. Lozovsky on Perspectives and Probable Basis of the Soviet British Collaboration. 15.11.1944. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 6, fol. 14, v. 143, p. 83.

121. From M. Litvinov to J. Stalin, V. Molotov, V. Dekanozov, and S. Lozovsky on Perspectives and Probable Basis of the Soviet British Collaboration. 15.11.1944. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 9, fol. 14, v. 149, p. 61.

122. From M. Litvinov to J. Stalin, V. Molotov, V. Dekanozov, and S. Lozovsky on Perspectives and Probable Basis of the Soviet British Collaboration. 15.11.1944. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 9, fol. 14, v. 143, p. 76.

123. From M. Litvinov to J. Stalin, V. Molotov, V. Dekanozov, S. Lozovsky, T. Manuilsky, I. Maysky, and Y. Surits on the Question of the Straits. 15.11.1944. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 9, fol. 14, v. 143, p. 82.

124. *Ibid.*, p. 62.

125. *Ibid.*, pp. 62–63; V. Zubok and C. Pleshakov. *Inside the Kremlin’s Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev*. Harvard University Press, 1996, p. 92.

126. From M. Litvinov to J. Stalin, V. Molotov, V. Dekanozov, S. Lozovsky, T. Manuilsky, I. Maysky, and Y. Surits on the question of the Straits. 15.11.1944. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 9, fol. 14, v. 143, p. 63.

127. *Ibid.*, p. 63.

128. *Ibid.*, p. 64.

129. From M. Litvinov to J. Stalin, V. Molotov, V. Dekanozov, and S. Lozovsky on the Question of the Straits. 17.11.1944. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 9, fol. 14, v. 143, pp. 65–66.

130. *Ivestiya*, December 21, 1944.

131. Vladislav M. Zubok. *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev*, p. 38.

132. From A. Miller to V. Dekanozov. 15.01.1945. The NSA at the G. Washington University, Doc. 3785, 1.15.1945, p. 2.

133. N. V. Kochkin. SSSR, Angliya, SShA i “Turetsky krizis” 1945–1947 (N. V. Kochkin. “USSR, Great Britain, USA, and ‘Turkish Crisis,’ 1945–1947”), p. 63.

134. A. F. Miller. *Tursiya v 1924–1944 gg. Moskva 1945* (A. F. Miller. *Turkey in 1924–1944*. Moscow, 1945); A. F. Miller.

Tursiya i problema bezopasnosti prolivov (A. F. Miller. *Turkey and problem of the Straits*); A. F. Miller. *Kratkaya istoriya Tursiya*. Moskva, 1948 (A. F. Miller. *A Brief History of Turkey*. Moscow, 1948); A. F. Miller. *Ocherki noveyshey istorii Tursii* (A. F. Miller. *Essays on Turkish Newest History*).

135. From A. Miller to V. Dekanozov. 15.01.1945. The NSA at the G. Washington University, Doc. 3785, p. 2. Miller put forward the following arguments in favor of the bilateral Soviet-Turkish treaty: “a) case of Allies—the regional nature of treaty restricted by the Black Sea zone is not substitution or change but rather interpretation of the Montreux Convention, in the section that deals with the rights granted to the Turkish government by the convention and possibly to be assigned to the government of the USSR; necessity for the Soviet Union to enjoy rights under Article 19 of the Montreux Convention after cancellation of provisions related to the League of Nations, and just Great Britain is using these rights, expediency of the combination of the British-Soviet allied treaty and the Anglo-Turkish treaty on mutual aid with the projected Soviet-Turkish treaty to be concluded in accordance with purposes of the two treaties; b) case of The Turks—necessity for Turkey, in the interests of its own security, to return to the principles as adopted by the Moscow treaty of 1921 (commitment to assign the Straits issue to the resolution of the Black Sea Conference) with obvious changes arising from Romania and Bulgaria’s joining the war against the USSR; consent of the Soviet government, in case of the signing the projected agreement, to extend the treaty on friendship and neutrality, expiring in 1945, to the same period that the new agreement.” Main provisions of the Soviet-Turkish treaty, called the Treaty on the Security of the Black Sea, are as follows: “a) parties ascertain mutual interest in ensuring peace and, as supplement to the existing treaty on friendship and neutrality of December 17, 1925 with relative protocols and agreements, decide to agree on measures to strengthen security in the Black Sea; under the Black Sea zone is meant the Straits Zone, as it is defined in the preamble to the Straits Convention, signed in Montreux on July 20, 1936; b) in case where the Black Sea zone is under aggression on the part of the third power; both contracting parties, at the first demand of one of them, immediately start mutual consultations to find measures to prevent aggression; c) at any case and irrespective of the said consultations, if the Soviet government informs the Turkish government about the aggression threat with respect to the territories of the Soviet Union located in the Black Sea, the Turkish government, in reference to the fact that such a threat poses a threat to the security of Turkey as well, immediately puts into effect Article 21 of the Straits Convention signed in Montreux on July 20, 1936; d) in case where the USSR despite measures taken is subject to the aggression and Turkey remains to be non-belligerent, the Turkish government, when applying Article 19 of the Straits Convention, will extend the rights to the USSR as stipulated by clauses 2 and 3 of the said article in respect of the victim of the aggression to comply with the pact on mutual aid entered into with Turkey; e) bringing the treaty to the notice of the Montreux Convention participants, f) period of the treaty is similar to that of the Anglo-Soviet allied treaty.” Miller, in addition to the above-mentioned provisions, suggested including three confidential resolutions in the treaty: “1) With a view of preliminary preparation for the prevention of possible aggression in the Black Sea, the Turkish and Soviet Naval headquarters shall conclude a especial convention on measures to jointly protect the Straits zone; 2) In case of the necessity of sending the Soviet navy for taking preliminary measures for the protection of the Straits, the Turkish government shall send an invitation to the Soviet government to comply with Article 17 of the Montreux Convention; 3) When applying Article 21 of the Montreux Convention, Turkey shall establish the Straits regime in agreement with the USSR.” As is seen, a proposal of the Soviet expert on the draft treaty, as well as on additional secret articles, will ensure not only the USSR participation in the Straits protection but also lay down principles for the seizure of Bosphorus and Dardanelles. As the author of the project, Miller was well aware of the fact that these proposals would be opposed by the Turks, so the project was, at best, of unilateral nature and imposed no obligations on the USSR. But he hoped that sooner or later the Turks would agree on the regional pact on extending mutual aid to the Black Sea and the Straits zone. In this case Miller proposed to risk and pledged to protect the Straits from any threats, including the threat against Turkey proper but not related to the USSR. Besides idea of entering into the treaty with Turkey as main instrument of ensuring Soviet interests in the Straits, Miller suggests to profit by the date of its revision in 1946 as set forth in the convention and make following amendments: (1) to remove all references to the League of Nations; (2) to withdraw Japan from participant countries (in doing so, there may arise a question on the joining of new independent Mediterranean countries—Egypt and Lebanon—to the convention; (3) to supplement Article 21 with Turkey’s commitment to provisionally close the Straits for warships of non-Black Sea powers in the case that one of the Black Sea countries considers itself under the threat of war; (4) to reduce for Black Sea countries a period of warning against forthcoming passage of ships three days before (instead of eight days) as set forth in Article 13; (5) to specify the type of warships and auxiliary boats proceeding from the precedents of the current war (see From A. Miller to V. Dekanozov. 15.01.1945. The NSA at the G. Washington University, Doc. 3785, pp. 2–5).

136. On the Question of the Straits January, 1945. AFP RF, f. 015, r. 5, fol. 8, v. 9, pp. 39–40.

137. S. Kavtaradze and S. Vinogradov. Memorandum on the Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits. 06.02.1945. AFP RF, f. 012, r. 6, fol. 91, v. 376, pp. 141–149.

138. F. Armaoğlu. Belgelerle Türk-Amerikan münasibetleri. Ankara, 1991 (F. Armaoğlu. *Turkish-American Relations with Documents*. Ankara, 1991), p. 125.

139. S. Deringil. Denge Oyunu. İkinci Dünya Savaş,ında Türkiye’nin Dış, Politikası. İstanbul, 1994 (S. Deringil. *The*

Balancing Game: Turkish Foreign Policy during the Second World War. Istanbul, 1994), pp. 249–250.

140. From V. Grubyakov to S. Kavtaradze. 09.03.1945. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 22, p. 2.

141. N. V. Kochkin. SSSR, Angliya, SShA i “Turetsky krizis” 1945–1947 (N. V. Kochkin. “USSR, Great Britain, USA, and ‘Turkish Crisis,’ 1945–1947”), p. 63.

142. Y. Gorkov. Gosudarstvenniy komitet oborona postanovlyayet (Y. Gorkov. *State Defense Committee Resolves*), p. 457.

143. From V. Grubyakov to S. Kavtaradze. 09.03.1945. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 22, p. 5.

144. Sovetsky Soyuz na mezhdunarodnykh konferensiyakh perioda Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny, 1941–1945. Sb. dokumentov. T. 4. Krymskaya konferentsiya rukovoditeley trekh soyuznykh derzhav-SSSR, SShA i Velikobritanii (4–11 fevralya 1945 g.). Moskva, 1984 (*The Soviet Union at International Conferences during the Great Patriotic War, 1941–1945: Collected Documents*, Vol. 4; *The Crimea Conference of the Heads of Three Allied Powers—USSR, USA, and Great Britain* (February 4–11, 1945). Moscow, 1984), pp. 196–201.

145. *Ibid.*, p. 263.

146. From V. Grubyakov to S. Kavtaradze. 09.03.1945. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 22, pp. 11–13.

147. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

148. As far back the early 1920s Saka was a member of the Turkish delegation to the Balkan Conference in Athens and Istanbul, a delegate of the Pan-European Conference in Geneva, and headed, for long time, a foreign commission in the Grand National Assembly (see Brief Biographical Report on Turkish Political and Public Figures. 12.09.1942. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 3, p. 131).

149. From V. Grubyakov to S. Kavtaradze. 09.03.1945. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 22, pp. 60–76.

150. *Cumhuriyet*, February 24, 1945.

151. From V. Grubyakov to S. Kavtaradze. 09.03.1945. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 22, pp. 3–9.

152. From diary of V. Molotov. Reception of Iranian Ambassador M. Ahi. 26.02.1945. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 7, fol. 464, v. 33, pp. 1–2.

153. *Foreign Relations of the United States*. (hereafter, FRUS), 1945, Vol. VIII, Near East and Africa. Washington, 1969, p. 1219.

154. E. Athanassopoulou. *Turkey-Anglo-American Security Interests*, pp. 39–40; AFP RF, f. 132, r. 30, fol. 109, v. 7, p. 1.

155. N. V. Kochkin. SSSR, Angliya, SShA i “Turetsky krizis” 1945–1947 (N. V. Kochkin. “USSR, Great Britain, USA, and ‘Turkish Crisis.’ 1945–1947”), pp. 63–64.

156. Reply of the Turkish Foreign Ministry to V. Molotov of March 19, 1945. 04.04.1945. AFP RF, f. 132, r. 30, fol. 109, v. 7, pp. 2–3.

157. The Ambassador to the Soviet Union (Harriman) to the Secretary of State. 21.03.1945. FRUS, 1945, vol. VIII, pp. 1221–1223.

158. The Ambassador to the United Kingdom (Winant) to the Secretary of State. 23.03.1945. FRUS, 1945, vol. VIII, pp. 1224–1225.

159. S. Deringil. Denge Oyunu. I'kinci Dünya Savas'ında Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası (S. Deringil. *The Balancing Game: Turkish Foreign Policy during the Second World War*), p. 252.

160. The United States Representative in Bulgaria (Barnes) to the Secretary of State. 11.04.1945. FRUS, 1945, vol. 8, p. 1232.

161. The Charge in Turkey (Packer) to the Secretary of State. 22.05.1945. FRUS, 1945, vol. VIII, pp. 1233–1234.

162. From V. Grubyakov to S. Kavtaradze. 12.04.1945. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 22, p. 103.

163. From V. Grubyakov to S. Kavtaradze. 12.04.1945. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 22, p. 105.

164. From V. Grubyakov to S. Kavtaradze. 21.05.1945. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 22, pp. 180–181.

165. From N. Sümer to V. Molotov. 08.05.1945; and I. İ'nönü to M. Kalinin. 17.02.1945. AFP RF, f. 132, r. 30, fol. 109, v. 9, pp. 2–6.

Chapter Two

Increasing Soviet Pressure on Turkey and the Beginning of the War of Nerves

After six years of bloodshed, the war in Europe came to an end. The main prerequisite for the victory was collaboration among the Allies during the war. The decisions made at the Teheran and Yalta conferences laid the foundations of the postwar world. The euphoria of victory had temporarily swept past grievances and the evident ideological divide under the carpet.

However, this seemingly unshakeable cooperation among the Allies already began to show cracks at the final stage of Germany's rout and the end of military operations in Europe. Soviet troops consolidated their positions in East Europe and the Balkans, as well as in North Iran. Moreover, the Soviets began laying claims to their neighbors across a vast swathe of territory from Germany and Austria to the Kuril Islands. The policy of expanding the borders of the Soviet Union was the starting point of the Stalin-Molotov doctrine. The Kremlin interpreted the decisions of the Teheran and Crimea conferences in its own favor, believing this moment to be appropriate for transforming the Communist idea into world hegemony.

Shortly after the signing of the act of unconditional surrender of Germany, British Prime Minister W. Churchill wrote to US President Truman:

I am gravely concerned about the situation in Europe. . . . The trouble is that the Russians misinterpret the Yalta decisions, take a special stance on Poland, put obstacles in the way of settling the Vienna issue, consolidate their overwhelming influence in the Balkans, except for Greece, preserve control over subordinated or occupied territories, and retain large military formations in the front line for a long period of time.¹

US Ambassador to Moscow W. Averell Harriman also forwarded a report to Washington, which was intended to attract the US government's attention to the dangerous actions of the Soviets.² On 13 May, Churchill made a radio speech which examined postwar development tendencies and stood up for democratic principles.

Anxious for the future of the world, the Allies set their hopes on collaboration with the Soviet Union in the belief of peace and security around the globe. All these were illusions based on imaginary values. Several weeks later, upon completion of joint combat operations Soviet foreign policy began evading cooperation, first latently, then openly, replacing allied relations with rivalry. In analyzing trends of the Soviet-American relations of 1945–1946, Russian researcher V. O. Pechatnov termed them a transition “from alliance to hostility,” saying that May–June 1945 engendered a period of fierce debates over Soviet foreign policy.³

After the end of the war in Europe the Near and Middle East region grew into the most vulnerable and painful point of relations between the Allies. The newly opened Soviet

archives demonstrate that the confrontation between the Soviet Union and Britain/USA clearly related to Iran and Turkey and thus became the first Cold War confrontation of geopolitical interests and related ideological antagonism.

From June 7 to July 6, 1945, the Soviet leadership adopted a number of important decisions on Iran and Turkey, putting forward claims that initiated the Cold War. The first action on this track was the reception of Turkish Ambassador Sarper by Molotov. The Soviet commissar set the following demands before Sarper: joint control over the Straits, Soviet military bases in the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, return of Kars and Ardahan to the Soviets. Three days later on 10 June, Stalin signed a secret resolution "On Organization of Soviet Industrial Enterprises in North Iran."⁴ On 18 June, Molotov met with Sarper and put forward the Soviet ultimatum. On 21 June, Stalin signed Decree No 9168 "On Geological Prospecting Operations in North Iran." This "top secret" document is indicative of the beginning of a fierce struggle for energy resources in the Near East.⁵ On 6 July, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee adopted a secret resolution "On Measures to Organize Separatist Movements in South Azerbaijan and Other Provinces of North Iran."⁶ The resolution provided for the development of a separatist movement for autonomy with the subsequent joining of the region to North Azerbaijan. Soviet consolidation in this part of Iran contributed to the strengthening of the USSR's influence in the Near and Middle East, its rapprochement to energy resources of the East and transformation of North Iran into a Soviet strategic point to annex the eastern provinces of Turkey.

At that moment, Turkey's position was far from perfection. It may be conjectured that the country was in isolation. In the beginning of the war Turkey and its Allies stuck to a policy of neutrality; now it disadvantaged this country. After the denunciation of the Soviet-Turkish treaty of 1925 Turkey found itself in a suspended state. The government was unaware of whether Britain and the USA would protect it against growing Soviet pressures or Turkey would have to face the USSR alone. Turkey was increasingly perturbed by new political realities.

Turkish political circles successfully strove to meet the challenges ahead. On May 19, 1945, İ'nönü addressed a traditional holiday of youth and sports, saying: "We want to desist from some actions caused by the war. There are favorable conditions to apply democratic principles in political and ideological life of our country. From the very outset of its establishment, the Grand National Assembly has been the institution to lead us on the path of democracy."⁷ İ'nönü spoke about the formation of a new party and transition to a multiparty system. He announced some reforms, cancellation of emergency laws, and democratization of the political life of the country. Problems put forward by İ'nönü were discussed during the San Francisco debates to comply with the UN conception that each nation was entitled to live under a democratic regime. On İ'nönü's recommendation, Turkish Foreign Minister and head of the Turkish delegation to the San Francisco conference Saka gave an interview to the Reuters press agency, which pointed out that the government of the Turkish Republic is following the path of democracy and that Turkish democracy may be compared to the world's most advanced constitutions. At the same time Saka told Reuters that democracy would reign triumphant in Turkey after the war. Another member of the Turkish delegation in San Francisco Ahmet S,ükrü

Esmer addressed US public opinion, saying that Turks highly respected the American nation and believed in the good intentions of the Americans.⁸ Beyond any doubt, the appeal to “democratic principles” by President İñönü or Minister Saka or any other politicians and the necessity of drawing upon democratic values within the framework of this propaganda campaign were accounted for by the US and British line on opposing “totalitarian regimes.”

İñönü’s statement of 19 May and his view on the establishment of the second party formed the crux of Turkish mass media debates in the last days of May and throughout June. Some left-wing newspapers saw the causes of this approach in the decision of the Crimea conference and Atlantic Charter. In their view, victor nations would not tolerate totalitarian regimes wherever they existed. The left wing Turkish press pointed out that the roots of rejuvenation stemmed from abroad. On the contrary, official newspapers believed that this democracy was purely of local origin, arising from Kemalism. *Son Telegraf* newspaper on 26 May wrote: “The Kemalist democracy is of a progressive nature and directed to bringing happiness to mankind.” Touching upon the idea of a new party, the Turkish press considered it to be important, on the one hand, and rather difficult, on the other, especially against the background of the yet-unfinished war. Some newspapers recalled that in 1930 Fethi Okyar had been unsuccessful in creating a Liberal Progressive party. These newspapers were apprehensive that the second party would throw Turkey back to Sharia law and stir up a civil war. As viewed by some newspapers, rumors of a third world war between the belligerents should make Turkey focus on its national unity. Other newspapers defined developments in newly liberated European countries as a result of party anarchy. Distinguished journalists N. Sadak and N. Nadi believed that Turkey should not change its laws under pressures from the outside. The Soviet Embassy in Ankara reported to Kavtaradze: “The Turkish press has gained its freedom, and the government has to resign itself to this. Apprehensive of being unmasked in newspapers as anti-democratic, the government does not dare apply repressive measures.”⁹

Before the end of the Second World War, the Soviet Union began devising measures against Iran and Turkey. On April 6, 1945, the State Defense Committee adopted a decision on improving highways in Transcaucasia. The logic of such a decision by the war-devastated country’s State Defense Committee was far from intended to address the socioeconomic problems of the country.

Commissariats of Foreign Affairs (CFA) were set up in the Republics of Transcaucasia. Georgian and Armenian CFAs focused on active participation in the development and implementation of the Soviet political line in regard to Turkey and partly Iran. The Azerbaijan CFA largely concentrated on Iranian developments.

On April 6, 1945, leaders of Soviet Armenia applied to the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee (CC) and Stalin personally. Chairman of the Armenian Council of People’s Commissars (CPA) Agasi Sarkisyan and Secretary of the Armenian CC Grigori Arutyunov sent a letter which said that

during the imperialist war upwards of one million Armenians, natives of Armenia, with the purpose of escaping massacres arranged by Turkish and German imperialists during the course of which over one million Armenians were butchered, had to emigrate from Turkish Armenia to Arab and Balkan countries, Western Europe, USA, etc. As a result, numerous Armenian Diasporas sprang up in these countries. Particularly large colonies currently exist in Syria and Lebanon, numbering 200,000

Armenians; in Iran—100,000 to 120,000 Armenians; in the Balkans—80,000 Armenians (Romania—30,000; Bulgaria—35,000; Greece—20,000); in Egypt—40,000; in France—80,000; and in the USA—150,000. According to information available, most Armenians abroad enjoy no political and civil rights in the said countries. Owing to increased sympathies of foreign Armenians with their native land, the USSR and Soviet Armenia, the ruling circles of these countries regard them as an undesirable element and infringe their rights and freedoms. Despite all obstacles, foreign Armenians created a wide network of patriotic organizations and collect funds to help the Red Army. These organizations unmask Dashnaks, combat them, and frustrate the attempts of some states to create a stronghold in these countries.

It also pointed out that Soviet Armenia enjoys property and material rights in these countries: large sum testaments, museum and scientific artifacts, specifically, thousands of ancient Armenian manuscripts, numerous buildings, etc.

On April 6, 1945, leaders of Soviet Armenia addressed Stalin calling to establish diplomatic relations and exchange diplomatic representatives between Armenian SSR and Iran, Syria, and Lebanon. The same letter raised the question of instituting posts of advisors for Armenian Diaspora in the USA, France, and Egypt.¹⁰ The second letter of Sarkisyan and Arutyunov to Stalin arose from increased interests of foreign Armenians in Soviet Armenia. It said that people lodged complaints with the governmental bodies of the Armenian SSR for lack of ties between progressive organizations of foreign Armenians and Soviet Armenia. It was the lack of ties that meant that foreign Armenians had no convincing replies to their questions about the situation in Soviet Armenia. Making use of it, Dashnaks disseminated provocative rumors among the Armenian Diaspora. Armenian leaders wrote Stalin as follows:

In connection with this, a question arises due to the necessity of strengthening ties with truly patriotic, pro-Soviet foreign Armenians. With this end in view, the Council of People's Commissars of Armenian SSR and the Central Committee of the Armenian Communist Party raised a question of dispatching Armenian representatives to Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Romania and Bulgaria to: (1) study the situation of Armenians in these countries and their aspiration to adopt Soviet citizenship, and (2) acquaint foreign Armenians with the achievements of Soviet Armenia in culture, science, art, national economy and well-being of workers.

It was proposed to send two representatives to Iran, Syria, and Lebanon, and two representatives to Romania and Bulgaria. Armenian leaders explained their request by the fact that Dashnaks and anti-Soviet elements had launched a propaganda campaign against the USSR and Armenian SSR in some countries abroad.¹¹

On 7 April, the Armenian National Committee headquartered in New York appealed to Stalin. The telegram said that Stalin was aware of the decree of Soviet Russia "On Turkish Armenia" of December 29, 1917. It has to be kept in mind that the anti-Turkish propaganda of Armenian religious and nationalistic organizations in the USA increasingly intensified in the end of the war. In March 1945, the Armenian national church council in Philadelphia sent a telegram to President Roosevelt, which wished victory to the USA and robust health to him personally. The telegram emphasized Roosevelt's role as a follower of Wilson's course to protect minor peoples and endorse the Armenian cause. Also, the telegram asked Roosevelt to assist in expanding the borders of Soviet Armenia and take a fair stand on the Armenians, i.e., gather worldwide Armenians together, according to the Wilson's precept.¹²

By the end of the war the Armenian national press of America launched a campaign against Turkey with special emphasis on the expansion of the territory of Soviet Armenia as its top priority. The Armenian press pointed out that it was the mission of the Soviet Union in

agreement with the USA and Great Britain to cope with this task. The US-based newspaper *Ayrenik* wrote: “The whole of our activity in Armenia, directed to the Armenian cause, serves the single purpose only: one day the Soviet government will be about to meet our requirements, and in this event we shall have to politically ground the territorial expansion of Armenia.”¹³

The anti-Turkish campaign started in the Armenian SSR toward the end of the war. In spring 1945, the Armenian branch of the Academy of Science of the USSR published a series of articles generically entitled “Feats of Arms of Armenian Sons.” However, heroes of this series were not participants of the Great Patriotic War, but Armenian participants in the Russian-Turkish War of 1877–1878 who distinguished themselves in the struggle against Turks. One of the booklets was entitled “General Loris-Melikov;” another, “General Lazarev.” From 1848, Loris-Melikov had been known for his leading part in the struggle against the movement of Imam Shamil in the North Caucasus. After the conquest of Dagestan he was appointed military chief of South Dagestan and later headed the Terek region. During the Russian-Turkish War of 1877–1878, Loris-Melikov was in command of a separate Caucasian Corps. The booklet above focused on this episode of the war. The second booklet dealt with general Lazarev’s participation in the war against Shamil and his struggle against Turkey in 1877–1878. Both booklets were fraught with hostile views toward Turkey.¹⁴

It should be noted that the Armenian cause formed the basis of the territorial claims of Armenians to Turkey and, most importantly, it enabled the Soviets to receive aid from the Allies. In spring 1945, Soviet diplomats and special services intensified their work in collecting information about Armenian communities, activities of Dashnaks on the territories in the sphere of USSR influence. State security bodies were engaged in collecting operative information about the Dashnaktsutyun intelligence center in Beirut, as well as numerous bureaus, located in France, Trans-Jordan, Syria, Iran, Greece, Egypt, Iraq, Cyprus, and other countries.¹⁵

K. B. Arushanov, Secretary to the Consulate General in Tabriz, in his report along Soviet Foreign Ministry lines reported on April 9, 1945, that there were 17,000 Armenians in Iranian Azerbaijan, of whom 12,000 resided in the Tabriz district. His report added that a greater part of the Armenian population felt positive about the USSR and Soviet Armenia, and showed great interest in the life of the Soviet people. It stressed that the local Armenians celebrated the anniversary of the establishment of Soviet power in Armenia. At the same time, Arushanov, emphasizing the anti-Soviet propaganda of Dashnaks, pointed out that Dashnaks were spreading information that the Soviet government was going to appoint its own man as Catholicos while making a show of inviting foreign guests. Hence, foreign representatives would be in no position to change the situation.¹⁶

On April 19, 1945, Stalin received the deputy Catholicos of all Armenians, Archbishop George Chorekchian. On the one hand, this was attributable to the forthcoming election of the Catholicos on the other hand, it came from his desire to impart a practical character to the demands of Armenians and instruct them in anti-Turkish propaganda. Note that on April 3, 1945 the deputy appealed to Stalin with a request to restore Echmiadzin, re-open religious institutions, return to Echmiadzin its former library, permit Echmiadzin to maintain a printing

house, return some buildings, allow the entry of religious figures to the USSR by invitation of the Catholicos, and invite foreign bishops and heads of eparchies.¹⁷ Right after Stalin's reception of the Armenian church leader, the Armenian National Council handed to participants of the conference in San Francisco a memorandum on "The Cause of the Armenian People," which stressed that a fair solution to the issue would enable the Armenian diasporas to return home. Archival documents show that Stalin's reception of Archbishop Chorekchian was due to the forthcoming elections of the Catholicos. On September 4, 1944, the Political Bureau of the CC CPSU, on the recommendation of the KGB, passed a decision "to permit" a convocation of the Council of the Armenian Gregorian Church in early 1945 at Echmiadzin with the participation of the representatives of foreign eparchies to elect the Catholicos. Excerpts from this decision were forwarded to Molotov, Malenkov, Beria, Vsevolod Merkulov, and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Armenia.¹⁸

The Armenian National Council presents itself as a representative of the Armenian people, including all Armenian civil, social, cultural, and religious organizations of the United States, "except for a small fascist party known under the title of Dashnaks." The second section of the document entitled "Historical Prospects of the Cause of the Armenian People" lists events after the formation of civilization in Mesopotamia. It turns out that the Armenians "were the first people to adopt Christianity and resisted the hordes from Asia. Therefore this appeal of the Armenian people is worth special attention of international justice." The third chapter was called "Involvement of Terrible Turks in History." From the very outset of their appearance in the Near East, Balkans and Central Asia, Turks ruled over other nations through a system of merciless terror. The next section entitled "Armenians as Objects of Particularly Malicious Persecutions" describes Turks' finding faults with Armenians, the most cultural Christians in the world. In the end of the nineteenth century the Armenian massacre assumed a nation-wide character. Another section narrates how Armenians together with their Allies won the First World War. However, insidious Europe that promised "to define the borders of a free and independent Armenia" failed to realize provisions of the Treaty of Sèvres.

All promises were doomed to oblivion or fell prey to the selfish interests of mighty powers. . . . Our native land where our forefathers lived from time immemorial is a part of Turkey, while 1.5 million Armenians have to live the life of refugees and emigrants on the globe. Even Mount Ararat, the pride and glory of our people, symbol of our expectations and dreams, remains under Turkish rule. The Armenian provinces of Turkey are separated from the free and independent Republic, Soviet Armenia, where people are engaged in reviving and restructuring the life of the Armenian nation. . . . The time is ripe for Armenia, currently under the power of Turkey, to join the free and independent Armenia within the borders of the Soviet Union. Among all Christian peoples, formerly seized by Turks, it is Armenians only that failed to get rid of Turkey. We know that the conference in San Francisco is not authorized to solve problems of repatriation and borders. However, it is not adverse to the spirit of the conference.

The final part of the document refers to William Gladstone's aphorism: "to save Armenia is to save civilization." And the document reproaches the West: "The great Soviet Union proved over the past twenty-five years that the salvation of Armenia is the salvation of civilization." Every comma and dot in this document attests to the Kremlin's involvement in its production. To conclude, this Armenian document was translated into Russian and sent to the Armenian Foreign Ministry.¹⁹

Despite boasting of their unity, the Armenians have never been unanimous in international affairs. An eloquent testimony is the conference in San Francisco where Armenians submitted two memorandums. The Armenian National Committee distributed the second memorandum in April 1945 under the title “Memorandum on the Armenian Question.” The said memorandum describes developments from the nineteenth century, from the date of the “division” of Armenia between Russia and Turkey. “Liberation of other national groups of Ottoman Christians led to repressive measures against Armenians aimed at preventing their liberation. The Berlin congress of 1878 adopted Article 61, under which Turkey was committed to carrying out reforms in the Armenian provinces under the supervision of six participants of Congress. This was the beginning of the Armenian question. “Despite pressures on the part of great powers, no reforms were carried out; even worse, in the end of the nineteenth century 300,000 Armenians were butchered, and in 1909—30,000 Armenians.” The document emphasized the Armenian cause during the First World War. Touching upon the 1915 developments, the authors alleged that the “Turks were the first nation to have invented an idea of banishment and extermination of the whole peaceful nation as means of resolution of political problems. . . . However, the Turkish government failed to exterminate the Armenian people. About one million Turkish Armenians fled and became emigrants thanks to the hospitality of friendly countries.” Further, the document presents an interesting conception that the Near East front line in the First World War was attributable to the prowess of Armenians. It was alleged that “the defeat of the Turkish front in Palestine came as a result of the fact that Turks had to send their best forces to the Caucasian and Azerbaijani fronts where they fought against Armenians. . . . Russian Armenians protected Baku against Turks for eight months. Armenians were welcomed by great powers as a “small ally.” Among great personalities who devoted their lives to the Armenian cause, there were allegedly Lloyd George, George Clemenceau, and Woodrow Wilson. Even better, “Lenin and Stalin also recognized the unconditional right of Armenia to self-governance and independence. This right was later confirmed by official decree of the Russian government on December 30, 1918 and later recognized as the first constitution of Soviet Russia.” The memorandum also considered issues arising from the Treaty of Sèvres and the intentions of Wilson to define the borders of Armenia; however, the Senate declined from backing his aspiration. One more section of the document is entitled “Kemalist Turkey and Sovietization of Armenia.” It said: “During the signing of Treaty of Sèvres, the differences between the Allies clearly manifested themselves on issues related to Near East. Italy backed the position of Kemalists. In response to these events Russia had to sign a treaty on friendship with Turkey and withdrew from Turkish Armenia and Kars and Ardahan regions. To assist the Turks, France evacuated Cilicia, which was occupied during the war. In the meanwhile, the Allied Supreme War Council and the League of Nations adopted resolutions favorable to Armenians. Yet, the league did nothing to implement the Treaty of Sèvres or to help Armenia. Encouraged by such a turn of events, Kemalist Turkey attacked the Armenian Republic in September 1920.

The document points out that on December 2, 1920 the government of Armenia, whose troops were numerically fewer than the Turkish army, signed the Treaty of Alexandropol [Gümrü] and withdrew from the war against Turkey. The same day the Armenian Republic was recognized

by the Soviets. The last part of the memorandum is devoted to Soviet Armenia. It said that Soviet Armenia is a small state occupying an area of just 11,580 square kilometers. A greater part of Armenian land was still owned by Turks. It also pointed out that Armenians place great hopes on the UN to assist in solving their problems and returning home. The memorandum was also translated into Russian and sent to Yerevan.²⁰ As distinct from the memorandum of the Armenian National Council, the Kremlin did not influence the one of the Armenian National Committee.

A report prepared by the Armenian Foreign Ministry said that in the pre-war period reactionary parties of Dashnaks and Hnchaks, in a effort to struggle against Soviet power, demanded the withdrawal of the Armenian SSR from the Soviet Union; however, in the war years a part of these organizations changed their political propaganda and ceased their anti-Soviet rhetoric, taking a loyal stand toward the Soviet Union and Soviet Armenia. The report noted that these parties were unanimous in annexing Turkish lands and joining them to Soviet Armenia.²¹

Turkish political circles and the press watched closely the activities of the Armenians and their yes-men in San Francisco. *Cumhuriyet* reporter in San Francisco Dog'an Nadi reported later in November that the Armenian National Committee published a strange memorandum, which alleged that all Armenians residing in Turkey wished to move to Russia. In connection with this, Nadi interviewed Arslanyan, the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople. The Patriarch declined to answer the question, saying that he was a religious figure, not authorized to make statements on behalf of the Istanbul Armenian community. Meanwhile, the Soviet Consulate to Istanbul informed Moscow that the number of Armenians who applied to the Consulate was increasing. They implored the Consulate to let them into the Soviet Union. The Consulate reported that the Turkish governmental bodies dragged out the issuing of visas to the Armenian delegation headed by Arslanyan to leave for Yerevan and attend the All-Armenian religious congress and that the Turkish government and Dashnak groupings were doing their best to frustrate the visit. Despite all obstacles, necessary formalities were complied with. The Consulate added that conditions for Turkish Armenians were very hard and that they were ready to leave for the Soviet Union.²²

Two weeks after the denunciation of the Soviet-Turkish agreement of 1925, Turkish Ambassador to the Soviet Union Sarper returned to Ankara and had unofficial meetings with Soviet Ambassador Vinogradov. The purpose of these meetings was to outline a new Soviet-Turkish treaty and discuss further collaboration between the two countries. The contracting parties came to the conclusion that the new treaty could not be weaker than the previous one; they also agreed on the idea of concluding an allied treaty. During his meeting with the Soviet Ambassador Sarper stated that his country was ready to sign a treaty of alliance, therefore; Turkey suggested that the Soviets conclude a treaty on friendship and alliance. On 8 May, Vinogradov sent a telegram to the Soviet Foreign Ministry indicating that Sarper was instructed to offer a treaty on friendship.²³ On the eve of his departure to Ankara, Sarper assured Molotov that upon his return to Turkey he would do his utmost to improve Soviet-Turkish relations.²⁴ And indeed, during his stay in Ankara from early-April to late-May 1945, Sarper kept his

word and greatly contributed to the improvement of Soviet-Turkish relations up to the conclusion of the treaty of alliance.

On 11 March, a week before the denunciation of the Soviet-Turkish treaty, Soviet experts in foreign policy compiled a report entitled "On the Soviet-Turkish Treaty on Friendship and Neutrality," which warned that such a step would make it difficult for the Soviets to solve the Straits issue, and would create unacceptable conditions for the signing of a new Soviet-Turkish treaty; however, Soviet leaders chose a confrontational line.²⁵ Turkish political circles were aware of the alignment of forces. In discussing the Soviet goals during his meeting with American Ambassador to Ankara Laurence Steinhardt, Hasan Saka concluded that the whole point was related to the Straits, while the denunciation of the treaty of 1925 was just a peculiar manifestation of the issue.²⁶ Touching upon Saka's statement, Russian historian Natalia Yegorova came to the conclusion that he was not far from the truth.²⁷ An eloquent testimony is Kavtaradze's letter to Vyshinsky. In his letter Kavtaradze advises to explain to the Turkish government that if it takes a pro-Soviet position regarding the Straits, it may pin its hopes on a more advantageous Soviet-Turkish treaty.²⁸

Upon completion of a two-month consultation in Ankara, Sarper left on 24 May for Moscow and expressed his desire to meet with Molotov. A day before his talks with Molotov, the Turkish Ambassador met with Deputy Foreign Minister Kavtaradze; coordinator of the Soviet Union's political approach to the Near East, including Iran and Turkey. In an effort to make talks more effective, Sarper declared that he gave preference to specific talks with practical results instead of idle talks. During this meeting, Sarper stressed the necessity of preserving the spirit of the treaty of 1925 and indicated readiness of his government to raise a level of bilateral relations up to a treaty of alliance.²⁹ On 7 June, Molotov met with Sarper. The meeting lasted more than two hours in a strained atmosphere. Sarper stressed that a decision on denunciation of the treaty of 1925 had already been adopted; he left for Turkey and came back expecting a new treaty to be signed. He pointed out that he had conducted unofficial talks with Vinogradov in Ankara. Molotov said he knew about it and asked Sarper to clarify his stand on the issue. Sarper replied that the point was about an alliance between the USSR and Turkey against possible aggression from European and Mediterranean countries. Sarper believed this idea should form the basis of the new treaty. To his thinking, Turkey would face difficulties in amending the Montreux Convention, since other members of the Convention oppose this attempt. Under a draft new treaty, in case of war against a European country Turkey would be committed to stopping land or naval forces of the enemy. In considering that the Straits are a part of Turkish territory, this obligation is effective with respect to the Straits as well. As viewed by the Turkish Ambassador, the question of the Straits was to be approached with deep caution to avoid the protests of other countries. Molotov objected to this, saying that if Turkey and the Soviet Union would come to agreement, nobody would dare oppose them. Sarper noted that the signatories would oppose this; yet, nobody was entitled to prevent Turkey from signing a treaty with the Soviet Union. Still, the allied treaty should embrace, in addition to the Straits, other issues as well. Molotov declared,

The conclusion of the treaty between the two countries after so many amendments is a matter of great importance. In doing

so, the parties should settle disputes existing between them. A question arises: how to make concessions to the Soviet Union in the matter of the Straits in considering that the USSR was concerned about its security in the postwar period. There are some other problems as well. We have a treaty of 1921, which was concluded under absolutely different conditions. The Ambassador is well aware that under this treaty we were deprived of our legitimate share of territory.

Molotov asked plainly: “Is Turkey ready to consider these claims to thus improve relations with the Soviet Union?”³⁰

The Ambassador guessed, and Molotov reaffirmed that the point was about the correction of the eastern border of Turkey. Sarper noticed that the issue had not been discussed in Turkey, so the Ambassador did not expect that “the Soviet Union would put forward such terms. The Soviet Union does not need territories numbering several thousands of people. As far as he remembers, the treaty of 1921 was forced upon the Soviet Union.” After such a *démarche* from Sarper, Molotov had to retreat, saying that he did not consider it necessary to solve all the issues at once. If the point was about the treaty of alliance, Soviet-Turkish relations should be considered in a broader perspective and all mutual claims settled appropriately. Citing an example, Molotov referred to the Polish issue, saying that in 1921 Poland behaved unjustly with respect to Russia, while the current Polish government corrected this mistake. Molotov emphasized: “If a territorial aspect of the issue, which damaged the interests of the USSR under the Soviet-Turkish treaty, was settled properly, this could greatly contribute to the strengthening of friendly relations between the Soviet Union and Turkey.” Sarper disagreed, saying that in the capacity of ambassador he would not be able to substantiate such a claim to his government. Should the treaty of 1921 be discussed, there would be many things that infringe on the interests of Turkey. Sarper plainly declared that Turkey did not consider the treaty of 1921 to be unfair, and asked Molotov not to raise territorial issues: “We won’t be able to explain this to the public, so the belief in the justice of the Soviets would decline. The matter is not very significant for the Soviet Union, Armenia or Georgia.” Owing to the fact that the territorial issue was an obstacle in the success of the talks, Sarper proposed to start discussing more important questions, for it would be difficult to explain the Turkish public opinion that Turkey lent a helping hand to the Soviet Union, and the latter took it with additional square kilometers of the Turkish territory, Lenin and the Soviet government did not consider the treaty of 1921 to be unjust. Instead, they believed that the establishment of borders under this treaty was an attempt to correct the injustice. Then Molotov returned to the Polish case, saying: “As for the territorial issue between the Soviet Union and Turkey, one cannot deny that a part of the Soviet territory went to Turkey due to the Soviets’ weakness after the war of 1914–1918.” Sarper’s mentioning of Lenin’s name incensed Molotov. He declared that since the Ambassador had referred to Lenin, he should know that Lenin had signed the treaty and that the borders with Poland were unfair. The Ambassador knew about the Soviet leaders’ respect for Lenin. On the other hand, everybody knew the Soviet-Turkish border was detrimental to the Soviet Union. If the Ambassador considered it inexpedient to raise this issue, it would be premature to speak about a treaty of alliance, so it would be appropriate to consider other issues.³¹ Some historians conclude that all the talks between Molotov and Sarper in June focused on Soviet territorial claims, absolutely unacceptable for Ankara. However, these talks were also designed to frustrate the treaty of alliance, to focus discussion on the

issue of the Straits and thus revise the Montreux Convention. In doing so, the Soviets meant to settle the problem of the Straits regime.³²

On the other hand, it should be noted that during the 7 June talks Molotov termed as “unfair” the treaty of 1921, which the Soviet leaders had so highly appreciated at one time—even Molotov had arranged a special reception on March 23, 1936 at the Soviet Foreign Ministry on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the conclusion of the treaty and held a banquet. All the Soviet leaders, except for Stalin, and the Turkish Embassy officials attended the event. Making a salutary address were Molotov, as head of the Soviet government, and Zekai Apaydın, the Turkish Ambassador to the USSR.³³

After Sarper declined to accept the USSR’s territorial claims and Molotov refused to negotiate the treaty of alliance, the talks regarding the Straits went on. Molotov’s position was as follows: “The Soviet Union’s security in the Black Sea and, especially in the Straits, cannot be dependent on Turkey’s will and its capacities.” The Turkish Ambassador plainly declared that his country may start considering the issue of the Straits, provided the Soviet Union would not insist on deploying its bases in the Straits in peacetime. Molotov tried to explain the Soviets’ actions via the fact that the country incurred great losses during the war, so the Soviet government was entitled to a guarantee that the Straits would pose no threat in the future. Sarper replied that in the war years the Turks fulfilled their duty before the Soviet Union even in the absence of a treaty of alliance. If Turkey had wished to close the Straits it would have done so. Molotov replied that it was now the age of aviation. Sarper agreed, stating that it was necessary to prepare for war not two hours before but in good time, especially with due deference to public opinion. Then Sarper drew the outline of the Black and Marmara Seas on a sheet of paper, saying that if there would be a treaty of alliance and a European country declare war on the USSR, Turkey would become involved in the war as the Soviets’ ally, it is obvious that Turkey would do its best to win the war. But all of these are possible in two cases. First, the Soviet Union should not put forward territorial claims. Second, it should desist from the idea of creating bases in the Straits in peacetime.³⁴ Molotov disagreed with such an approach, saying that the Soviet Union should be aware of the future danger. He stressed that from now on all preparations for war should be carried out in peacetime. Then the Turkish Ambassador suggested another option for protection of the Straits: it would be fine if the USSR sold weapons to Turkey, and the latter would purchase them with great pleasure in order to protect the Straits. Molotov drew attention to the fact that Sarper frequently used a phrase “in peacetime.” Then he shifted to another item: creation of joint Soviet-Turkish military bases in the Straits in case of war. In turn, Sarper disagreed with this idea, saying he was not authorized to give such a promise and that he was not a war expert. If the treaty of alliance were to be signed, the General Staffs of the two countries could then discuss the issue or the governments of allied countries could adopt an appropriate decision. Molotov considered it necessary to ensure real security, since in twenty to thirty years Germany “would rise from the dead” and begin searching for new allies. Molotov was interested in Turkey’s willingness to protect the interests of the Soviet Union in the Black Sea, should it be able to do that. To sum up: the Straits should be protected jointly. Sarper replied he could not promise bases, either in war or

peacetime. Yet, he was confident that Turkey would be in position to protect the Straits independently. If a treaty of alliance were concluded, all other issues could be discussed as well.

In an attempt to avoid going into full details, Molotov stated that there was no need to draw up a text of the treaty. The point was about the definition of its principles, including Straits regime, revision of Montreux Convention, etc. To uphold the interests of his country, Sarper reminded him that the USSR and Turkey wanted to revise the convention, while other countries concerned did not. It would be a quite different thing if the USSR and Turkey would come out as allies at a conference to discuss changes in the convention. Finally, Molotov summed up the two-hour talk, saying: "An agreement on revision of the Montreux Convention should be accompanied by an agreement on the principles of the treaty between the Soviet Union and Turkey, as well as the principles for the settlement of the Straits issue."³⁵

The same night Molotov sent a two-page telegram to Vinogradov, which narrated his talks with Sarper. The next day, Saracog̃lu met with US Ambassador Edwin Wilson and told him about a telegram he received from Moscow. He stressed that the telegram had a depressing effect on him. Wilson immediately informed the US Secretary of State: "That day I met with Deputy Foreign Minister. He also informed me about the Moscow telegram. He noted that the situation called for serious analysis several days before the debates over the Soviet plans."³⁶ Historian Edward Mark concludes that "V. M. Molotov imparted on 7 June 1945: the cession of the provinces of Kars and Ardahan to the USSR, joint defense of the Turkish Strait, and a complete revision of the Montreux Convention that governed the passage of ships through the waterway."³⁷

On June 11, Turkish Ambassador Sarper sent a telegram to Prime Minister Saracog̃lu, which reported on his talks with Molotov.³⁸ It seems that the Prime Minister urgently discussed this issue with President İ̇nönü and that's why the same day İ̇nönü met with US Ambassador to Turkey. İ̇nönü stated that Turkey was ready to discuss any issue which did not compromise the country's independence and sovereignty, with the Russians. One day later, Saracog̃lu met once more with US Ambassador Edwin Wilson and said that he had received a telegram from the Turkish Ambassador to Moscow and that his impression about the telegram was not so positive.³⁹

The Turkish politicians discussed Sarper's telegram with British Ambassador to Ankara Maurice Peterson, who informed London about the Soviets' desire to create a base in the Straits, to revise the Turkish-Soviet treaty of 1921 and to amend the Montreux Convention. Peterson pointed out that Molotov emphasized the fact that the treaty of 1921 was signed under pressure, so it was subject to revision. The Turkish Ambassador had replied that the treaty was freely discussed, and it had never previously been questioned. He added that the problem of military bases in the Straits was out of the question and that not only Turkey and the USSR but all the countries concerned should take part in revising the Montreux Convention. Peterson pointed out that the Turkish government was satisfied with the talent of the Turkish Ambassador to control the situation; yet, Molotov's actions caused nervousness in the Turkish governmental circles.⁴⁰

Despite Soviet pressures, Turkey tried to improve relations with British and American politicians. In reply, Molotov threatened to put forward the fourth demand. The Turks supposed that this demand meant to break off British-Turkish allied relations, otherwise the Turkish authorities should adopt “a new course” of behavior. Despite these rumors, Peterson sent a message to London, which aroused new suspicions. The Ambassador wrote that the other day he had invited Deputy Foreign Minister of Turkey and former Turkish Ambassador to London, Rüştü Aras, to a dinner party. After the dinner the Deputy Foreign Minister asked Peterson not to invite him to meetings where Aras was present, saying that Aras “was a well-known Soviet agent.”⁴¹

In all probability, both the USSR and Turkey took note of some pro-Soviet statements of Aras during the war. For instance, in December 1943, Aras told the *New York Times* that “the USSR was right in considering itself a country that made enormous sacrifices in the war and that this country had been alone at war against the enemy over the past two years. No one had a right to criticize Soviet methods aimed at the prevention of a new massacre and establishment of friendly governments in neighboring countries.”⁴² Besides, in June 1944 an article by Aras was published in *Vatan*, which highly praised the friendship between the USSR and Turkey. Aras wrote, “today’s Russia is a new America in the old world.”⁴³ It should be noted that Aras, one of the oldest experienced Turkish politicians, intensified his activities in spring 1945. On 30 March, he published an article in the left-wing newspaper *Tan* entitled “Principles of a Draft Drawn Up at Dumbarton-Ox.” As a whole, the article focused on the establishment of the UN; in some places Aras touched upon the Soviet Union. He recalled that while at the League of Nations the Turkish representatives put forward a proposal, under which no decision could be adopted against the Soviet Union.

Our step was correct and opportune. It is essential to prevent Turkey’s involvement in any action directed against our friend the Soviet Union, and Great Britain, our ally, as well as the United States. It was Soviet Russia that first advanced the idea of collective security. And it was Mr. Litvinov, representative of Soviet Russia to the League of Nations, who first defined the term “aggressor.”⁴⁴

One more article by Aras was published in *Tan*, dealing with the French-Syrian conflict of spring 1945. In describing his trip to Syria and Lebanon and his meetings with statesmen of these countries, Aras noticed that in view of the geographical and political position of Turkey, it would be appropriate to invite representatives of this country to attend the future conference on the Syrian question.⁴⁵ The Soviet Embassy immediately informed Moscow about these publications.

On June 17, 1945, elections for six seats at the Grand National Assembly were held. A week before the elections, Prime Minister Saracog˘lu as vice-president of the People’s Republican Party declared that the ruling party would not nominate candidates. This step was accounted for by the desire to demonstrate that the elections would be held honestly and freely. Aras was among those willing to run for election. During his pre-election campaign Aras addressed his voters, promising to be loyal to the political line of Atatürk, to social, political and economic principles of the People’s Republican Party, as well as to assist in implementing the Constitution. The Soviet Embassy in Ankara reported to Moscow: in making his statement Aras

conceded that both the government and his party departed from Atatürk's policy and main principles of the Party, violating the Constitution.⁴⁶ As the election campaign got underway, pro-government newspapers *Tasvir*, *Vakit* and *Yeni Sabah* launched criticisms against Aras. On 15 June, in its editorial, *Yeni Sabah* wrote, "Aras had been the Foreign Minister for fifteen years. As one of the founders of the one-party system, he did nothing to solve people's problems; and he did his utmost to preserve his post. For years, he stayed in the capitals of European countries, lived luxuriously, and squandered people's money." Beyond any doubt, this anti-Aras campaign went back to rumors that he was a Soviet agent.

Following the war in Europe, the Soviet Union made efforts to create friendly governments in Eastern Europe, the Balkans and neighboring countries. In April 1945, owing to the governmental crisis in Iran Kavtaradze wrote to Stalin that after the resignation of the Bayat's Cabinet on 17 April, Bader, Pakrevan, Ali Mansur, Samin, Marziban, Qavam, Soheyli and Mostasharidovle intended to take the post of Prime Minister. The candidacies of Qavam and Mostasharidovle were more convenient, since they agreed to supply the USSR with oil. However, the British categorically opposed Qavam, and he therefore had no chance. Kavtaradze suggested backing Mostasharidovle and forcing Qavam and Soheyli to support him. At the same time, it was necessary to back Qavam and Soheyli's joining Mostasharidovle's cabinet.⁴⁷ Another example, during the governmental crisis in Iran, Molotov wrote to the Ambassador to Teheran that Qavam should take the post of Prime Minister and that the Ambassador should personally agree with Qavam on how to back him. If Qavam's chances proved to be low, it was required that he come to an agreement with Hakimi and support his Cabinet, provided the Cabinet should include people capable of improving Soviet-Iranian relations.⁴⁸ After the war interference in the internal affairs of contiguous states became ordinary. The Soviet Union had similar plans with respect to Turkey. As distinct from Iran, Eastern Europe and the Balkans, there were no Soviet troops in Turkey and it was difficult to create a friendly government there. On the other hand, of no small importance was the unanimity of the Turkish political circles and government. Rumors that Aras was a "Soviet agent" were unfounded. After the Soviet secret archives had been declassified, no documents about Aras's collaboration with Soviet special services were discovered. To all appearances, these rumors came as a result of postwar internal tensions in society or intrigues in the corridors of power.

The second meeting between Molotov and Sarper took place on June 18, 1945. This time, the Turkish Ambassador took the lead and asked Molotov if he agreed to postpone debates over territorial claims under the treaty of 1921 and the question of military bases in the Straits. Molotov replied, "In that case the question of a treaty of alliance becomes senseless. If the Turkish government wants to settle all the claims, the Soviet government is ready to conclude a treaty of alliance." Sarper asked if Molotov included question of territories and a military base in his list of claims. Molotov replied in the affirmative. Then the Ambassador asked Molotov to desist from the last two claims, from there would be no chance for success. Ambassador told Molotov that he had appropriate instructions from his government, saying that Turkey wants to conclude a treaty with the USSR; however, in the view of the Turkish government,

these two claims could not be a subject of debate or a starting point for the talks. Molotov heard out the Ambassador but insisted that no treaty of alliance was possible unless these two items were observed.⁴⁹

Stalemated, the Ambassador asked what Molotov could suggest instead of a treaty of alliance? Molotov explained that if the Turkish government considered it impossible to discuss the question of territorial claims, then the Soviet government could not start discussing a treaty of alliance. The point was about the signing of a treaty on the Straits to ensure Soviet security in the region. And he added that a question of territorial claims, should it be settled, “offers good prospects for Turkey and the Soviet Union for many years.” Molotov reminded that last time he referred to Poland, which had differences with the Soviet Union. Now these differences had been removed. Molotov was hopeful that the Ambassador would explain his idea to the Turkish government and that Turkey would respond to it in any form. He stressed that injustices with respect to the USSR were removed. Sarper replied that he had familiarized himself with the treaty of 1921, which reflected a free will of the peoples and governments of the two countries and that Sarper saw no injustice in the treaty. As for the resolution of the Polish issue as “positive example,” Sarper underscored that Poland fought against the USSR and the treaty with Poland was concluded after the war. The situation with Turkey was different. The Ambassador said he hoped to improve relations, however, he was now disappointed. In his opinion, Turkey and Russia did not fight against each other in 1919, 1920, and 1921. Turkey faced the same danger that Soviet Russia did. Molotov pointed out that Russia was weak in the period in question, but Sarper parried that Turkey was weak as well. He added that Turkey fought against world imperialism with the help of the Soviet Union. Turkey was weak and the Soviets helped it stand up to its enemies, and therefore Turkey and the Soviets were allies at that period.⁵⁰

Molotov returned to the subject of territorial claims. Ignoring historical facts, he accused the Turkish army of having invaded Soviet territory and “perpetrating crimes.” Despite this, the Soviet Union helped Turkey gain its independence. One cannot deny that “Turkey profited by the then position of the Soviet Union and seized parts of Armenia and Georgia. The latter will never forget about it, even if we do. If the Turkish government wants to settle relations, the Soviet government insisted, the territorial claims should be properly met and injustices with respect to the Soviet Union be removed.” In turn, Sarper repeated that he had not sufficient powers to discuss the territorial claims. He stressed that it made no sense to creep in historical injustices. Sarper said he was very sad that the talks with Molotov had taken a turn for the worse. When he talked to Vinogradov in Ankara, he “thought Turkey and the Soviet Union would reach complete meeting of minds for many years.”⁵¹

Molotov answered that he was not going to go deep into the history and that he meant the treaty of 1921, which was still effective, despite the fact that it was unfair. How could Russians reconcile themselves with such a treaty? Sarper replied that the Turks could have declared: Russians think in this manner, we in another. However, in an effort to improve Soviet-Turkish relations he, Sarper, was seeking a way out of the impasse. However, the treaty of 1921 was subject to no revision, for it met the interests of the two parties. As is seen,

Turkey and the Soviet Union had different interpretations of justice.

It would be appropriate to recall that until 1953 the Soviet Union had repeatedly applied the Treaty on Friendship and Brotherhood of 16 March 1921, and except for two Moscow-inspired reports of Armenia and Georgia, no secret reference materials of the Soviet leadership had said anything of unfair nature of the Treaty of 1921. For example, a sixteen-page document was drawn up in January 1953 on political conditions that accompanied the signing of the said Treaty. The document detailed the situation on the eve of the signing, saying that the British, jointly with the Greeks, sought to take advantage of the Dashnaks to deliver a blow concurrently from the West and the East to prevent the forming of the Soviet-Turkish border. In doing so, they relied on Dashnak Armenia as a counter-revolutionary factor. Soviet Foreign Ministry official I. Lakomsky wrote in this document that further to the inquiry of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey of June 2, 1920, Soviet Russia expressed its consent to act as a mediator to define fair borders between Turkey and Armenia on the basis of the right of nations to self-determination.⁵² Beyond any doubt, the treaty of 1921 and other numerous facts of cooperation with Russia were well known to the Turkish party. Sarper again requested that Molotov expunge the two above-mentioned items. Molotov insisted that no treaty of alliance was acceptable without discussing all the claims. In this case, one could agree on the Straits question. That's why he decided to focus on this issue and asked how the Soviet interests would be met. In turn, Sarper asked: "Is Molotov going to conclude a separate treaty on the Straits?" Molotov replied that there was a chance to agree on making changes in the current Convention. The Ambassador said that eight countries had signed the Convention, so it would be difficult to settle the problem by the two officials. Molotov reminded Sarper that Japan was among these eight countries. Sarper parried, saying that Turkey was at war with Japan and that Japan would soon cease to exist. As for the interests of the USSR, it would be appropriate to observe these interests under a treaty of alliance rather than within the Montreux Convention. He explained that nothing could be changed in the convention, while the treaty would stipulate that no aggressor might cross through the Turkish territory. Thus, the issue of the Straits might be considered.⁵³

In an attempt to ensure strategic interests of the Soviets and create military bases in the Straits, Molotov tried during the 18 June talks to manipulate Sarper's statements. "In considering the Ambassador's words that the Turkish government disagreed to consider a question of granting bases to the Soviet Union in the Straits in peacetime—Ambassador did not mention "in wartime"—Molotov concluded that the Soviet bases in the Straits in wartime were not excluded. In reply, the Ambassador made it clear that no bases in the Straits were admissible. As for "wartime" and in case of the treaty of alliance with the Soviet Union and a related question of the Straits defense, the General Staffs of the two countries may discuss it and adopt an appropriate decision. Prior to the Montreux Convention consideration, both parties could discuss a question of the treaty of alliance. "However, it remains unclear how the People's Commissar conceives a separate treaty on the Straits." Molotov explained that this problem is of international nature and has aspects that may be regulated by the USSR and Turkey only. Technically, the question might be solved by the military, while diplomats should

outline the framework of the matter. Sarper pointed out that he opposed territorial claims and military bases in peacetime. "I am not authorized to speak about it," Sarper stressed. Should the treaty of alliance be signed, "Black Sea security may be considered, provided that the Soviet Union and Turkey are co-belligerents." For this reason, Sarper believed that "one cannot interpret his words on military bases too broadly, as Molotov did." The latter summarized Sarper's words, saying that "the Ambassador came to see him empty-handed. . . . Turks want to sign the treaty, but they have no grounds for such a treaty."⁵⁴ Sarper explained that if any state threatened the USSR from the Black Sea, Turkey would lock up the Straits for that state. If the aggressor wanted to cross the Straits forcibly, Turkey would start fighting against this state. Isn't that a basis for the talks? Turkey is ready to back the USSR and ensure the security of the Black Sea. However, Molotov noticed that "Turkey's real opportunities are restricted and cannot guarantee Soviet Union's security, as well as the security of Turkey proper in the Black Sea." Sarper replied: "The country is ready to do its best to protect its ally." Molotov explained this by the fact that Turkey did not take part in the last war and cannot therefore imagine its consequences and all challenges. A basis for a treaty of alliance should be more substantial than Turkey sees it.⁵⁵ The 18 June talks lasted an hour and half and the last minutes proved to be rather strained. To cite some fragments of the talks:

Ambassador: Is Mr. Molotov ready to negotiate as an ally?

Molotov: On condition that the treaty will be based on the settlement of all the claims, including territorial ones and the Straits issue.

Ambassador: The territorial issue is of particular importance for Turkey.

Molotov: The same is true for the Soviet Union.

Ambassador: Turkey is a small country. It has lost much in the East, West and South, so it has nothing to grant anymore.

Molotov: The Soviet Union is a big state; however, Armenia and Georgia are small republics and they want the return of the regions they owned, for example, Kars and Ardahan.

Ambassador: The Soviet party demands the return of what had been granted to Turkey to remove injustices committed by tsarism.

Molotov: The Soviet party cannot reconcile itself with injustices.

Further, the Ambassador expressed his regret that the parties failed to reach a meeting of minds and that they should think about the issues raised. Molotov replied that he expounded his government's point of view.⁵⁶

The analysis of documents reflecting the talks between Molotov and Sarper on 7 and 18 June makes it possible to specify some aspects of postwar Soviet policy and the start of the Cold War epoch. Along with secret decisions adopted in June and July 1945 with respect to Iranian Azerbaijan, the talks between Molotov and Sarper, both formally and essentially, are reminiscent of the Cold War. Allied relations with respect to Iran and Turkey went from bad to worse, and that resulted in the Cold War. Well-known Russian researcher Vladimir Pechatnov fairly pointed out that it was strong pressures upon Iran and Turkey, initiated by Stalin, that made the allies take joint steps.⁵⁷

A number of Russian historians, including Natalia Yegorova, believe that the territorial claims of the USSR to areas of Turkey were not accounted for by real needs but rather due to

the desire to blackmail and pressure opponents. However, Soviet leaders considered the issue of military bases as an integral part of the Straits resolution. While the development of aviation belittled the importance of the Straits, the Soviet Union insisted on their significance to ensure its own security. It was evident that this route was significant to the biggest Black Sea power as a means of consolidating its positions in the Near East, Mediterranean and the Balkans.⁵⁸ Yegorova holds that the putting forward of unrealistic Soviet territorial claims was aimed at establishing joint Soviet-Turkish control over the Straits and creating a military base in the region. Vladislav Zubok concludes that “control over the straits was of geopolitical priority, from it would have turned the Soviet Union into a Mediterranean power. Territorial demands became an important second goal that, in Stalin’s opinion, helped achieve the first.”⁵⁹ According to Gaddis, “he [Stalin] demanded territorial concessions from Turkey as well as bases that would have given the USSR effective control over the Turkish Straits.”⁶⁰ Research into further developments and analysis of archival materials of the Trans-Caucasian Republics confirm once again that the USSR had territorial claims to Turkey and wished to consolidate its positions in the Straits. Beyond any doubt, Soviet leaders meant to realize both claims if possible, especially the Straits.

In June 1945, important decisions on Iranian Azerbaijan were considered, including reunification with Soviet Azerbaijan. The concurrence of these plans with the territorial claims to Turkey is indicative that this factor was decisive in Soviet strategic interests in the Near East. Contributing to the implementation of these plans was the geographical location of these disputed territories on the borders of the Trans-Caucasian Republics.

On the other hand, recent Soviet archives have made it possible to become familiarized with “secret” and “top secret” documents, none of which stress that the territorial claims to Turkey were put forward as a means of applying pressure to the Straits issue. As a rule, these documents clearly indicated which were realistic demands and which were considered to be a means of applying pressure.

Besides, right after the talks between Molotov and Sarper the US Army Command Forces drew up a document entitled “The US stand on expansionist aspirations of the Soviets,” which said that at the greatest risk was to Turkey and that the USSR’s access to the Straits would, sooner or later, result in the Soviet control over the Aegean Sea and Eastern Mediterranean, the so-called “double blockade of Asia Minor.”⁶¹

Immediately after the Molotov-Sarper talks, Soviet military intelligence sent operative information to the Central Committee about strengthening military propaganda in the Turkish army and preparations for an attack against the USSR and Bulgaria. The information referred to deserter I’smail Mehmet Ras, it, who said that rumors were afloat among soldiers and officers about a possible war with Russia. Officers allegedly reaffirmed that Russia would capture the Straits, while Turkey would try to hold the Bosphorus and Dardanelles. At the same time, it was generally accepted that Turkey would be in no position to independently hold the Straits, so assistance from other countries would be required. “Turkish political circles consider Bulgaria to be a principal enemy of theirs, and sooner or later, a confrontation between them would become inevitable. Turkish soldiers are mostly afraid of the future war and do not wish for it.”

On June 13, 1945, another Turkish soldier, Suleyman Dursun declared during an interrogation:

Rumors are afloat among soldiers and the civilian population of Turkey about an inevitable military confrontation with the USSR. Some officers indicate that the war will be sacred for the Turks, for the return of territories captured by Bulgaria in Thrace, for the return of Batumi seized by the USSR. Analysts allege that Britain will back Turkey in the future war. Pending the Soviets' assault on Turkey, the country is engaged in reinforcing its fortifications.

It should be noted that these fortifications were scattered from the Black to the Marmara Seas. One of Turkey's most active generals, İsmail Hakkı Tekçe was responsible for reinforcement operations. Some sources confirm that British weapons—for example, one hundred Martin Baltimore and one hundred Spitfire fighter planes—were being delivered to Turkey.⁶²

Analysis of the Moscow talks is illustrative of the reasons for the formation of a pro-Western, primarily pro-American and pro-British, political line in Turkish foreign policy. The Ankara-initiated treaty of alliance could have placed Turkey in the sphere of cooperation with the USSR and forced a distancing of relations with the West. Turkey's aspiration to purchase Soviet weapons for the protection of the Straits and the Black Sea on the whole could have resulted in the development of an alliance. However, intensification of Soviet pressure and the putting forward of unrealistic demands coincided with the launching of an anti-Turkish campaign in the Soviet mass media.⁶³ Turkey would henceforth be compelled to become an appendage of the United States in the postwar period.

The Turkish mass media first received information about the Moscow talks from Istanbul reporter for *The Times of London* Mavrudi. His telegram stated that the Soviet Union put forward proposals to revise the Straits regime and requested the cession of the territories of Kars and Ardahan. Turkish society had a presentiment of a third world war. Some journalists, including Yalçın, pointed out that this third world war might be provoked by the Turkish issue, from Anglo-Americans would not let Slavs swallow Turkey. Meanwhile, the Soviet Embassy in Ankara considered that Yalçın's article "Turkey turns into the backbone of the Middle East and the last bulwark of international peace," published on 22 June, gave impetus to the anti-Soviet campaign in Turkey. First Secretary General of the Embassy Vasili Grubyakov told Kavtaradze that the government had secretly stirred up the anti-Soviet campaign in the Turkish press. In doing so, he tried to explain the invitation of well-known journalist Yalçın and Sadak to visit Ankara and be properly briefed.⁶⁴

Thus, in late June the Turkish press launched an anti-Soviet campaign, newspapers published sensational materials about Soviet foreign policy significantly entitled "Soviet Russia demands to annex Korea and establish its influence in Inner and Outer Mongolia," "Russians annex Northern Iran," "Soviets establish National Salvation Committee in Iranian Azerbaijan," "Communist demonstrations are held in Syria, contacts between the Soviets and Near Eastern countries are intensifying," "As compensation for Kars and Ardahan, Russia offers Aleppo," "Russia demands to change borders of Eastern Thrace," "Russia wants Mosul oil," "Russians demand to transfer a part of our and Greek territory to Bulgaria," "Soviet Russia concentrates its troops on the Turkish-Bulgarian border," etc. In connection with this, Yalçın wrote: "For thirty-seven years I served the cause of Turkish-Russian friendship, but I damn the Russian friendship at the expense of Turkish honor, rights and independence." Some journalists drew

parallels between the policies of the Soviet Union and Tsarist Russia and accused the Soviets of imperialism. They placed their trust in the Turkish army. A treaty with Czechoslovakia on the transfer of Carpathian Ukraine to the Soviet Union was termed by the Turkish press as a “new form of occupation.” *Tanin* newspaper on 30 June wrote: “Neither word nor signature, nor promise means anything for red fascists. If not opposed, they will seize Iran, India, China, the sun and moon.” Some articles pointed out that Great Britain should persecute communists in Greece; threaten sanctions against marshal Tito regarding Trieste, and cease deliveries of US aid to the USSR.

The Soviet Embassy found that most responses from abroad regarding the Soviet claims, published in the Turkish press, came from British sources. The Embassy paid attention to the fact that among these responses there were none from America. The Turkish newspapers wrote that in the beginning of the war the USSR did its best to help Hitler conquer Great Britain and France. Well-known journalist Asim Us put forward a proposal regarding the settlement of Soviet-Turkish relations. He wrote that Turkey should always take into consideration either Great Britain or the USSR, so “either Turkey, Great Britain or Russia conclude a Triple Alliance to consolidate security in the Mediterranean and Black Sea, or Turkey and Russia, conclude a treaty of alliance with a proviso regarding Great Britain, as was the case with Russia in the British-Turkish treaty.” As for the Straits, Asim Us agreed with the revision of the Straits regime, saying that the main contention lay in the relations between Great Britain and the USSR, while the role of Turkey was to smooth different points of view. Besides, Asim Us believed that the United States should also take part in settling the Straits regime. In short, the Soviet Embassy combed through materials in the Turkish press regarding Soviet claims, and made detailed reports for Moscow.⁶⁵

As soon as the Moscow talks announced the Soviet claims to Turkey, the Soviet leadership instructed ideological and scientific circles to prepare publications unmasking the expansionist plans of pan-Turkists. Following these instructions, Miller, Alkaev, and one of the leaders of the Turkish Communist Party, Marat Bostañcı, wrote on July 18, 1945 an extensive article entitled “On Pan-Turkism in Turkey” and sent it to the deputy head of department under the CC CPSU Boris Ponomarev. Authors of the article believed that the election of İ'nönü as President of the country after Atatürk's death became a turning point in the activities of pan-Turkists. They stressed that pan-Turkists, persecuted during Atatürk's rule, openly surfaced on the political scene under İ'nönü.

Among politically active organizations of pan-Turkists, the article singled out groups headed by Og'uz Türkan, Nihal Atsız, and Zeki Velidi Togan. Authors also tried to identify leading figures of the People's Republican Party, MPs, senior officials from the state apparatus, diplomats, and top military as pan-Turkists. A trial of twenty-three pan-Turkists, including Zeki Velidi Togan, Nihal Atsız and Og'uz Türkan, was held in Istanbul over seven months from September 1944 to March 1945. However, the authors of the article remained discontented with the course of the proceedings. They thought that the Turkish government wanted to demonstrate the small number of the participants of the movement through artificially limiting the number on trial to twenty-three.⁶⁶

When the content of the Moscow talks became evident, political circles of Great Britain and the USA responded negatively, considering this as the start of the Soviet expansionism. However, there were old friends of the Soviets, particularly of Stalin, who tried to justify the actions of Soviet leaders. One of them was the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Hewlett Johnson, who welcomed the demands of Armenians. In June 1945, Johnson visited Soviet Armenia and took part in the election of the Armenian Catholicos. The Archbishop also raised the question of “the return of Armenian territories.” During a 24 June press conference in Yerevan Johnson declared: “I fully agree that all the regions annexed by Turkey should immediately be given back to Armenia. Turkey intentionally slowed down the normal economic development of the annexed regions with their disproportionately small population, whereas their aboriginal residents are scattered across the globe.”⁶⁷ Johnson also characterized demands of the American Armenians as topical. The Soviet leadership gladly benefited from Johnson’s position, which “legitimized” its own demands. During a meeting between Molotov and Anthony Eden on the eve of the Potsdam conference, the Soviet Premier stressed that even British Archbishop, Dr. Johnson backed the Armenians. Eden replied that “Johnson is a Soviet man and his allegations concur with arguments of the Soviet government. In Great Britain, he is referred to as the ‘Red Dean.’”⁶⁸

Meanwhile, Turkish public opinion was indignant at the statements of Dr. Johnson. Ankara and Istanbul newspapers called him a “red priest,” “adventurer” and “charlatan.” Newspaper *Tasvir* hinted that the American Armenians were acting with the support of “a certain power.” Turks linked the intensified activities of Armenians to the Soviet demands. Turks were irritated by the fact that Stalin had received Johnson. Some newspapers wrote that Russia used religion in order to achieve its goals.⁶⁹ In assessing the Turkish press materials, the Soviet Embassy reported that Turkish newspapers used the situation to stir up anti-Soviet sentiments among British and American public opinion and thus distract these countries’ public opinion from domestic issues.⁷⁰

On June 22, 1945, on the instructions of the Turkish government, Sarper officially rejected all the Soviet proposals. Turkey then quickly moved to protect its interests, first with the help of Great Britain, then the United States.⁷¹ The Turkish party immediately informed its ally—Great Britain about the Moscow talks, which, in turn, was greatly surprised with Molotov’s proposals. British Ambassador to Moscow Archibald Kerr handed in a note on 7 July due to Molotov’s proposals, which said: “My government was very astonished that the Soviet government advanced territorial claims, as well as discussed the question of military bases in the Straits.” The note denied the right of the Soviet and Turkish governments to discuss these issues, “for they have no relation to the governments of these states. So, the first issue should be considered in the light of the world organization, and the second issue touches upon the multi-lateral Montreux Convention.” Ambassador Kerr said that the Soviet government had agreed at Yalta to consult with the British and US governments before the former’s addressing the Turkish government regarding the Montreux Convention, and Stalin agreed to avoid actions affecting independence and integrity of Turkey.”⁷² As is known, during the Yalta Conference Stalin suggested that the foreign ministers of the three countries consider the issues of the

Montreux Convention and the Straits regime, and Churchill and Roosevelt agreed with him. Then Churchill noted that the British government was committed to informing Turkey about matters that affected its interests.

Having learnt about the Soviet demands, the Turkish government tried to persuade Great Britain that it was crucial for this country to back Turkey and thus preserve its position in the Near East. British diplomat Edward Crigg told Eden from Cairo that in the course of talks a spokesman for the Turkish government warned him that Turkey's falling under the Soviets' influence was fraught with the "spreading of Russian influence over the Red Sea and the Gulf." Brigg assured that "a) we attach great importance to Turkish independence and the British-Turkish alliance and b) we shall not allow the Straits issue to be interpreted as bilateral, affecting only Russia and Turkey."⁷³

It should be recalled that the activities of the Soviets in Iran had already put Great Britain on alert. After the end of the war in Europe the USSR took active steps to consolidate its position in Iranian Azerbaijan. On May 19, 1945, Iranian Foreign Minister Anushiravan Sepahbodi appealed to Ambassadors of the Allies in Teheran, including Soviet Ambassador Mikhail Maximov with a request to clear out the Iranian territory from foreign troops. In particular, Sepahbodi asked Ambassadors to inform their governments about this plan and provide an answer.⁷⁴ In connection with this, British Ambassador Kerr wrote to Molotov on 19 May stating, "In spite of the fact that the Iranian party misinterprets the British-Soviet-Iranian Treaty of 1942 and ignores that the war with Japan is still underway, it seems to us that Allied troops may be withdrawn from Iran on a step-by-step basis."⁷⁵ In his reply to the British note Molotov agreed to start a step-by-step withdrawal prior to the treaty date on the condition that military structures would discuss this issue.⁷⁶

Molotov said one thing, yet his deputy Kavtaradze in his secret recommendations to the Soviet leadership said another. He warned that the withdrawal of the Soviet troops would instigate reactionary forces of the country, defeat democratic organizations and weaken Soviet positions in Iran. Besides, the withdrawal of the troops would prevent drilling operations in Northern Iran and expansion of the independence movement. The Soviets were therefore interested in keeping their troops back in Iran as long as possible. Kavtaradze alleged that a negative response to the issue and the maintenance of a Soviet military presence up to the end of the war with Japan would strongly affect British prestige in Iran and drive the ruling circles of Iran to consider the Soviet point of view. Kavtaradze believed that Iranian hopes in the British were vanishing. Thus, former Minister Hajir told Maximov that if the issue would not be settled positively, the Iranian ruling circles would appeal to the Russians, not British, for support.⁷⁷

It was the strengthening of Soviet pressures on Turkey that forced the United States to take retaliatory measures. In the first instance, the British government, anxious over Soviet steps in the Balkan countries, applied on 18 June to the US government with a request to pay attention to the Soviet political line, inconsistent as it was with the decisions of the Yalta Conference. Hence, it was essential to draw up a joint US-British stance.

The Turkish government rested its hopes on the US position to this matter. In turn, US

Ambassador to Ankara Edwin Wilson informed the Department of State that the Soviet claims to Turkey were absolutely adverse to the principles of postwar international relations and that Washington should analyze the problem. On 7 July, Assistant Secretary of State John Grew received Turkish Ambassador to the USA Hüseyin Baydur and explained to him that the conversation between Molotov and Sarper was friendly in nature and that it did not aim to put pressure on Turkey. Joseph Grew thought that the “big three” would discuss Turkey’s position at the Potsdam conference, so President Truman had already asked the Secretary of State to provide information in this regard.⁷⁸

On the US President’s instructions, various American institutions began analyzing the Straits issue and Soviet pressures against Turkey, and drew up several memorandums that mirrored the US standpoint. Drawn up in late June and early July 1945, these documents stressed that the Soviets’ failure to use the Straits during the war was accounted for by the fact that the Axis powers were dominant in neighboring lands, not because of the defects in the Montreux Convention. They said that changes in the convention should be minimal, while any changes, unconfirmed by the “free will” of Turkey could lead to the violation of its sovereignty and possibly negatively affect the country’s strategic and political standing. The memorandum stressed the necessity of researching the issues of passage and transit through the Straits, maintaining warships in the Black Sea, and related Soviet proposals. At the same time, it was the mission of the United Nations to adopt specific decisions on the Straits during the War. The UN could disagree with Turkey’s decision, in which case Turkey should subordinate to the decision of the UN. A memorandum of the US Chiefs of Staff of the Armed Forces, submitted on 17 July, said that Russia had pressured Turkey in the matter of Dardanelles, pushed for the establishment of a military base in northern Turkey and was attempting to gain access to the Persian Gulf. Therefore the memorandum offered to postpone the issue of Dardanelles with a view of long-term and total security.⁷⁹

A day before the opening of the Potsdam conference, a meeting was held between Molotov and Eden to discuss preparations for the conference. During discussions Eden declared that both Great Britain and the United States were ready for the conference to be held under the schedule adopted at the Yalta Conference.

During the talks the parties touched upon the Polish question, indicated their dissatisfaction with Tito’s actions and stressed the successful results of the San Francisco conference. At the end of the talks Eden declared that Turkish representatives had visited him in London. Molotov replied that he knew about it, and he expressed his hopes that Turkey impartially informed Eden about the contents of the Moscow talks. He added that in 1921, the Turks profited from the USSR’s weakness and annexed a part of Soviet Armenia. Soviet Armenians felt hurt. For these reason, the Soviet government raised the question of the return of legal Soviet territories. As for the Straits issue, the Soviet government noted that the Montreux Convention did not suit its interests. Eden replied that until recently the British had never heard of any Soviet claims to Turkey. The British government was aware of the Soviet claims to the Straits regime. Molotov replied that the territorial issue arose after Turks suggested concluding a treaty of alliance and wanted the Soviet government to acquaint them with the terms of the treaty. It was natural that

the Soviet government responded to the request. Eden reminded Molotov that the Turks had not agreed to meet the Soviet territorial claims. Molotov responded saying that “the territories were not owned by Turks. They behaved unjustly by taking them away from the Soviet Union.” The Poles had done the same in 1921. However, the Poles revised their position and agreed to correct their “mistake.” Molotov stressed that he addressed the Turks with a similar request. Eden replied that there was the so-called Curzon line in Turkey. Molotov objected that “the British government repeatedly backed the Armenian population subordinated to Turks.” When Eden asked whether there many Armenians on the Turkish territory, Molotov answered,

Some 400,000 to 500,000. The total number of Armenians in Soviet Armenia was one million, and over one million living abroad. After the Armenian territory is enlarged, scores of Armenians from abroad will be eager to come home. Account has also to be taken of the fact that prominent Armenians live and work in the Soviet Union, for example, Minister of Foreign Trade Anastas Mikoyan. In general, Armenians are talented and energetic people. Let Turks give Armenians back to the Soviet Union, we are not afraid of them.⁸⁰

The Potsdam conference started on July 17, 1945. Three days later, Molotov replied to the British note of 7 July regarding the Turkish issue. After the talks with Eden, the Soviet diplomat concluded that the territorial claims to Turkey and infringement of this country’s sovereignty would not be welcomed at the conference. In his counter note Molotov tried to explain that the Soviet government did not violate agreements with the Allies and that it was the Turkish government that initiated negotiations over a treaty of alliance “to provide for the settlement of the Straits issue.” The Turkish government was told that “the conclusion of such a treaty was possible provided other issues would be resolved as well, including the lands annexed from the Soviet Union and ceded to Turkey in 1921.” The Soviet government had all the grounds to believe that Turkey would immediately inform the British government. The Molotov’s note said that the Soviet government planned to discuss the issue in Berlin.⁸¹

The Turkish issue and the Straits problem were unofficially dealt with at Potsdam on 18 July. On 22 July, the Turkish issue was raised at the sixth session chaired by President Truman. Winston Churchill took the floor, saying that the issue was very important because of the necessity to make changes in the Montreux Convention. During the talks with the Soviet government the British government declared that it stood for the revision of the Convention. This revision should be carried out by means of an agreement between convention participants, except for Japan. “I have repeatedly expressed my perfect willingness to draw up an agreement, under which the Soviet fleet, both naval and merchant, could freely navigate from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean and back. Therefore we start discussing this issue on the basis of friendly arrangement.” Then Churchill began convincing Stalin to avoid intimidating Turkey:

Beyond any doubt, Turkey is worried about continuing attacks in the Soviet press and radio, as well as about the talks between the Turkish Embassy to the USSR and Mr. Molotov. The talks mentioned changes to the eastern border of Turkey, as well as a Soviet base in the Straits. I realize that this is not a claim of the Soviet government to Turkey; however, owing to the fact that Turkey raised the question of an alliance with the USSR, the latter put forward the conditions for such an alliance. It is quite obvious that if Turkey wants the Soviet government to conclude an offensive and defensive alliance, the Soviet government has every right to declare ways of improving relations between Turkey and Russia. However, Turkey is anxious about these conditions. I do not know what has happened after these talks. So I’d like to know the position of the Soviet government on the issue.⁸²

To answer Churchill's question, Stalin asked Molotov to clarify the history of the issue:

The Turkish government showed initiative and suggested that the Soviet government conclude a treaty of alliance. The Turkish government put this question first before our Ambassador to Ankara, and then, later May through the Turkish Ambassador to Moscow. In early June I had two meetings with Sarper in Moscow. Asked by the Turkish government about a treaty of alliance, we answered that the Soviet government does not object to concluding such a treaty on certain conditions. I gave instructions that when concluding a treaty of alliance we should settle mutual claims. We have two questions to be settled. Conclusion of the treaty of alliance means that we should jointly protect our borders: not only of the USSR but Turkish ones as well. However, in some parts we consider the border between the USSR and Turkey to be unfair. Indeed, in 1921 a territory was annexed from Soviet Armenia and Soviet Georgia. This includes areas of Kars, Artvin and Ardahan. Here's a map of the annexed territories.

Having shown a map of Soviet territorial claims (in all Soviet manuals this map was presented as model of justice and proletarian internationalism), Molotov added: "Therefore I declared that in order to conclude a treaty of alliance, it is essential to settle the question of the territories annexed from Georgia and Armenia, and return these territories to them."⁸³

Then Molotov pointed out that the next important issue to be settled was the problem of the Black Sea Straits. "We have repeatedly declared to our Allies that we cannot regard the Montreux Convention as fair. Under this Convention, the authorities of the Soviet Union are similar to those of the Japanese Emperor. We know that our Allies, the US President and British Prime Minister, also consider it necessary to remedy the situation." After presentation of the second question, Molotov stressed:

The Turkish government was told that if it was ready to settle the basic issues under dispute, we are ready to conclude a treaty of alliance after their resolution. In saying so, we expressed our willingness to settle the issues put forward by Turkey. We added that if the Turkish government considers it inadmissible to resolve both issues, we were ready to conclude an agreement on the Straits only. The Turkish government was informed about the proposals I am submitting to you in written form.⁸⁴

Then Molotov conveyed to Roosevelt and Churchill Soviet proposals on the settlement of the Black Sea Straits. These proposals consisted of three parts: first, it stated that the Montreux Convention on the Straits should be annulled as it was inconsistent with modern conditions; second, the establishment of the Straits regime, the sole sea route from the Black Sea and back, should be the sole responsibility of Turkey and the Soviet Union as the parties most interested and capable of ensuring freedoms of navigation in the Black Sea Straits; third, the new regime of the Straits should, among others, provide for the following: Turkey and the Soviet Union, interested in their security and maintenance of peace in the Black Sea region, should jointly prevent the use of the Straits by other states for hostile purposes (i.e., both Turkish and Soviet military bases should be installed in the Straits).⁸⁵

After acquaintance with Molotov's note, Churchill declared that this was a very important document and went far beyond what had formerly been agreed in Moscow. Molotov justified himself, saying that the question was not about a treaty of alliance with Turkey. Churchill began insisting on the resolution of other problems: "The point was about having a Russian base in the Straits, and ensuring passage through the Dardanelles and Bosphorus for Turkey and the Soviet Union alone. I am confident that Turkey will never agree with it." Molotov tried to persuade him that agreements of this kind had already been concluded between Turkey and Russia. Churchill asked again: "Under which Russia could maintain a military base in the

Straits?” Molotov said there were agreements under which the passage through the Straits was the responsibility of Turkey and Russia. These were the treaties of 1805 and the 1833 Treaty of *Hünkâr İskelesi*. Churchill objected, saying he wanted to familiarize himself with these treaties. Also, he wanted to draw a distinction between proposals put forward and those referred to earlier. At this moment, Stalin interfered in the conversation, asking, “What treaties are being discussed?” Churchill reminded him that during his talks with the Soviet government he expressed his willingness to influence the Turkish government to make it revise the Montreux Convention, and that this proposal remained valid. As for the new proposals, he felt free. Stalin, half in jest, snapped up: “You are free.” Churchill hastily interposed: “I want to keep my word. I would like to reach agreement with you.” Truman took the floor and uttered words that showed the level of his awareness on the issue “I am not ready to express my view on the subject, for I failed to think of it properly.”⁸⁶ Thus, the first debates over the Straits issue at the Potsdam conference were over. In doing so, the Soviet Union laid its claims to Turkey at the international level. On 22 June, Molotov announced its two claims to Turkey: territorial and the revision of the Straits regime. The very problem of the Straits consisted of two parts: revision of the convention and creation of a Soviet military base in the Straits. As for the territorial claims, it should be noted that after the Moscow talks with Sarper the Soviet party drew up a map as a visual aid. An eloquent testimony to the progress on this track was that in June the question was about Kars and Ardahan, and at Potsdam Artvin was added to the above. It was the Armenian Diaspora that made numerous inquiries at the conference. Declassified secret archives indicate that Soviet institutions were involved in these inquiries. During his talks with Idem, Molotov wanted to inform his British counterpart about the aspirations of foreign Armenians to move to the Soviet Union. From May 1945, the Soviet leaders sent representatives of state institutions, unions, and religious organizations abroad to carry out propaganda campaigns among the Armenian Diaspora. Well-known Armenian historian Eduard Melkonyan pointed out: “Prior to the end of the war, Stalin set himself the purpose of returning territories granted to Turkey by the Soviet Union under the treaty of March 16, 1921. Realizing the possibility of US and British opposition to Soviet expansion in Eastern Europe and the Balkans, Stalin decided to play the Armenia card.”⁸⁷ With that end in mind, commencing from April 1945, the Armenian leaders had repeatedly applied to Stalin with requests to allow foreign Armenians to return to Soviet Armenia.⁸⁸

Secretary of the Armenian Communist Party Central Committee Grigori Arutyunov and Deputy Chairman of the Council of People’s Commissars of the Armenian SSR Saak Karapetyan applied 4 July to Molotov reminding him that on 15 May that year the Armenian leaders raised a question of the settlement of Armenian refugees in Soviet Armenia from Romania and Bulgaria. It was supposed that representatives of foreign Armenian Diaspora, arriving at Echmiadzin to attend a council of the Armenian church, might raise this issue before the Armenian government. This supposition was confirmed. At the request of the delegates of the Council of People’s Commissars of the Armenian SSR, representatives of all Armenian Diaspora abroad, except for the Turkish one, raised the question of the settlement of Armenian refugees to their homeland, Soviet Armenia. Unsanctioned by the central Soviet government,

the Council of Ministers of Soviet Armenia told them that the question was being considered due to its complexity. The letter said that a few days previously Greek Armenians had addressed the Armenian Communist Party Central Committee saying that the Greek authorities charged local Armenians with betrayal, and sympathizing with Bulgaria with the USSR behind it. Armenians in Greece, Macedonia and Thrace were arrested and banished from their old haunts. The situation of Armenians in Greece was aggravated by the fact that just 5,000 out of 20,000 Greek Armenians had Greek citizenship; others were stateless. Therefore Armenian leaders suggested repatriating 15,000–20,000 Greek Armenians to their homeland via the Black Sea.⁸⁹ In a letter to Stalin, Arutyunov wrote as follows:

Owing to the enhanced interest of numerous Armenian Diaspora abroad (there are colonies in twenty-five countries worldwide) in the Soviet Union and Soviet Armenia especially during the Great Patriotic War, there is a need for regular awareness of foreign Armenians about the economic and cultural achievements of Soviet Armenia, and participation of the Armenian people in the Patriotic war of the Soviet Union. This information would also contribute to the further consolidation of progressive Armenian organizations abroad. Note that these organizations maintained a friendly political line with respect to the USSR and Soviet Armenia, and exposed the anti-Soviet activities of separate parties, groups and persons. The only channel providing the foreign progressive Armenian press (there are twenty such organs) and organizations with information materials is the newly established Armenian Society of Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. According to information available, these materials fail to meet everyday needs, since they arrive irregularly and do not fully reflect the true achievements of Soviet Armenia. Hence, we consider it necessary to raise a question of the issuing of an illustrated magazine under the title *Soviet Armenia* in Armenian for foreign Armenians.

It is also necessary to stress that *Echmiadzin* magazine, issued in Armenia from the last year, despite its narrow specific church themes, causes a great interest among foreign Armenians with its articles about the achievements of Soviet Armenia. Note that foreign Armenian newspapers often reprint articles from this magazine and use its materials. The magazine has a circulation of 2,000 copies and runs twelve issues per year.⁹⁰

In his letter to Stalin and Molotov of 7 July, Arutyunov advised them that the Armenian public opinion and Diaspora organizations were widely debating the return of Armenian territories and there was hope that the Soviet government, together with Ukrainian, Belarusian and other peoples, would apply joint efforts to fulfill the wishes of the Armenian people, and that the question of reunification of lands given to Turkey after the First World War, with those of Soviet Armenia, would be raised at the upcoming conference of the heads of the three great powers. The letter advised “to restore the borders of 1914 and transfer the Kars region and Surmeli district to Armenia.” The question of resettlement of foreign Armenians to Soviet Armenia was also linked to this issue.⁹¹ Note that Molotov juggled with phrases from the Arutyunov’s letter during his meeting with Anthony Eden on 16 July and at the Potsdam conference.

The seventh session of the Potsdam conference discussed the Turkish issue and the Straits problem. Except for the Königsberg question, the session focused on the Near and Middle East countries—Turkey, Syria, Lebanon and Iran. Churchill took the floor, saying that he could not back a proposal of the establishment of a Soviet military base in the Straits, and stressing that Turkey would hardly agree to adopt these proposals. This time Stalin stepped in: “Yesterday, Mr. Churchill alleged that the Russians frightened the Turks because of an alleged concentration of Russian and Bulgarian troops in Bulgaria. I consider it necessary to explain

that we dispose of two divisions only. Mr. Churchill was frightened by the Turks.” When the parties began arguing the number of troops in the Constantinople region, Stalin stated that there were 20 divisions, perhaps, twenty-three or twenty-four. It was the Bulgarian troops that frightened the Turks. Stalin added:

Maybe the Turks are scared by a proposal to correct the borders. The point was about the restoration of the border that existed prior to the First World War. I mean the region of Kars that was a part of Armenia before the war, and the region of Ardahan that was a part of Georgia. A question of the restoration of the previous border would not be raised if the Turks did not insist on the conclusion of a treaty of alliance between the USSR and Turkey. To create an alliance is to recognize that we are committed to protecting Turkish borders and the Turks would be committed to protecting our borders. We believe that the border in the regions of Kars and Ardahan is wrong, and we told Turkey if it wants to conclude an alliance with us, it is essential to correct this border; if does not, the alliance is impossible.

Having substantiated his territorial claims, Stalin shifted to the Straits. He made a statement as follows:

The question of the Straits is of particular importance for Russia. The Montreux Convention is adverse to Russia. Turkey is entitled to close the Straits to our navigation not only in case of war but also if it seems to Turkey that there is a risk of war. Incredible! We, Russians, have the same rights as the Japanese Emperor. It is ridiculous but it is a fact. In other words, a small state backed by Great Britain holds a knife at Russia’s throat and does not let it pass through the Straits. I can imagine the reaction of Great Britain with respect to Gibraltar or the US with respect to the Panama Canal, if an identical situation occurred. We want guarantees that the freedom of passage would be ensured in case of complications.

Stalin also touched upon the Straits problem. He noted: “You insist that a military base in the Straits is not acceptable. Well, show us then another base where the Russian navy could be repaired, maintained or, jointly with its allies, uphold the rights of Russia. That’s the point. It would be ridiculous if the situation remained as it is.”⁹²

Then Truman took the floor, explaining the US stand on the Black Sea Straits and international inland waters. He said: “We believe that the Montreux Convention should be revised. We believe the Straits should provide free passage for the whole world, for all ships crossing the passage.” As for the territorial issue, Truman pointed out that this matter was about the Soviet Union and Turkey only and that they should decide on the issue. However, the Black Sea Straits question related to many countries. Realizing that Truman’s statement regarding the freedom of marine ways was not the one he wanted, Stalin decided to change the topic, saying that this statement should be carefully considered before further discussing it.⁹³

During the Potsdam conference, British and American delegations put forward proposals on navigation in international inland waters. First the USSR and then the USA and Great Britain submitted their written proposals on the Straits. The British-American proposals made it clear that both Truman and Churchill, who backed the idea of Straits internationalization, stepped back from this idea. Following the two debates over the Straits, Great Britain informed Turkey on 26 July about the course of the talks. British Ambassador Peterson advised Prime Minister Saracog˘lu to treat the Soviet Union carefully, and informed him about Truman’s idea of the establishment of an international administration to manage the Straits. However, Saracog˘lu received this idea negatively, as was the case before Montreux and previous debates over the Turkish issue without Turkey’s participation. He asked Peterson if they had promised the Russians what the latter wanted to have.⁹⁴

On 28 July, Peterson met with Turkish officials and discussed the question of the Straits. It

was agreed that Turks would back collaboration with the United States in the matter of internationalization of the Straits provided Turkish security and sovereignty were observed, and the problem would be solved within the framework of the improvement of relations with the USSR.⁹⁵ The Allies did not support the Soviet claims to Turkey. For that reason, a final protocol of the Berlin conference of the three great powers merely noted with regard to the Black Sea Straits: “The three governments acknowledged that it was necessary to revise the Convention as inconsistent with modern times. It was agreed that the given issue would be in the focus of direct talks between the three governments and the Turkish government.”⁹⁶ On 2 August, US Secretary of State James Byrnes informed US Ambassador to Ankara Wilson about the text of the decision. Well-known Turkish historians Mehmet Gönlübol and Haluk Ülman, analyzing the decision of the Potsdam conference, point out that there are differences between the Russian and British versions of the text. The British version instructed the three powers each to inform Turkey about their vision of the Straits problem, while the Russian version instructed each of them to negotiate with the Turkish government about the Straits. Subsequently this insignificant difference led to great misunderstanding between the United States and the Soviet Union.⁹⁷

An official declaration about the Berlin conference of the three powers, signed by Stalin, Truman and new British Prime Minister Clement Attlee, was published on 2 August. The declaration did not mention Turkey, the Straits or Soviet-Turkish relations. Thus, despite the apparent willingness of the Soviet leaders to solve the Turkish issue at Potsdam, they failed to force their ideas upon the Allies. Soviet claims against Turkey regarding the country’s provinces and a military base in the Straits were opposed and kept out of the final documents of the conference. The decision on the revision of the convention was diffuse and declarative. Potsdam did not see unanimity of Allies, as was the case during the Teheran and Yalta Conferences. Previous advantages and the prestige of the Soviet Union were ignored in Potsdam. Note that Stalin personally felt these changes, especially because of his stance regarding Turkey and the Straits in the postwar world. Russian historians Vladislav Zubok and Konstantin Pleshakov showed in their work that Western Allies did not wish to understand the logic of Stalin actions in this regard. Instead, they explained this as first manifestations of Stalin’s postwar excesses. However, it would be appropriate to explain this in a different manner. The problem was that Stalin treated the Straits issue not only as a means of ensuring Soviet security, but also as a way to enhance his influence. He did not doubt that his demands would be satisfied.⁹⁸

The Potsdam conference was notable for three features: first, the idea of internationalization put forward by Truman and backed by Churchill, which was inconsistent with the interests of the USSR and Turkey; second, the US President showed indifference to the territorial claims of the USSR, which gave carte blanche to Stalin; third, the territorial claims of the USSR and demands regarding a military base in the Straits, though rejected by the Allies, were not mirrored in the final protocol. Some historians, including well-known historian of Turkey, Mikhail Potshveria, believe that the Soviet territorial claims to Turkey were turned down at Potsdam, though Armenians and Georgians kept on raising them at the level of public opinion.⁹⁹

Account has to be taken of the fact that in the 1930s and 40s the notion of “public opinion” as it was used in the Soviet Union was of a formal nature, and state bodies were behind the actions of the public. Besides, the archives of Georgia and Armenia, as well as the Russian Federation Foreign Policy archives, Russian State Archives of Social and Political History provide us with newly discovered documents confirming that the central leadership, as well as in the leadership of Armenia and Georgia, guided by the instructions of Moscow, continued to initiate territorial claims against Turkey. Faced with the opposition from the Allies, especially Great Britain, the Soviet leaders decided to shift the burden of territorial disputes onto the South Caucasian Republics, while the Kremlin was responsible for the Straits resolution. In other words, the form of territorial claims against Turkey changed while their nature remained unaltered.

On the eve of the Potsdam conference the Turkish press launched a campaign against increased Soviet pressures. Anti-Turkish attacks in the Soviet press, and especially Moscow radio, provoked Ankara and Istanbul newspapers to publish materials, full of harsh criticism, which charged the USSR with “imperialist intentions,” “profiting from the moment,” “continuation of tsarist Russian policy,” etc. Some well-known journalists alleged that the Soviet region was no different from the fascist one, and they even labeled it “red fascism.” Sometimes, the Turkish press accused the Allies of not understanding the nature of the Soviet demands, saying that the Allies did not resist properly. When *The Manchester Guardian* newspaper discussed Russian demands and considered them well founded, this publication caused appreciable troubles in Turkey. Yalçın wrote in *Tanin*:

We are astonished that the most serious British newspaper cannot realize the gist of the Straits problem and Russian claims on the issue. Europeans and Americans think that the Russians want the Straits to be free. . . . No! Russians do not want the opening of the Straits; they want the closing of the Straits! They want the Straits to be closed and opened to comply with Russian interests. They do not want control over the Straits by Europeans or Americans, i.e. their enemies. They want to use the Straits as a base for their aggressive intentions.¹⁰⁰

Commenting on the Soviet territorial claims, a number of newspapers pointed out that the transfer of lands was an untouchable subject for Turks. Turkish newspapers considered it necessary to continue friendly relations with the USSR, provided the territorial claims were withdrawn. Under the Straits regime, the Turkish press believed that the issue should be solved at a conference, not through Russian-Turkish talks, to be attended by representatives of the countries that signed the Montreux Convention.

In their publications regarding the Potsdam conference, the Turks prudently predicted that a summit of the three states might resolve the destiny of the Straits and eastern provinces of Turkey. Some newspapers tried to persuade the “Anglo-Americans to force the Russians to decline from their aggressive plans.” They appealed to Great Britain and America, saying “If no drastic measures are taken now against this bolshevist avalanche, the world will face terrible disaster.” In the first days of the Potsdam conference the Turks tried to prove that “if the USSR does not decline from its aggressive intentions, this country would be isolated after the conclusion of a bilateral British-American alliance.”¹⁰¹

It was evident that the Turkish press was not properly informed about the Potsdam talks. Most

publications focused on possible debates over the Soviet territorial claims to Turkey. It was alleged that the three premiers should concentrate on Soviet-Turkish relations. For this reason, the press organs paid a great attention to the analysis of these relations, the Straits issue and the Armenian question. Turkish journalist Necmettin Sadak wrote in *Aksham* newspaper, “The main reason for the aggravation of Soviet-Turkish relations was the rivalry between the USSR and Great Britain with the Soviets as initiator of this rivalry.” Examining Sadak’s article, the Soviet Embassy concluded that “Turkish propaganda acted as British instigators in an attempt to convince the latter of the Soviets’ purpose to take an advantageous position in Turkey against the British.”¹⁰² Some journalists saw a way out of the impasse by concluding the British-Russian-Turkish treaty or the Soviet-Turkish alliance with a proviso, identical to the British-Turkish Treaty of Alliance. Using secret methods, the Soviet Embassy learned that the government had welcomed this point of view. But they did not expect that the USSR would adopt this alliance, for “the Soviet Union is not eager to preserve peace; no, it seeks to establish its supremacy over Turkey and the entire globe.” Touching upon the Straits, Yalçın wrote in *Tanin*: “The Straits is not an end in itself for Russia, it is a means and a stage. It put forward this issue not to confine itself to the Straits but go far beyond it.” Turkish journalists agreed with the revision of the Convention only and making some changes in it, provided they would ensure the security of the Straits and avoid infringing on national independence and sovereignty of Turkey.” The Turks hoped that the British and the Americans would support them, for the interests of the USA and Great Britain call for the Straits to be unharmed by the USSR.” After the declaration of the results of the Potsdam conference the Turkish newspapers started lively debates. Hüseyin Yalçın, Nadir Nadi, and other journalists believed that the lack of mention of the Straits in the communiqué reaffirmed that the Soviet Union did not dare to lay its claims at the conference.¹⁰³

A telegram of the Armenian National Committee addressed to the Potsdam conference with a request to return Kars, Ardahan and Artvin to the Soviet Union stirred up indignation in Turkey. Turkish newspapers pointed out that Turkey was indignant at the Soviet government-controlled Moscow radio, not “certain Armenians.” Responding to the territorial claims of the Armenian National Committee, the Turkish press insisted that the provinces of Kars, Ardahan and Artvin had no relation to Armenians and were primordial Turkish lands. The newspapers underscored that “these territories were taken away by Russia after the war of 1877–78 and returned to Turkey by Lenin and Stalin under the treaty of 1921.” Analyzing this fact, *Vatan* newspaper underlined that one could not trust Russia: “Today they sign a treaty, tomorrow they ignore their own signature.” As a rule, all the articles ended with a call to restore Soviet-Turkish friendship and cooperation. The newspaper wrote that in spite of criticisms of Soviet claims, Turks should respond to the wishes of the Russians and discuss their concerns. Yet, “Russians have no right to demand territorial claims from Turkey or right to the control over the Straits; they could expect some guarantees only.” Turkish public opinion showed great interest in the open letter of journalist Yalman, addressed to the Potsdam conference, and publications of MP, Professor Yavuz Abadan in *Cumhuriyet* newspaper. In his letter, Yalman tried to persuade the nations that defeated fascism to follow the path of justice and avoid using force for mercenary

purposes. He wrote: “They say there are issues in the agenda of the conference pertaining to Turkey. If so and if you are going to adopt a decision inconsistent with the goals of our independence and integrity of the country, you should know that we shall never submit to your decisions and shall do our utmost to prevent their adoption.” MP Yavuz Abadan called for the Turks to be ready for any surprises, for Europe, as he saw it, had not yet reached a haven of rest and confidence, and the Berlin conference yielded no desirable results, and the differences between Allies remained as they were.¹⁰⁴

Turkish public opinion felt relief that the decisions of the Potsdam conference, published on 2 August, said nothing of Turkey and the Straits. Yalçın pointed out, “We did not doubt that our Allies Britain and America would not let the conference adopt decisions contrary to Turkish interests; and we are confident that they would prefer Turkey proper to protect its own interests.”¹⁰⁵ Thus, Soviet Embassy officials in Ankara in charge of the review of the Turkish press for the second half of July and first half of August reported to the Soviet Foreign Ministry that anxieties of the Turkish political circles regarding the results of the conference clearly manifested themselves in the mass media.¹⁰⁶

Following the end of the Potsdam conference, the Soviet Foreign Ministry drew up a document on 18 August entitled “On Soviet-Turkish Relations,” which, among others, focused on the Straits. A preamble to the document said that for some time past the world public opinion closely watched the development of Soviet-Turkish relations. The same was true of the Soviet press. The document stressed that on March 18, 1945 the Soviet Union unilaterally denounced the treaty of 1925 as “inconsistent with the new international situation.” The Soviet party disagreed with Turkish Foreign Minister Saka, who

has the other day told press representatives in London that the future of Dardanelles and revision of the Soviet-Turkish treaty are different, unrelated issues. That’s not so. The point is about the settlement of relations between the Soviet Union and Turkey, specifically, the questions of the Straits and the territories annexed by Turkey from the Soviet Union after the First World War.

The first section of the report dealt with “substantiation of rights to the Straits. It pointed out that the Turkish-owned Straits were the only way out of the Black Sea to the Mediterranean and other seas. Suffice it to note that about half of all the export cargo of the USSR was transported via the ports of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. The section said:

It is obvious that the Black Sea Straits are of paramount importance for us, especially as compared with the Suez Canal for the British Empire or the Panama Canal for the United States. Both the Straits and the Suez and Panama Canals are located on foreign territories. While the USA and Great Britain found no difficulty in ensuring their legal interests through the Panama and Suez Canals, our country, owing to the current historical circumstances failed to adequately solve the Straits problem.

The report also dealt with the history of the Straits problem and the analysis of the Montreux Convention. It negatively assessed Turkey’s aspiration to solely control the Straits:

It is natural that the Soviet Union, as a power interested in the security of the Black Sea, should be entitled, jointly with Turkey, to control the passage of ships through the Black Sea Straits. Beyond any doubt, Turkey cannot independently resist the attempts of the navy of a big Black Sea power to go through the Straits, so there is a need to protect the Straits jointly.

The report pointed out that the national interests of Turkey and the USSR, as well as interests

of long-lasting peace in Europe and international security accounted for such a formulation of the question. It was not in the interests of the world to endure this situation, where the problem of the Straits comes out as means of blackmail, source of conflicts and differences between the world powers. It was proposed to remove this thorn from international policy, drive a blow at the ominous plans of warmongers and thus contribute to the cause of peace between the peoples of the globe.¹⁰⁷

Upon his return to Washington, US President Truman made a radio report on 8 August on the results of the Potsdam conference. In his speech he charged the Europeans with their inadequacy in exploiting water arteries, for example, the Kiel Canal, Rhine, Danube and Black Sea Straits. As far back as on 23 July at the seventh session of the Potsdam conference President Truman stressed that over the past two hundred years all the wars had broken out in the region between the Mediterranean and Baltic Seas, between eastern borders of France and western borders of Russia. The same idea was repeated on 8 August. Addressing the American people, Truman proclaimed himself to be an advocate of the principle of “sea passage” neutrality.¹⁰⁸

Following this statement, Turkish Ambassador to the USA Hüseyin Baydur met with the Deputy Head of Near and Middle East Department George Allen and conveyed the deep concern of the Turkish public with Truman’s statement. He pointed out that this standpoint was indicative of US forgetfulness of the Allies’ relations with Turkey and the latter’s role in resisting Hitler’s advance in 1940–41 towards the Suez and the Caucasus. Further, Baydur reminded him that the mobilization of the Turkish army and its willingness to fight for freedom saved the Middle East and the Eastern Front. He expressed hope that the USA would properly treat Soviet claims to the Straits and the territories of Kars and Ardahan as part of a common problem. The Ambassador objected to the decline of US interest in Turkish problems, citing as an example the lack of adequate British-American opposition to Soviet claims in Berlin. The Ambassador expressed his surprise that America viewed the Russian-Turkish talks as “friendly,” since territorial claims to two provinces of Turkey could hardly be interpreted as “friendly.” He drew historical parallels: if the United States considers the territorial claims of the USSR to Turkey as the internal affair of two neighboring countries, it is reminiscent of the fact that great powers closed their eyes on the territorial claims of fascist Germany on the eve of the Second World War. It would be appropriate to recall that the great powers undertook to oppose any aggression. Proceeding from the experience of his work in Moscow, Baydur warned that US inconsistency with respect to Turkey would be received by Russia as a “green light” and signal for action. As for the US idea of internationalization of the Straits, this would result in bringing the Russian Black Sea fleet into the Sea of Marmara, seizing control over Ankara and laying claims against Turkey. And nothing would prevent this. That’s why the US view on the Dardanelles is, under current circumstances, very detrimental to Turkey. Allen replied that it was possible to resolve the territorial and Straits issues separately. Baydur took these words to be a repetition of the US President’s position of non-interference in Soviet-Turkish relations. Allen tried to assure him that the US was very serious about its membership in the UN and stood up for peaceful resolution of the disputes, and he was hopeful that the Kars

and Ardahan issues would not lead to grave consequences. Also, Allen stressed that allegations of a US repudiation of Turkey were groundless, and that US policy with respect to Turkey remained unaltered.¹⁰⁹

Looking back at the visible dimensions of Western policy, Turkish political circles, apprehensive of the Great Powers' failure to endure the pressure of aggressors as was the case before the war, believed that they would meet the Soviet Union's demands. They alleged that laying territorial claims against Turkey was a means of applying pressure in the matter of the Straits. Others feared that the USA and Britain would agree to transfer Kars and Ardahan to Soviet Armenia in exchange for refusal to establish a military base in the Straits. Though Turkey was displeased with the US idea of internationalization of the Straits, the country feigned interest in the subject. With that end in mind, the Turkish Foreign Ministry submitted on 20 August a note to US and British Ambassadors, which expressed Turkey's consent to the internationalization of the Straits, provided the US would guarantee the security of the Straits and free passage of ships, preservation of Turkey's sovereignty and relaxation of tensions forced by the Soviets. On 11 August Prime Minister Saracog̃lu told the US Ambassador to Ankara that the Turkish government agreed to acknowledge the principle of internationalization of the Straits on the condition of the continued sovereignty of Turkey and changes in relations with the USSR for the better.¹¹⁰

However, the position of the United States on the internationalization of the Straits was different. Having familiarized himself with a note of the Turkish Foreign Ministry of 20 August, Secretary of State Byrnes wrote to President Truman that it would be appropriate to limit US involvement to the question of amending the Convention. To his thinking, the time was not ripe for restricting Turkish control of the Straits or internationalizing them. Byrnes thought that the UN should act as the Court of Appeal for any state that considered Turkey to be mercenary in its control of the Straits or incapable of managing them. As for internationalization, the United States would face difficulties in obtaining Turkey's agreement to dismantle its defenses or create a neutral zone until the United States guaranteed Turkey aid in case of assault from a third country. Byrnes considered it necessary to avoid any guarantees if the US could not keep its word. Turkey mistrusted the UN, from each member of the Security Council has the right to veto any decision. Besides, a proposal to internationalize the Straits involved two other problems: the Panama and Suez Canals.¹¹¹

Attached to Byrnes's letter to President Truman were "Proposals of the US Government Arising from Amendments to the Montreux Convention of 1936." These were based on four basic principles. First, Byrnes wrote that the Straits should be open to trade vessels of all nationalities. Second, the Straits should always be open to the warships of Black Sea littoral states. The Secretary of State explained that in peacetime the Straits were open to all warships of the Black Sea countries. Under the current regime of neutral Turkey the Straits were closed to the warships of belligerents. The reason was to avoid the Straits becoming an arena of combat operations. At the same time, Black Sea countries were entitled to demand passage for their warships through the Straits at any time, and the USA should ask Turkey to give this concession. Third, the Straits were closed to the warships of non-Black Sea states, except

where an agreement would be reached with respect to restricted tonnage in peacetime. Fourth, the USA offered to exclude Japan from the Convention and substitute the League of Nations for the United Nations.¹¹² Secretary Byrnes informed the President that the US proposals would be conveyed to Turkey, while consultations would be held with Britain and Russia. Note that the US proposal on the Straits was timed to coincide with the session of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, which was held on 22 September in London. In turn, Turkey was anxious that the issue of the Straits would be discussed in London without its participation. Using all possible diplomatic channels Turkey tried to appraise itself of the attitudes to the issue and decisions to be adopted.

In early September 1945 there was no anti-Turkish campaign in the USSR. William Averell Harriman wrote to Secretary Byrnes that the anti-Turkish campaign in the Soviet press had visibly lessened and that US Embassy officials were hearing from some Soviet citizens that the USSR had to take Turkey's interests into consideration. There was a mix of opinions ranging from "this autumn we shall fight against the Turks" to "we shall have to negotiate with Turkey." As for Greece and Iran, there were no comments of this kind. Harriman believed these comments mirrored the Soviet Party guidelines to form the public opinion.¹¹³

The weakening of the anti-Turkish campaign in the Soviet press occurred against the background of Britain's pressuring the USSR to withdraw Soviet troops from Iran. Now the main point was to maintain Soviet troops in Iran as long as possible. At the same time Soviet troops in Iran formed an integral part of the anti-Turkish plan in Moscow. On the eve of the London session, during his correspondence with British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, Molotov under various pretences declined from specifying the date of the withdrawal. On 17 August Kavtaradze wrote to Molotov regarding the withdrawal of the troops of the Allies from Iran:

The British in London may raise a question on the withdrawal of allied troops from Iran due to the capitulation of Japan. Under Article 5 of the British-Soviet Iranian treaty of 1942, the troops of the Allies should be withdrawn from Iran within six months of the termination of combat operations against Germany and its satellites or after the conclusion of an armistice or peace treaty. Therefore we have a formal right to insist and keep our troops in Iran until the conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany and Japan. We should insist on our right to keep troops in Iran for the six months following the capitulation of Japan.¹¹⁴

On 19 September, Bevin told Molotov that an exact date of the withdrawal of allied troops from Iran had been specified: March 2, 1946. If the question arose at the Council of Foreign Ministers, Bevin stressed that he intended to declare that the USSR and Britain had agreed to withdraw their troops from Iran between mid-December 1945 and March 2, 1946. Meanwhile, British troops would stay in the oil-producing regions of the country south of Andimeshk, while the Soviet army would stay in Iranian Azerbaijan. A day later, Molotov replied that if necessary the planned withdrawal of British and Soviet troops might be discussed elsewhere. The Soviet government considered it unnecessary to discuss the issue at the Council of Ministers.¹¹⁵

During preparations for the session, the first after the Potsdam conference, British political circles were apprehensive that the USSR might take advantage of the situation to expand its influence in the Mediterranean. In connection with this, the US Chiefs of Staff of the Armed

Forces insisted on preventing any attempts at establishing a Soviet military base in the former Italian colonial territory in Cyrenaica. The British Foreign Office discussed the revision of the Montreux Convention as insisted upon by the Soviets. Many analysts believed that it would be appropriate to make amendments to the convention rather than allow Russians to seize control over Turkey and Greece. A memorandum by Principal Private Secretary to the Foreign Secretary Pierson Dixon termed the desire to establish a military base and get access to the Mediterranean as the “primary goal of Russians.” Dixon therefore proposed to oppose Russian demands regarding the Straits and Tripolitania “even at risk of the session’s failure.”¹¹⁶

Commencing from the last week of September, the British Embassy in Moscow observed a strengthening anti-Turkish campaign; both the Red Army and public opinion were being prepared for the forthcoming conference. At the same time, British military analysts in Bulgaria and Romania discovered that two divisions with tanks between Sofia and Plovdiv were moving southwards, and a great quantity of tanks and heavy artillery that crossed the Bulgarian border and were moving further to the south.¹¹⁷

US Ambassador to Ankara Edwin C. Wilson considered the issue differently. In his message to Byrnes he reported:

It seems to me that the question of the Straits, put forward by the USSR, is designed to conceal the real agenda of the Soviets. As regards Turkey, this agenda is to change the internal regime of Turkey. In the west and the south, from the Black to Baltic Seas, Turkey is the sole state that is not governed by a “friendly” regime. Any concessions to the USSR would mean actual Soviet control over the Straits. It is significant that this control would cease the Anglo-Turkish alliance and therefore mean the end of Western liberalism in the Middle East. Ambassador Wilson pointed out that pressure on Turkey began with the denunciation of the Soviet-Turkish treaty of friendship, the June demands of Molotov and provocative statements over radio and press. The signing by the great powers of any agreement on the Straits that would infringe Turkey’s sovereignty may lead to the collapse of the present regime and create conditions favorable to the USSR.¹¹⁸

In his telegram from Moscow, George Kennan also agreed with Wilson: “I fully agree with the text of the telegram to the Department of State from Ankara on 25 September. I am well aware of the Soviet practice, so I am sure that the Soviets will not temper their appetite for the Straits. On the contrary, they will take every chance to weaken the West’s influence on Turkey and establish a friendly regime there.”¹¹⁹ In another telegram Kennan told the Secretary of State:

Though the press keeps silent on Turkey, we dispose of information that some Party functionaries keep mentioning the possibility of war between Turkey and the USSR. It is no mere coincidence that three political propagandists spoke at Moscow industrial enterprises and openly hinted at the war with Turkey. Though we approach this information carefully, it is nevertheless so widely spread that it cannot be interpreted as purely idle talk. This propaganda is designed to divert the public from domestic problems, justify the intensification of military production and accelerate industrial production. Also, these actions aim to weaken the Turks in the war of nerves.¹²⁰

Wilson and Kennan’s suppositions about the Soviet intention to establish “a friendly regime” in Turkey proved to be true. A letter of the Central Committee of the Turkish Communist Party addressed to the CC CPSU on October 30, 1945 openly hinted at the plans of the Soviets. On 1 November, this letter was handed to Georgi Malenkov. The Central Committee of the Turkish Communist Party informed him: “We undertake to do our utmost to create a democratic government that will maintain an indissoluble collaboration between the two countries and comply with their security needs.”¹²¹

On 29 October, representative of the Turkish Communists Marat Bostancı prepared a note for

Bulgarian Premier Georgi Dimitrov, which stressed this idea. Bostançı wrote: “The Turkish people are well aware of the fact that the government of Saracog̃lu is pursuing an anti-democratic policy inside the country and adhering to the anti-Soviet position in its foreign policy.” In doing so, the government is turning Turkey into a base for international reactionary forces. Today, many people in Turkey say: “What Atatürk gained in Sakarya River, İsmet and Saracog̃lu are selling out in Ankara.” At the end of his seven-page note Bostançı concluded,

If there were a truly democratic government, there would be no issue that Turkey wouldn't be able to settle with its great neighbor. Settlement of all unresolved points with the USSR is the most reliable guarantee for independence and freedom of Turkey. The government of Saracog̃lu, unwilling to be on friendly terms with the Soviet Union, should resign.¹²²

Demands for the resignation of the government of Saracog̃lu and the creation of a “democratic” government found their parallel in a memorandum of L. Boretsky, reviewer of the Soviet Foreign Ministry for Turkey. This memorandum, prepared on 17 August 1945 and entitled “On the Ankara Trial of Turkish Communists and Democrats,” dealt with legal proceedings held against sixty-four persons on 3 March. The main accusations were directed against the Secretary of the Turkish Communist Party, Resat Fuat Baraner [Sitki], sentenced to nine years, and democratic writer Suat Dervis, sentenced to eight months. The memorandum pointed out that Suat Dervis had been convicted for the publication of a book entitled *Why am I a friend of the Soviet Union?* Boretsky noted that the principal objective of the Turkish Communists was to create a democratic and purely popular government, well disposed to the Soviet Union. For this to happen, “the government of Saracog̃lu should give way to the people's government and the Grand National Assembly should be replaced by a new one.”¹²³

The memorandum of Boretsky was prepared on the basis of bulletins of the Turkish Communist Party. Another letter of 9 August addressed to Dimitrov said that some convicted Communists were delegates of the VII Congress of the Comintern and needed assistance. The letter added, “Turkish reactionaries had consolidated their position in the country. Opposition activities against the authorities, typically for June and early July, have become less tense. Today, MPs unanimously vote for the government of Saracog̃lu. The reactionary press is carrying on open anti-Soviet campaign.”¹²⁴

Two days before the opening of the session of the Council of Foreign Ministers in London, the Turkish leaders learned that the Straits issue had been removed from the agenda. The United States opposed debates over the Straits until bilateral talks between Turkey and the Soviet Union and Britain and the USA were held. The Department of State informed the British Ambassador to Washington that the American Ambassador to Ankara was instructed as follows: the United States objected to discussing the Montreux Convention at the Council, and all the parties concerned should directly apply to the Turkish government in compliance with the appropriate procedures. The Department of State added that this came as a response to the Turkish government. At the same time, US Ambassador to London John Gilbert Winant informed Byrnes that the governments of USA and Britain, before giving a clear answer to the Turkish government, should hold consultations to concert their positions. Ambassador Winant pledged to arrange a meeting between Byrnes and British officials.¹²⁵

The Turkish press paid particular attention to the first session of the Council. Some

newspapers complained that the work of the session was kept secret, especially the possible debates over the Straits issue. Molotov's statement about Soviet interests in the former Italian colonies reaffirmed Britain's concerns on the eve of the session. The Turkish press took Molotov's statement as evidence of the USSR's intention to break through the Mediterranean and the Middle East. From Soviet interests ran counter to British ones, Turkish journalists commented on it as a main reason for the British-Soviet confrontation. *Aksham* newspaper of 23 September wrote that for Britain the Italian threat in the Mediterranean had transformed into a Soviet threat. Britain Mediterranean changed into the Soviet threat. Britain entered the war to retain the Mediterranean. The war was over and the enemy defeated, but a powerful state had laid its claims to the Mediterranean and Africa, as well as the Red Sea. The Turkish press correctly linked the destiny of Italian colonies in the Mediterranean and the Red Sea to the problem of the Straits. Some newspapers wrote that Molotov's claims regarding Tripolitania, the Dodecanese Islands and Eritrea were a means of applying pressure to the Allies in response to their refusal to accept the USSR's plans to put a military base in the Straits. Turkish journalist N. Sadak wrote in *Aksham* on 24 September that the deployment of Soviet occupation forces on the territories of the Balkan countries, former German satellites, posed the greatest threat for Turkey. He condemned the Moscow-formed governments of Bulgaria, Romania and Yugoslavia, saying that Turkey could not feel at ease until democracy was restored in these countries. N. Sadak believed that if the Balkan problem were resolved then peace would be restored. Sadak explained the failure of the London session as continuing Soviet rule in the Balkans and increasing demands in the Mediterranean and Africa.¹²⁶

Meanwhile, various Armenian organizations again demanded to return Kars, Ardahan and Artvin to the Soviet Union through the mediation of the Council of Foreign Ministers in London. Their appeal was broadcast all over the world by TASS. The Turkish press considered these Armenian demands as a continuation of traditional Russian policy and manifestation of Soviet imperialism. *Cumhuriyet* newspaper of 22 September wrote that the TASS information about the Armenian appeal was published in the USSR earlier than in the United States, and this clearly demonstrated the source of this concoction.¹²⁷

It was Soviet demands against Turkey and increasing claims to the Mediterranean and the Near East that made the United States change its point of view on the Straits question. Growing US interest in the subject manifested itself in the visit of American Congressmen to Turkey in autumn 1945. In their statement Congressmen pointed out that the US did not support the construction of a military base belonging to one country on the territory of another, and Turkey was no exception to the rule.¹²⁸ Truman's idea of internationalization of the Straits was mirrored in the American press. Newspapers presented this as if a decision on international control had already been adopted. The Soviet Union immediately responded to the fabrications of American journalists, and the TASS issued a special statement of the Soviet government. On 15 October *Pravda* newspaper published information that several days previously the American press had alleged that leaders of the three powers had agreed to revise the Montreux Convention and thus internationalize the Dardanelles. For that reason, they would hold separate talks with the Turkish government. The TASS declared that this information was

contrary to reality. In fact, a meeting in Berlin had agreed to revise the Montreux Convention, for it was inconsistent with modern requirements and the problem had to be a subject of talks between the three countries and Turkey. The Turkish assessed this statement as reflective of the intentions of the Soviet government to finalize the settlement of the Straits problem. Turkish Ambassador to London Açıklan told the American Ambassador to Ankara that the TASS statement was indicative of the USSR's disagreement not only with internationalization of the Straits but with Turkey's desire to revise the Montreux Convention irrespective of the talks between Turkey and Britain/USA.¹²⁹

Faced with Soviet intensification of the issue, Secretary Byrnes informed President Truman on 19 August of the necessity of writing a counter note, saying that he shared the President's aspiration to placate the Russians by revising the Montreux Convention. However, he stressed it would be inappropriate to propose the internationalization of the Straits without clarifying the true intentions of the Russians.¹³⁰ The British Foreign Office informed Byrnes on 23 October that it would be expedient to react quickly to the Turkish demands and start the talks. With that end in mind, Loy Henderson, Director of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs, sent on 24 October a copy of the note to the British government.

Having familiarized themselves with the American note the British officials were indignant at the fact that from now on they would have to ask permission from Romania and Bulgaria for the passage of British warships into the Black Sea. Additionally, British officials believed that the Russians would be dissatisfied with American proposals or that Russians would turn down any proposals disapproving of the deployment of a Russian military base in the Dardanelles. Despite this pessimism, Byrnes sent on 30 October a note which put forward proposals on the Straits for Ambassador Wilson to hand to the Turkish government. It stated that,

as viewed by the US government, the Montreux Convention has to be revised in 1946. The USA suggests convening an international conference for revision of the Convention and bringing it into conformity with the changing situation. The USA will be glad to attend such a conference, if invited. According to the US government, amendments in the Convention should be based on the following principles: 1) The Straits shall always be open for trade ships of all countries; 2) the Straits shall always be open for warships of the Black Sea countries; 3) warships of non-Black Sea countries shall be prohibited from passing through the Straits except where they have special permission of the Black Sea countries or are under UN jurisdiction; 4) to update the Convention, it is essential to replace the League of Nations in the text by the United Nations Organization and withdraw Japan from Convention membership.¹³¹

On 2 November, the note was handed in to Turkish Foreign Minister Saka. The governments of the USSR and Britain were notified about it. As is seen, the US note did not provide for the construction of a military base by the Soviets in the Straits, and withdrew from the idea of placing the Straits under international control. On 3 November, US Ambassador to Moscow Harriman handed a copy of the note to Molotov.¹³² Stalin watched the US proposals closely and instructed the Soviet Foreign Ministry to prepare a counter note stating that the USSR's stance regarding the Straits remained unchanged. However, this note was not dispatched.¹³³ Still, Ambassador Vinogradov contrived to inform the Turkish government (through the mediation of Greek Ambassador R. Raphael) about the position of his country. In turn, Ambassador Wilson sent a message to the US Department of State in which he informed it that the Greek Ambassador had visited Secretary General Erkin and said to him:

On 13 November Soviet Ambassador S. Vinogradov visited the Greek Ambassador and broached the subject of revision of the Montreux Convention. He declared that the American proposals consisted of insignificant amendments to the text, and in case of war the Convention would not guarantee the security of the USSR. The Greek Ambassador asked what Vinogradov intended by way of guarantees. The Soviet Ambassador replied that the security of the USSR in case of war might be guaranteed by controlling the Straits, and this might be a joint Soviet-Turkish control enabling the USSR to avail itself of military bases within the Straits. Raphael stated that his ten years in Turkey had convinced him that Turks would never agree with such a proposal. The Soviet Ambassador answered that he was not sure: the Turks might agree on certain terms. Raphael asked, whether the Soviet government planned to submit its proposals to the Turkish government. Vinogradov replied that these proposals had already been submitted to the Turkish government in Moscow, June 1945 and reported to the British and Americans in Potsdam.¹³⁴

Commenting on this message, Erkin told Wilson that Vinogradov's "certain terms" under which Turkey would accept Soviet-Turkish control over the Straits actually meant an alliance between the USSR and Turkey. Turkey, however, would never pay this price. The same day, the Greek Ambassador came to Wilson and recounted to him the contents of his talks with Vinogradov, saying that he had not met with the Soviet Ambassador for about six months. He guessed that Vinogradov acted on the Kremlin's instructions, for the Soviets were aware that Raphael enjoyed the trust of the Turkish government and that Vinogradov had earlier made use of Raphael's status to bring the Soviet leadership's point of view to the notice of the Turkish government. Hence, Ambassador Wilson concluded that Vinogradov's statement of 2 November, presented as his personal view, had now been affirmed by the Soviet government; the Soviet government considered the US proposal unacceptable; the Soviets had no desire to prepare a new plan, still, the Russians were ready to insist on proposals as set forth in Moscow and later in Potsdam.¹³⁵

Before responding to the American note, the Turkish Foreign Ministry got in touch with British Ambassador to Ankara Peterson to clarify Britain's stance on the issue. The Foreign Office believed that the issue "should be frozen to avoid confrontation with the Soviets." On 21 November, Ambassador Peterson told Foreign Minister Saka that his government shared the US point of view on the necessity of revising the Montreux Convention, yet did not consider the issue to be urgent.¹³⁶ Of the same view was British Ambassador to Moscow Kerr in his letter to Molotov of 23 November. This correspondence between the British diplomats is indicative of their support for not making changes to the Convention of 1936.

Through the mediation of Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Feridun Cemal Erkin, Turkey indicated its attitude on the Straits to Ambassador Wilson, who declared that he was authorized by the Prime and Foreign Ministers to express his country's satisfaction with these proposals. The credit also went to the United States, which displayed a great interest in preserving Turkish sovereignty and independence. In fact, the US proposals to be discussed at the forthcoming international conference favored Turkey. The Turkish government considered it necessary to clarify Britain and the Soviet Union's stance on the issue before giving a detailed answer to the American note. However, the above-mentioned actions might be considered a positive response on the part of the Turkish government.¹³⁷

Having fully considered the American proposals, backed by Britain, Prime Minister Saracoglu held a press conference on 5 December. Following the US note and especially after some of its provisions were clarified by Secretary Byrnes at a subsequent press conference on

6 November, Saracog˘lu made a statement that reflected Turkey’s stand on the issue. He declared that the problem was of an international nature. After the British and American points of view were expressed, Saracog˘lu stated that “the revision of Convention is stipulated as set forth in its regulations, but the problem is that all three states concerned should inform the Turkish government about their points of view, following which the Turkish government would then express the Turkish view on the subject.” Thus, Saracog˘lu officially expressed his government’s concern about the fact that “the Soviet government has not yet handed an official note to Turkey regarding the future regime of the Straits, as was the case with Britain and the United States.” During the press conference the Prime Minister shed light on many issues. He stated that the US note on the Straits might be taken as a basis for future talks and US participation in the revision of the Convention was “useful and necessary.”¹³⁸ The Turkish government did not like the American proposals, however, when adjusted in light of a Soviet response, Saracog˘lu considered it necessary to welcome them. The Soviet Embassy in Ankara informed the Soviet Foreign Ministry that “the American proposals cause no joy, especially a paragraph which offers to cancel an item entitling Turkey to close the Straits to warships of all powers in cases where it is at risk of war.”¹³⁹

By autumn 1945, relations between the Allies had dramatically deteriorated. Two notes from Ivan Maysky to Molotov of November 1—“On the Economic Policy of Great Britain after the War” and “On the Economic Policy of the United States after the War”—stressed the undesirable results of this policy for the USSR. Of interest is the following phrase: “As for Eastern Europe (Finland, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey and Hungary), the United States shows comparatively little interest in these countries.”¹⁴⁰ A Byrnes-initiated Moscow meeting of Foreign Ministers held on December 16–26, did not produce an agreement on the Straits; instead, it displayed increasing tensions, even confrontation with respect to Iran and Turkey. Under these circumstances, the Soviet Union was in no hurry to put forward new proposals regarding the Straits, preferring instead to pressure Turkey from both flanks. In the period under discussion, the term “Cold War” was not widespread, so the Turkish press in describing developments around the Straits and Turkey applied phrases like “war of nerves” or “psychological warfare.” These phrases were also frequently used in diplomatic correspondence.

NOTES

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2. Olaylarla T¸rk Dıř, Politikası (*Events in Turkish Foreign Policy*), p. 192.
3. Kholodnaya vojna. 1945-1963 gg. Istoricheskaya retrospektiva (*Cold War, 1945–1963: Historical Retrospective*), p. 36.
4. Resolution of the Council of People’s Commissariats of the USSR on Organization of Soviet Industrial Enterprises in North Iran. 10.06.1945. APD PARA, f. 1, r. 89, v. 106, pp. 8–10.
5. Resolution of the State Defense Committee On Geological Prospecting Operations in North Iran. 21.06.1945. APD PARA, f. 1, r. 89, v. 104, pp. 1–3.
6. Resolution of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party on Measures to organize of Separatist Movements in South Azerbaijan and Other Provinces of North Iran.” 06.07.1945. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 162, v. 37, p. 147–148; APD PARA, f. 1, r. 89, v. 90, pp. 4–6.
7. From A. Ivanov to the Near Eastern Department of the Foreign Ministry. 25.06.1945. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 22, pp. 213.
8. T¸rkler, cilt 16, Ankara, 2002, s. 273 (*Turks*, Volume 16. Ankara, 2002, p. 273).

9. From S. Vinogradov to S. Kavtaradze. June 1945. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 23, p. 316.
10. From A. Sarkisyan and G. Arutinov to J. Stalin. 06.04.1945. Armenian Republic Central State Archive of Documents of Social and Political Organizations' (hereafter, AR CSADSPO), f. 1, r. 034, v. 27, pp. 18–10.
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16. K. Arushanov. Report on the Armenian Colony of Tavriz Consul District. 09.04.1945. AFP RF, f. 094, r. 31, fol. 353a, v. 64, pp. 103–116.
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19. From G. Ovanesyan to G. Arutinov. Copies of Translations of the Two Memorandums on the Armenian Question. 02.08.1945. AR CSADSPO, f. 1, r. 034, v. 28, pp. 45–53.
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22. From V. Gryubakov to S. Kavtaradze. 13.04.1945. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 22, pp. 117–120.
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31. *Ibid.*, pp. 5–6.
32. See, for example, N. I. Yegorova. *Istoki Sovetsko-Amerikanskogo sopernichestva v Irane i Tursii* (N. I. Yegorova. "Sources of the Soviet-American Rivalry in Iran and Turkey"), p. 138.
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Chapter Three

Inclusion of the South Caucasus Republics in the Soviet Policy against Turkey

The Allies did not back the USSR at the Potsdam conference on the question of the Straits. President Harry Truman defined territorial claims to the Turkish provinces as a domestic Soviet and Turkish political question, leaving its resolution to the two parties. Analysis of documents and materials shows that from autumn 1945, there began a new stage in the Soviet-Turkish standoff and the burden of this problem mainly fell on the shoulders of the South Caucasus Republics of the Soviet Union, in particular, the Armenian and Georgian SSRs. As Vladislav M. Zubok noted: “Stalin tapped into the nationalist aspirations in those Soviet republics.”¹ In the period under study, the Soviets did not display notable activity in the matter of the Straits. However, the territorial claims of Armenia and Georgia had yielded no desirable results; therefore, from August 1946 the issue of the Straits came to the forefront of the Soviet foreign policy.² A compromise solution, though not reflected in the documents of the Potsdam conference, was obvious for the Soviet leaders: the USSR should reject the idea of stationing military bases in the Straits, and in this case the Allies would overlook Soviet claims to Kars and Ardahan.³ American author N. Sheehan noted that Stalin

clumsily instructed Molotov in June 1945 to demand a lease from Turkey for a Soviet base in the Straits and the return of two Turkish districts, once conquered by the tsars, that Lenin had ceded to Turkey in 1922 [in fact, this had occurred in 1921 in accordance with the Moscow and Kars agreements signed between the Turks and Soviets] when a weak Soviet Union was seeking tranquility on its southern borders. (The territorial claim was probably just a bargaining gambit, as Stalin later dropped it).⁴

It might be supposed that at the initial stages of development the territorial claims had been put forward as a means of pressuring Turkey in the matter of the Straits. Subsequently, it became evident that from autumn 1945 the territorial claims turned into a major factor determining the Soviet policy with respect to Turkey.

The victory of the USSR in the Second World War was put forward from summer 1945 as the main argument to justify Soviet claims against its neighbors. Stalin himself did not doubt the fairness of these claims. Russian scientists V. Zubok and C. Pleshakov were right in holding that “Stalin, perhaps, expected that the Turks, shocked by the Red Army’s triumph, would give up, and Washington and London accept it as a *fait accompli*.” This time, a disagreement broke out between Molotov and Stalin. At the end of his lifetime Molotov conceded that Stalin overestimated the Soviets’ might and was very stubborn. At the same time, it was obvious that Stalin put forward territorial claims as a pretext for the talks; thus, he abandoned them in

1946.⁵ It should be taken into account that his territorial claims to Turkey regarding the latter's eastern provinces were a logical continuation of identical territorial claims to Iranian Azerbaijan, and all such actions of the Soviet government have to be considered in concert. The idea of joining two contiguous territories to the Soviet Union was put into practice from June–July 1945. On the other hand, Stalin's talks with Secretary General of the Comintern Executive Committee Georgi Dimitrov on 25 November 1940 had not yet become known to history.

It should be recalled that Stalin promised to banish the Turks from Europe and even Turkey proper. In so doing, he emphasized the statistical data, including two million Georgians, 1.5 million Armenians and one million Kurds. In autumn 1945, Georgian and Armenian leaders sent ethno-historical references to Moscow to provide information about the eastern *vilayets* of Turkey. These references were essentially a sop to substantiate Stalin's claim of 1940. Allegations that in 1946 Stalin retreated from his territorial claims are groundless. While from 1947 this question had not been raised in the Soviet foreign policy, only in May 1953 did the Soviet Union, acting on behalf of Armenia and Georgia, officially abandon its territorial claims to Turkey.⁶ On 29 March 1948, the Political Bureau approved a list of instructions for the new Soviet Ambassador to Ankara Aleksandr Lavrishev. The two-page text consisted of nine items. The text pointed out that the Soviet Embassy in Turkey should not show initiative in improving relations with Turkey. Relations between the Ambassador and Soviet Embassy members should not overstep the official framework. Should the Turks touch upon Soviet-Turkish relations, it would be appropriate to try to get out of doing this with the excuse that the issue remains unsettled.⁷

Why did Soviet leaders try to realize their territorial claims with the hands of Armenia and Georgia? In the first instance, the point here is about the desire to avoid accusations of expansionism and imperialism, to deserve gratitude of emigrant organizations, introduce them into the sphere of its influence and then use them in their own interests. Also, there were plans to ensure international support for the territorial claims, using for this end the prestige of separate countries and well-known political figures, which once had advocated the Armenian national movement.

In summer 1945 the Soviet Foreign Ministry sent secret instructions to the leaders of Georgian and Armenian SSR, as well as the Foreign Ministries of the two republics to start collecting necessary information about the territory, national composition, history and cultural monuments of the eastern *vilayets* of Turkey. At the same time, Soviet special services arranged provocations on the border between Armenia, Georgia and Turkey. Populated border areas of Turkey were frequently fired upon. The Soviet special services arranged an explosion of a bridge across the Arax River linking Armenia and Turkey. They also conducted an air raid against Turkish soldiers. Simultaneously, on the instructions of the country's leaders, the State Security Commissariat began collecting information about foreign Armenians, their political organizations, interests, and attitudes toward Armenia.

In August 1945, the Soviet special services obtained a "Guide for Our Propagandists" prepared by the Armenian Dashnak Party, which became an important source of research into

the Armenian movement. The booklet was immediately translated into Russian and sent to the State Security Commissariat. The booklet was based on propaganda aspiring for a unified and independent Armenia. It noted that the main purpose of the Dashnak Party was to combat Turkey. This struggle was to be completed with the liberation of occupied Armenian lands and formation of an independent Armenian state. For this to happen, the Dashnak leaders advocated the destruction of the economic life of Turkey, stirring up a world anti-Turkish movement and creating numerous obstacles to Turkey abroad—in short, to harm Turkey by every possible means. The booklet added that the Kurdish factor played a crucial role in the anti-Turkish struggle. In considering the Kurds as their natural allies, the Dashnaks proposed to back the Kurdish movement, avoid anti-Kurdish attacks and conceal the collaboration between Armenians and Kurds.⁸

Account has to be taken of the fact that the Soviets also obtained information from other sources about the importance of the Kurdish factor in the Near East. In August 1945, during a meeting with Kavtaradze, Iranian Ambassador to Moscow Majid Ahi reported that disturbances were likely to take place in Iranian Kurdistan, the population was intimidated, and pogroms and lootings were expected to take place. The Ambassador pointed out that the government was going to send troops to Mahabad to restore order however, the Soviet command disagreed with this plan. Kavtaradze noted that the idea of sending troops to Mahabad was not new; that the Ambassador as far back as 3–4 months previously had raised this question, but as time passed, and none of the expected disturbances took place. Ahi complained that all these were tricks of the British who armed reactionary forces to take advantage of the situation. Asked by Kavtaradze about British interests, the Ambassador replied that the British wanted to cause the Kurdish revolt in order to create “the state of Kurdistan” in the Near and Middle East between Iran, Turkey, Iraq and Arab countries.⁹ Majid Ahi’s information was correct with a small proviso. At that moment it was the Soviet Union that planned to stir up disturbances among Kurdish tribes to thus pressure Iran, Turkey and the oil regions of Iranian Mosul. In other words, all these were provocations of the Soviet special services. The Dashnak booklet indicated that in addition to the Turkish territories, the Armenians were going to annex Akhalkalaki and Lori in Georgia, Mountainous Garabagh¹⁰ and Sharur-Nakhchivan in Azerbaijan. For this to happen, it was recommended to start propaganda work among the local population to make the latter initiate the attempts at annexation. Further, the booklet considered some issues of national life, relations to the Soviets, accommodation of emigrants, etc.¹¹

From summer 1945, the First Secretary of the Armenian Communist Party G. Arutyunov sent letters and reports to the Kremlin condemning the anti-Soviet activity of foreign Dashnaks. Yet, his territorial claims to Turkey and neighboring Soviet Republics were no different from the program targets of the Dashnaks. As has been noted above, on July 6, 1945 Armenian leaders appealed to Stalin and Molotov substantiating their territorial claims to Turkey. The Armenian appeals were divided into two components. The first component was built on the idea of foreign Armenians returning to their homeland, hence it was required to expand the territory to accommodate everyone. The second component, initially directed against Turkey, was later

redirected against Soviet Azerbaijan. In considering Stalin and Beria's position in the top echelons of power, the leadership of Armenia and Echmiadzin did not risk raising territorial claims against Georgia. In the beginning of this process, Georgian leaders showed no particular activity. However, subsequently the situation changed radically. Upon the inquiries of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, in August, first Armenia and then Georgia prepared their territorial claims against Turkey and submitted them in an enlarged report to Molotov. On the basis of these two historical-ethnographic references the Soviet Foreign Ministry prepared on 18 August the above-mentioned report "On Soviet-Turkish Relations." The second section of the report was entitled "The Question of Territory Annexed by Turkey from Transcaucasian Soviet Republics." The report pointed out that "another unsettled question of the Soviet-Turkish relations requiring settlement is the question of Armenian and Georgian lands annexed by Turkey after the First World War." Then the report described the events of 1918 in Transcaucasia and "seizure of Baku by the Turks," stressing that after the denunciation of the Peace of Brest-Litovsk, Turks declined to return occupied lands. On March 16, 1921 Soviet Russia and Turkey concluded a treaty and Turkey, taking advantage of the difficult economic and international position of Russia, succeeded in solving the territorial question in its favor. Turkey annexed from Russia the southern part of Batumi district, Kars region and Surmeli district of Erivan (Yerevan) province. Note that the first two territories were a part of Russia from 1878, while Surmeli district was a part of Persia. The report noted that from time immemorial these were ancient Georgian and Armenian lands but later, the Turks seized them. The report underlined that the point was about Armenian and Georgian lands which Turkey once captured and later, availing itself of Russia's weaknesses, recaptured again. The Soviet Foreign Ministry believed that

after the war in Europe there sprang up a lot of unsettled territorial issues. However, the issue of Armenian and Georgian lands was the most urgent. The capture of these lands by the Turks seriously violated the territorial interests of the Georgian and particularly Armenian SSR, essentially weakening their strategic security. The total area of the lands captured by Turkey was 26,000 sq. km. Armenian lands comprised 20,500 sq. km, i.e. about 80 percent of the territory of the Armenian Republic, while Georgian lands amounted to 5,500 sq. km, i.e. 8 percent of the territory of the Georgian Republic. It should be noted that Armenia as a contemporary state was the only country within the boundaries of which their resided a minority of the population, i.e. just one million Armenians, an insignificant part of the entire Armenian nation. Over one million Armenians resided outside the Soviet Union. This situation was accounted for by the fact that a considerable part of primordial Armenian homeland with its ancient culture was in enemy hands.

The document stressed that after the victory of the Soviet Union over Germany, Armenians in America, and the Near and Middle East increasingly tended to return home—to Soviet Armenia. "However, today's Soviet Armenia scarcely has the capacity to accommodate foreign Armenians. Its stony and waterless lands are unfit for cultivation. Note that arable lands are just $\frac{1}{6}$ of the entire territory of the country." The report indicated that lands taken away from Armenians were not suitable for agriculture, and were not pastures or grazing areas. Whereas the density of the population in Soviet Armenia was forty-three inhabitants per square kilometer, that of the annexed lands was just three or four per sq. km.

As witnessed by many impartial observers, of the 2.5–3 million Armenians that had resided in Turkish Armenia during the latter half of the nineteenth century, more than one million had been exterminated in 1894–1896 by Turkish Sultan Abdülhamit II in 1915–1916 by the Young Turks. Another one million Armenians fled to other countries worldwide. A

similar massacre was carried out by the Turks in the lands occupied by them in 1918.

The report implied that:

These territories should be returned to their legitimate owners—the Armenian and Georgian peoples. It was legal right of Transcaucasian peoples who jointly with all the nations of the Soviet Union contributed to the salvation of European civilization from fascist barbarism. It should be noted that all those supporting this right of nations will thoroughly back just Soviet demands in line with this.

As viewed by the authors of the report, these were problems the resolution of which formed the basis of further development of Soviet-Turkish relations under new circumstances after the victorious war of the Allied states against Hitler's Germany. Confidence was expressed that resolution of these problems would be advantageous both to the USSR and to Turkey. However, "success on this matter will upset the international circles which stir up disturbances to complicate relations between neighboring states. The time is ripe for the foreign policy of Turkey to pursue an independent course."¹²

On the basis of this document Kavtaradze prepared a draft plan of division of lands to be annexed from Turkey and divided between the two republics of the Soviet Union. The document stated that this territory covered approximately 26,000 sq. km. Kavtaradze proposed to grant 20,500 sq. km to Armenia and 5,500 sq. km. to Georgia. The Georgian part included the southern part of Batumi district, while the Armenian part comprised Artvin, Ardahan and Olti. Such a formulation of the issue seriously troubled Georgian leaders.¹³

First Secretary of the Georgian Communist Party K. Charkviani discussed this issue with leaders of the republic. As a result, scientific institutions were instructed to draw up historical-ethnographic and geographic references proving that the southern part of the Batumi district, Artvin, Ardahan and Olti belong to the Georgian people. Having discussed this question with Charkviani, Georgian Foreign Minister G. Kiknadze sent a letter to Beria, and in early September 1945, made his way for Moscow. Addressing L. Beria, G. Kiknadze wrote:

On October 13, 1921 a treaty on friendship between the Soviet Republics of Transcaucasia and Turkey was concluded. This treaty and identical treaties on friendship and brotherhood between the Russian Federation and the Ukrainian SSR, on the one hand, and Turkey, on the other, were concluded in hard times for the young Soviet Republics.

Mention of "the weakness of the young Soviet Republics" was reminiscent of Molotov's speculations in his talks with Sarper, as well as of Molotov and Stalin in their statements at the Potsdam conference. Further Kiknadze noted: "Under the treaty of October 13, 1921, the Soviet Republics had to cede parts of their territories to Turkey—already occupied by this country—to avoid war. Thus, the southern sector of the former Batumi district, as well as Artvin, Ardahan and Olti districts were taken away from Georgia."¹⁴

It is possible that Moscow, Tbilisi and Yerevan had simultaneously experienced a memory loss regarding the events of 1918–1920. It would be appropriate to recall that in 1918 Armenia separately declared war on Turkey. However, two months later, Dashnak Armenia was defeated. On 19 September, the army of Kazim Karabekir liberated Sarikamish, Kars on 30 October, Gümrü on 7 November, and then approached Batumi. On 2 December, belligerents concluded the Treaty of Gümrü. Stalin wrote: "Dashnak Armenia fell prey to the Entente

provocation which pushed it against Turkey and then abandoned it to be torn to pieces by Turks.”¹⁵ As is known, when drafting the treaty of 13 October which settled border disputes between Turkey, Armenia, and other allied Republics, Soviet Russia acted as a mediator.

In a letter to L. Beria, Kiknadze touched upon Turkey’s stand during the war:

During the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union against fascist Germany, Turkey violated the main principles and provisions of the treaty of October 13, 1921, which were plainly set forth in Article 10. Turkey’s violation of the treaty was that it acted inconsistently with the spirit and letter of the existing treaty of friendship. This became obvious after Turkey began shutting its eyes to the activities of Pan-Turkists, German agents aiming to create a “Greater Turkey” at the expense of the annexation of Crimea and the Caucasus from the USSR.

Recognizing this, Kiknadze believed that “Turkey has actually annulled the treaties of friendship between it and the Soviet Union, so the problem is about the renunciation of these treaties and, hence, return of the territories to Transcaucasian Republics it originally owned.” Kiknadze complained to Beria that the Kavtaradze’s report granted the Ardahan and Olti districts to Armenia. Kiknadze insisted that a territory with 12,760 sq. km. would be included into Georgian SSR, and 13,390 sq. km. be included into Armenian SSR. He added that this issue had already been discussed with K. Charkviani.¹⁶ As is seen, two southern republics of the Soviet Union considered their demands to be fair and final. In fact, these aspirations unexpectedly led, as historian Vladislav Zubok concludes, to considerable tensions between Armenian and Georgian Communists. Armenians’ sudden prominence in Stalin’s plans vexed the officials of Georgia. They nurtured their own “national project,” according to the disputed Turkish provinces allegedly constituted Georgian ancestral lands.¹⁷

On September 4, 1945, Kiknadze prepared one more report of seven items entitled “On Georgian Territories Included into Turkey,” which was sent to Molotov, A. Vyshinsky, V. Dekanozov and I. Samylovsky. The first item of the document said, “the Treaty on Friendship and Brotherhood between the Russian Federation and Turkey of 16 March and an identical treaty between the Soviet Republics of Transcaucasia and Turkey of September 13, 1921 were concluded under compulsion. Annexed from Transcaucasia were the southern sector of the former Batumi district and former Artvin, Ardahan, Olti, Kars and Kagizman districts and the Surmeli district of the former Erivan province. The second item of the report noted that during the Patriotic War Turkey violated the main principles of these treaties and tried to annex Crimea and the Caucasus from the Soviet Union to create a “Greater Turkey.” In doing so, Turkey actually suspended the Treaties on Friendship between the two countries. G. Kiknadze wrote in the third item that “when solving the question on restoration of the 1878–1918 borders, the Georgian SSR could have hoped for inclusion in its territory of the southern sector of the former Batumi district and former Artvin, Ardahan and Olti districts with total areas amounting to 12,760 sq. km.” Beyond any doubt, territorial claims of Georgia were not confined to this, and the next two items “substantiated” the necessity of joining South-Western Metskhetia (Parhal, Tortom and Ispir provinces) and Lazistan (Rize and Trabzon provinces). Kiknadze wrote: “In the two regions of this province [South-Western Metskhetia]—Gurdjibogaz and Bayburt—the Turks have fully denationalized the old Georgian population. The same is true of Lazistan. . . . The probability remains that Lazistan might be granted and

autonomy.”

To his thinking, reunion of the lands of the South-Western Metskhetia and Lazistan with Georgia would ensure security of the south of Georgia and, in the first instance, the Black Sea port of Batumi. The seventh item pointed out that attached to the report was a brief review of provinces annexed by Turkey, and a map to make the above more convincing.¹⁸

The historical study “On Georgian Provinces Annexed by Turkey” was compiled in fifteen pages. Kept at archives of the Georgian President, this “top secret” report was compiled at the request of the Georgian leadership by academic S. Janashiya. The historical part of the report was practically identical to “the letter of Georgian academics, later published in the press. Janashiya was among these academics.”¹⁹ There was also an appendix of two pages, that described territories and populated localities between Turkey and Georgia. The report noted that the Batumi district occupied an area of 6,975 sq. km., of which 2,799 sq. km. fell to Georgia under the treaty of 1921, and 4,176 sq. km. to Turkey. According to the census of 1897, the Batumi district numbered 63,200, including 53,900 Georgians, 8,000 Armenians, 1,000 Russians, and 300 from other nationalities.²⁰ Strangely, the statistics did not indicate the Turkic population. True, it said that 2,000 of the Georgian population were Lazs and the rest Ajars. Both were Muslims, and nobody questioned this fact.

More interestingly, the report contained information regarding Ardahan and Olti. For example, both districts occupied an area of 8,588 sq km with a population of 96,120. The report deliberately falsified the census of 1897 with 47,766 Turks. They were attributed to Muslims of Georgian origin—Eski Gurdji. Next followed 12,402 Turkmens and Karapapaks; 16,070 Kurds; 10,543 Greeks; 5,043 Armenians; 3,495 Russians; and 801 other nationalities. To confirm these districts’ belonging to Georgia the authors refer to the *Comprehensive Register of Gurdjistan Province*. To give proof of the lack of Turks in these districts, they were included in the register under the title of Eski Gurdji, Turkmens, Karapapaks and Kurds. A new edition of the register, prepared by S. Chikiya, made changes to the old one and thus “Georgianized” them. The report noted that the Ardahan and Olti districts were a part of Upper Georgia–Metskhetia. However, the fact that in November 1944 Metskhetia Turks as victims of Stalin’s “Turkophobia,” were forcibly banished from their native lands was hushed up in the report. After “substantiation” of the importance of Metskhetia region for Georgia, the report cited its borders: the whole upper part of the Kur River basin and the entire part of Chorokh River up to the “Gurdjibogaz” pass. Further, it alleged that the Turks seized Metskhetia as far back as in the sixteenth century, and finally established themselves there in seventeenth century. “From that time there started a forcible Islamization and Turkicization of the region” and “a greater portion of the indigenous Georgian population, which declined from adopting Islam, had to flee to central Georgia.” The report put forward the idea that “the Turkish language began spreading among the Georgian population only after the adoption of Islam” and that “though the Georgian population of Ardahan and Olti districts has, in the main, been Turkicized linguistically, it, nevertheless, does not forget its Georgian origin: titling themselves as “Eski-Gurdji,” i.e. ancient Georgians. As has been noted above, contributing to this idea was a book *Deferi Mufassal Vilayeti Gurdjistan (Comprehensive Register of Gurdjistan Vilayet)*.²¹ In

early September 1945, on the way to Moscow G. Kiknadze took this document with him, as well as a book entitled *Archaeological Travel to Ardahan and Olti Districts* which gave a detailed description of the said regions. He handed the two books to L. Beria.²² In his memoirs Sergo Beria reaffirmed his father's participation in the inquiry. He wrote: "Father often told me how Turkey seized Georgian lands, and I had an impression that he was not indifferent to the destiny of Mingrels who lived on the occupied territory."²³ It was N. S. Khrushchev who also recalled Beria's active involvement in the process.²⁴ According to Khrushchev, Beria who was from Georgia, like Stalin, kept bringing up the subject, saying that Kars and Ardahan used to belong to Georgia and the Soviet Union should demand their return now that Turkey was weakened as a result of its neutrality during the war and would not be able to resist.²⁵

Much of the information on national-ethnic composition of these regions' population, as provided in the report, was inconsistent with the truth. It was obvious that these figures had undergone changes over the previous twenty-five years. During the forty years since the Russian-Turkish war of 1877–1878, despite serious attempts to change the national-ethnic composition of Kars, Batumi and Ardahan as parts of the Russian Empire, the Turkish component proved to constitute a majority in the region. That's why Turkey readily agreed to hold a plebiscite under the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. Either at the end of the nineteenth century or beginning of the twentieth century, the results of a census in Kars, Batumi and Ardahan would demonstrate the majority of the Turkish population. Over this same period, 56.3 percent out of 730,000 population of the South-West Caucasus were Turks; 26 percent—Armenians; 3 percent—Georgians; 15 percent—Russians, Gypsies, Greeks, etc. As for separate regions, the figures stood as follows: 70 percent of Batumi's population were Turks; 12.5 percent—Armenians; 7 percent—Georgians; 49.5 percent—Kars population were Turks; 29 percent—Armenians; 0.3 per cent—Georgians; 19.3—Russians; 75.1 per cent of Akhaltsik population were Turks; 14.1 percent Armenians; 10.5 percent—Georgians.²⁶ This information was submitted in 1919 to the Versailles Peace Conference and the parties concerned did not call these figures into question.

It should be noted that in addition to territories, officially declared by Stalin and Molotov, the Georgian leaders emphasized Western Metskheta and Lazistan. Whereas the first part of the report dealt with the southern part of the Batumi, Ardahan and Olti provinces, lost in 1918–1921, the second part was devoted to "proving" the Georgian claims on the Western Metskheta and Lazistan, lost as far back as the sixteenth century. Authors of the report divided the South-Western Metskheta into five regions: Parhal, Torton, Ispir, Bayburt and Gurdjibogaz. The report pointed out that "the most Turkicized are two southern regions—Gurdjibogaz and Baybur where the de-nationalization of the Georgian population came to an end." Therefore it implied that Georgia might not lay claim to these regions; they were located in the outlying districts and refusal from them did not violate the territorial integrity of the Georgian SSR. As for the first three regions with a total area of 9,500 sq. km. and definition of their borders, the report considered this to be of top priority. The last section of the report was devoted to Lazistan, or Chanetia. Borders of this territory start from the borders of the Batumi province and further to the west along the Black Sea coast to Termodon River near the town of Terme.

This territory occupies approximately 20,000 sq. km. and embraces the capes of Rize, Trabzon, Fici, and Fener. Trabzon was the town of Mingrels with L. Beria as its native resident. Note that medieval wars with Byzantium and events of the eleventh to thirteenth centuries found their parallel in the report. Finally, the report implied that “Georgian SSR, besides the southern sector of the former Batumi district and former Artvin, Ardahan and Olti districts, could lay claim to its historical provinces, including Parhal, Tortom and Ispir (South-Western Metskhetia) and the East Chanetia (region of Rize) and the Central Chanetia (region of Trebizond).”²⁷

The Turkish political circles were still unaware of confidential inquiries delivered to the Soviet leaders in early September; however, in the June talks with Sarper, claims to Turkey from Stalin and Molotov in Potsdam made the goals of the Soviets clear. Turkey ignored the parties that had laid the territorial claims—Georgia and Armenia or the Soviet Union. In early September the Turkish government made a statement regarding the claims. On 5 September Saracoglu told a monthly meeting with journalists that “the present government, like the previous Turkish government, like all previous Turkish governments, would maintain friendly relations with all countries, especially neighboring ones. To attain desirable results, it is essential to gain mutual respect to avoid possible speculation. We want nothing from anyone, and we shall give nothing to anyone.”²⁸

Upon his return from Moscow G. Kiknadze informed the First Secretary K. Charkviani that the both reports had been handed to Molotov and L. Beria, as well as to Deputy Foreign Ministers A. Vyshinsky and V. Dekanozov, and head of department I. Samylovsky. Kiknadze added that he appealed to S. Kaftanov on the occasion of opening a faculty of oriental studies in the Tbilisi State University named after Stalin, as well as to Molotov regarding the destinies of the Georgian population in Iran.²⁹

In October 1946, the Georgian Foreign Ministry appealed to the Soviet Foreign Ministry with a request to assist in arranging radio broadcasts for the Georgian population in Iran. In his letter to Kiknadze V. Dekanozov expressed his consent to undertake preparatory work. It simultaneously proposed to carry out anti-Turkish propaganda using this radio-line.³⁰ A correspondence between Moscow and Tbilisi demonstrated that the Soviets planned to use the Georgian population in Iran for political purposes. As soon as Soviet plans in Iranian Azerbaijan proved to be a failure, and the Iranian Majlis (parliament) rejected a proposed oil concession, the Georgian leaders were instructed to establish direct contacts with the Georgian population in Iran.³¹

It is noteworthy that while the question of the Georgian population in Iran was essential for Moscow in order to pressure the Iranian authorities, it was not a top priority for officials in Tbilisi.³² Note that earlier Cold War Georgia focused on deriving greater profits from the Soviet claims to Turkey. Analysis of the Georgian Presidential Archives confirms once again that L. Beria was initiator and organizer of all these claims. He believed that the Soviets should abandon the claims to Black Sea Straits (Bosporus and Dardanelles) in favor of territorial concessions from Turkey.³³

It is obvious in the period that followed the Potsdam conference and until August 1946, the

lessening of demands on the Straits and emphasis on territorial claims were attributable to differences of opinion among the Soviet leadership. Touching upon the foreign political initiatives of his father, Sergo Beria pointed out that his supporters in the Foreign Ministry, including Kavtaradze, advocated L. Beria's political line.³⁴ Note that L. Beria relied on some top military officials interested in solving the "Georgian question." Of particular interest is a conversation between the commander of the Transcaucasian military district, Marshal Feodor Tolbukhin (1945–1947) and former First Secretary of the Georgian Communist Party Akaki Mgeladze. In his memoirs issued in Tbilisi in 2001 Mgeladze noted:

When the army under my command entered Bulgaria, I phoned comrade Stalin and said that I could liberate Georgian lands on the territory of Turkey. He immediately reacted, saying it was impossible for political reasons. I was very anxious about this issue and hoped to persuade comrade Stalin. Temptation was too great. You know, the military has such a habit. I again phoned comrade Stalin, but he asked me to forget about this idea. This would be a political adventure. If he had agreed, I would have liberated these lands within twenty-four hours.³⁵

Indeed, on the presentation of L. Beria Marshal Tolbukhin was appointed commander of the Ukrainian front; the probability remains that it was Beria who arranged telephone talks with Stalin. In his book A. Shirokorada writes:

Above 300,000 soldiers, 4,000 ordnance, about 400 tanks and 1,200 airplanes entered Bulgaria in September 1944. This army was bursting to go into action, as witnessed by the 28 September–28 October Belgrade offensive. If this army had attacked Turks, the latter would have easily been defeated by Soviet T-34, KB, and IS tanks, to say nothing of the Soviet aviation.³⁶

In autumn 1945, leaders of Armenia again raised the question of the repatriation of Armenians residing abroad. In his letter of October 27, 1945 First Secretary of the Armenian Communist Party G. Arutyunov wrote to Stalin that for some time past patriotic sentiments were growing among Armenians abroad, which enabled the Soviet Union to expand its influence among Armenian Diaspora. Resolution of this problem would largely be dependent upon work with foreign public and religious associations that were influenced by organizations hostile to the USSR. Arutyunov added: "One of these religious associations is the Armenian Catholic Congregation of Mhitarists headquartered on the island of St. Lazar in Venice. This congregation is directly subordinated to the Vatican. For over two hundred years Mhitarists have carried out religious-ideological activity among Armenian Catholics." Because of the Vatican's irreconcilable position against the USSR, G. Arutyunov suggested that Stalin make the Mhitarists friends of the USSR. He stressed:

If the problem be solved, we would succeed in compelling the Vatican not to use Armenian Catholics, numbering 150,000–200,000, against the Soviet Union. In stationing this religious-ideological centre of Armenian Catholics on the territory of Soviet Armenia, we would be able to draw the Armenian Gregorian church nearer to the Armenian Catholicos church and thus subordinate them to the Catholicos of All Armenians in Echmiadzin. Our confidence in the final success is based on the sentiments and patriotic feedings of most Mhitarists and General Abbot of Mhitarists, Serapion Uluedyan, who in a conversation with Mhitarian, head of consulate department of the Soviet Embassy in Italy, declared that "once the Armenian church was single; Mhitar, founder of our congregation, adopted Catholicism and moved from Echmiadzin center. . . . But if we were admitted to Soviet Armenia on favorable terms, we, beyond any doubt, would subordinate to Catholicos in Echmiadzin."

In the end of his letter Arutyunov asked to send two representatives of scientific organizations of Armenia to study sentiments of Mhitarists and appeal to Catholicos of All Armenians and the government of Armenia regarding the return of Mhitarists to their homeland—Soviet

Armenia.³⁷ Earlier in November 1945 G. Arutyunov again appealed to Stalin and Malenkov to finalize an issue of repatriation. Attached to the letter was a draft decision of the Council of People's Commissars prepared in Yerevan on the permission to repatriate foreign Armenians.³⁸

In November 1945, the Political Bureau passed a secret resolution, which said that two representatives of Armenian scientific organizations would be sent to Venice to identify sentiments of Mhitarists and other Armenian communities. Extracts from the protocol of this meeting were sent to Molotov, L. Beria, G. Malenkov, A. Mikoyan, V. Merkulov and the Central Committee of the Armenian Communist Party.³⁹

On 21 November 1945, the Political Bureau passed one more resolution due to the appeal of the Armenian Communist Party. It was decided to agree with the proposals of the Armenian Communist Party.⁴⁰ Some practical steps were immediately made. Six days later, Catholicos Gevorg VI appealed to the heads of the USSR, USA and Great Britain with a request to assist in joining lands forcibly annexed by Turkey to Soviet Armenia. Under the decision of the Political Bureau of 21 November the Council of People's Commissars passed a decision "On Measures Aimed at Returning Armenians Abroad to Soviet Armenia." The Political Bureau approved the draft, prepared jointly by the Soviet Foreign Ministry and consisting of six clauses on 22 February. The Armenian Foreign Ministry was instructed to render assistance to Armenians returning from Bulgaria, Greece, Iran, Lebanon, Romania and Syria. The Soviet Foreign Ministry jointly with the Armenian Committee of Aid to Settlers was to compile lists of Armenians and simultaneously propagate ideas for their return to Soviet Armenia. To execute measures on repatriation, the Armenian Foreign Ministry was permitted to send two representatives to the above-mentioned countries. A commission headed by I. Samylovsky, including G. Ovanesyan (Council of People's Commissars of Armenia) and Ovakimyan (Soviet State Security Committee), was set up to work at the Soviet Embassies abroad. Soviet representations to the United States, France, Egypt, Turkey and Iraq were instructed to compile lists of Armenians willing to move to Soviet Armenia and adopt Soviet citizenship. An emphasis should be laid on able-bodied Armenians and their families. Besides, it was decided to back the initiative of progressive Armenian organizations on collecting funds to assist settlers. Stalin and G. Chadayev signed this decision.⁴¹

In adopting this decision, Stalin wanted to demonstrate to the Western Allies the firmness of his stand on the territorial claims to Turkey and reaffirm a thesis that lands were required to accept repatriated Armenians. The Soviet propaganda proceeded from an idea that the territory of Soviet Armenia was insufficient to accommodate all the Armenians arriving. Governmental circles of Armenia and Georgia demanded Moscow cancel the Moscow⁴² and Kars⁴³ treaties of 1921. In doing so, these circles distorted the provisions of these treaties and interpreted them as they liked.

Both the Soviet government, leaders of Georgia and Armenia and related press often raised the issue as if Turkey, profiting from the weakness of the Soviets, had forcibly enforced the Moscow and Kars treaties. As the press put it, in late 1920 to early 1921 Turkey allegedly invaded Transcaucasia, seized the southern part of Batumi province of Georgia, the districts of Artvin, Ardahan and Olti, captured the provinces of Kars and Surmeli from Armenia.⁴⁴ As

viewed by the press, these occupied lands had not been returned to the Soviet Union; instead, under the treaties of March 16, 1921 and October 13, 1921 these lands had been brought under the jurisdiction of Turkey, and the Soviet Republics were forced to make territorial concessions to Turkey to avoid war.⁴⁵

Meanwhile, political circles and diplomatic institutions of the USA and Great Britain were watching closely the events around the Soviet claims to Turkey. From summer 1945 the Western press hinted that Soviet leaders had instigated the territorial claims of Armenians to Turkey. On July 24, 1945 *The Times of London* forecast that the issue of Straits regime revision would involve claims to return Kars and Ardahan to the Soviet Union. *The New York Times* of August 8, 1945 wrote, "Over the past few months Russia has been engaged in stirring up Armenian nationalistic propaganda." On December 9, 1945 Reuters wrote,

a key factor in Turkey is Armenian propaganda toward unification of north-eastern provinces of Turkey with Soviet Armenia. Turks are prone to consider this propaganda as a means of pressure to compel Turkey to agree with the Soviet proposals, including the creation of bases in the Straits zone, granting of Kars and Ardahan to Turkey, and change of domestic regime of the Straits.

In reviewing the Reuters information, the Armenian Foreign Ministry wrote: "To all appearances, the correspondent shares a Turkish view on the subject."⁴⁶ On September 21, 1945 Turkish Foreign Minister Saka, in reply to E. Wilson's question, noted that Turkish Ambassador to Moscow Sarper did not raise any questions of Soviet-Turkish relations from an 18 June meeting in Moscow.⁴⁷ US Secretary of State J. Byrnes reminded Wilson on 19 October that the Soviet-Turkish treaty of 1925, denounced unilaterally by the Soviet party on March 19, 1945, would be invalid on November 7, 1945, so it was necessary to preliminarily ascertain the possible consequences of this step for Soviet-Turkish relations. US Ambassadors in London and Moscow received identical telegrams from Byrnes.⁴⁸ In complying with this instruction, Chargé d'Affaires Gulman held consultations with the Foreign Office and told Byrnes on 22 October that the "British Foreign Office does not believe in radical changes in Soviet-Turkish relations because the Russians are likely to make an open anti-Turkish démarche. If Turks keep their head, the war of nerves will start again and the Turks would have to wait for the storm to pass and overcome their fear."⁴⁹

A message from Ambassador E. Wilson of 23 October also said that the cancellation of the Soviet-Turkish treaty would lead to no serious changes in the relations between the two countries. He wrote:

If one approaches the problem from a Turkish point of view it is obvious that Turkey has shown initiative in arranging the June talks in Moscow and holding unofficial talks between Sarper and the Soviet Ambassador to Turkey. Molotov's criticism of Turkey will make the latter stick to this political line. The Turks believe that after the Potsdam conference the USA, United Kingdom and particularly the USSR have taken the initiative, and now they are awaiting our proposals on making changes in Montreux Convention. From the Soviet standpoint, the latest TASS statement clearly indicates that the Soviets disagree with internationalization of the Straits. It is quite possible that the USSR would prefer to decline from debates over internationalization hoping that Turkish domestic problems would lead to the creation of "friendly" regime here. There is also an idea that Soviet claims to the Straits are accounted for by desire to conceal another goal: to seize control over Turkey. Perhaps, the USSR has already decided to use powerful pressures against Turkey. But implementation of such a decision would be excused by counteraction and linked to the denunciation of the treaty of 1945.⁵⁰

US Ambassador to the USSR W. Harriman reported to Byrnes on 24 October that from now

on the USSR had turned into a powerful state, eager to expand its territory, while Turkey considers itself a country threatened by the USSR, so the treaty of December 17, 1925 is invalid. After 7 November the Soviet policy with respect to Turkey would be based depending on principles of territorial expansion. The termination of the treaty would have its effect on the intensification of the war of nerves.

As far back as June the Turkish Ambassador to Teheran sent telegrams to Ankara, which warned against the influence of these events on Turkey. The first telegram advised that the Soviet government tried to incite rebellion in North Iran and, if successful, the Soviets would prevent the Iranian government from restoring order. In several days, the second telegram was sent which informed that if the rebellion failed it might be assessed as a preparatory measure to join the eastern Turkish provinces to Armenia. Turkish Foreign Ministry officials believed that in autumn 1945 events predicted in the telegrams came true, and they evaluated them as consequences of a nerve war with long-sighted consequences.⁵¹

At the same time, Turkish, British and American special services had materials on Soviet plans to pressure Turkey from Iranian Azerbaijan and Bulgaria. Measures were taken to supply the Azerbaijani population of Iran with weapons and ammunition. On September 28, 1945, a Soviet resident in Iran asked for 20,000 rifles, 2 million cartridges, etc. to be distributed among the population. A certain part of these arms was designed for the populations of the region bordering Turkey. To cover up traces, Soviet leaders instructed to send Iranian and German, not Soviet, weapons to Iranian Azerbaijan, particularly “Brno” rifles of Czech production.⁵² In order to control the situation, Soviet leaders made a secret decision on October 8, 1945 to reinforce Iranian Azerbaijan. Baku military district and the Azerbaijan Communist Party were instructed to train personnel to annihilate those opposing the movement for autonomy of Iranian Azerbaijan. In mid-October, the first weapons arrived in Iranian Azerbaijan through Soviet NKVD channels.⁵³ On October 21, 1945, commander of the Baku military district General Ivan Maslennikov and M. J. Bagirov wrote to L. Beria:

To execute the decision of the Central Committee of October 8, 1945 on the matter of Iranian Azerbaijan and North Kurdistan, we have done the following: singled out twenty-one experienced operative officers of the NKVD and the NKGB (People’s Commissariat of State Security) of Azerbaijan SSR, capable of arranging operations to annihilate people and organizations hampering development of an autonomy movement in Iranian Azerbaijan. These comrades should also create armed guerilla detachments from the local population. To assist operative officers, seventy-five militants closely related to NKGB bodies were selected from among local residents.

Before departure they were to have political, military and special training in Baku.⁵⁴

From autumn 1945, the political circles of Turkey and the country’s press organs closely watched developments in Iranian Azerbaijan. An article by H. Yalçın entitled “The Azerbaijani Issue” was published on September 16, 1945 in *Tanin* newspaper. The article described the beginning of a national movement in Azerbaijan but stressed that this was instigated by Moscow. Yalçın wrote: “If the movement for the independence of Azerbaijan started straight after the withdrawal of foreign troops from Iran, we would treat it as local movement and assess it as an internal affair of Iran. But while Russian pressures and intrigues are still appreciable in Iran, we cannot regard the Azerbaijani issue separately from them.” Yalçın explained Azerbaijani developments as Russia’s unwillingness to leave Iran. He

pointed out:

Russians promise Azerbaijan freedom and independence. They also supply this country with arms and money. They want Azerbaijan to struggle against Iranians. As long as Azerbaijan is quiet, as long as it is related to Iran, it would be very difficult, from an international point of view, to separate Azerbaijan from Iran and annex it. As soon as an Azerbaijani national movement rises in revolt, it will immediately be Bolsheviks, enemies of independence and nationalism, under the pretext of democracy and protection of freedom, who interfere with the settlement of the Azerbaijani issue. Suffice it to make a step, and Iranian Azerbaijanis would re-unify with Russian Azerbaijanis. Today, just one part of Azerbaijan is subordinated to the Bolsheviks, tomorrow the entire unified Azerbaijan will be. If Azerbaijanis want freedom and independence, they should claim it from their government after the withdrawal of Russian troops. It is essential to negotiate with the government. Otherwise, they will court disaster.⁵⁵

In the second half of October, Turkish military intelligence (MIT, National Intelligence Organization) received information about the movement of Soviet divisions from the USSR and Czechoslovakia via Romania to Bulgaria. "According to MIT's estimates Turkey's military position with respect to the USSR was parlous indeed. After consultations with the British, French, and Turkish general staffs, MIT placed about 200,000 Soviet soldiers in Bulgaria, 500,000 in Romania, and about 175,000 in the Trans-Caucasian regions of the USSR adjacent to eastern Turkey."⁵⁶ NKGB carried out the training of operative officers to act in Bulgaria and Iranian Azerbaijan. The Soviet Political Bureau instructed NKGB bodies to arrange a six-month training course for twenty operative officers for Bulgaria. Responsible for this mission were Molotov and Viktor Abakumov.⁵⁷

US Ambassador to Ankara sent a report to the Department of State which said:

Over the past three days seven or eight Soviet divisions moved from the USSR to Romania and kept on moving southwards. The movement began two weeks previously. The other day, five or seven divisions arrived in Romania from Czechoslovakia. It may be supposed that there are about fifteen Russian divisions in Romania. Turkish intelligence reaffirmed the fact of seven infantry divisions, one anti-tank corps and one motorized brigade. Also confirmed was that three Soviet divisions crossed the Danube over the past seventy-two hours and entered Bulgaria. As a result, the number of Soviet divisions in Romania and Bulgaria has reached forty, and that of anti-tank divisions taking into account two newly arrived in Bulgaria now equals eight. Besides, there is unconfirmed information about Soviet troops in the Caucasus and Iranian Azerbaijan.

Further, Wilson wrote: "Yesterday I talked to the Foreign Minister. He said that the Turkish government is very anxious about the concentration of Russian troops in Bulgaria and Romania." Ambassador Wilson summed up the information:

Should the Soviets engage in the war of nerves, they will go on concentrating their troops. As a matter of fact, they have gained a certain success through stirring up a tense situation. But there are other elements as well which cannot be ignored. Incessantly, Soviet press and radio pave the way for annexing the eastern regions of Turkey to Soviet Armenia. There are also other factors which I cannot assess properly.⁵⁸

Later in October, Soviet military activity on both flanks of Turkey led to rumors about upcoming war. On 29 October, Harriman met with Molotov and tried to learn his view on the subject. However, Molotov replied that it was impossible, that a war between the USSR and Turkey was unthinkable and that he was surprised at those spreading these rumors.⁵⁹

Molotov denied a military threat; meanwhile, military preparations were in full swing. In threatening Turkey from the Balkans, Iranian Azerbaijan and the South Caucasus Republics, the Soviet Union tried to drive Turkey into a corner. Strengthening of the Transcaucasian military district could result in the short-term war in Eastern Turkey. The reinforcement of South

Caucasian Republics in autumn 1945 and strengthening of Transcaucasian military district personnel was an unpleasant sign. Military and political circles of Turkey were shocked. On 31 October, Head of the General Staff Kazım Orbay met with military attaché, General Harriman and openly told him about Turkey's anxiety. Wilson wrote to the Secretary of State:

Yesterday, head of the Turkish General Staff General Orbay met with my military attaché and analyzed the current situation. Information about the concentration of Russian troops coincides with information of the General Staff about movement of three additional divisions from Czechoslovakia to Romania. General Orbay declared that this information about Bulgaria and Romania was reliable and that information about Iran was erroneous, while news of the Caucasus was incomplete (there are 10–15 divisions). Orbay evaluated the situation as follows: the presence of the Soviet troops in the Balkan Peninsula might be explained by desire to strengthen control over these countries, pressure the course of elections, threaten Georgia or devise operations against Turkey. The presence of Soviet troops in Iran might be explained by the Kurdish problem or plans against Turkey. He failed to find other explanations, except for plans to oppose Turkey. . . . In exchanging views with the American attaché, Orbay stated that in case of aggression the Soviets would make an attempt to cross the Straits via Thrace. He also pointed out that the Soviets were willing to seize the eastern *vilayets*.⁶⁰

On November 1, 1945, President İ'nönü made a report to the third session of Grand National Assembly. The report analyzed problems around Turkey arising from the domestic and foreign political course of the country, especially the slanderous anti-Turkish campaign. He started his review with spring 1939 where Turkey was the only country to have chosen the right path and backed Great Britain and France. In 1940, France was defeated, and the Battle of Britain began. And again Turkey was the only country to have praised Great Britain's actions. In early 1941, Turkey opposed the German-Italian forces from Rhodes to Thrace. As is known, in the period in question "axis powers" formed a government in Iraq, while the French Vichy government took an openly anti-British stance in Syria. To be fair, all of Turkey was surrounded by "axis powers." Touching upon relations with the Soviets, İ'nönü declared: "As soon as the war between the Soviets and Germany started, we declared that we would be neutral. How was our position assessed at that time? Suffice it to refer to appraisals of belligerents. The Soviet government through its Ambassador stated that the "position of Turkey was very useful to the Allies." As for the United States, President İ'nönü recalled that on December 4, 1941 the US President made a statement that the protection of Turkey was of vital importance for US protection, so the President promised to ensure land lease deliveries even if an appropriate agreement failed to be signed. But the agreement was signed on February 23, 1945. As for the British government, İ'nönü reminded that "it highly appreciated our position, suffice to recall British Prime Minister's statement in Adana earlier 1943."⁶¹

Then İ'nönü responded to the unfair criticism Turkey had been subject to from late 1943. He said:

We were criticized for concluding a treaty on friendship with Germans prior to the war between the Soviets and Germany. The Germans had reached the gates of Istanbul and had formerly concluded a non-aggression pact with Soviet Russia. Why should we decline from a written obligation for Germans not to attack Turkey while our country opposed "axis powers" alone, when America had not entered the war and Britain was applying its efforts to protect itself from German invasion and where the Soviets were linked to the Germans by the non-aggression pact? Especially as the pact stipulated that Turkey would be loyal to its allied obligations and that aid from Germans in Syria and Iran via transit by Turkey was categorically excluded, and we compelled Germans to adopt all these conditions.

İ'nönü pointed out that

the Soviet government, Great Britain and America praised Turkey's position after we concluded a treaty of friendship with the Germans. This meant that the treaty of friendship with Germans was necessary at that period, so criticism against Turkey was artificial and far-fetched. Some claimed that we hindered Soviets when Germans were advancing to the Volga by concentrating our troops on the eastern borders. Official allied authorities should learn the truth. . . . When the Germans reached the Volga, our defensive line stretched from Rhodes to Hopa. The probability of an unexpected German operation against our Black Sea front made us distribute our forces along the Black Sea littoral and even concentrate here in Ankara forces to defend the capital. Newly discovered German plans clearly indicate that this precaution was timely and appropriate. In the late of summer 1942, we officially informed the Soviet government that we were concentrating our troops in Trebizond [Trabzon] and Hopa to prevent German invasion from the rear of the Caucasian front; that's why we had to re-station our forces. So re-stationing of our forces was directed exclusively against "axis powers."⁶²

After this explanation I'nönü went on to examine Turkey's belated joining of the war against Germany and Japan to thus reject critics' view

that our declaration of war yielded no results and that it occurred after the victory had been apparent. We have no claims regarding the effectiveness of this action. We just want to say that our line of behavior during the nightmare before we had declared war helped our allies gain victory. Our joining the war against Germans and Japanese took place only at the request of the Allies. Hence, it was of certain importance for them. Nobody can tell us that we had declared war after the Allied victory was evident. We had always been together with them in the hardest days. And we have no intention, to profit from the situation and participate in prey sharing.

Furthermore, I'nönü explained why Turkey did not join the war straight after it broke off relations with Germany in August 1944. He stressed:

Our position, as agreed by a written decision between Great Britain and Turkey, was as follows: this decision is the first step to real participation in the war. The British government notified that it would discuss with us details of Turkey's joining the war later. From that our Allies did not demand from us to fulfill the decision, though they could have done it.

President I'nönü also touched upon Soviet accusations, especially during talks between Sarper and Molotov, of war deliveries to the USSR via the Straits: "This is absolutely unfounded. If the Allies failed to help each other using the Straits, it was explained not by Turkey's unwillingness but by the fact that axis powers succeeded in keeping Mediterranean routes closed from sea and air until 1945." In this respect I'nönü concluded: "It is impossible to claim that the Montreux Convention was detrimental during the war. It was evident that the Straits were in reliable hands and that there were no obstacles for free use of this route for the good of all nations."⁶³

In his detailed report to the Grand National Assembly President I'nönü reprovved territorial and other claims to his country. He declared:

The German policy considered the Second World War as a continuation of the First. All the states which during the First World War were in the ranks of central European powers found themselves in the same camp during the Second World War, except for Turkey. Turkey had to endure the burden of the First World War to a greater degree than other countries within the subsequent four years: it had managed to conclude peace just in 1923, and it lost its great empire and suffered countless hardships to preserve its existence within its national borders. Sixteen years later; during the Second World War it stood up for the United Nations and demanded nothing to compensate for its losses, it just tried to be useful. How could anyone demand territorial concessions from Turkey? We have no doubts that if we succeeded to explain the fact of the past and our present rights to the Soviet people, the peoples of the British Empire and the United States, they would excuse us. However, it is impossible to attain this goal and penetrate the souls of the Soviet, British and American peoples. Hence, we rely on the heads of great powers only, their justice and impartiality, to understand our preoccupation and anxiety.

Then I'nönü summed up:

We openly declare that we have no debts to anyone to repay with Turkish lands and rights. After the denunciation of the

treaty on friendship with Soviets we applied all our efforts to conclude an amended treaty on new terms. The results of these efforts are well known. We have not lost hope that the truth will properly be understood and that good neighborly feelings will triumph. Perhaps, good relations between the two countries will be established. We welcome future prospects.⁶⁴

Soon after the İönü's speech, a meeting and exchange of views of American, British and Soviet Ambassadors to Ankara took place on 2 November. During discussions the Soviet Ambassador S. Vinogradov confessed that on instructions of his government on January 19, 1942 he expressed gratitude to Turkey for its firm position. However, he insisted that Turkey lost the right to expect a good attitude from the Allies for refusal to join the war straight after the Cairo conference. Ambassador Wilson objected to Vinogradov that neither his country nor the Soviet Union joined the war until Germany attacked them and added that Turkey's refusals to Germany's demands proved to be useful for Allies. Asked by Wilson, whether the Soviet government intended to make any proposal to the Turkish government, Vinogradov replied that Stalin had stated the Soviets' position in Potsdam. "Does this mean that demands for bases remain in force?" asked Wilson. Vinogradov answered that in case of war the USSR would not be able to ensure its security. In his report to Byrnes on these discussions Wilson wrote: "Vinogradov speaks so ill of Turkey that one can hardly believe in the success of the Straits. Vinogradov's behavior confirms once again the Straits issue has been invented by the Soviets to cover their true intentions—establish control over Turkey."⁶⁵

İönü's speech to the third session of Grand National Assembly aroused great interest in the Turkish press and society. Newspapers widely commented on the President's statement on a correct political line during the war. Confronting Turkey, the Soviet Embassy reported to the Soviet Foreign Ministry that some journalists "tried to falsify historical facts to prove the pro-Western policy of Turkey during the war. In connection with this they emphasized that Britain and America allegedly appreciated Turkey's stand despite both countries' hesitation on the issue." Other journalists praised Anglo-Americans for "their appreciation of Turkish services to the Allies," though they alleged that "Russia will not understand it," for "it is a locked safe, and those inside are unaware of what is happening outside."⁶⁶

According to the information of the Soviet Embassy, not only reactionary journalists but also progressive ones had backed the foreign policy section of İönü's speech as well. They active uphold a thesis of "the correctness of the political line of Turkey during the war." Well-known journalists M. Sertel and A. Yalman welcomed the President's arguments, saying that nobody was entitled to accuse Turkey of its policy. İönü's speech was so much welcomed that his permanent critics Sabiha Sertel and Cami Baykurt said nothing of the President's speech on the country's foreign policy. The Soviet Embassy reported to Dekanozov: "Nearly all the journalists stressed fragments of his speech which touched upon friendship with Britain and America and Arab countries headed by Iraq."⁶⁷ Yalçın wrote in *Tanin* on 11 November: "The history of the latest period has no example of a situation where Turkey is so much welcomed and sympathized with as today. It is an ally of Britain, a reliable friend of America, and is willing to establish friendly relations all over the world." On 19 November, former Foreign Minister R. Aras published an article in *Tan* which stressed that borders between the two countries had been established on mutual consent and could not be changed. Aras believed that

some changes might be made to the Montreux Convention, not affecting its main principles. In his view, it would be appropriate to replace Japan by the USA in the text of the convention, and the very fact of handing in an American note to Turkey might be evaluated positively regarding the Straits issue.

The Soviet Embassy in Ankara urgently translated İ'nönü's speech into Russian and sent it to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. Moscow thoroughly analyzed it, and researcher V. Kornev made a six-page report for the Soviet leaders, which criticized some statements of İ'nönü. Head of Near Eastern Department of the Foreign Ministry I. Samylovsky sent a text of İ'nönü's speech and Kornev's report to the Foreign Ministries of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia. Entitled "Notes on President İ'nönü's Speech," Kornev's report was very critical. For example, "Traditionally speeches of İ'nönü delivered yearly on 1 November at the opening ceremony of Grand National Assembly have been notable for particular demagoguery." Kornev makes it clear that İ'nönü's speeches are made of two parts: internal and foreign political with special emphasis on their topicality. This time, Kornev focused on the foreign political aspect of his speeches. To Kornev's thinking, İ'nönü tried to prove that

in the Second World War Turkey has been in the ranks of the United Nations. However, Americans/British and Soviets differently interpreted this approach. Americans and British considered Turkey's position to be favorable for Allies, while Soviets, as viewed by İ'nönü, highly appreciated Turkey's intentions to curb Germany's aspirations to seize the Caucasus.

As for Turkey's subsequent behavior (1943–1945), İ'nönü alleged "the Soviet Union unfairly criticized Turks, while the Americans and British kept on praising Turkey." Summing up his notes, Kornev makes two conclusions: first, İ'nönü seeks to excuse Turkey's having concluded a treaty on friendship with Germans on the eve of Germany's attack against the Soviet Union; second, he tries to exculpate Turkish unwillingness to take part in the war after a formal breaking of diplomatic ties with Germany. Further, the report condemned İ'nönü's arguments on the concentration of Turkish troops in the regions of Hopa and Trebizond. Kornev questioned a thesis on counteracting the German invasion of the Caucasus, saying that "this concentration was of anti-Soviet nature, since it was designed to prevent Soviet attempts to use a part of the Turkish littoral some Turkish Black Sea ports to protect against Germans. Germans failed to break through the Caucasus not because the Turks hampered them but due to the fact that in late 1942 a German army in the region was defeated."⁶⁸

The Soviet Foreign Ministry believed that a part of İ'nönü's speech, which talked about the severance of relations between Turkey and Germany and Turkey's alleged joining the war against "axis powers" was demagogical, so İ'nönü is eager to demonstrate that "these actions of the Turkish government proved to be useful for the Allies. The report stressed "the break of relations with Germany and declaration of war on Germany and Japan was not the Turkish government's desire but rather a request of the Allies, İ'nönü maintained. Kornev recalled

throughout the Second World War, Turkish leaders, when Turkey's behavior and its obligations to Greece against Bulgaria and to Great Britain and France against Germany were questioned, referred to the material unpreparedness of their army and the lack of ammunition and arms. After the war Turks ceased to advance this argument and preferred to justify their pro-German policy by the fact that the Allies did not ask Turkey to join the war against Germany but limited themselves to breaking relations off and formally declaring war on Germany and Japan.

Kornev charged İ'nönü with passing over in silence the Soviet Union's stand on Turkey's joining the war after Teheran conference: "As is known, the Soviet government suggested that Turkey join the war and thus break off relations with Germany in considering this to be Turkey's first step against the 'axis powers.' Kornev regrets that such a position of British and Americans enabled the Turkish government to manipulate them with promises to break off relations with Germany and decline from real involvement in the war against Germans. The same was true of the Turkish government's expectations that Turkey would be excused in the postwar period as an allegedly full-fledged member of the UN, which had made its contribution to the cause of democracy. And, finally, commenting on a last fragment of the foreign policy speech of İ'nönü, which touched upon relations between Turkey and other countries, Kornev noted: "İ'nönü tries to demonstrate that the Soviet Union, through denouncing a treaty on friendship with Turks, and in spite of the efforts of the Turkish government to improve relations with the USSR, is not receptive to these overtures."⁶⁹

The two other pages of Kornev's report are reflective of a preconceived attitude of the Soviets to Turkish domestic policy. Kremlin leaders believed that İ'nönü's speech played an important role in whipping up an anti-Soviet campaign in the Turkish press. Indeed, proceeding from İ'nönü's speech at the Grand National Assembly, the Turkish press condemned the Soviet claims to Turkey, Molotov's statements of 6 November, Armenian claims to the eastern *vilayets*, and the Soviet policy in the Balkans and Iranian Azerbaijan. The Turkish press believed that on the eve of the anniversary of the October Revolution, Stalin should clarify the Soviet position on topical international problems. However, it was Molotov who delivered a report. Some journalists linked it to the illness of Stalin, others to changes in the Soviet leadership. All Turkish newspapers were prone to think that Stalin would have said the same, as Molotov did, and that the text of the report was agreed upon with the Soviet leader. The Turkish press termed Molotov's speech as a set of idle words. Thus, Molotov linked aggravation of the international situation to attempts to create a Western Bloc. Some Turkish newspapers explained this as the West's answer to the creation of an Eastern Bloc of Slav states by the Soviets. Besides, Molotov declared that the USSR was not going to impede democratic development among Germany's former Allies. The Turkish newspapers angrily responded, writing that the Russians opposed development of trade relations between Romania and Bulgaria and Turkey. In comparing Molotov's speech with that of Bevin on 7 November, the Turkish journalists came to the conclusion that the British Foreign Minister's speech was "sincere, topical and lively."⁷⁰

Despite growing tensions in Soviet-Turkish relations after the statements of İ'nönü and Molotov, the Turkish President and Prime Minister sent a telegram of congratulations to the Soviet leaders in connection with the twenty-eighth anniversary of the October Revolution. In informing Stalin about the Saracog˘lu telegram, Molotov wrote: "Our press has already published a telegram of congratulations of İ'smet İ'nönü to comrade Kalinin. I think it would be expedient to publish the Saracog˘lu telegram as well even though it is not very satisfactory."⁷¹

As for the Balkan countries, the Turkish press focused on the elections in Bulgaria,

welcoming the American note to Bulgaria on the necessity of postponement of the elections as the first sign of the fact that the United States decided to resist the Soviet policy directed at establishing its dominance in the Balkans. The Turks explained the Balkan situation by erroneous US-British policies. A report of the Soviet Embassy noted “in condemning the irresolute policy of Anglo-Americans in the Balkans, Turkish newspapers are engaged in an anti-Soviet policy and criticize the democratic governments of Tito, Groza and Dimitrov. “They allege that the USSR was dictating its will to these governments, which are not independent but rather “Quisling type.”⁷²

Under Soviet control since autumn 1945, Bulgaria tried to maintain normal relations with Turkey. With that end in mind, member of the Bulgarian Cabinet of Ministers Antonov arrived in Ankara. He declared that it was his own initiative, since he was very troubled with relations between the USSR and Turkey and as friend of both countries he cherished hopes on improvement of these relations.

Prior to his meeting with Prime Minister Saracog˘lu, Antonov visited the Soviet Ambassador S. Vinogradov “to avoid rumors.” During the meeting with the Turkish Prime Minister, Antonov asked why the Turkish government does not show initiative. Saracog˘lu reminded him of the past experience saying that when they agreed with Vladimir Potemkin on the conclusion of a treaty of alliance a visit was made to Moscow in 1939 to conclude talks. The result was a failure. Later, Turkey tried to improve the situation a few more times but in vain. The last attempt was made the previous summer when the Soviet Ambassador inspired him to go to Moscow for talks with Molotov. A question arose on territorial claims to Turkey, so the Prime Minister considered further initiatives as inappropriate. During the talks, Antonov pointed out the growing improvement of relations between Turkey and Iraq, Syria and other Near Eastern countries. “To be frank, if things continue in this way, I’m afraid the Soviets will not like it.”⁷³

In November 1945, the Soviets had already made some practical steps in Iranian Azerbaijan.⁷⁴ It is natural that the Soviet policy in Iranian Azerbaijan and measures to establish Soviets in the South Caucasus compelled Turkey to be very prudent. Political circles of Turkey took a tough position with respect to Iranian Azerbaijan developments, since they saw it as a demonstration of Soviet expansion that posed a strategic threat to Turkey. Therefore, the Turkish press charged the USSR with attempts to separate Iranian Azerbaijan from Iran, create a Communist Party, and appropriate oil resources in Northern Iran, to get access to the Gulf and rule in the Middle East and India. The Turkish press believed that the Soviet Union provoked mutiny in Iranian Azerbaijan and delivered weapons to mutineers and thus tried to impede the Iranian government from putting the situation in order. Some newspapers wrote that these Bolsheviks decided to seize “the heart of Iran” before leaving the country. The second Secretary General of the Soviet Embassy to Turkey I. Tsatsulin in his report to Dekanozov pointed out that “Turkish journalists deny the national character of the movement in Iranian Azerbaijan.”⁷⁵ On November 27, 1945 Yalçın published an article in *Tanin* newspaper entitled “Iranian issue in Turkey.” He wrote that the “Iranian issue” was associated with the Turkish and the Straits issues. The Azerbaijani issue and related consequences are a sign which indicates the situation with the Turkish front.” Yalçın pointed out that Russia was the first to

have started a political offensive against Turkey and raised a question of three *vilayets* and the Straits. But Russia failed to attain its goal. “The first reason of its failure is the fact that the Turkish people are united and unanimously resisted the war of nerves and possible threats. If Turkey weakened its government or changed it and created a ‘friendly’ government, beyond any doubt our eastern *vilayets* would start a war for liberation, something similar to the developments in Azerbaijan. Aid to the Iranian mutineers from Russian Azerbaijan should have been conveyed to our mutineers.” As viewed by Yalçın, the prudence of Turkey and its precautions against any possible risks made Russian imperialism change its front. “At present, the Anglo-American resistance in Iran and forthcoming success will have the same meaning for Turkey as well. Should Russians want war, they could do it immediately even against Turkey’s desire. But they preferred to attain their goal in Iran using diplomacy and trade. And they will do that until the war is declared.”⁷⁶

In the first days of December 1945 Turkey suffered a rough week. Against the background of the growth of Soviet pressures, the domestic leftist press began propagating Communist ideas. The threat of the Soviet scenario in Iran repeating itself in Turkey was quite real. Further aggravating the situation were Soviet armed forces stationed in Bulgaria. Involvement of the South Caucasus in the struggle of Soviet republics showed that the threat is approaching the borders. On 2 December, the Soviet press published a resolution of the Soviet Cabinet of Ministers of 21 November on resettlement of foreign Armenians in Soviet Armenia. Soviet mass media, in the first instance, Moscow radio, carried out open anti-Turkish propaganda. Behind publications in *Tanin*, *La Turquie*, *Yeni Dunya* newspapers and *Gorushler* magazine stood the Soviet Union. Newspapers and magazines that appeared in early December were received by Turkish public opinion as ideological substantiation of the expected Soviet invasion in Turkey. Turkey was shocked. The article “Freedom in chains” by leftist journalist Sabiha Sertel published in the magazine *Gorushler* and pro-Communist materials of the first issue of *Yeni Dunya* disturbed Turkish society, in the first instance, university youth. The Sertel article said that the main principle of society of free people is their ability to sacrifice freedom of separate personalities in the name of a broad stratum of the population. Then she explained that freedom is a common treasure in her country. Freedom may be restricted for the good of the nation. Sertel demanded that workers and peasants of the democratic state should have their own organizations, and their rights to demonstrations and strikes should be secured.⁷⁷

Political circles familiar with the Communist dictatorship realized what lay behind these lines. The term “popular masses” was being used to advance the Communist cause and establish the so-called dictatorship of the proletariat. The political circles were aware that the point was about the enslavement of 160 million people, as Communists and their leaders see the “freedom of popular masses.” In her articles Sertel asked: “In what democracy does the law on the press cancel freedoms of speech, thought and consciousness?” Yalçın replied: “In the Russian democracy, which you praise and are delighted with.” Sertel asked: “In what democracy does the civil code ban citizens from creating societies and political parties?” Yalçın replied: “In the Russian democracy, which you want to establish in our country.” Sertel asked: “In what democracy might a policeman arrest a citizen, deprive the population of the

right to immunity, and the police check citizens to identify their political stances?” Yalçın replied: “In your favorite Russian democracy.”⁷⁸

As is known, the Soviet press accused Turkey of collaboration with fascists, and any country that the Soviets disliked, they identified a manifestation of fascism. Under these circumstances, the new newspaper *Yeni Dunya* declared in its first issue that it was a democratic newspaper, which protects progressive democracy against fascist ideology. In early December, Zekeriye Sertel⁷⁹ called on Turkish public opinion to follow the example of elections in Albania: “we declined from following the examples of the great countries; let’s pay attention to small Albania. The Turkish people has reached the level of political preparedness of the Albanian people in the matter of transition to democracy, has it not?”⁸⁰ Turkish public opinion was indignant at the fact that not only elections of 1945 but also all political processes in Albania proceeded under Soviet control. The Soviet leaders skillfully manipulated the Enver Hoja regime to counteract Balkan countries. In particular, Moscow paid great attention to Albania when supporting the communist movement in Greece. Greek guerrillas applied to Albania for help, and Hoja applied to Moscow for instructions. Stalin advised him to solve this question jointly with Tito. One more case confirms Albania’s joining the sphere of Soviet control. A meeting of the political bureau decided to send 156,000 membership cards to the Albanian People’s Union of Youth and an appropriate instruction from the Soviet Komsomol, Ministry of Communication, Ministry of Sea Transport, and State Security Committee.⁸¹ All contacts with Albania were kept secret, all decisions adopted secretly and, despite this, Sertel advised Turkey to follow the Albanian example.

In the first days of December national and patriotic circles called on Turkish society to resist Communist propaganda. Prominent Turkish poet N. Kamal published on 3 December in *Tanin* an article that called on citizens to “rise up!” The newspaper stressed the necessity of the creation of a national front. In *Tanin* Yalçın pointed out: “Enemy aggression has penetrated into our country in the form of communist propaganda. The point is about *Yeni Dunya* and *Gorushler* magazine. The situation is clear: the fifth column is active and on the offensive. It was Hitler who did the same with the countries he planned to destroy.”⁸² Yalçın completed his statement with the following words: “It is the mission of journalists and free citizens to decide.” The next day *Tasvir* newspaper, which the Soviet Embassy termed pro-fascist, called:

Great Turkish people! Turkish youth! Attention! The fifth column of red fascism is on the offensive. It has appeared on the pages of daily newspapers and magazines. . . . Red fascists are openly guided by directives that they obtain from abroad. They are enemies of the great Turkish nation, enemies of the Turkish morality and being, enemies of the Turkish army. . . . Turkish people! It is time to struggle. We shall fight enemies of our homeland until all of them are annihilated.⁸³

Well-known journalists Asim Us published an article titled “Unmasked” in *Vakit* newspaper which called some materials published in *Gorushler* a “nuclear bomb,” placed in pure brains and minds of the Turkish youth to split national accord in the country.” These calls of the Turkish press had a great influence on society, especially students.

Unrest broke out in Istanbul on 4 December, other sectors of the population joined them. This chaotic movement ended with destruction of editorial offices of *Tanin*, *Yeni Dunya*, *La Turquie* and *Gorushler*, as well as a bookshop that traded in Soviet literature. The TASS correspondent

in Istanbul informed Moscow about the unrest. Commencing from 5 December the Istanbul unrest became the primary topic of the Turkish press. Official organ *Ulus* published an article “Demonstration in Istanbul” by editor-in-chief F. Atay, who listed three important items. First, the demonstration of young people was not premeditated; it broke out chaotically under the influence of democratic newspapers. Atay believed that citizens were indignant at attempts to destroy the state, ignore laws and weaken Turkish society from inside. Second, the Grand National Assembly and the Republican government did not allow illegal actions. Atay wrote that no citizen should doubt that Turkey disposes of effective laws to cope with any danger. Demonstrations may be assessed positively when they do not exceed limits of the law and voice national sentiments. Third, the Istanbul demonstrators came out to the streets after newspapers insulted their national and patriotic feelings, so these demonstrations were not aimed against a specific country and that the TASS correspondent made a great mistake when inciting a clamor. Atay added that truthful or false information matters in interstate relations. TASS as an official organ should be very careful and avoid aggravating interstate relations. Such an activity of the TASS correspondent is another reason for the provocative program of Moscow radio.

On 4 December a meeting of the Grand National Assembly took place where Internal Minister Hilmi Uran declared that demonstrators destroyed a shop that “distributes propaganda literature and serves as medley of some suspicious persons.” Deputies demanded that the “law should prosecute those who oppose the People’s Republican Party and the Grand National Assembly.” Press and propaganda leaders prepared a press release for foreign correspondents to reject the TASS statement that demonstrators put forward slogans directed against the USSR.⁸⁴ Newspaper *Ulus* published on 5 December a report on the press conference of Saracog˘lu who informed that “the Ministry of Justice has 40–50 files about crimes committed by either newspaper. However the government did not apply to start legal proceedings. Perhaps it will be necessary to start some of them.”⁸⁵

Owing to the developments in Istanbul, the Soviet Ambassador to Turkey S. Vinogradov urgently sent his proposals to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. He proposed to officially accuse the Turkish government of strengthening fascist tendencies in the country, as well as to make an official statement on behalf of the Soviet government to Britain and the United States that “the fascist anti-Soviet demonstration in Istanbul may compel the Soviet Union to take adequate measures to ensure its security.” He also suggested publishing a TASS report that “owing to the fascist anti-Soviet demonstration in Turkey, the Soviet government decided to reinforce garrisons along the Soviet-Turkish border.” The Ambassador even suggested breaking off any contacts with Turks.⁸⁶

On 7 December, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, having discussed the proposals of S. Vinogradov, sent him a text of the note to be handed to Turkish Foreign Minister H. Saka. The text of the note said:

According to the information received by the Soviet government, a demonstration of 4 December in Istanbul was accompanied by numerous hostile attacks against the Soviet Union, destruction of two book-shops where Soviet literature was sold and burning of Soviet books, which instigated hostile attitudes to the Soviet Union. The aforesaid hostile actions from demonstrators took place under the passive watch of the Turkish police forces. The Soviet government cannot ignore

these provocative actions against the USSR as indicating that the Turkish government is responsible for these actions.⁸⁷

The Political Bureau approved the text of the note to the Turkish government and concurrently condemned Vinogradov's proposals. A letter to S. Vinogradov read as follows:

We consider your proposals to be absolutely unacceptable and thoughtless. You must understand that we cannot make any official presentations to the Turkish government regarding the growth of fascism in Turkey, since it is a domestic affair of Turkey. We also consider as inadmissible and not serious your proposal about our statement to British and Americans, since saber rattling may have provocative consequences. Your proposal on publishing TASS information that the Soviet government, due to the fascist anti-Soviet demonstration in Turkey, decided to reinforce garrisons along the Soviet-Turkish border is too frivolous. Nor can we accept your proposal on discontinuing our contact with Turkey. You should not make thoughtless proposals that may lead to political complications for our government. Think of it once again and be more sober-minded to comply with your post and mission.⁸⁸

In its reply note of 11 December, the Turkish Foreign Ministry stated that the Istanbul demonstrations were an internal affair of Turkey. After publication of the Soviet note some Turkish newspapers published views that the demonstration was directed against communism in Turkey and was a purely domestic Turkish affair.⁸⁹ An article by Yalçın entitled "Unchanged communist tactics" read: "Orders of Moscow demand that the Turkish government be accused of fascism. That's why they wrote that our government is fascist." Rumors and insinuations around the Istanbul developments complicated Soviet-Turkish relations. Some Turkish newspapers believed that the Istanbul demonstration arose out of the panic over events in Iranian Azerbaijan or the Balkans. They were apprehensive that unless Russians leave Iran and desist from the idea of joining Iranian Azerbaijan, the very idea of Kars and Ardahan would remain topical for them. Beyond any doubt, there were grounds for trouble. Karen Brutens, who for long years worked in the party organs wrote in his memoirs entitled *Thirty Years on Old Square*:

With its plans to punish Turkey for its favorable attitude to fascist Germany in the first year of the war against the Soviets, Stalin intended to remedy the injustice. He even appointed Party secretaries to rule in the future on the territories liberated from Turks and granted to Armenia. For example, a certain Anton Kochinyan was approved Secretary General of Kars province Communist Party.⁹⁰

The Soviet Cabinet of Minister decision of 2 December on repatriation of foreign Armenians caused additional troubles to Turkey as about 300,000 Armenians from ten countries worldwide were planned to be settled in Soviet Armenia in 1946–1949. Though this decision stressed on resettlement in Soviet Armenia only, it was evident that the point was about the lands of Eastern Turkey. Before the end of the war Stalin proposed to resettle several thousand Armenians in Soviet Armenia. He explained his idea by the fact that the war against Germany would be over soon and the USSR intended to seize a part of the Turkish territory. Stalin firmly declared that Armenians must live on these lands.⁹¹

Straight after the publication of the decision of the Soviet Cabinet of Ministers, Soviet Consulate offices abroad began their work to encourage Armenians to repatriate. The Turkish political circles were well aware that this artificially whipped-up campaign pursued one aim – to annex the eastern provinces from Turkey. US Ambassador to Ankara E. Wilson wrote to the Secretary of State: "Perhaps the Soviets believe that such great masses of Armenians having been settled in Soviet Armenia will have to search for new places of residence and demand the

annexation of the eastern provinces of Turkey.”⁹² Wilson advised the Department of State using Embassies in France, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt and other countries where Armenians reside to control the situation and carry on recording the number of resettled Armenians. In a day, the Department of State gave these instructions to the US Embassies in Europe and the Near East. A telegram said that Armenia was in no position to accept all emigrants and therefore this artificially whipped up problem may increase Soviet claims to the eastern provinces of Turkey. The telegram also asked US diplomatic offices abroad to report back about the quantity and composition of the Armenian families making their way to the USSR.⁹³

After the Soviet Cabinet of Ministers allowed Armenians to return home from different countries, a great number of telegrams were addressed to the Soviet Union, which thanked it for the care shown to Armenians. All the telegrams backed the Soviet Union. On the other hand, Armenian Diaspora organizations were apprehensive of the idea of resettlement. In mid-December *Son Telegraf* newspaper published an article entitled “Turkish Armenians and Russian proposal” which said that a small number of Armenians out of 60,000–70,000 Armenian population of Turkey agreed to move to Soviet Armenia and that “these people are unemployed and homeless and strive to become rich immediately.” *Tanin* newspaper published an article “The Armenian Issue,” which said that invitation to Armenians to come to the USSR was an attempt of Bolsheviks to revive the Armenian matter under the cover of Armenians proper after the Soviet Union was refused in annexing Kars and Ardahan regions to Soviet Armenia. *Vakit* newspaper claimed “The invitation of Armenians to move to the Soviet Union was made by the Soviet government not from a humanist motive but for political purposes only.” The newspaper wrote: “It is truth that there are still Armenians who want to be the instrument for this provocation.”⁹⁴ Despite the false information of the Soviet special services, the idea of the return of Armenians to Soviet Armenia was received differently by various sectors of the Armenian population of Turkey. A certain Ashot Gasparyan declared that attempts to send Armenians to their homeland were not the solution to the Armenian question. Just 30,000–40,000 Armenians may be accommodated in Erivan province and this would be unlikely enough for the Armenian emigration. The political situation is that we cannot even dream of joining Kars and Ardahan. Americans have several times declared that they would protect the territorial integrity of Turkey.⁹⁵

In terms of intensified pressures against Turkey, the foreign press published materials about the Moscow meeting of three Foreign Ministers. Ruling circles and journalists of Turkey impatiently waited for the debates over the Straits and Soviet claims to the eastern *vilayets* to start. Turkish Foreign Ministry Secretary General F. Erkin met with Ambassador E. Wilson and drew the latter’s attention to publications in Washington Turkic-language press which said that the Straits issue would be discussed in Moscow. The Ambassador replied that he knew nothing of it. After the meeting the Ambassador asked the Department of State to send him new information, if any, to convey to Turkey.

On the eve of the Moscow meeting, the British party was also anxious about Turkish developments. In connection with this, the US Ambassador to London, Halifax, wrote to J. Byrnes:

Mr. Bevin does not intend to include the Turkish issue on the agenda of the Moscow meeting but in order to reply to the Russians and encourage Turkey and finally adopt a joint decision, he asked to convey to you his request to jointly discuss the issue. Mr. Bevin noted the growing intensity of anti-Turkish war of nerves, as well as the fact that this intensity is not accompanied by military preparations. The British government does not see the Turkish party weakening its resistance to Soviet claims.⁹⁶

After the first information about the Moscow meeting, the Turkish press placed various materials on the matter. The organ of the People's Republican Party *Ulus* newspaper of 10 December wrote that the Moscow meeting does not suggest particular hope, saying "There is mistrust between the USA and Great Britain, on the one hand, and the USSR, on the other, concerning peace principles." The Turkish press noted that Turkey was subject to Soviet pressures as an ally of Britain. As a result, the Soviet-Turkish treaty on friendship was terminated. *Ulus* pointed out that after the severance of friendly relations there followed no military attack but attempts to weaken and undermine Turkey from inside.⁹⁷

On December 12, 1945 Reuters reported an interview with Turkish Ambassador to London C. Açıkalın who declared that Lenin granted Kars and Ardahan to Turkey in 1921, while the Turks gave Batumi to the Soviets. This exchange was a demonstration of trust and friendship between the two countries.⁹⁸

The Moscow meeting should have started on December 16, 1945. On 14 December, Secretary of State J. Byrnes and the next day—British Minister E. Bevin arrived in Moscow. The Georgian newspaper *Kommunisti* published an article of Georgian academics S. Janashiya and I. Berdzenishvili entitled "On Our Lawful Demands to Turkey."⁹⁹ At the moment of the opening of the Moscow meeting *Izvestiya* newspaper placed detailed information about the formation of the national government in Iranian Azerbaijan. The same day Moscow radio announced about this event. On 20 December, newspapers *Pravda*, *Izvestiya* and *Krasnaya Zvezda* re-published the above-mentioned article of the Georgian researchers. At first, the Article was published in Georgian and Russian in Georgia and later sounded through the Moscow airwaves. Not only Byrnes and Bevin but also the entire world learned about Soviet plans in Iran and Turkey. The letter of Georgian researchers looked like a document addressed to the Soviet leaders in early September 1945. As compared with the previous document submitted by Kiknadze to Molotov and Beria, the letter focused on the pre-history of the issue. The letter pointed out that the Georgian people made a great contribution to the victory over fascism and now it has the right to put forward its legal demands. Georgians are appealing to world public opinion regarding ancient Georgian lands annexed by Turkey.¹⁰⁰ According to V. Zubok, the *Kremlin vozhd'* (Kremlin chief, i.e., Stalin) still hoped to neutralize the growing resistance of Western powers to Soviet demands to Turkey. The "Armenian card" and the letter of Georgian academics were timed to influence the discussions at the conference of foreign ministers of the great powers in Moscow on December 16–26, 1945.¹⁰¹

In his recollections of his father, S. Beria wrote that L. Beria was very interested in Turkey, believing that Turkey should play a substantial role in the destiny of Georgia. As an ardent opponent of pan-Turkism L. Beria wanted the return of Georgian and Armenian lands annexed by Turkey. However, S. Beria confirmed that Stalin had personally overseen the applying of pressure against Turkey and the anti-Turkish campaign. He wrote: "Stalin was enemy of Turkey

but this was rather a tradition inherited from the Russian Imperial policy. Stalin headed the campaign arranged by the mass media due to our territorial claims to Turkey. To this end, historians have tried to substantiate these claims.”¹⁰² S. Beria points out that professors Janashiya and Berdzenishvili published an article on Georgian-Turkish relations at the request of his father, Lavrentiy Beria. There is one more document that alleges that the article was ordered by Moscow. This is of a senior researcher of the Georgian Academy of Sciences, D. Zavriyev to the Chairman of the Georgian Council of People’s Commissars Valerian Bakradze December 29, 1945. Zavriyev wrote:

In May 1945 Kavtaradze applied to me with a proposal to write a scientific work entitled “National Regions of Turkey under the Power of Kemalists.” The plan of the scientific work I elaborated was welcomed by members of the Academic Council of the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, Professor Miller. This work has already been completed by me (650 pages) and based exclusively on archival sources, Turkish statistics and the foreign press. It covers the period from 1878 (Berlin treaty) to 1921 (Moscow treaty) and 1945. Academician Evgeni Tarle, and Professors Miller and Kovalevsky approved the work. Owing to the above mentioned démarche of Georgian scientists, I believe that some data of my work is of topical interest—the number of Georgians in Turkey, the number of those speaking their native language, the policy of Kemalists in the Georgian regions of Turkey, economic conditions, etc. I want to submit to you a brief review of this information.¹⁰³

The review consisted of eleven pages, which said that the government of Kemalists was seeking to minimize the national problems of the country. Afraid of the national-liberation movement of Lazans, the government moved them to the inland regions of Turkey.¹⁰⁴ The manuscript of D. Zavriyev was published in Tbilisi in 1947 in Russian under the title *On the Most Recent History of the North-Eastern vilayets of Turkey*. The first part of the book dealt with staying *vilayets* of Kars and Batumi in the composition of the Russian Empire. This part falsified the history of the said *vilayets* from the date of the Russian-Turkish wars of 1877–1918. All materials of the book were designed to support, justify and substantiate territorial claims of the Soviet Union. The second part of the book is devoted to the second march of Turks into Transcaucasia in 1920–1921. In this part, D. Zavriyev tries to analyze the class nature of the Kemalist regime, national policy of the Turkish government, and Turkish policy in respect of Armenians and Georgians.¹⁰⁵

This letter of Georgian academics was timed to coincide with the Moscow meeting and published in the central press, sounded over the radio and backed by Soviet Armenia which immediately put forward claims to Ardahan, Kars and Artvin. Armenians from all over the world had sent letters and telegrams to the Potsdam conference, the September meeting of Foreign Ministers in London and now the December meeting in Moscow, as well as the first session of the UN General Assembly in January 1946. The same letters were addressed to Stalin with a request to annex lands from Turkey and resettle Armenian repatriates there. The meeting of Foreign Ministers of the USA, Great Britain and the Soviet Union began on 16 December. The same day, J. Byrnes received a telegram from American Ambassador to Teheran Wallace Murray, which said:

The Azerbaijani democrats seized control of all towns, including Tabriz and Ardebil, all villages and roads. They held elections and created their Parliament and Cabinet of Ministers. The Iranian government neither has strength to disperse the mutineers, nor hold talks with them or negotiate with the USSR. If urgent measures fail to be taken, the revolt will pass to other regions of the country. Otherwise, the northern regions of Iran would become a part of the USSR.

These apprehensions came true. The same evening Byrnes and Bevin heard over Moscow radio that democrats seized forty towns of Iranian Azerbaijan. US Undersecretary D. Acheson wrote to W. Harriman in Moscow that Azerbaijani developments were the first signal to Turkey and Near Eastern countries.¹⁰⁶

Despite Byrnes and Bevin's attempts, Molotov succeeded in excluding the Iranian issue from the agenda of the Moscow meeting. It was agreed that the issue would be discussed unofficially. On 18 December Bevin proposed to Molotov to exchange views on Iranian Azerbaijan. In reply, Molotov suggested discussing the issue of British military involvement in Indonesia, thus outmaneuvering the British party. Bevin had to discuss the Azerbaijani issue unofficially. On 19 December Stalin received Bevin and Byrnes. The talks touched upon the Turkish and Iranian Azerbaijan issues. Stalin explained that Iran took a hostile stand against the Soviets. This hostility may result in subversive acts against Baku oil fields, therefore the Soviets had to station its troops in Iran. As soon as the security of oil fields is ensured, the USSR will withdraw its troops from Iran and ignore the internal affairs of this country.¹⁰⁷

As for Turkey, the Soviet leader repeated the same claims that sounded in Potsdam. In the course of the Moscow meeting the United States had not yet lost hopes on collaboration with the Soviet Union. Unlike Bevin, J. Byrnes was more loyal to Stalin and Molotov's proposals. Well-known American historian Bruce Kuniholm was right in writing that Americans in Moscow tried to find a common position with Russians. It was no mere coincidence that they declined from debating the growth of Soviet influence in Iran and thus caused the greatest regret of the British and Turks.¹⁰⁸

On 18 December an exchange of views took place between Byrnes and Molotov in the matter of the convocation of a peace conference and attitudes of UN members towards this matter. Molotov pointed out that it would be inappropriate to invite Turkey, Argentina and Honduras to attend this conference. But Byrnes insisted on the participation of all UN members. Molotov specified that Turkey was a European state and UN member, so it was entitled to attend the conference. Byrnes said he did not remember whether Turkey was a UN member or not; Molotov explained it was, and that this country attended the San Francisco conference and was even involved in UN preparatory events. Following Molotov's explanations Byrnes declared that the United States did mean to invite Turkey.¹⁰⁹

On 23 December Stalin received Byrnes, and here the US loyal attitude to Iran and Turkey became evident. Byrnes expressed his grave concern to Stalin by the fact that the Azerbaijani conflict might be raised at the January session of the UN General Assembly. He indicated his hopes that all necessary measures would be taken to avoid this procedure. At the same time, the Secretary of State noted that Iran helped the Soviets during the war and that this country was not an enemy of the USSR. Stalin declared that he was not afraid of Iran's appeal to the UN. He said: "Small countries often seek to set big countries at each other. For example, small countries may complain to the Soviet Union about oppression from Britain and the USA and simultaneously complain to Britain and the USA about oppression from the Soviet Union. Therefore one should be critical to the statements of small countries."¹¹⁰

On 24 December Stalin received Bevin who, distinct from his American counterpart, took a

tough position and opposed Soviet claims. Bevin indicated the concern of his government by consolidation of Soviet troops along the border of Turkey, the anti-Turkish campaign on radio and press, Moscow's encouragement of Georgian claims to the Turkish lands and the war of nerves the Soviet Union was waging against Turkey. Bevin called on Stalin to stop intimidating Turkey, saying that this country was an ally of Great Britain. Stalin replied that his concerns were groundless. Thus, debates in Moscow did not touch upon the Straits issue.¹¹¹ The main result of the talks was lack of confidence of the Western Allies in the possibility of collaboration with the Soviets, whose policy in Iranian Azerbaijan and claims to Turkey demonstrated that the epoch of allied cooperation remained far behind.

Russian researcher of the Cold War period and author of interesting works on the subject Natalia Yegorova points out that the West received the global plans of Soviet leaders. Of no small importance were Soviet claims to Turkey. It was no mere coincidence that during the Moscow meeting Soviet newspapers published a letter of the two Georgian academics to the editor of the Georgian newspaper *Kommunisti*. The letter was published in this newspaper of 14 December 1945 and substantiated territorial claims to Turkey. As viewed by Yegorova, Soviet tactics of blackmail and pressure against Turkey were ill conceived and flawed. It caused the opposite response and aggravated relations with the western Allies.¹¹²

The letter of the Georgian academics published in *Pravda*, *Izvestiya* and *Krasnaya Zvezda* provoked harsh criticism in Turkey. This same day (20 December) the Grand National Assembly discussed the budget of the Foreign Ministry. Istanbul parliamentarian, head of the Turkish delegation to the Kars conference in September–October 1921, General Kazim Karabekir declared: “The Turkish-Russian enmity remained far in the history of tsarism and the Ottoman state. The Moscow and Kars treaties put an end to the hostility.” Touching upon the idea that the treaties of 1921 came as a result of Russian weakness, Kazim Pasha specified that lands around the Kars province were left by Russians under the Kars treaty:

At the date of signing the Kars treaty with the participation of representatives of the Federation of Caucasus Peoples and Foreign Ministers, we were strong enough. Our Eastern Army went to the west, taking cannons and ammunition along with it. The Russians knew it very well. If there had been a vengeful army in place of ours, the Armenians would have been exterminated. That's why when the Russians signed the treaty, they considered it a sign of their indebtedness and thankfulness to us.¹¹³

Kazim Pasha referred to the statements of Russian representative Yakov Ganetsky and Armenian Foreign Minister Askanaz Mravyan. Ganetsky expressed hopes that Turkey would get out of the crisis: “The mighty Turkish and Armenian peoples relinquish mutual enmity forever and will demonstrate this to the world.” On behalf of the three South Caucasian Republics A. Mravyan considered it necessary that “documents of the conference should reflect the wishes of the South Caucasian peoples to the fraternal Turkish people every success in the struggle against imperialism and violence.”¹¹⁴

Kazim Pasha pointed out that at the date of the document signing in 1921 Lenin was the head of the state and Chicherin was Foreign Minister. They also reported to the world that Turkey was waging a liberation war, that this war was fair, and that Turks received what they owned legally. “The Turks believe in justice, and in the struggle for justice they are confident in their

strength. We in the East have defined their borders. And you in the West, be civilized as we are! So spoke Lenin, Chicherin and Kars treaty signatory Y. Ganetsky.” Conversant with Eastern Anatolia, Kazim Pasha used to say:

To possess Kars means to lie in ambush in an effort to seize Anatolia. To possess Kars means to keep control over roads along Tigris and Euphrates to the Mediterranean and Basra gulf. The Kars plateau is our spinal column; if lost, we shall perish. The great personalities ruling our Russian neighbors are aware of our intentions in the liberation war.

Kazim Pasha noted that “if Russians insist on their claims, we would fight without concern for our lives. We shall spend all our money for arms. Both parties to the conflict would lose life, civilization and culture.”¹¹⁵

Then Foreign Minister H. Saka took the floor. He gave a briefing on the history of developments from March 1945, saying that the Treaty on Friendship and Neutrality terminated by the Soviets unilaterally became invalid on 7 November. He declared:

The whole world knows that the Turkish Republic adheres to the values of peace worldwide. We have always been guided by the slogan “Peace in the country, peace all over the world.” Loyal to these principles, we shall build our relations openly and cordially with our neighbors and the entire world. We believe the long-awaited universal peace will come in the end and we hope the UN will make an essential contribution to the peace process.

Saka ignored the Soviet claims and expressed hopes that a new treaty would be concluded to replace the previous one. “We wish for the restoration of friendship between our countries and we have not lost hope.”¹¹⁶ In the end, the Grand National Assembly adopted an appeal to the Turkish army, which indicated that armed forces of the country would secure safety, independence and integrity of the country.

Though Foreign Minister Saka said nothing disquieting, US Ambassador to Turkey sent a telegram to the Secretary of State on 22 December, which said that the Turkish government and particularly İönü were very troubled. Wilson wrote:

An article about the belonging of Turkey’s Black Sea littoral to Georgian SSR published in a Georgian newspaper caused a commotion. At night, Turkish Foreign Ministry Secretary General F. Erkin told me about his meeting with İönü who was very angry. The Ministry instructed its Washington Ambassador to clarify the US government’s view on this new stage of the “war of nerves.” . . . Erkin asked me to inform the Department of State that the Turkish government was interested in learning the US government’s view on the event. I promised to do that and added that this signaled a Soviet shift to the new stage of the “war of nerves,” and expressed hope that the Turkish government would be sufficiently relaxed to avoid provoking the Soviets in their campaign.¹¹⁷

Further aggravating Turkey’s concern was the open nature of territorial claims of the two Soviet Republics to Turkey, expansion of propaganda work of Soviet diplomatic offices among Armenians in Ankara and Istanbul, calls for movement to the USSR, additional Georgian claims and finally the loyal position of Americans with respect to the USSR. The population of the country was nervous for lack of information. The government disposed of information but it was alarming information. American diplomats were also concerned when seeing a growing queue of Armenians to the Soviet Consulate in Istanbul. On 21 December Wilson met with Saka and asked him to prepare adequate measures to avoid conflicts with the participation of Armenians. Saka pointed out that the Turkish government had been engaged in preparing such measures, so no problems were expected to take place. He added that a government statement was being prepared informing that all those willing to go to America were free in their choice.

Until recently, about 1,500 had applied to the Soviet Consulate, and most of them were people without stable incomes and occupation.¹¹⁸

To clarify the situation, Ambassador Wilson met on 28 December with Ambassador Vinogradov. During a two-hour conversation Vinogradov declared that he had not read the article of the Georgian academics but he was confident that the Georgian people were determined to return Georgian lands. Wilson asked what could be done to remedy the situation. Vinogradov referred to the June meeting of Molotov and Sarper where the Soviet Prime Minister proposed the recipe for success. The Soviet Ambassador added that Soviet security interests called for military bases, and the Soviet Union should ensure the interests of the Armenian Republic. Asked about correlation between Soviet territorial claims and principles of sovereignty as set forth in the UN Charter, Vinogradov noted that principles of equality of peoples concerned Georgia as well. However, Wilson mentioned that the borders had been regulated by the Kars and Moscow treaties of 1921. The Soviet Ambassador repeated that the texts of the treaties were discussed “when the Soviets were weak” and now the situation has changed and there was necessity of revising these texts. Asked about movement of ethnic Armenians from Turkey to Armenia, Vinogradov replied that several thousand Armenians had applied to the Soviet Consulate. However, there were no transport facilities to take them, therefore Consul Sergei Mikhailov would have to report to Moscow on the issue.¹¹⁹

The same day, Turkish Ambassador to Washington H. R. Baydur was engaged in fulfilling the instructions of his government. On 29 December he met with Under-Secretary General D. Acheson and tried to clarify whether any talks on Turkey were being held in Moscow. It became clear that the Secretary of State had just returned from Moscow, so Acheson could say nothing of the talks. Ambassador Baydur tried to clarify Acheson’s stand on the territorial claims of the Soviet Union to Trabzon-Ardagan region. Acheson replied that the Department of State was closely watching materials published in the Soviet press, saying that the US was doing its utmost to turn the UN into effective means for the prevention of wars. Meanwhile, small peoples with their defeatist sentiments and uncoordinated actions complicated US activity. The Under-Secretary General advised Turkey to be more patient and take all measures to avoid conflicts and demonstrations. Acheson said that the issues in question exceeded the capacity of Turkey to maintain the sphere of peace and security, so the Turkish government was very interested in the matter. The Ambassador agreed with this idea, saying that the Turkish people had become a target of attacks by its aggressive neighbor. He said that the Soviet Union, not Turkey, violated peace and tranquility. For this reason the Soviets could not assess Turkey’s position in the mass media and Parliament as “aggressive.” Acheson agreed with the arguments of the Turkish Ambassador.¹²⁰ During the talks, Baydur noted that after the Moscow talks there appeared to be signs of impatience among US officials. In late December, Byrnes advised Wilson that no talks on the Turkish issue were held in Moscow. Nevertheless, Bevin asked Molotov about the intentions of the Russians on this matter. Bevin remained dissatisfied with Molotov’s answer. So the talks had brought no results. Byrnes advised Wilson to inform Turkey that disquieting questions were not raised in Moscow and that it was not worth mentioning the talks between Bevin and Molotov. To Byrnes’ thinking, it would be better for

the British Ambassador to inform Turks about this, for it was the British government that showed interest in the matter.¹²¹ Against the evasive US position, Turkey felt greater sympathy to the tighter stand of Great Britain. Turkey's doubts regarding the British Labour government were dispersed. In addition, British official circles assured Turkey that no changes would occur in British foreign policy. As a result, Turkey had to rely on the British support before Soviet threats.¹²²

Publications of the letters of the Georgian academics led to stormy debates in the Turkish, British and American press. Georgian Foreign Minister G. Kiknadze wrote to his party leader: Publication of the article by Moscow newspapers on 20 December 1945 looked like a bomb explosion in the camp of Turkish reactionaries."¹²³ It is natural that the government organized a campaign of letters from scientific and religious circles of Georgian society. In their letters, head of Ajarian Muslims Beridze, Georgian Patriarch Tsintsadze, academic A. Chikobava, Professor Zavriyev, Jikiya, and other intellectuals "emphasized the justness of the issue and backed this by new materials substantiating the legality of demands of the Georgian people." The Georgian Foreign Ministry summed up the results of international response to the letter of the Georgian academics, saying that "the issue raised by the progressive Georgian public caused a new wave of anti-Soviet propaganda in the foreign press and radio." The document noted that Turkish reactionaries were especially active in this regard. Also, some British, American, French, Indian, Canadian, etc., journalists and commentators also tried to keep pace with their Turkish counterparts. Kiknadze wrote that they did their utmost to unmask "Soviet expansionist" intentions.¹²⁴

On 22 December, Ankara radio provided information about Soviet claims to Turkey. It stressed that Turkey did not lay claims to foreign territories. Therefore the Turkish official circles excluded any possibility of discussions over this issue at the Moscow meeting: if this is a war of nerves, they should know that Turks are strong and as resolute as steel to protect their homeland." Turkish newspapers *Ulus*, *Yeni Sabah*, *Cumhuriyet*, *Tasvir*, *Tanin*, and *La République* etc., also protested against the Soviet claims. In his articles, editor of *Tasvir* Cahit Baban threatened that Turkey may demand Batumi, Baku and Tbilisi from Russia. The Georgian academicians would be in no position to prove that Yerevan, Tbilisi and Baku are not Turkish. On 28 December *Cumhuriyet* published a leading article "Ten words: The slogan of nineteen million:" "Turkey is ready to fight to protect all its land."¹²⁵ In late December, Andre Chloé, Agence France-Pressé correspondent analyzing Turkish radio and press materials, came to the conclusion that "Turkish journalists adhere to three main principles: first, the Soviet Union is going to annex eight Turkish regions; second, the Soviet Union claims a lot to get the least; third, the Soviet Union lays its claims to make Anglo-Americans give in on some questions, especially the Balkan issue and the nuclear bomb."¹²⁶

The Soviet territorial claims to Turkey, especially the "letter" campaign in the Moscow press, attracted the attention of the Western circles. For instance, the British press was awash with articles against the "strange," "ungrounded" or "romantic demands" of Georgian scientists. They asked, "Are these claims serious or are they sly bargaining tactics?" The Georgian Foreign Ministry said that every day there were comments on the letter of the

academics. *The Times of London* columnist wrote on December 22, 1945: “A manner in which Moscow newspapers and Soviet radio announced new Georgian claims at the height of the Moscow meeting of Foreign Ministers surprised all allied countries. Everybody tried to understand the reasons of this action. These claims rely on romantic tradition and episodes of ancient history.” *The Daily Herald* expressed its surprise over “strange” claims to the territories, which once belonged to Georgia but were seized by Turkey.” As viewed by *The Yorkshire Post*, “there are signs that this pressure is something more than a mere war of nerves. To all appearances, the Turks are ready to resist Russian demands.” London radio reviewed the international situation on 22 December, saying

Appetite comes when its time to eat: This proverb is applicable to Russia and its territorial claims. Not so long ago Soviet Russia demanded control over the North African colonies of Libya and Eritrea. But it was for nothing. A little afterward, Russia laid a new claim: Revise the Straits convention! Then Russia demanded from Turkey to return Ardagan, Kars and Artvin. Britain protested saying that this political line was not peace loving. Now that the Moscow conference of Foreign Ministers is in full swing, Soviet Russia puts forward new claims to unlucky Turkey, this time from Georgia, and these claims are substantiated by “historical arguments.”¹²⁷

In examining this information, the *London Evening News* came to the conclusion that claims to Turkey followed after Iranian developments. *The Times of London* highly appreciated Ankara’s obstinacy in opposing Moscow’s pressures. It wrote, “The truth is that the Turks are doing their best to keep intact a fragment of a once mighty Empire.”¹²⁸

Soviet claims were commented on the USA as well. *The New York Times* published an article entitled “Russia demands a Black Sea region from Turkey” and a map “Russians are looking at areas beyond their borders, toward Turkey.”¹²⁹ *The Washington Post* pointed out that “Soviet pressures complicated the situation around Turkey. But the Turks have good nerves, these are oriental people and they are in position to diagnose any bluff.” Then the newspaper noted that if the arguments of the two Georgian scientists were adopted, it would have been of no use. In this case, Poland might demand territories up to Kiev and Dnieper. The Amur River Basin was a part of Chinese territory, so Russia risks to lose the right to these lands. Under the UN Charter, claims based on historical sources constitute aggression.¹³⁰ Most French newspapers, especially the Catholic and Socialist press, condemned the territorial claims and termed them a “manifestation of Soviet imperialism.” *Paris Populaire* of 24 December in an article entitled “Trebizond? No, Dardanelles” declared that the purpose of “new Soviet claims are not Turkish provinces but rather the Dardanelles and the creation of a military base near Istanbul.”¹³¹ TASS foreign correspondents reported to Moscow that not only the press organs of big powers but also those of smaller countries condemned the anti-Turkish actions of the Soviets. These included Canada, Egypt, India, Denmark, Brazil, Switzerland, Finland, and Italy.

Summing up information about foreign mass media responses to the letter of the Georgian academics, the Georgian Foreign Ministry prepared a secret report, which pointed out that “the spirit of the most statements was negative.” Analysts believed that “the letter was instigated by Moscow” as a disguised manifestation of “Soviet imperialism,” “mysterious maneuvers of Soviet diplomats,” and as aspiration to divert attention from topical international problems. The report laid a special emphasis on Bevin’s statement that “demands on changing borders are groundless.”¹³²

From the end of 1945, US official circles felt appreciable signs of Soviet expansionism in the Near and Middle East, especially with respect to Iran and Turkey. A Department of State memorandum pointed out that the UN would rectify the problems in Turkish-Soviet relations. Americans believed that any aggressive actions of the USSR against Turkey would be evaluated as aggression, and should the UN fail to take adequate measures to remedy the situation, the organization would lose its authority and the world would fall into chaos. Thus, on the eve of 1946, the Western Allies faced the necessity of retaliatory actions. Department of State experts warned officials in Washington that it was the time for decisive action, while the Soviet Union had not yet gone too far in Iran and Turkey.

NOTES

1. Vladislav M. Zubok. *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev*, p. 39.
2. See E. Mark. *The Turkish War Scare of 1946*, pp. 113–114.
3. N. V. Kochkin. SSSR, Angliya, SShA i “Turetsky krizis” 1945–1947 (N. V. Kochkin. “USSR, Great Britain, USA, and ‘Turkish Crisis.’ 1945–1947”), pp. 66–68.
4. N. Sheehan. *A Fiery Peace in a Cold War: Bernard Schriever and the Ultimate Weapon*. Random House, New York, 2009, p. 86.
5. V. Zubok and C. Pleshakov. *Inside the Kremlin’s Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev*, pp. 92–93.
6. From diary of V. Molotov. Reception of the Turkish Ambassador to the USSR F. Hozar. 30.05.1953. AFP RF, f. 0132, r. 36, fol. 324, v. 5, pp. 11–12.
7. Decision of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party on Instructions to the Soviet Ambassador to Turkey. 29.03.1948. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 162, v. 39, p. 41.
8. Translation of the Dashnak booklet titled “Guidebook for Our Propagandists.” August 1945. AMNS AR, v. 862, part IV, pp. 1–5.
9. From Diary of S. Kavtaradze. Record of the Talk with the Iranian Ambassador M. Ahi in Moscow. August 1945. AFP RF, f. 094, r. 31, fol. 351a, v. 6, pp. 27–28.
10. Although the name of the region is translated differently in English in various sources (such as Nagorno Karabakh, Upper Karabakh, etc.), the correct translation is “Mountainous Garabagh.”
11. Translation of the Dashnak booklet titled “Guidebook for Our Propagandists.” August 1945. AMNS AR, v. 862, part IV, pp. 6–7.
12. On the Soviet-Turkish Relations. 18.08.1945. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 7, fol. 47, v. 762, pp. 13–18. For more details, see J. Hasanli. “The ‘Turkish Crisis’ of the Cold War period and the South Caucasian Republics.” *The Caucasus and Globalization*, Vol. 2, Issue 4, 2008, pp. 123–127.
13. From G. Kiknadze to L. Beria. 04.09.1945. GPA, f. 14, r. 19, v. 209, pp. 49–50.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 49–50.
15. I. Lakomsky. Report on the Political Situation in which the Treaty on Friendship and Brotherhood between the Russian Federation and Turkey Was Signed. 19.01.1953. AFP RF, f. 032, r. 366, fol. 325, v. 1, pp. 9–10.
16. From G. Kiknadze to L. Beria. 04.09.1945. GPA, f. 14, r. 19, v. 209, p. 51.
17. Vladislav M. Zubok. *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev*, p. 39.
18. From G. Kiknadze to V. Molotov, A. Vyshinsky, and V. Dekanozov. On the Georgian Territories Included in Turkey. 04.09.1945. GPA, f. 14, r. 19, v. 209, pp. 54–57.
19. G. Mamulia. *Gruziya v pervye gody kholodnoy voyny (Neizvestnye stranitsy Iranskogo i Turetskogo krizisa 1945–1947 gg.)// Vertikali istorii*, Tbilisi, 2003, 5 (G. Mamulia. “Georgia in the First Years of the Cold War (unknown pages of the Iranian and Turkish crisis, 1945–1947).” *Verticals of History*, Tbilisi, 2003, No. 5), p. 70.
20. From G. Kiknadze to V. Molotov and L. Beria. On Georgian Provinces Annexed by Turkey. 04.09.1945. GPA, f. 14, r. 19, v. 209, pp. 24–25.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 27–29.
22. From G. Kiknadze to K. Charkviani. 26.10.1945. GPA, f. 14, r. 19, v. 209, pp. 52–54.
23. S. Beria. *Moy otets Beria: V koridorakh stalinskoy vlasti*. Moskva, 2002 (S. Beria. *My Father Beria. In the corridors of Stalin rule*. Moscow, 2002), pp. 256–257.
24. Speech of N. S. Khrushchev in the Eleventh Meeting of the June 1957 Plenary Session of the CC of the Communist Party

of USSR. Russian Newest History State Archive (hereafter, RNHSA), f. 2, r. 1, v. 161, p. 224.

25. N. Khrushchev. *Khrushchev Remembers*. Penguin Books, Harmondsworth. 1977, pp. 347–348.

26. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 1, v. 42, p. 34.

27. From G. Kiknadze to V. Molotov and L. Beria. On Georgian Provinces Annexed by Turkey. 04.09.1945. GPA, f. 14, r. 19, v. 209, pp. 30–37.

28. From E. Aliyev and V. Kostilyev to V. Dekanozov. September 1945. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 24, pp. 118–119.

29. From G. Kiknadze to K. Charkviani. 26.10.1945. GPA, f. 14, r. 19, v. 209, p. 52.

30. From G. Kiknadze to K. Charkviani. 12.11.1945. GPA, f. 14, r. 20, v. 253, pp. 119–120.

31. G. Mamulia. *Gruziya v pervye gody kholodnoy voyny* (G. Mamulia. “Georgia in the First Years of the Cold War”), p. 63.

32. The destiny of Georgians residing in Iran was raised in the agenda after the well-known events in Iranian Azerbaijan. Both Georgia and Armenia did their utmost to take advantage of the processes going on in South Azerbaijan. Kiknadze wrote to Molotov that “on the territory of Iran there is a numerous Georgian population banished from Georgia in the 16–17 centuries during Persian raids against Georgia.” Thus, during his two campaigns in 1614–1616 Shah Abbas I took away over 100,000 Georgians from their native land to Iran. According to Kiknadze, a part of Georgian prisoners settled down in Fareidan near Isfahan and was called Fareidan Georgians. This population is absolutely illiterate, and at low level of social and cultural development, subject to arbitrariness and oppressions by local Iranian administration, therefore the Georgian Foreign Ministry proposed to render “fraternal aid to Georgians residing in Iran” and send a complex expedition consisting of physicians, teachers, historians, linguists, and other scientists for detailed examination of the current situation. Besides, Kiknadze offered to open a vacancy for special Georgian representative of Isfahan in the capacity of Vice Consul and First Secretary of the Georgian Consulate to get systematic information. (See From G. Kiknadze to V. Molotov. On the Georgian Population in Iran. 04.09.1945. GPA, f. 14, r. 19, v. 209, pp. 44–45.)

33. S. Beria. *Moy otets Beria. V koridorakh stalinskoy vlasti* (S. Beria. *My Father Beria. In the Corridors of Stalin Rule*), p. 257.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 258.

35. A. Mgeladze. *Stalin: kakim ya ego znal. Stranitsy nedavnogo proshlogo*. Tbilisi, 2001 (A. Mgeladze. *Stalin as I Knew Him: Pages of the Recent Past*. Tbilisi, 2001), pp. 61–62.

36. A. B. Shirokorad. *Russko-turetskie vayny 1676–1918 gg.* (A. B. Shirokorad. *Russian-Turkish Wars, 1676–1918*), p. 731.

37. From G. Arutinov to J. Stalin. 27.10.1945. AR CSADSPO, f. 1, r. 034, v. 27, pp. 54–56.

38. From G. Arutinov to J. Stalin and Malenkov. November 1945. AR CSADSPO, f. 1, r. 034, v. 27, pp. 73–75.

39. Meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. The Question of the Central Committee of the Armenian Communist Party. 19.11.1945. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 162, v. 37, p. 158.

40. Meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. The Question of the Central Committee of the Armenian Communist Party. 21.11.1945. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 3, v. 1054, p. 32.

41. Resolution of the Council of People’s Commissariats of the USSR on Practical Measures to Move Armenians from Abroad to Armenian SSR. 22.02.1946. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 3, v. 1056, pp. 44–46.

42. The Moscow treaty of March 16, 1921, between Russia and Turkey consisted of 16 Articles and 2 Appendices. In Article 1 the both parties turned down forcibly thrust bilateral and international agreements. Under Article 2 of the Moscow treaty, Turkey agreed to grant sovereignty to the town of Batumi and the gulf of the same name wider autonomy to protect cultural and religious rights of all the citizens. Under Article 3, the parties confirmed Azerbaijan’s protectorate over the Nakhchivan autonomy and that Azerbaijan had no right to cede Nakhchivan to the third party. Under Article 5, the party agreed on joint development of the international status of the Black Sea. The decision on the subject cannot be detrimental to the sovereignty and security of Turkey, including that of Istanbul. Other Articles of the treaty provided for the struggle against the Entente, non-admission of “the stay on its territory of organizations or groups pretending to the role of the government of other country,” opening of communication lines, protection of cultural and national rights of the population, etc. (For records of the Moscow Conference, see: 26.02.–16.03.1921. RSPHSA, f. 159, r. 2, v. 57, pp. 39–81; AFP RF, f. 04, r. 39, fol. 232, v. 12, pp. 25–80.)

43. The Kars treaty signed on October 13, 1921, comprised twenty articles and three appendices. The first 3 Articles of the treaty dealt with the denunciation of inequitable treaties, annulment of the capitulation regime and the Serves treaty, etc. Under Article 5, three Republics of South Caucasus and Turkey reaffirmed Nakhchivan’s membership as part of Azerbaijan. Under Article 6, Turkey ceded Batumi to Georgia, and Georgia undertook to create Batumi autonomy. Under Article 13, any citizen who lived from 1879 to the end of the First World War in Russia, and resided on the territory of Turkey had the right to decline from the Turkish citizenship, freely leaving Turkey and taking with him his property or its cost. Finally, Article 6 on Batumi’s cession to Georgia and another 4 Articles came into force without ratification. Also, ratification copies of the treaty should be exchanged in Erivan (Treaty of Friendship between Transcaucasian Republics). (See Azerbaijan SSR, Armenian SSR and Georgian SSR and Turkey with the participation of the RSFSR. 13.10.1921. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 1, v. 5, pp. 136–141; APDPARA, f. 609, r. 1, v. 94, pp. 103–116; *Traite de Kars*. Baku, 2004, pp. 69–81).

44. As is known, in September–October 1921 during a Kars conference Turkey wanted to sign bilateral agreements with each of the South Caucasian Republics with the purpose of securing its sovereignty. Head of the Turkish delegation Kazim Karabekir Pasha explained that the Soviet government recognized the independence of the South Caucasian Republics; therefore Turkey wanted to conclude an individual agreement with each of them, as instructed by Mustafa Kemal Pasha. However, Russian representative Y. Ganetsky disagreed with formulation, saying that a collective treaty was required. He declared that the situation had changed from the signing of the Moscow treaty and that all three Republics were advancing toward unification and pleased to conclude a treaty with Turkey. So, it would be better to conclude a single treaty of three Republics with Turkey. In the dispute representatives of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia advocated Russia's position, so Kazim had to retreat. The conference and the text of the treaty indicated the lack of any compulsion, and though Turkey made some concessions, the parties gladly signed the Kars treaty. (For more details, see I. Musayev. *Azərbaycanın Naxçıvan və Zəngəzur bölgələrində siyasi vəziyyət və xarici dövlətlərin siyasəti (1917–1921-ci illər)*. Bakı, 1996 (I. Musayev. *Political Situation in Nakhchivan and Zangazur Regions of Azerbaijan and Policy of Foreign States (1917–1921)*. Bakı, 1996), pp. 335–352; M. Qasımov. *Xarici ölkələr və Azərbaycan*. Bakı, 1998 (M. Gasymov. *Foreign Countries and Azerbaijan*. Bakı, 1998), pp. 171–174.)

45. From G. Kiknadze to V. Molotov and L. Beria. On Georgian Provinces Annexed by Turkey. 04.09.1945. GPA, f. 14, r. 19, v. 209, pp. 23–24.

46. From S. Karapetyan to G. Arutinov. Report on Responses of Foreign Press and Foreign Political Figures to the Demands of Armenians on Joining the Armenian Lands Annexed by Turkey to Soviet Armenia. 29.05.1946. AR CSADSPO, f. 1, r. 26, v. 47, pp. 161–162.

47. The Ambassador to Turkey (Wilson) to the Secretary of State. 22.09.1945. FRUS, 1945, vol. VIII, p. 1248.

48. The Secretary of State to the Ambassador to Turkey (Wilson). 19.10.1945. FRUS, 1945, vol. VIII, p. 1254.

49. The Charge in the United Kingdom (Gallman) to the Secretary of State. 22.10.1945. FRUS, 1945, vol. VIII, p. 1256.

50. The Ambassador to Turkey to the Secretary of State. 23.10.1945. FRUS, 1945, vol. VIII, p. 1257.

51. The Ambassador to the Soviet Union (Harriman) to the Secretary of State. 24.10.1945. FRUS, 1945, vol. VIII, pp. 1258,1282.

52. From “Bull” (the spy of the Soviet special services in Tabriz) to M. J. Baghyrov and I. Maslennikov. 28.09.1945. APDPARA, f. 1, r. 89, v. 95, pp. 174–175, 181.

53. Resolution of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party on South Azerbaijan and North Kurdistan. 08.10.1945. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 162, v. 37, pp. 152–153.

54. From M. J. Baghyrov and I. Maslennikov to L. Beria. 21.10.1945. APDPARA, f. 1, r. 89, v. 95, pp. 198, 208–209.

55. *Tanin*, September 16, 1945.

56. E. Mark. *The Turkish War Scare of 1946*, p. 116; Bruce R. Kuniholm. *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey, and Greece*, p. 262.

57. Meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. On Mutual Aid to the Government of Bulgaria. 23.11.1945. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 162, v. 39, p. 31.

58. The Ambassador to Turkey (Wilson) to the Secretary of State. 27.10.1945. FRUS, 1945, vol. VIII, pp. 1260–1262.

59. The Ambassador to the Soviet Union (Harriman) to the Secretary of State. 29.10.1945. FRUS, 1945, vol. VIII, p. 1263.

60. The Ambassador to Turkey (Wilson) to the Secretary of State. 01.11.1945. FRUS, 1945, vol. VIII, p. 1268.

61. The Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. Speech of İsmet İnönü to the opening of the III session of Majlis (Parliament) of the 7 Convocation. 01.11.1945. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 47, pp. 4–6.

62. The Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. Speech of İsmet İnönü to the Opening of the III Session of Majlis (Parliament) of the 7 Convocation. 01.11.1945. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 47, pp. 6–8.

63. The Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. Speech of İsmet İnönü to the Opening of the III Session of Majlis (Parliament) of the 7 Convocation. 01.11.1945. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 47, pp. 8–10.

64. *Ibid.*, pp. 10–12.

65. The Ambassador to Turkey (Wilson) to the Secretary of State. 02.11.1945. FRUS, 1945, vol. VIII, p. 1272.

66. From E. Aliyev and V. Kostilyev to V. Dekanozov. 10.12.1945. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 46, p. 23.

67. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

68. V. Kornev. Remarks on the Speech of Turkish President İsmet İnönü. November 1945. // AR CSA, f. 28, r. 1, v. 47, pp. 21–22.

69. *Ibid.*, pp. 23–24.

70. From E. Aliyev and V. Kostilyev to V. Dekanozov. 10.12.1945. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 46, pp. 10–13.

71. From S. Saracog˘lu to J. Stalin. November 1945. RSPHSA, f. 558, r. 11, v. 98, pp. 72–73.

72. From E. Aliyev and V. Kostilyev to V. Dekanozov. 10.12.1945. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 46, pp. 18–19.

73. The Ambassador to Turkey (Wilson) to the Secretary of State. 12.11.1945. FRUS, 1945, vol. VIII, pp. 1276–1277.

74. For more details, see J. Hasanli. “Iranian Azerbaijan: The Epicenter of a Cold War.” *The Caucasus and Globalization*,

Vol. 2, Issue 1, 2008, pp. 13–14.

75. From I. Tsatsulin to V. Dekanozov. 10.12.1945. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 46, pp. 134–137.

76. *Ibid.*, pp. 102–105.

77. From I. Tsatsulin to V. Dekanozov. 20.01.1946. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 47, pp. 78–79.

78. *Tanin*, December 3, 1945.

79. Zekeriye Sertel and his wife Sabiha Sertel were famous for their leftist views as far back as the 1920–1930s. Z. Sertel graduated from Istanbul University and Sorbonne and attended a journalism college under Columbia University. In 1924 he returned from the United States and worked as a head of the press department under the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In 1928–1932 he published a magazine, *Resimli ay*, in 1930 he instituted the newspaper *Son Posta*, and in 1935 the newspaper *Tan*. After the war, *Tan* turned into mouthpiece of Turkish leftist organizations. In turn, Sabiha Sertel graduated from Columbian University and worked *Resimli ay* magazine and *Tan* newspaper. She was notable in Turkey as writer and journalists. She translated some works by V. I. Lenin into Turkish. (See, Brief biographical report on Turkish political and public figures. 12.09.1942. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 3, pp. 131–132.)

80. Brief Biographical Report on Turkish Political and Public Figures. 12.09.1942. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 3, p. 132.

81. Decisions of the Political Bureau of Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. Question of the Central Committee of the Soviet Komsomol. 23.05.1950. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 162, v. 43, p. 144.

82. *Tanin*, December 3, 1945.

83. *Tasvir*, December 4, 1945.

84. From I. Tsatsulin to V. Dekanozov. 20.01.1946. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 47, p. 36.

85. *Ibid.*, p. 50.

86. From Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party to S. Vinogradov. 07.12.1945. RSPHSA, f. 558, r. 11, v. 99, pp. 117–118.

87. *Ibid.*, p. 117.

88. *Ibid.*, pp. 117–118.

89. Note of the USSR to the Turkish Foreign Ministry. 08.12.1946. AFP RF, f. 132, r. 30, fol. 109, v. 7, pp. 9–10.

90. K. N. Brutents. Tridsat let na Staroy ploshadi. Moskva, 1998 (K. N. Brutents. *Thirty Years at the Old Square*. Moscow, 1998), p. 509.

91. See E. R. Melkonyan. Mezhdv dvumya mirami. Puti politicheskoy adaptatsii Armyanskoy diaspori (E. R. Melkonyan. “Between the two worlds. The roads of political adaptation of Armenian diaspora”), p. 78; K. N. Brutents. Nesbyvsheesya. Neravnodushnye zametki o perestroyke. Moskva, 2005 (K. N. Brutents. *Failure: Unwilling Notes on Perestroika*. Moscow, 2005), p. 336.

92. The Ambassador to Turkey (Wilson) to the Secretary of State. 19.12.1945. FRUS, 1945, vol. VIII, p. 1284.

93. *Ibid.*, p. 1285.

94. From I. Tsatsulin to V. Dekanozov. 20.01.1946. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 47, pp. 52–55.

95. Zaven. On the Armenian Question. 16.06.1946. AMNS AR, v. 862, part I, pp. 289–290.

96. The Ambassador to Turkey (Wilson) to the Secretary of State. 19.12.1945. FRUS, 1945, vol. VIII, pp. 1283–1284.

97. From I. Tsatsulin to V. Dekanozov. 20.01.1946. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 47, pp. 62–64.

98. From G. Kiknadze to K. Charkviani. Responses of Foreign Press to the Letter of the Georgian Academics to the Editorial Office of *Communist* Newspaper. 14.08.1946. GPA, f. 14, r. 20, v. 253, pp. 63–64.

99. S. Janashiya, I. Berdzenishvili. “On Our Lawful Demands to Turkey.” *Kommunist*, December 14, 1945.

100. S. Janashiya and I. Berdzenishvili. “On Our Lawful Demands to Turkey.” *Ivestiya*, December 20, 1945.

101. Vladislav M. Zubok. *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev*, p. 40.

102. S. Beria. Moy otets Beria. V koridorakh stalinskoy vlasti (S. Beria. *My Father Beria: In the Corridors of Stalin Rule*), pp. 256–257.

103. From D. Zavriyev to V. Bakradze. 29.12.1945. GPA, f. 14, r. 20, v. 253, p. 33.

104. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

105. D. S. Zavriyev. K noveyshey istorii severo-vostochnykh vilayetov Tursii. Tbilisi, 1947 (D. S. Zavriyev. *On the Newest History of North-eastern vilayets of Turkey*. Tbilisi, 1947), p. 155.

106. The Ambassador to Iran (Murray) to the Secretary of State. 15.12.1945. FRUS, 1945, vol. VIII, pp. 496–497.

107. See James F. Byrnes. *Speaking Frankly*. New York and London, 1947, pp. 118–121.

108. Bruce R. Kuniholm. *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey, and Greece*. Princeton University Press, 1980. pp. 285–287.

109. Sovetsko-amerikanskie otnoshenie. 1945–1948. Dokumenty. Pod red. G. N. Sevostyanova. Moskva, 2004 (*Soviet-American Relations, 1945–1948: Documents*. Edited by N. Sevostyanov. Moscow, 2004), pp. 134–135.

110. A. A. Danilov, A. B. Pyzhikov. Rozhdenie svrkhderzhavy: SSSR v pervye poslevoennye gody (A. A. Danilov and A. B.

Pyzhikov. *Rebirth of Superpower: USSR in the First Postwar Years*), p. 26.

111. Ays, egül Sever. *Sog'uk Savas, Kus,atmasında Türkiye, Batı ve Orta Dog'u. 1945–1958* (Ays, egül Sever. *Turkey, the West and Middle East in the Siege of the Cold War, 1945–1958*), p. 31.

112. N. I. Yegorova. *Istoki Sovetsko-Amerikanskogo sopernichestva v Irane I Tursii* (N. I. Yegorova. “Sources of the Soviet-American Rivalry in Iran and Turkey”), p. 143

113. Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi Tutanak Dergisi. Ardahan Meselesi. TBMM’de. Aralık 1945 (*Registration Journal of the Turkish Grand National Assembly*. Ardahan issue in TGNA. December 1945), pp. 367–370.

114. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 1, v. 81, pp. 1–2.

115. Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi Tutanak Dergisi. Ardahan Meselesi. TBMM’de. Aralık 1945 (*Registration Journal of the Turkish Grand National Assembly*. Ardahan issue in TGNA. December 1945), pp. 370–371; D. E. Ereemeev. *Tursiya v gody Vtoroy mirovoy i “kholodnoy” voyn* (D. E. Ereemeev. *Turkey in the Second World War and Cold War Years*), pp. 51–52.

116. Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi Tutanak Dergisi. Ardahan Meselesi. TBMM’de. Aralık 1945 (*Registration Journal of the Turkish Grand National Assembly*. Ardahan issue in TGNA. December 1945), pp. 372–373.

117. The Ambassador to Turkey (Wilson) to the Secretary of State. 22.12.1945. FRUS, 1945, vol. VIII, pp. 1285–1286.

118. The Ambassador to Turkey (Wilson) to the Secretary of State. 22.12.1945. FRUS, 1945, vol. VIII, p. 1286.

119. *Ibid.*, p. 1287.

120. Memorandum of Conversation by the Assistant Chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs. 29.12.1945. FRUS, 1945, vol. VIII, p. 1288–1289.

121. The Secretary of State to the Ambassador to Turkey. 02.01.1946. FRUS, 1946, vol. VII. Washington, DC), 1969, p. 804.

122. Ays, egül Sever. *Sog'uk Savas, Kus,atmasında Türkiye, Batı ve Orta Dog'u* (Ays, egül Sever. *Turkey, the West and Middle East in the Siege of the Cold War*), pp. 31–32.

123. From G. Kiknadze to K. Charkviani. Responses of Foreign Press to the Letter of Georgian Academic to the Editorial Office of *Communist Newspaper*. 14.08.1946. GPA, f. 14, r. 20, v. 253, p. 64.

124. *Ibid.*, p. 62.

125. *Ibid.*, pp. 66–72.

126. *Ibid.*, p. 72.

127. *Ibid.*, pp. 76–78.

128. Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi Tutanak Dergisi. Ardahan Meselesi TBMM’de. Aralık 1945 (*Registration Journal of the Turkish Grand National Assembly*. Ardahan issue in TGNA. December 1945), pp. 385–387.

129. From G. Kiknadze to K. Charkviani. Responses of Foreign Press to the Letter of Georgian Academic to the Editorial Office of *Communist Newspaper*. 14.08.1946. GPA, f. 14, r. 20, v. 253, p. 80.

130. Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi Tutanak Dergisi. Ardahan Meselesi TBMM’de. Aralık 1945 (*Registration Journal of the Turkish Grand National Assembly*. Ardahan issue in TGNA. December 1945), pp. 387–388.

131. From G. Kiknadze to K. Charkviani. Responses of Foreign Press to the Letter of Georgian Academic to the Editorial Office of *Communist Newspaper*. 14.08.1946. GPA, f. 14, r. 20, v. 253, pp. 81–82.

132. *Ibid.*, pp. 84–85.

Chapter Four

Growth of Pro-American Sentiments in Turkey in Response to Increasing Soviet Pressures

From 1946 Turkey was stricken by unrest. Meetings and demonstrations were held in Trabzon, Giresun, Hatay, Zonguldak, Olti and other towns. Then the tide of discontent reached Ankara and Eskişehir. Resolutions and appeals of these meetings and demonstrations called for the Turkish people to unite against the Soviet threat and to come together around the government and army. Turks outside the country wrote to government institutions and the mass media that the Turkish Diaspora was ready to sacrifice everything to preserve Turkey's sovereignty and protect it against Bolshevik aggression. In a telegram to İnönü, students of Ankara University declared their preparedness to protect their motherland from disaster.¹ It was demanded in these numerous appeals and statements to preserve the Turkish republican system founded by Atatürk, to punish "agents of Moscow," and to do their best to contain any anti-Turkish attempts on the part of the USSR. The mass media assured the population and political circles that under the guise of being "supporters of Atatürk," some "Bolshevik agents" fought against the republic system.² On 3 January, Ankara Radio reported in several foreign languages, including English, a review of the modern Georgian history that dismissed its territorial claims as "a fairy tale" invented by Georgian historians and stated that not an inch of the Turkish territory had ever belonged to Georgia.

On 6 January, Prime Minister Ş. Saracoglu held a press conference, which clarified the Turkish foreign policy, Soviet pressures, and Armenian and Georgian territorial claims. Saracoglu stated as follows:

Several months ago well-known newspapers and radios publicized rumors and reports, which said that Kars and Ardahan *vilayets* should be given to Armenians, so that they would become a homeland for Armenians scattered across the world. The whole world knows that there is not a single Armenian in these territories. We have trust in our Armenian citizens living in various regions of our country, with most of them residing in Istanbul. We cannot imagine that there are some tensions between Turks and Armenians stirred up by foreign instigators. I am also confident that in connection with this game of foreigners, all citizens will preserve loyalty to each other and to the laws of the Republic. After the Ottoman Empire lost the last Russo-Turkish War (1877–1878), there was concluded the Ayastefan (Saint Stephen) Peace Treaty, under which Russia could not lay claims to Kars and Ardahan *vilayets*, since the greater portion of these regions was Turkish and Muslim. However, Russia demanded war reparations, which the Ottoman Empire could not pay. These reparations amounted to 1,410 million rubles. Therefore, Article 19 of the Ayastefan Peace Treaty said, "Considering the financial difficulties of the Ottoman Empire and to comply with Padishah's [the Ottoman Sultan] desire, the Russian Emperor agreed for a large portion of the above-mentioned reparations be recovered through transfer of the below-cited territories.

A significant part of the territories granted to Russia under this article as war reparations comprised Kars and Ardahan *vilayets*. The same is also said in the Berlin Agreement signed

after this treaty. As victims of the First World War,

Turkey and Russia agreed to decide on the destiny of these territories by the means of plebiscite. As a result of the plebiscite, 85,124 out of 87,048 voted for Turkey; 1,924 people did not vote in favor of Turkey, with 1,483 of them abstaining. Thus, Kars and Ardahan *vilayets* were returned to Turkey. Following this, a truce was signed. Finally, with the signing of the Kars Treaty with the Soviets, our eastern borders took their current form and so, ethnographic justice was restored with the consent of both parties.³

The Turkish Prime Minister believed that allegations of some newspapers about the annexation of Kars and Ardahan from Russia at the time when Russians were weak were absolutely wrong:

First, the point is not about taking or being taken. The point is about voluntary return of people to their old homeland and state. Besides, when Russia was weak, Turkey was in a position where it could be characterized as non-existent. Considering this truth, it is obvious that this statement is unfair. Two weeks ago, two Georgian professors demanded to join half of the Turkish territory on the Black Sea coast to Georgia on the grounds that this territory had once belonged to Georgia, and the Soviet newspapers and radio proclaimed this all over the world. Indeed, there are citizens in these *vilayets* who speak Georgian, but confess Turkish religion, possess Turkish conscience and culture, and know the Turkish language. These people are Turks who fled from the tsars and their armies and sought shelter in their homeland.⁴

Further, to clarify the statistics of the population of the eastern *vilayets* of Turkey, S. Saracog˘lu referred to the statistical documents of the 1935 census. He stated:

The total number of the Georgian population of Turkey is 57,325. The number of Georgians in those regions which, in the Georgian professors' view, are Georgian and should be returned to Georgia, is 15,596, while the number of the local Turkish population is 1,746,329. The number of Georgians in the *vilayets* that are claimed from us is as follows: 37 in Ardahan district of Kars *vilayet*; 116 in Olti, Tortum and Ispir districts of Erzurum *vilayet*; 0 in Bayburt and Gumushhane districts of Gumushhane *vilayet*; 15,325 in Chorok *vilayet*, so-called Eastern Lazistan; 3 in Trabzon and 115 in Giresun—which in total make up 15,596. 23,863 out of the remaining 41,729 Georgians are settled down in the villages of Kocaeli, Bursa and Balikesir *vilayets*, located on the coasts of the Marmara and Mediterranean seas; the remaining 17,866—by a few persons, in various lands of Turkey. Thus, the number of Georgians in the regions they demand to annex to Georgia is very few and much less than those settled in the Marmara and Mediterranean regions. I want to believe that this eleven-year-old official information will convince even these professors that these settlers are Turkish persons who fled from tsarist armies and found shelter in their homeland, in various parts of Turkey.⁵

At the end of the press conference, S. Saracog˘lu, on behalf of the Turkish people, expressed his gratitude to radios and newspapers worldwide; in the first place, to those of Britain, America, Greece, Switzerland, Arab countries, France, and Sweden for their uncompromising attitude towards the Soviet adventure. He noted: “Despite this, I would like the articles of these professors to remain articles only, works of their own imagination.”⁶

In early January 1946, Selim Pandol published a number of articles in *La République* newspaper, in which he carefully analyzed all the conventions and treaties regulating the issue of the Straits. Having thoroughly studied international maritime acts, the author started this review from 30 July 1841, when Britain, Russia, France, Austria, Prussia and Ottoman Empire signed an international Convention on the Straits. He also focused his attention on some practical aspects of implementation of this convention. Pandol's review of the history of the Straits from the 1840s showed that any separate agreement between the USSR and Turkey on this subject, as well as revision of the Montreux regime, would be illegal. He wrote: “At present, none of the Montreux Convention powers—neither Turkey nor the USSR—has the right to unilaterally cancel even a comma in the text of the Convention, because this Convention

is one of the principal bases of international law in Europe.” Further, the article details about the US and British notes to Turkey on this issue. To Pandol’s thinking, the third clause of the US note greatly advantaged Russia. According to him, the prohibition on the passage of warships of all non-Black Sea states through Dardanelles, except the cases when it is requested by the United Nations or one of the Black Sea states, was an indication that Russia’s interests had been taken into consideration. Having analyzed the US note, Pandol concluded that according to this note, Soviet squadrons would freely cross the Straits and further go to the Mediterranean, while British warships would not be allowed to enter the Marmara Sea and get access to the Black Sea. The author claims that the Russians were not satisfied with this; they would like to have a base in the Straits, similar to the British one in Gibraltar. However, a closer look reveals that in comparison with Gibraltar, the Russians attached much higher importance to the bases that they wanted to establish in the zone of the Straits. In general, S. Pandol’s article can be considered a valuable source for the study of the legal principles of the Straits regime.⁷

On 8 January, Turkish Prime Minister S. Saracog˘lu met with US Ambassador E. Wilson for the purpose of discussing the situation on the eve of the first UN session. The Prime Minister pointed out that the pressures of Moscow radio and press, Armenian and Georgian claims, publication of Communist newspapers inside the country, and Communist propaganda might lead to the weakening of the government. At the same time, Saracog˘lu expressed his surprise at serious mistakes made by the Soviets, which should have known the Turkish mentality. In his view, Turks had become increasingly united vis-à-vis the Soviet threat. He said that the Soviet Union had created a fiasco in its choice of tactic against Turkey and now did not know what to do. Saracog˘lu was sure that prior to the beginning of the UN session, the USSR would seek to carry out an anti-Turkish action. He believed that the Soviets were not going to desist from their intentions; they were just waiting for an opportune moment. Saracog˘lu told the Ambassador that the developments in Iran and especially unsuccessful efforts to solve the Iranian problem in Moscow “caused deep concern and pessimism in Turkey.”⁸

At the same time, Turkish Ambassador to London Cevat Açıkalın had talks with Prime Minister Clement Attlee and Foreign Minister Ernest Bevin. During his meeting with Attlee, Açıkalın explained Turkey’s position against territorial and other claims of the Soviets, while the British Prime Minister expressed his full consent with Turkey’s stand. In his meeting with Bevin, the British Foreign Minister told the Ambassador that he had raised the Turkish issue with Stalin, saying that the Soviet attitude toward Turkey had forced the latter to maintain a large army, thereby halting economic development of the country. And Stalin had replied that it was up to Turkey to decide whether or not to maintain a large army. Then Bevin openly stated that Turkey’s defense was a “vital interest” of the UK.

Having analyzed reports of Açıkalın’s talks with Attlee and Bevin in early 1946, İ. İnönü and S. Saracog˘lu came to the conclusion that issue of the Turkish-Soviet relations exceeded the limits of Turkish borders and came to the level of world struggle for peace and security. The government expressed its satisfaction with the situation in Turkey. Contributing to this were statements of Bevin to Stalin and assessment of the situation by Acheson. Thus, the “war

of nerves” did not shatter the Turkish society; instead, it consolidated the society. In connection with this, Ambassador E. Wilson pointed out that the Turks were feeling more relieved.⁹

Against the background of increased Soviet pressures, in early 1946, the Turkish press launched an anti-Soviet campaign and published critical articles about political, economic and social life in the USSR. These publications stressed that the USSR had lost its image of peace and security advocate and turned into an aggressive capitalist state. Journalist A. E. Yalman published an article entitled “Where is Russia going?” in *Vatan* newspaper, which said that the Soviet Union had long rejected the principles of socialism and passed to the worst form of capitalism—state capitalism. In his opinion, the privileges of the previous Russian aristocracy were transferred to the new aristocracy and, as a result, the people lost their basic democratic freedoms. Finally, Yalman concluded that unless the Soviets relented, the USSR would soon be ruined. On 5 January, in *Tanin* newspaper, Yalçın compared Russia to a decrepit sack, a prison of peoples, and an incarnation of hell. A day later, he published an article in *Tanin* entitled “Soviet Union is military criminal number one.” The Soviets were particularly infuriated with two articles published in early January—“Has Machiavellism turned into Molotovism?” and “Stalin repeats actions of Hitler.” These articles caused a stormy response in wider society. The second article was fully translated into English and published in London newspapers. Owing to the increased anti-Soviet campaign and criticism against Stalin and Molotov, Soviet Ambassador S. Vinogradov handed over a note of protest to the Turkish Foreign Ministry.

On 9 January, Asim Us published his above-mentioned article “Has Machiavellism turned into Molotovism?” in *Vakit* newspaper, in which he accused Soviet leaders of forgetting their country’s recent past and adapting themselves to changing circumstances. He cited as an example Molotov’s speech at the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on October 31, 1939. The speech was published in newspapers. In connection with the circumstances and political developments in Russia, A. Us proposed to look through the article more attentively. He wrote:

When Molotov delivered his speech, Germany, having agreed with the Soviets, attacked Poland, and this country was divided between the two powers. Neutral in word, Russia did its best to expand its borders. Great Britain and France as guarantors of Poland declared war on Germany. Turkey as ally of Great Britain and France in the Mediterranean continued to pursue a neutral political line. In his speech Molotov tried to clarify the Soviet foreign policy and simultaneously eulogized Hitlerism, now fully eradicated. He spoke of Germany as a peace-loving state and instead, condemned France and Britain as states seeking to unleash war. Then he attempted to prove that Russia’s support to Germany was a pledge of peace. The same speech charged Turkey with concluding an alliance with Britain, and rejected rumors that Russia demanded the return of Kars, Ardahan and Artvin. Touching upon the Moscow talks with Saracog˘lu, Molotov pointed out that some people insisted that the USSR laid claims to Ardahan and Kars. He said it was an outrageous lie. Other people alleged that the USSR demanded to revise the Montreux Convention and wanted new privileges in the Straits. This was a lie too. As it is seen, what Molotov had characterized as gossip and lies in 1939 turned into reality in 1945–1946. Soviet leaders preferred to ignore their own statements, though not so much time had passed. . . . In 1939, Molotov denied rumors that Russians demanded the return of Kars, Ardahan and Artvin. Today, the international press is full of Russian demands to Turkey. He is well aware of what Moscow radio is broadcasting. Perhaps, Molotov wishes the policy of ‘Machiavellism’ to be named ‘Molotovism.’¹⁰

A few days before receiving the Soviet note, the Turkish Prime Minister called on the Turkish press to refrain from insulting attacks on the USSR. The reply note handed to the Soviet Ambassador said that the government had given appropriate instructions and that the Turkish government was regretful of articles published. The note pointed out that these publications

were a kind of response to the articles of Georgian academics published in the Soviet press and that the Turkish government had undertaken to stop further publication of anti-Soviet articles, hoping that the Soviet government would take similar steps.¹¹ Indeed, analysis of newspaper publications shows that the number of mutual attacks in the Soviet and Turkish press sharply declined in the second half of January. Articles by Professor of Ankara University Osman Turan (*Ulus* newspaper) and Professor Fuat Köprülü (*Vatan* newspaper) assumed the nature of historical dispute. In *Tanin* newspaper of 11 January H. Yalçın reminded that back in 1876 Mithat Pasha had sent a telegram to Turkish Ambassador to London, in which he asked the latter to use any opportunity to get Britain's support in the Russian-Turkish confrontation. Yalçın wrote: "The document is still topical and can be sent to Cevat Açıkalın in London with the signature of Saracog'lu."¹²

The first session of the UN General Assembly was held in London on January 10, 1946. Contributing to the cause of peace was the participation of US Secretary of State J. Byrnes, Deputy Soviet Foreign Minister A. Vyshinsky, and British Foreign Minister E. Bevin. Foreign Minister H. Saka headed the Turkish delegation. Turkish officials closely watched the UN's activity and hoped that the organization would assist in preserving the country's territorial integrity and removing Soviet threats. Both governmental circles and journalists impatiently awaited the General Assembly's stand on Iranian Azerbaijan, Balkan countries, and unfair claims to Turkey. The latter believed that if the British government followed its tough line on these issues, it would be able to lead most countries. Under the UN Charter, great powers were entitled to veto, and this caused anxiety in Turkish political circles. As viewed by the Turkish press, as long as the veto power remained, no state in the world could be confident in preserving its sovereignty and territorial integrity.¹³

On 17 January, Secretary of State Byrnes received Turkish Foreign Minister H. Saka, who indicated his country's concern over Soviet desires to establish a military base on Turkish territory and in the Straits. Saka said that no official appeal from the Soviets had so far been received, but six months earlier the USSR had put forward new amendments to the Treaty of 1925, which included return of Kars and Ardahan provinces and reconsideration of the Straits regime. Asked by Byrnes about ethnic composition of the population, H. Saka reported that Turks resided in Kars and Ardahan and they spoke Turkish and supported all democratic initiatives of the Turkish government. Saka underscored that the situation there was quite different from the one in Iranian Azerbaijan. He explained that Soviet successes in Azerbaijan were due to the fact that another people lived in this part of Iran who demanded a better attitude to itself from official Teheran.

Then J. Byrnes showed interest in the capacity of the Turkish army. Saka reported that the army numbered one million and added that the government had no time for demobilization. So, the army was growing, not reducing. Saka explained that the Turkish people was rather patient, but if the Soviet government put forward new reasons for annexation of eastern *vilayets* or other lands of Turkey, the Turkish people would respond adequately and the situation might grow into armed clashes. The Turkish Foreign Minister assured him that the government would be able to prevent provocations, yet, he stressed that the government and people of Turkey

would resist any attempts to seize Turkish lands by force. Having familiarized himself with the situation, J. Byrnes expressed his solidarity with the Turkish government's position. He also indicated his satisfaction with the founding of the UN. He promised the Turkish government that the UN would contribute to the resolution of the conflict issues. Despite such promises, Turkish officials considered it necessary to behave prudently. Although E. Bevin, on behalf of the USA and Britain, proposed to raise the question of Russian-Turkish relations before the UN General Assembly, Saka considered it unnecessary to start debates. The Turkish Foreign Minister said that they should wait and see the results of debates over the Soviet-Iranian problem at the General Assembly.¹⁴

The question of Iranian Azerbaijan was discussed on 28 and 30 January at the Security Council, where British and American representatives, in an effort to avoid the UN losing its authority, declined from confronting the USSR and preferred to leave the achievement of consensus between the USSR and Iran to the conflicting parties' own discretion. At the same time, the Security Council reserved the right to demand a report on the progress of negotiations.¹⁵

The Turks believed that a governmental crisis had broken out in Iran due to this country's lodging a complaint with the UN. Ibrahim Hakimi (Hakimulmulk) resigned from his post of Prime Minister and the formation of a new government was entrusted to Ahmad Qavam (Qavam as-Saltanah), "incited by Bolsheviks." Turks assessed the change of the government in Teheran as a response to the British and Americans in revenge for raising the Iranian issue at the London session.¹⁶ Turks closely watched the debates over the Iranian Azerbaijan issue and the UN response to it, realizing that they had chosen the right tactics. Besides, their assumption that the government in Teheran would be changed proved to be correct. Qavam as-Saltanah's coming to power was an integral part of the Soviets' intention to create "a friendly government" in Iran.

On 30 January, several days after the formation of Qavam's government, First Secretary of the Soviet Embassy in Iran Aziz Ashurov was secretly invited to come and see Qavam at home, where the latter expressed his wish to pay an official visit to Moscow. At the session of Iranian Majlis on 17 February, Qavam advised that he had received an invitation from Stalin to visit the USSR. On 19 February Qavam, as head of a large delegation, left for Moscow and difficult talks were held with Molotov on 20 February, with Stalin on 21 February, and again with Molotov on 23 and 25 February.¹⁷

From January–February 1946, when the movement in Northern Iran assumed an alarming nature and the national government, headed by Seyid Jafar Pishavari took serious steps, Turkey's attitude to the Azerbaijan issue changed. *Tasvir* newspaper and *Millet* magazine, controlled by Turkish nationalists, began commenting on the developments in a different manner and writing that the resolution of the Azerbaijan issue gladdened Turks. *Millet* informed that the Azerbaijanis constituted half of the total Iranian population; however, the Iranian government was trying to deprive Iranian Turks by every possible means of their national language and written literature and mercilessly exploited them, suspending their basic rights. Hence, the authors of the article implied that Iranian Turks were absolutely right in their

aspiration to create a new independent state. *Millet* of 1946, No. 4, published an article on the developments in Iranian Azerbaijan entitled “The government established in Azerbaijan should be called a Turkic Republic, since six million Turks reside in Iran.” The very title of the article talks about many things. Following the analysis of developments in Iranian Azerbaijan, the article concluded that such a resolution to the Azerbaijan issue would have been quite acceptable if the movement in Azerbaijan was not “a matter for Moscow.”¹⁸

Turkey closely watched Qavam’s Moscow visit. The Turks assessed his failure as a bankruptcy of the Soviet-Iranian talks. They believed that from then on the Iranian people would realize that irrespective of the government in office, the Soviet Union would pursue its own policy in Iran. Some newspapers regarded the non-conclusion of any agreements in Moscow as a great success for Iran, linking this to the fact that Qavam disagreed with Moscow’s demands. The Turkish press associated this with Iran’s being actively backed by Western countries.¹⁹

It should be noted that developments in North Iran stirred up one more problem—the Kurdish issue. On January 22, 1946, at the initiative of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan, the autonomy of Kurdistan was proclaimed and this fact increasingly troubled Turkey.²⁰ At the same time, M. J. Bagirov in Baku and S. J. Pishavari in Tabriz were against the declaration of Kurdish autonomy. However, the formation of “Republic of Kurdistan” in the Near East was a part of the strategic plan of the Soviets and nobody succeeded in stopping this process.²¹

The formation of Kurdish autonomy in Mahabad inspired Armenians residing in the region of Urmieh. Soviet special services reported that the Armenian population of Iranian Azerbaijan comprised 17,000; of them 12,000 resided in the Tabriz consulate district, including 6,500 in Tabriz city; 1,000 in Marageh; 1,000 in Miandoab; 3,100 in Karadag, etc.²² The idea of the formation of Armenian autonomy in Urmieh was a part of territorial claims of the Armenian SSR to the eastern provinces of Turkey. In connection with this, Deputy Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan SSR A. S. Alizadeh informed Bagirov on 28 January 1946:

During my stay in Moscow I incidentally met with comrade Karapetyan, Armenian Foreign Minister. During the conversation, he touched upon the settlement of Armenians from abroad in Soviet Armenia. Karapetyan mentioned the migration of Armenians from Iran. He noted that this migration would be made from the southern regions of Iran only and added that not all Armenians residing in the south of Iran would migrate to Soviet Armenia, just a part of them. The rest would be resettled in North Iran, for they are planning to declare Armenian autonomy here. Further Karapetyan talked about the number of the Armenian population in North Iran and said that about 120,000 Armenians live in the region. When I told him that Armenians were scattered across the whole of Iran and live in towns only, comrade Karapetyan replied that there were several Armenian villages around Urmieh and that even the name of this locality was of ancient Armenian origin. Meanwhile, Head of the Middle East Department of the Foreign Ministry of USSR comrade Sychev came to us. Karapetyan told him that the settlement of Armenians from Iran concerned the Armenian population of South Iran only, for they would not permit the Armenians from North Iran to settle in Soviet Armenia.²³

However, leaders of Soviet Azerbaijan did not allow the creation of an Armenian autonomous region in Iranian Azerbaijan.

Having brought Qavam to power and created “a friendly government” in Iran, the Soviets intended to arrange the same “peaceful” scenario in Turkey as well. It was planned, in the first place, to separate from the government the most active and serious opponent—Prime Minister S. Saracog˘lu. With that end in mind, Soviet Ambassador to Turkey Vinogradov used the

services of the Bulgarian Embassy in Ankara and Bulgarian political figures who frequently visited Turkey. As Foreign Minister Saka headed the Turkish delegation to the UN General Assembly, Minister of Finance N. E. Sümer temporarily performed his functions. During a reception, Bulgarian Ambassador Antonov expressed to Sümer his confidence in the improvement of Turkish-Soviet relations, saying that the main obstacle was the Soviets' mistrust of the Turkish government and that in the case of Saracog̃lu's resignation, there would be no problem between the two countries. Sümer replied that the current situation was a consequence of the Soviet claims and explained that the USSR pursued other purposes by wishing for a new Turkish government. The Turkish Foreign Ministry's Secretary General F. C. Erkin informed Wilson about this and reminded him that Antonov was a Soviet puppet and in doing so, the Russians wanted to weaken Turkey from inside.

Several days later Antonov got in touch with Sümer and reminded him that removal of mutual accusations in the Turkish and Soviet press provided a good chance to improve relations and that the time was ripe to show initiative. Sümer replied that he also sought to improve Soviet-Turkish relations; however, for this to happen, it was essential to gain equality and make the USSR desist from its territorial claims to the eastern provinces of Turkey and military bases in the Straits. Antonov confidently declared that there was no problem of Kars and Ardahan, though another problem regarding the Straits treaty remained unsolved. He said that Ambassador Vinogradov was instructed to discuss the issue with the Turkish government and expressed his hope that the Turks would agree to negotiate. Sümer replied that he would receive Vinogradov when the latter considered it necessary.²⁴

The Turkish party was suspicious about this progress in their mutual relations, yet it attached importance to this fact. The Turkish Foreign Ministry believed that the Soviet campaign, based on erroneous data, had failed and now the Soviets were engaged in choosing a new line. This line aimed for a treaty with Turkey to thus enable the Soviets to keep control over the Straits. The Turkish government believed that if the Soviets put forward suitable proposals, an international conference on the revision of the Montreux Convention could be convened.

On 1 February, Ambassador Wilson met with Ambassador Vinogradov, who indicated his country's dissatisfaction with publications in the Turkish newspapers especially, those insulting the honor and dignity of the Soviet leaders. To his thinking, the number of such articles had already decreased; yet, there materials still appeared that contained undesirable claims and hints. The Turkish party recognized these facts; still, it explained them by the Moscow radio's violating the "truce" as well. According to the Turkish Foreign Ministry, if Moscow radio behaved properly, the Turkish press would not show off.

After a long conversation with the Soviet Ambassador, Ambassador Wilson came to the conclusion that the Straits remained the major issue for the USSR. Vinogradov had to concede that Molotov put the question of Kars and Ardahan forward in response to Turkey's desire to sign a treaty of alliance with the Soviets. However, the Turkish party insisted that it never wanted to sign a treaty of alliance. When Wilson noted that territorial disputes had to be settled in accordance with the treaties already signed between the two countries, Vinogradov replied that these treaties had been signed in the period when the Russians were weak, and to be

adjusted to the changed circumstances, they had to be revised. Vinogradov reminded Wilson that the USSR had signed a treaty with Poland on the revision of previously agreed borders and did not see any reason for not signing such a treaty with Turkey. It should be noted that Molotov had put this idea forward during the talks with Sarper in June 1945 and Ambassador Vinogradov repeated it. With regard to the Soviet territorial claims, Wilson recalled that back on 10 August 1941, the Soviet government had committed itself to observing the territorial integrity of Turkey. Vinogradov replied that this statement was made when Soviet and British troops had entered Iran and that it was necessary to soothe Turkey. Wilson disagreed, however, that Vinogradov insisted on the appraisal of the document in terms of the events of the period in question, which were invalid today. Vinogradov accused Turkey of expanding ties with Arab countries under British patronage, hinting at an anti-Soviet orientation in its foreign policy.²⁵

On 4 February, acting Turkish Foreign Ministry Sümer had talks with Vinogradov, who asked for “friendly aid” in curbing anti-Soviet attacks by the Turkish press. He asked why the Turks did not want to make a step to improve these relations. Sümer answered that the relations might be improved to comply with the sovereignty and independence of Turkey and asked if the Soviet proposals on the eastern provinces and bases in the Straits were still in force. Vinogradov replied that the territorial demands were very important, yet the Straits problem was of vital importance. When Sümer asked to specify Soviet demands on the Straits, Vinogradov explained that this matter of the Soviets’ security and that the security was to rely on “adequate assurance.” In reply, Sümer noted that a friendly and sovereign Turkey was the best guarantee of the Straits’ security. Vinogradov immediately objected that Turkey was weak and in no position to protect the Straits. The Ambassador stressed that there was a military base in the Straits to ensure real security in the region. Sümer plainly noted that the Soviet base in the Straits would violate Turkish sovereignty, so Turkey would not agree to the stationing of any military base there. He added that if the territorial question were not so important for the Soviets, it would be possible to retract claims to the eastern *vilayets*. Vinogradov explained that these were claims of the Armenian SSR and, in line with the Soviet Constitution, the Soviet government should protect the interests of its allied republics. In the end of the conversation, Vinogradov said: “To attain consent with Poland, we waited rather long and finally reached our goal. So, we can wait until the Turkish question is settled.” Analyzing his talks with Soviet Ambassador, Sümer inferred that the USSR was not going to desist from its claims to the eastern territories and the Straits.²⁶

Sümer’s assumptions proved to be true. Commencing from February, the world felt that the expansion of Soviet borders was becoming a reality. Under the decision of the Yalta Conference, the Kuril Islands and South Sakhalin were given to the Soviets. The same was true of a part of Pechenga (from Finland), East Prussia and Königsberg. Under Communist power, Eastern Europe and the Balkans were subordinate to Moscow. Also supported by the Soviets were groups fighting for power in China and Korea, and guerillas in Greece. To exert control over the Mediterranean, the USSR demanded a protectorate over Tripolitania (Libya) and a military base in the Straits. Strategically, the USSR sought to consolidate its position in Iranian Azerbaijan and Kars plateau. Any movement of anti-Western nature, be it in Indonesia, Iraq,

Syria or Egypt, was immediately backed by Moscow. On 9 February, on the occasion of the elections to the Supreme Council of the USSR, Stalin spoke to the electorate and openly announced that the days of cooperation with the Allies were far behind. In his speech, Stalin reanimated pre-war Marxist ideas of the struggle against imperialism. He said:

Marxists have repeatedly declared that the capitalist system of the world economy is fraught with elements of general crisis and military clashes. For this reason, world capitalism is currently not developing smoothly and regularly, but rather in the form of crises and military disasters. The point is that the irregularity of the development of capitalist countries leads gradually to sharp imbalances inside the capitalist system. The loser tries to change the situation by means of armed force.

Reanimation of this idea in the fragile postwar world overstepped the idea of “friendly governments” along the borders of the USSR; today, the winner—the Soviet Union—posed a threat to its Allies of yesterday. The Soviet leader presented the socialist model as the best one to develop the world’s political processes. Stalin made a scandalous statement: “The point is that the Soviet social system proved to be more viable and steady than any other social system and that the Soviet system is the best form of organization of society as compared with other systems.” Stalin’s statements of the Soviet military might also have worried the world. Threatening the whole world, he declared:

The Red Army is the highest-quality army of our era, equipped with the best modern arms and ammunition and headed by experienced commanders and soldiers with high morale and combat qualities. One cannot ignore the fact that the Red Army utterly defeated the German Army, which just yesterday scared the armies of other European states.²⁷

Stalin’s statements on the end of the era of cooperation seriously alarmed US official circles. They evaluated them as a call for a third world war. In the period in question, George Kennan sent anxious information from Moscow, defining the Kremlin’s policy as traditional, instinctive Russian policy aimed at annihilating rival states.²⁸ On February 22, 1946, Kennan sent a telegram to Washington, which stressed the necessity of opposing the expanding influence of the Soviets, both in the political and military arena. Kennan warned that the Soviet Union was eager to liquidate “our traditional mode of life.” Therefore, he suggested that the United States “not cherish hopes on political rapprochement with the Soviet system. As for foreign policy, we should regard the Soviet Union not as supporter but rather as rival.” Kennan stressed that the USSR should be treated from the “position of force.”²⁹

The change of Soviet policy to a “position of force” put an end to illusions of American-Soviet collaboration. President Truman had to concede that the only language they could speak to the Soviets was the language of force. In early 1946, he instructed Secretary of State Byrnes: “There isn’t a doubt in my mind that Russia intends an invasion of Turkey and the seizure of the Black Sea Straits to the Mediterranean. Unless Russia is faced with an iron fist and strong language another war is in the making. Only one language they understand—“How many divisions have you? I do not think we should play compromises henceforth.”³⁰

From 1946, contributing to the formation of tough anti-Soviet policy and protection of Turkey against Soviet attacks were head of the Near Eastern and African Department of the US Department of State L. Henderson, Navy Minister J. Forrestal, Chargé d’Affaires G. Kennan, Ambassador to Turkey E. Wilson and other officials. Secret German documents seized by Americans at the end of the war made it possible to restore a picture of the Soviet plans in the

Middle East and Mediterranean. On February 28, 1946, Secretary of State Byrnes delivered a speech in New York and launched a tough anti-Soviet policy. He pointed out that the West would not be indifferent to pressures and threats inconsistent with the purposes and principles of the UN. “If we are a great force, hence, we are designed to not only protect our security but also safeguard world peace.”³¹

Upon instructions from Moscow, leaders of the Georgian and Armenian SSR were actively involved in the campaign against Turkey from February 1946. In January 1946, Patriarch of Georgia Catholicos Callistrat published a large article in *Zarya Vostoka* newspaper entitled “Georgian Catholicos about Valid Demands of the Georgian People from Turkey.” Like an article by a member of the Transcaucasian Spiritual Department, Qazi of Adjariya Rasih Beridze, entitled “Turkish Conquerors Must Return Our Lands,” published in the same newspaper on December 29, 1945, this article advocated that the ideas of the Georgian academic and territorial claims on behalf of the Georgian people were addressed to the UN. Beridze’s above-mentioned article put forward rather disputable, dubious ideas with reference to a remote historical past. This series of articles by Georgian scientists ended with a publication of Professor E. Takashvili in May 1946 in *Zarya Vostoka* newspaper entitled “On Georgian Lands Captured by Turkey.” In February 1946, on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Soviet power in Georgia, First Secretary of the Georgian Communist Party K. Charkviani published an article in *Pravda*, which officially legalized all previous territorial claims of Georgia to Turkey. The party leader noted that a century-long dream of Georgians on restoration of the territorial integrity of Georgia had not been realized.

Ancient Georgian lands of Ardahan, Artvin, Olti, Tortum, Bayburt, Ispir, Gumushhane and Lazistan were still outside Georgian borders. It was explicable that Georgian Soviet public opinion strongly insisted on returning these forcibly annexed lands. This cradle of culture and statehood of the Georgian people suffered great losses in the struggle against ancient barbarians, as well as barbarians of the twentieth century, for salvation of universal culture. That’s why these people have the right to hope for the meeting of its legitimate demands.³²

Whereas anti-Turkish ideas took an insignificant place in the article by Charkviani, a statement by Arutyunov, First Secretary of the Armenian Communist Party, made on February 3, 1946 before voters of Yerevan, condemned Turkey. In the first place, Arutyunov pointed out that the decree of the central government on the return of Armenians from abroad to Soviet Armenia and putting this decree into practice would ensure normal development of the Armenian people and serve as an essential factor in the prosperity of its culture and language. Arutyunov added that all Armenians residing abroad received this decision with great enthusiasm as a manifestation of comrade Stalin’s fatherly care of the Armenian nation. He noted:

At numerous meetings foreign Armenians voiced their profound gratitude to the great leader and liberator of the Armenian people Stalin. In the first days after the publication of the decree of the Soviet Council of People’s Commissars thousands of Armenians abroad made a request to return home. According to the available information, the first group of Armenians wishing to leave for Armenia from Greece numbers 8,000. Respective figures are: Teheran—17,000; South America—32,000; Syria and Lebanon—50,000. Requests come from France, Romania and Bulgaria, even from Turkey where Armenians are perpetually persecuted and deprived of the opportunity to express their will freely.³³

However, these figures given by Arutyunov were exaggerated. In a secret report to Stalin, G.

Arutyunov noted that the number of foreign Armenians arriving in Soviet Armenia by May 1947 was 50,945.³⁴ This figure did not constitute even half of those allegedly willing to repatriate.

In his statement Arutyunov also touched upon the problem of accommodating repatriates. To his thinking, just 350,000–400,000 Armenians could be settled on the territory of Soviet Armenia. Of one million Armenians abroad, it was planned to settle 500,000–600,000 in the lands that Turkey was supposed to return. As noted earlier, the problem of Armenian repatriation was initiated by the Soviet government as a justification to its territorial claims to Turkey. In connection with this Arutyunov stated: “We raise the question that Armenian regions captured by Turkey shall be returned to Armenia. Only on this condition will we be able to accommodate all of those willing to return. And we have no moral right to refuse them. That’s why it is very important to return all Armenian regions currently owned by Turkey to Soviet Armenia.” It was obvious that Arutyunov tried to shift the responsibility for territorial claims from the central government to the shoulders of Armenian SSR in order to protect the former from criticism. He added:

The question of the return of Armenian regions captured by Turkey has been raised by the Armenian people, both the population of Soviet Armenia and Armenians residing in Europe, America, the Near and Middle East. . . . Russians, like true friends of the Armenian people, are unselfishly supporting this fair demand of Armenians. Russians are not aggressors; they liberated some European states from German invaders and handed them over to their genuine owners.³⁵

The second part of Arutyunov’s statement was directed at refuting facts and documents referred to by Prime Minister S. Saracog˘lu at the 6 January press conference. The speaker tried to substantiate a thesis that Turkey violated Article 4 of the Brest-Litovsk treaty by conducting a plebiscite in Kars and Ardahan. He alleged that 400,000 Armenians resided in these *vilayets* before the First World War. Some Western and Turkish authors, relying on statistical data from the Ottoman Empire, noted that on the eve of the First World War in thirty-three *vilayets* and *sancaks* of Turkey, 1,229,000 Armenians and 1,504,846 Muslims lived.³⁶ Well-known American researcher Justin McCarthy claims that in the First World War 400,000 Armenians from Eastern Anatolia and the same number of Turks from Caucasus exchanged their places of residence. As a consequence of the Russian policy, 600,000 Armenians, moved from the Ottoman Empire to Russia and 200,000 Turks from the Caucasus to Turkey during 1820–1920.³⁷ In his statement Arutyunov, ignoring the developments of 1920–1921, focused on the events of 1918. In doing so, he passed over the treaties of G˘umr˘u, Moscow and Kars in silence. He declared: “Backed by the peoples of the USSR and government of the Union, we shall meet our legitimate demands. Only in this case, will we be able to declare that we have created the necessary conditions for the return of all Armenians abroad and those banished by Turkey from their lands.”³⁸

Several days later, after this statement by Arutyunov, Armenian societies and organizations abroad lodged appeals to the UN London session, which said that to judge by Turkish allegations, there were no Armenians on the disputed territories. As a response, Armenians wrote that from time immemorial to 1945, Armenians had largely populated these vilayets and now they were sentenced to death. Both Arutyunov’s statement and these appeals rejected

Saracoglu's arguments of 6 January. All the appeals to the UN singled out two major issues. First, return of the Armenian people to the lands captured by Turkey at the end of the First World War and annexation of these lands to Soviet Armenia. Second, creation of the necessary conditions for the return of 1.5 million Armenians, forcibly banished by Turks from "Turkish Armenia."³⁹ These appeals and statements were so similar and "Moscow's hand" in them was so obvious that Professor E. Ismayilov made a fair conclusion: "It was Stalin who launched a campaign in the Armenian and Georgian press, and among the foreign Armenian Diaspora demanding to transfer some regions of Turkey to Armenia and Georgia."⁴⁰ In February 1946, associate member of the Academy of Sciences of Armenian SSR A. K. Chivelegov delivered a lecture entitled "Armenia and Turkey." He familiarized the audience with historical destiny of the Armenian people, concentrating on the alleged annexation of Van, Bitlis and Erzurum by Turkey.

Bloody massacres and suppressions followed throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, especially after the Russian-Turkish war of 1877 and during the First World War. European powers remained indifferent to the hardships of Turkish Armenians. Meanwhile, Turkey, availing itself of the betrayal of the Dashnak government, difficulties of the young Soviet Republic and the weakness of Armenia, and relying on direct support of German imperialism, seized Kars and Ardahan regions and Surmeli district of Armenia, which was a part of the former Russian Empire.

Then he shifted to the settlement of foreign Armenians in Soviet Armenia and linked this question to the return of "Armenian territories" of the Russian Empire to Soviet Armenia. The speaker stressed: "numerous appeals are addressed to the UN General Assembly and to the newly elected Catholicos of all Armenians George I which voice confident hope that the Armenian Soviet Republic will finally unite all historical Armenian lands and the Armenian population scattered across the globe."⁴¹

On February 22, 1946, with a view to imparting an effective image to anti-Turkish pressures, the Political Bureau of the Soviet Central Committee approved a draft decree "On Practical Measures to Move Armenians abroad to Armenian SSR." The decree instructed the Soviet Foreign Ministry to assist Armenians moving from Bulgaria, Greece, Iran, Lebanon, Romania and Syria to the Armenian SSR. A commission was set up. It consisted of I. V. Samylovsky, representative of the Foreign Ministry and chairman of the commission; G. Ovanesyan, member of the Armenian Council of People's Commissars; and G. Ovakimyan, member of the Soviet National Security Committee. Their responsibilities were to carry out the work among Armenians in the USA, France, Egypt and Iran, and collect funds for migrants.⁴² In May 1946, Secretary of Propaganda of the CC of the Armenian Communist Party Z. Grigoryan sent a telegram to the Head of Propaganda and Agitation Department of the CC of the USSR Communist Party Georgi Alexandrov. In this telegram he requested the latter to give permission for sending propaganda materials (for example, articles from *Sovetakan Hayastan* newspaper) abroad to acquaint foreign Armenians with the situation in the country. However, Moscow officially entrusted this job, including delivery of scientific, belle-lettres and other literatures, to the organization responsible for distributing books outside of the Soviet Union *International Book*. Grigoryan was informed of this by telephone on May 31.⁴³

The Soviet authorities paid particular attention to the propaganda work among foreign

Armenians through the meditation of the Armenian intellectuals, writers, etc. On March 27, 1946, Secretary of the CC of the Armenian Communist Party Grigori Arutyunov sent a letter to Georgi Malenkov, in which he asked permission to invite fifteen internationally recognized Armenian writers to Soviet Armenia. Arutyunov considered that this would contribute to the strengthening of the ideological influence of the Writer's Union of Armenia on foreign Armenian writers, who, in turn, enjoy great popularity among foreign Armenians.⁴⁴

In terms of the increased pressure of Soviet mass media, Stalin's statement of 9 February and the international community's growing concern, head of the Turkish delegation to the UN London session, Turkish Foreign Minister H. Saka met with E. Bevin on 15 February. Saka expressed his hope that the British would state the importance they attached to Turkey's independence. Under this plan, Ambassador C. Açıkalın handed to Bevin a memorandum on making amendments to the British-Turkish treaty of 1939.⁴⁵ The memorandum pointed out that when putting forward foreign political issues in the House of Commons, Bevin could have emphasized the great importance his government attached to the alliance treaty with the Turkish government. However, Bevin did not consider it necessary to revise the British-Turkish treaty, since he believed that the UN would adopt decisions to strengthen the world security system.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, in his statement to the House of Commons on 21 February, Bevin paid great attention to the Turkish issue. Particularly, he emphasized that in Near and the Middle East, there were very difficult issues concerning the nature of a "war of nerves" and that he was very interested in the settlement of these problems. Touching upon Russian-Turkish relations, Bevin pointed out that borders between these two countries "are accounted for not by conquest but by agreement between Turkey and Russia." For this reason, it could not be considered that the borders between them had been forcibly imposed. To his thinking, the Russian claims had no connection with bordering peoples or the national question. Bevin reminded Saka that it was Stalin who once sanctioned the borders between Turkey and Russia. As for the Straits issue, Bevin backed the Turkish stance. He declared that he was not sure that bases of one country, aimed against another country, could ever contribute to the consolidation of peace. Bevin declared: "I do not want Turkey to be converted into a satellite state. What I want is for her to be really independent."⁴⁷ This statement gave an impetus to debates in wider society. Especially interesting were the articles "Turkish-Anglo-Russian Relations" by N. Erim in *Tanin* newspaper, "Russian-Turkish Relations and Britain" by A. Us in *Vakit*, "Bevin's Statement" by A. S. Esmer in *Ulus*, "A Word on Turkey by Mr. Bevin" by F. R. Atay and others. All these articles assessed Bevin's statement on the necessity of preserving Turkey's independence as a demonstration of friendly sentiments and an appreciation of the Turkish political line. Turks emphasized Bevin's idea that a treaty on friendship between Russia and Turkey would not run counter to the British-Turkish treaty; instead, it would contribute to its consolidation. Turkish newspapers assessed the advantages of the Soviet-Turkish friendship, but they stressed that Turkey would, in every possible manner, resist any official and unofficial attempts to threaten its sovereignty and territorial integrity. However, Bevin's statement aroused negative responses from some Armenian societies. For instance, the Armenian National Council in Europe sent a telegram to Bevin and the Speaker of the House of

Commons, which condemned Bevin's attitude to the borders between Turkey and Armenian SSR and expressed hopes that Minister Bevin would "not agree with one of the history's greatest injustices."⁴⁸

Minister of Communication Ali Fuat Cebesoy as participant of the 1921 Moscow talks, touching up Bevin's confession that Stalin personally sanctioned the demarcation of the Russian-Turkish borders, told E. Wilson that during the Moscow talks the issue of the border was hampered by two items—Batumi and the southeast of Kars.⁴⁹ Finding the situation to be desperate, Commissar Chicherin applied to Stalin. This attempt was successful and the borders between Turkey and Georgian and Armenian SSR were defined. Ali Fuat Pasha recalled that Stalin wanted to retain Batumi and promised that if Turkey would sacrifice Batumi, then Russia would desist from Kars lands.⁵⁰

Practically simultaneously with Bevin's statement an article was published in the English *National Review* entitled "Russia and We," which was full of criticism of the Soviet foreign policy. The article also touched upon the Soviet-Turkish relations. The author asked a question about Russia's being so eager to seize the Kars and Ardahan areas, which did not exceed a medium-sized English county and answered that although these areas were of strategic importance, the most important thing was that, in giving up these lands, Turkey would recognize the authority of the Soviets and unintentionally be subordinated to the facts of force. The same was true of Russians' desire to station military bases in the Straits. In meeting these demands, Turkey would, beyond any doubt, be gripped in a Russian vice, and this would undermine the effect of the Anglo-Turkish treaty. Thus, Russia's will would be incontestable for Ankara, Sofia and Bucharest in the future. Similar publications in the foreign press and Bevin's statement caused concern among Armenian Foreign Ministry officials, since the whole world perceived Armenian demands as aggressive plans put forward by the Soviet Union. There was apprehension that the world press would restrict Armenian demands to Kars and Ardahan only.⁵¹

On 25 February, Soviet Ambassador Vinogradov met with Acting Foreign Minister of Turkey Sümer and evaluated Bevin's statement as a result of Saka's activity in London. Sümer disagreed with this and explained that it was a reflection of Turkish-British relations. Vinogradov warned that Bevin's statement might provoke a confrontation between Great Britain and Turkey, on the one hand, and the Soviet Union, on the other. Sümer replied that Bevin was hopeful about restoring friendly relations between the USSR and Turkey and believed that this friendship would have a positive influence on the growth of trust between the three countries. Vinogradov once again noted that if Turkey wanted to conclude a treaty of alliance with the USSR, the terms of which were already known since the previous June. Sümer replied that Turkey did not want to conclude a treaty of alliance; yet, this country wanted to establish friendly relations and therefore attached a great importance to the conclusion of a new treaty at the level of the friendship treaty of 1925. Then Vinogradov put forward an idea that had been raised neither in the talks, nor in correspondence. He talked about the possibility of Turkey being territorially compensated if it agreed to return to Armenia the regions mentioned by Molotov. Sümer made it clear that Turkey would give not a single

inch of its land.⁵²

There was a lull for few days in February and then there broke out a new wave of instigative programs on Moscow radio, pre-election statements of Soviet leaders, heads of Armenia and Georgia, a series of articles in *Pravda* and *Izvestiya* that stirred up anti-Soviet publications in the Turkish press. A secret report of the Soviet Embassy to the Foreign Ministry said: "Being aware that broadcasts of Moscow radio in Turkish are nearly the only source of information for the Turkish population, Turkish newspapers started attacking Moscow radio in an attempt to discredit it in the eyes of Turks. These newspapers alleged that Moscow radio "at the center of Bolshevik propaganda in charge of systematic lies and slander against Turkey, aims to spread discord in the country, which the Soviets are willing to seize." In early February a collection of verses by Faruk Gürtunca was issued in Istanbul. Entitled "Do Not Touch My Motherland," this book served a major means of stirring up patriotic sentiments of Turks. The introduction of the book cited fragments from statements of Turkish political figures regarding Kars and Ardahan. A fragment said: "The enemy raised its banners and fastened its gaze upon our motherland. Today and tomorrow, Turkey is able to protect its lands!"⁵³ The Soviet Embassy in Ankara sent a translation of the text to Moscow and stressed that the illustrations in the book were of anti-Soviet nature too.

In the same period, Turkish newspapers discussed a statement of US navy attaché George Earl, who condemned the Soviets' attempts to forcibly turn the whole world to Bolshevism and warned about the strengthening of the Bolshevik threat. After the information was spread that the Soviet Union had proposed to be a guardian of Tripolitania, the Turkish press broke out with indignation, saying that the Soviet Union was willing to obtain new colonies and pursue an imperialist policy. As viewed by journalist A. Esmer, "Claims to Tripolitania were put forward to speculate around other claims as well." Journalists Yalçın and Us believed that Tripolitania was not end in itself for the Soviet Union, just a part of the plan of "Bolshevization" of the Near and Middle East.⁵⁴

A new wake of emotions came from an article by written by Head of the International Relations Department of the Soviet Academy of Social Sciences V. Khvostov. The Article provided falsified data on the eastern *vilayets*, which alleged that Armenians had previously owned Kars and Ardahan and the Ottoman Empire had exterminated a huge number of Armenians in the First World War. The Turkish press replied that the extermination of Armenians in the eastern *vilayets* of Turkey had been a retaliation to repeated betrayals and repressive actions of Armenians with respect to Turks and that the Turkish population had always predominated in the eastern *vilayets*, which had been granted to Turkey "in mutual agreement between Turkey and Russia to meet the interests of the population." Newspapers insisted that it would have been frivolous to argue that "small Turkey could have taken Kars and Ardahan from Russia."⁵⁵

Another topical issue of the Turkish press was the UN London session, with its items on the agenda: the Iranian issue and the situation in Greece, Indonesia, Syria and Lebanon. Soviet appeals to the UN Security Council regarding Greece was evaluated by the Turkish press as a reply to the Iranian appeal to the UN. Turks saw this as an attempt to cast blame on Britain.

Newspapers perceived protection of Greek Communists by the Soviet Union as an attempt at the Bolshevization of Greece. Bevin's statement that "strengthening of Bolshevik propaganda posed a major threat to the world" was fully backed by the Turkish political circles and press.⁵⁶

From the first days of May 1946, this propaganda became increasingly intensive and a related threat proved to be realistic. Tensions were also typical in March for Iranian Azerbaijan, Turkey, and the entire world. The mutual cooperation of the war period grew into mutual accusations, historical partnership turned into historical rivalry, and confrontation became a reality. The era of Cold War began. Ten years later, former US Consul in Tabriz Robert Rossow published an article in the *Middle East* journal entitled "The Battle of Azerbaijan, 1946," which said:

One may fairly say that the Cold War began on 4 March 1946. On that day 15 Soviet armored brigades began to pour into the northwestern Iranian province of Azerbaijan, and to deploy along the Turkish and Iraqi frontiers and toward central Iran. Simultaneously, another Soviet army of comparable size and composition moved south through eastern Bulgaria, deploying along the short frontier of Turkey in Europe. This deployment of heavy armor was accompanied by diplomatic salvos and propaganda barrages on Ankara and Teheran, and by the acceleration of Communist rebel activities in northern Greece, Azerbaijan, and Iranian Kurdistan.⁵⁷

March 2, 1946 saw important events in the history of international relations: an end was put to the collaboration between the three great powers. Following international commitments, the Soviet Union should have withdrawn its troops from Iran by this date. However, TASS reported that the USSR would withdraw its troops from Meshed, Shahrud and Semnan only, while armed units would remain in other regions of Iran until further clarification of the situation. In connection with this Rossow sent a secret telegram to the Secretary of State which said:

The Soviet heavy machinery, including 450 trucks left Tabriz on 3 March for Teheran. Another twenty tanks and one hundred trucks have already reached Bostanabad. Today two artillery brigades came from Tabriz to Marand. It is not known whether they go to Khoy, Rezayeh, Maku or Julfa. It is reported from Mahabad that in a day or two Kurds will start combat operations in the Turkish direction. Two days previously the secret service provided information about Soviet cavalry units on the border with Iraq and about nine tanks moving towards Marand." At the same time, Rossow reported to Byrnes that commencing from 3 March, Soviet troops were advancing from the Soviet borders to Tabriz. The US Consulate was also informed that forty-six Soviet T-34 tanks had been brought to Iranian Azerbaijan by railway on 4 March.⁵⁸

Given powerful Soviet military units on the two flanks of Turkey, diplomatic pressures on Ankara assumed a tough character. In the first days of March, demands for privileges in the Dardanelles and Bosphorus, and transfer of Kars and Ardahan to the Soviet Union were accompanied by threats and blackmail. On 4 March, US President Truman received Secretary of State Byrnes to discuss the Soviet policy with respect to Iran, as well as the Azerbaijan question. He instructed Byrnes to write a letter to Stalin to clarify the situation. Byrnes sent a note to Moscow; however, the Soviet party did not respond officially. Instead, it called Truman the main instigator of pressures on the Soviet Union. In connection with this, Truman pointed out that the Russians had started their old games. On 5 March, former British Prime Minister W. Churchill made a speech in Fulton, Missouri, which made many things clear. Examining the situation in the world, Churchill implied that starting from Stetting in the Baltic Sea to Trieste in the Adriatic Sea, an iron curtain had dropped over Europe and all the treasures of ancient states of Eastern and Central Europe—Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade,

Bucharest, Sofia—had fallen under the Soviet influence and been subordinated to Moscow. To his thinking, pressured by the Moscow government, Turkey and Iran were awfully perturbed.⁵⁹ Churchill's speech was reflected in the Turkish press. Prior to the Fulton speech, Turkish newspapers spread information that Churchill proposed the Anglo-American alliance as a single way to save the world. Turkish newspapers called him the "greatest leader," a "hero of triumph," "the most far-sighted statesman," etc. The Turkish press beheld its country's rightness in Churchill's harsh criticism of Soviet foreign policy.

In early March 1946, the international situation not only in political and diplomatic but military spheres became increasingly aggravated. On 6 March commander of the Baltic military district Ivan Bagramyan, with a group of top Soviet military officials, arrived in Tabriz. Simultaneously commander of the Soviet southern group, Marshal F. Tolbukhin left for Bulgaria to lead military units concentrated on the European borders of Turkey.⁶⁰ On 6 March, in a secret report to Byrnes, Consul Rossow wrote:

Soviet troop reinforcements continue arriving night and day by truck and rail from the Soviet frontier, and are being constantly redeployed from here. Also yesterday forty-six new medium tanks arrived from Soviet Union by rail. General Bagramyan, Soviet Army Commander with spectacular combat record, has arrived and taken command of Soviet troops in Azerbaijan, superseding Lieutenant General Glinisky who is only Corps Commander and has no extensive combat experience. Additional Soviet troops including a strong force of motorized infantry have departed southward towards Mahabad and Iraq frontier . . . This point governs the main accessible frontier to Turkey . . . All observations and reports indicate inescapably that the Soviets are preparing for major military operations.⁶¹

The Consul warned the Department of State that urgent measures were required.⁶²

As soon as these news reached Washington, Byrnes, convened an enlarged meeting with the participation of his Undersecretary Dean Acheson and other top officials on 7 March. The meeting focused on the map of Azerbaijan, speckled with lines. The lines created an illusion of advancement of the Soviet troops toward Turkey, Iraq, Teheran and the oilfields of South Iran. In explaining this alarming situation, Byrnes exclaimed with tragic pathos: "Now, we will have to give them both oil barrels."⁶³

Simultaneously with this, there were reports that the USSR was concentrating its troops on the Turkish border in the Balkans. It was also reported that over the past two weeks, Soviet troops kept on arriving in Bulgaria by the Bessarabia-Dobrudja railroad. To step up this procedure, a rail track from Bessarabia to Ploesti was unified to comply with Soviet standards. Secret services informed that ammunition depots were arranged in Krayevo and Ploesti. According to other information, the Soviets instructed to equip all sixty hospitals of Bucharest with medical drugs and dressings by 1 April and discharge all patients. Relying on this information, Wilson wrote to the Secretary of State that the concentration of Soviet troops on the Turkish border was indicative of the risk of combat operations at any moment suitable for the USSR. As viewed by Wilson, the USSR was unlikely to unleash war; instead, it would prefer diversion, for instance, opening of Armenian or Kurdish front in the eastern *vilayets*. Wilson believed that starting a war against Turkey would mean the final rupture of Soviet collaboration with Western democracies. A testimony to this assumption was the accelerated movement of troops or reduction of foreign correspondents in Moscow. Wilson concluded that after 15 April when the roads would be dry, the Soviet Union might start large-scale

operations.⁶⁴ In early March, Turkish Prime Minister Saracog̃lu met with journalists and advised them to be patient and prudent with respect to Russia. Saying that the Moscow radio was broadcasting anti-Turkish materials, journalists refused to follow the Prime Minister's recommendations. However, Saracog̃lu strongly insisted on his advice and added that Churchill and other top officials were controlling the situation. He noted that tranquility and order were in favor of Turkey.

Back at the Potsdam conference and in subsequent meetings, the Soviet leaders had repeatedly declared that they had no particular claims to Turkey. However, when Turkey appealed to the Soviet Foreign Ministry and other governmental bodies with a request to conclude a treaty of alliance, Molotov put forward a counter-proposal: to return Kars and Ardahan, build a military base in the Straits, and exert joint control over Bosphorus and Dardanelles. In a meeting with journalists on March 1946, Byrnes tried to shed light on this issue. Initially, he reaffirmed President Truman's word that the issue had not been touched upon. But later he had to concede that they had touched upon "the issue of Kars and Ardahan." According to him, the Russian Foreign Minister declared that the Soviet government wanted nothing from Turkey, but it had just offered to sign a treaty of alliance with this country in exchange for revision of the eastern borders. Molotov added that the issue had been raised at the initiative of the Turkish side.⁶⁵

Once Byrnes found it difficult to picture the situation around the cancelled treaty of 1925 and Turkey's proposal to conclude a treaty of alliance, of which the Soviet Union immediately took advantage, Turkish officials not only declined from the idea of a treaty of alliance, set forth during Molotov-Sarper talks in June 1945, but fully denied the fact of such a proposal and were apprehensive of showing any initiative in this regard. Attempts of the Soviet Ambassador, through his assistants or directly by means of talks, to make Turkey respond failed. Therefore, the meeting between Prime Minister Saracog̃lu and Ambassador Vinogradov on March 9, 1946 was held in a strained atmosphere. The Prime Minister made it clear that it was senseless to make Turkey join the Soviet security system as a meek executor of someone else's will. Saracog̃lu declared his intention to inform journalists that Turkey had not applied to the Soviet Union with a proposal to conclude a treaty of alliance and that Molotov had invented this legend. In reply, the Soviet Ambassador replied that he had something to tell to the journalists and unmask the head of the Turkish government. Meanwhile, Saracog̃lu remembered that Sarper spoke not of a treaty of alliance but "of a treaty of closer relations." In his report to Moscow Vinogradov pointed out that Saracog̃lu did not specify the form of such a friendship: either in the form of the alliance treaty or "treaty of closer nature." The Prime Minister made it clear that as long as he was alive, Molotov's principles of the talks on the Straits and territories were out of question. Having condemned Soviet foreign policy, Saracog̃lu told Vinogradov: "You have deviated from justice. Now that you are strong, you have returned to the policy of tsars and started to pursue an imperialist policy."⁶⁶

Rumors that the Soviet Union had started an imperialist policy based on aggression came not only from Turkish and British political figures, but also from many reliable politicians and diplomats worldwide. French diplomat Andre Francois Poncet in the newspaper *Le Figaro*

(March 1946) criticized the aggressive anti-Turkish policy of the Soviets. He believed that the Soviets' attempt to seize Kars and Ardahan was an integral part of their greater plan to establish control over the Mediterranean. To neutralize this authoritative political figure's influence on the world public opinion, French Communist Party's newspaper *L'Humanité* of March 20, 1946 published, on Moscow's instructions, an article by Jacques Menier, which pointed out that the question of Kars and Ardahan was topical indeed and the Soviet's intentions were not aggressive. He wrote: "No Frenchman would ever use the term 'seizure' or 'annexation' with respect to Alsace and Lorraine instead of the term 'reunification with motherland.' Well-known diplomat Francois Poncet must have been aware that Kars and Ardahan are integral parts, first, of Armenia and, second, of Georgia." Then *L'Humanité*, proceeding from Moscow materials, provided historical references to aggressive campaigns of Turks to these lands and accused "advocates of minor peoples" of closing their eyes to these historical and ethnographic facts.⁶⁷ Thus, the Communist press in France also joined the campaign in advocating the USSR's demands on Kars, Ardahan and the Straits. In the first postwar years, the Party of Soviet Communists via Mikhail Suslov gave Jacques Menier \$508,850 and six million French francs to be handed to the French Communist Party and personally to Maurice Thorez. This became known after disclosure of "top secret" Soviet documents.⁶⁸

An information bulletin of the US Department of State published in February 1946 focused on the Turkish problem. On 27 February, Byrnes wrote a secret report, which asked E. Wilson to comment on the Turkish part of the bulletin. The letter and the bulletin reached Wilson with lengthy delay—on 18 March. Wilson disagreed with the bulletin's conclusions regarding Soviet-Turkish relations. Unlike many others, Wilson didn't take seriously the Straits issue and Soviet territorial claims. He informed the Department of State that the development of aviation over the years of war made it senseless to create a base in the Straits. Wilson wrote to the Secretary of State:

The real Soviet objective toward Turkey is not a revision of the regime of the Straits, but actual domination of Turkey. In the vast security belt of the Soviet Union, which extends from the Baltic to the Black Sea, Turkey constitutes the sole gap. Turkey maintains an independent foreign policy and in particular looks to the Western democracies for guidance and assistance. The Soviet Union is unwilling to tolerate this. The Soviet objective, therefore, is to break down this present independent Turkish government and to establish in its place a vassal or "friendly" regime in Turkey, which will complete the security chain of subservient countries on Russia's western and southern frontiers and put an end completely to western influence in Turkey. The accomplishment of this objective would, incidentally, give actual physical control of the Straits to Russia, but this, as pointed out, is not the primary Soviet aim. If, in fact, the main Soviet objective toward Turkey were to obtain a favorable revision of the regime of the Straits, all that the Soviet Union would have to do would be to signify acceptance in principle of our proposal of November 2, 1945, for revision of the Montreux Convention. Our proposal, granting the Black Sea powers a privileged position at the Straits, contains in essence the desiderata for which Russia has struggled at the Straits since the time of Peter the Great. The fact that the Soviet Union has declined to follow the procedure agreed upon at Potsdam and to present its views to the Turkish government concerning revision of the Montreux Convention, but has instead insisted on "a positive guarantee" in the form of bases in the Straits, indicates clearly that revision of the international convention governing passage of the Straits is of little importance to the USSR. To force Turkey, however, to grant bases in the Straits would be tantamount to the disappearance of Turkey as an independent power and would place Turkey in the same position vis-à-vis the Soviet Union as Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, etc.

How could the United States help Turkey? Ambassador Wilson saw it as follows:

Presumably, we intend to give Turkey all possible support in and through the UNO, which would appear to cover every contingency except one: armed attack by the Soviet Union. In the event of such an attack, the use of the Soviet veto might block any "legal" intervention by the UNO. What do we do then? If we have an answer ready, it is of course top secret and therefore not to be mentioned in this document; but without such an answer any statement of our Turkish policy is incomplete.⁶⁹

Under strained circumstances, adviser to the British Foreign Ministry Hector McNeil stated that Britain would "observe its obligations in respect of Turkey to comply with the alliance requirements." Public opinion regarded this statement as proof of the friendship and honesty of Britain. Both Bevin's statement and McNeil's declaration made it clear that Britain was ready to protect Turkey. In mid-March some mass media informed that the Department of State was ready to ensure the territorial integrity of Iran and Turkey. As the United States considered all the problems in the light of the UN Charter, they declared that if an act of aggression occurred in defiance of the UN principles, they would guarantee assistance to Iran and Turkey. At the same time, this step taken by the United States brought some confidence to these two countries. An idea was gradually taking shape in public opinion that America would not remain indifferent to the developments in the world and would "try to implement UN resolution with the help of the Security Council."⁷⁰

In the first week of March, *The New York Times* newspaper wrote with regard to Turkey that Washington officials believed that the Soviet territorial claims to Turkey were more important than all other questions, since the seizure of these territories might lead to war.⁷¹ It was these publications in mass media and secret diplomatic reports that helped Truman form his final approach to the issue. Finally, the US President stated that he considered the Soviet-Turkish border to be the border with the USA. It should be noted that in the period in question, the United States did not possess any military-strategic advantage in the region. On 13 March the US Department of State, having analyzed the possible consequences of Turkey's meeting Soviet demands, came to the conclusion that disintegration of the British Empire had resulted in the collapse of the last US stronghold in its struggle against the Soviet expansion in Eurasia. Therefore, the total military potential of the US together with its supposed Allies looked weaker as compared with the increasingly growing Soviet potential.⁷²

March 24, 1946 proved to be a turning point not only concerning Iran but also the Near East as a whole. The question of the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Iran assumed a dramatic character both in Washington and new headquarters of the UN in New York. The same day Stalin and Chief of the General Staff A. Antonov signed an order on the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Iran.⁷³

Another important event after the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Iran was the sensational arrival of the American battleship *USS Missouri* in Istanbul on 6 April 1946.⁷⁴ Preparations for this event began a month before—on 6 March and the start was given in New York on 21 March. The official reason of the visit of the battleship was delivery of the ashes of former Turkish Ambassador Mehmet Münir Ertegün who died in the United States in 1944. However, everyone was aware that the arrival of the *USS Missouri* was a demonstration of assistance to Ankara.⁷⁵ Note that special envoy of Truman Alexander Weddell, surrounded by journalists, also arrived in Turkey on board the battleship. The Soviet Embassy in Turkey

reported that the government deliberately raised a great noise about the arrival of the *USS Missouri*. Special stamps were issued in honor of the *USS Missouri* and top officers of the battleship were awarded with valuable presents. Against the sarcasm of the Soviet Embassy, the population of Istanbul experienced joy and enthusiasm. All the country was in euphoria due to the fact that Turkey, faced with Soviet pressures, had finally found a faithful and strong supporter. President İnönü termed the visit of the *USS Missouri* as a brilliant demonstration of the Turkish-American friendship and highly appreciated the growing level of security. Everybody perceived the visit as a political act directed against the USSR. Newspapers wrote that saluting the *USS Missouri* and the Turkish ship *Yavuz* caused joy among friendly Allies and irritation among hostile countries.

Prime Minister Saracog̃lu received journalists who arrived on board the *USS Missouri*. He declared that Turks deserved to be called friends of the United States, and they deserved this through their loyal policy during the Second World War. Asked about the Soviet military base in the Straits and the issue of Kars, Ardahan and Artvin, Prime Minister replied that the United States were ready to protect Turkey against any threat.⁷⁶ Ambassador Wilson in his report of 12 April on the visit of the *USS Missouri* informed the Secretary of State:

It was probably one of the most remarkable demonstrations of the friendliness on part of a government and people of a foreign country towards US Naval officers and men that has ever occurred in connection with a US Naval visit. This demonstration can be mainly explained by the hope engendered in the Turkish government and people by recent developments in US policy, culminating in the *USS Missouri* visit, that the US has now established independent policy in the Near and Middle East based on defense of its own interests in the region, these interests being understood as maintenance of peace and security through support of the principles of the UNO. Translated into specific terms applying to Turkey, the foregoing means to Turks that the US has now decided that its own interests in this area require it to oppose any effort by the USSR to destroy Turkey's independence and integrity. This is because if the USSR is allowed to destroy Turkish independence and set up a "friendly" regime here, nothing could then prevent the Soviets from ascending to Suez, and once this occurs, another world conflict becomes inevitable.

E. Wilson completed his report with the words "the *USS Missouri* visit is thus apt to take on the character of one of those imponderable events, the influence of which extends far beyond the immediate theater in which it occurs."⁷⁷

Secretary of State Byrnes, who arrived in Paris late in April to attend a meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, told Turkish Ambassador to France N. Menemenciog̃lu that the Turkish government should not perceive the arrival of the *USS Missouri* in Istanbul as a mere *beau geste*. In fact, this was an act of well thought-out policy. The American government was interested in protecting Turkey's position. Byrnes added that the US had not previously known the full truth about Turkey and its problems, but now had full information about the situation and was closely interested in Turkey's problems. Byrnes emphasized that the US felt sentiments of sincere and genuine friendship towards Turkey.⁷⁸

The visit of the *USS Missouri* in the Straits, the fact that the US had now taken the Turkish side and openly demonstrated such a policy, as well as the strengthening US position in the Near East were not unexpected for the USSR. Soviet Ambassador to Washington Nikolai Novikov defined this as "military political demonstration against the Soviet Union."⁷⁹ Such a state of affairs left Soviet leaders two ways out of the situation: either agree with the terms of the Turkish government and withdraw the question of territories and bases or seek their

fulfillment by means of applying maximum pressure to Turkey. Transformation of this region into an area of confrontation not only with Great Britain—losing its authority in the East, but also with the US enhanced the importance of the Straits problem for the USSR. Russian scientist N. Kochkin was right in writing: “It is quite probable that the American *démarche* encouraged the Kremlin not to give up its positions.”⁸⁰ For this reason, the Soviet Union kept on attacking Turkey by diplomatic channels and through mass media. In May 1946, during his meeting with Soviet leaders in Moscow British Ambassador M. Peterson tried to ease the situation, but failed. The Ambassador pointed out that Great Britain was supportive of the improvement of Soviet-Turkish relations and that Turks, in turn, were willing to become friends with the USSR. As for the free passage of Soviet ships through the Straits, Peterson saw the solution of the problem in concluding a treaty with the participation of all the parties concerned under UN auspices. The Ambassador was prone to think that if the Soviet Union needed more sound guarantees, it would suffice, following the British example, to conclude a treaty of alliance with Turks and raise the Soviet-Turkish relations to a friendly level.⁸¹ Stalin, different from Molotov, did not speak specifically of Turkey during his meeting with the British Ambassador. However, he stressed the importance of free navigation of Soviet ships in the Black Sea. When Peterson reminded him of the decision of the Potsdam conference to revise the Montreux Convention, Stalin objected that until Russia had its own base in the Mediterranean, the right of free passage via the Straits was not so essential.⁸²

Against growing Soviet pressures, the Turkish government was not going to give up. President İnönü, Prime Minister Saracog˘lu, Foreign Minister Saka, Foreign Secretary General Erkin and other officials resolutely declared that any demands and pressures from the Soviets would be rebuffed.

Foreign Minister Saka held a press conference in mid-April and answered questions regarding the territorial claims of the Soviet Union. Speaking of the possibility of the revision of the Montreux Convention, Saka noted that the United States, Great Britain and Turkey were unanimous on the issue. In doing so, he stressed the necessity of participation of all parties concerned in the future conference on the Straits. The exact date of the meeting of the conference was to be fixed by the great powers. Asked by American journalists, the Turkish Minister replied that the USSR would attend the conference as a party concerned; however, the USSR had not yet indicated its view on the subject and no exchange of opinions between Turkey and the Soviet Union had taken place so far. Touching upon the creation of an international structure in the Straits and transfer by Turkey of its rights on the Straits to an international commission, Saka replied that Turkey would never relinquish its rights on the Straits and would never agree to any foreign control. Concerning the issue of claims to Kars and Ardahan, Saka said that he had heard rumors on this matter; however, there was not an official claim. As to the question of whether he considered Moscow radio an official organ, Saka replied that he did not consider the Moscow radio to be an official body, so he did not believe it to demonstrate the official position of the Soviet government.

American journalists were greatly interested in Turkey’s view on the building up of the Soviet military might on the flanks, especially along the borders with Kars and Ardahan. Saka

pointed out that newspapers published information about this from time to time; however, no official information on the subject was available so far. “As a matter of fact,” he said, “there is no question of Kars and Ardahan.” Then journalists asked the Foreign Minister to compare the situations in Turkey and Iran. Saka replied: “We have no reason to complain to the UN Security Council, as we have not been presented with any claims. If a new situation arises, then we shall think of how to solve the problem.”

Finally, American journalists asked what the Turkish representative thought of Russian claims to the mandate over Tripolitania and the Dodecanese Islands. Saka replied that there was no official information about it; however, if Russia put forward such claims, Turkey together with its Allies would come out in a united front.⁸³ This meant that Turkey would take the position identical to that of Great Britain. The full text of Saka’s press conference was translated into Russian and urgently delivered to Deputy Foreign Minister V. Dekanozov.

In spring 1946 Soviet representatives declined to attend the Geneva meeting on the occasion of official dissolution of the League of Nations. However, countries of Eastern Europe and the Balkans, subordinated to the Soviets, did attend the meeting upon instructions of the USSR. The heads of many delegations that arrived in Geneva voiced their desire to restore a normal peace process and collaborate in this regard. In so doing, they pointed out that the policy and behavior of the USSR prevented further progress in this direction. They asked F. Erkin what Turkey should do in the event of a Soviet attack. Erkin replied that Turkey would fight with all its strength. Politicians were doubtful of this intention, saying that a small Turkish army is unlikely to resist the Soviet might. Erkin explained that even if Turkey would disappear as a result of a Soviet attack, it would surely again revive as a sovereign state. But if Turkey became a vassal of the Soviet Union, it would lose forever any chance of rebirth.⁸⁴

The Soviet Embassy in Ankara translated Erkin’s statement in Geneva into Russian and sent it to the Foreign Ministry. In his statement Erkin detailed the historical path of the League of Nations and touched upon both successes and failures of it. He recalled some facts about Turkey’s activity in the League of Nations. Erkin agreed with speakers who positively assessed the role of the League of Nations in the search for new ideas in security and disarmament and its role as an international organization despite certain shortcomings in its activity, specifically its inability to oppose well known acts of aggression. As viewed by Erkin, the League of Nations did its best to succeed. The speaker called for the UN to avail itself of the experience of this organization and protect itself against the failures the League had experienced. He concluded: “Otherwise, there would be no hope for the happy destiny of mankind.”⁸⁵

From the aggravation of Soviet-Turkish relations, both the Soviet Embassy in Istanbul, the Soviet Foreign Ministry and the Kremlin leaders were closely watching the statements and correspondence of President İñönü. In particular, his letter to President Truman of April 9, 1946, his speech at the extraordinary congress of the People’s Republican Party of 10 May, and his statements to the population of the eastern provinces were urgently translated into Russian and sent to the Soviet Foreign Ministry for analysis.⁸⁶

Although İñönü’s visit to the eastern provinces was timed to coincide with elections to the municipal bodies, it pursued an aim to ease the population and relax tensions caused by the

Soviet claims. For this reason, the President visited all the eastern provinces and encouraged the population to display firmness in the “war of nerves.” On May 26, 1946, the population of Kars cordially received İ'nönü. The same day, the President met with representatives of all provinces who arrived in Kars from nearby areas and detailed them about domestic and foreign policy of Turkey. He emphasized the great importance his country attached to Kars, Ardahan and Artvin, saying:

The soul of all the nation is devoted to the single inch of our borderland. I am saying to you: the fair position of Turkey has been recognized by all the nations of the world appreciating the truth and justice. We believe that the rights to independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty as set forth in the UN Charter are not idle words. Today, the strength of peoples is measured by their ability to do good. Free will and the strength of the people are sure to neutralize the actions of destroyers and confirm the right to life. In respect of all our land's qualities during the Second World War and after it, I'm thankful to residents of Kars. Soon we shall take part in the elections to demonstrate the will of the nation. I expect residents of Kars to demonstrate a good example of citizens in fulfilling their civic duties.⁸⁷

In late May, İ'nönü visited Trabzon. Here also he was received cordially. The population of the city was eased by his words:

It is four days that I'm staying with you. I'll be remembering with all my heart the citizens of Sivas, Erzincan, Agri, Erzurum, Kars, Artvin, Gumushane and you, residents of Trabzon. During my visits I had talks with numerous people. I explained to them the main elements of our country's domestic and foreign policy. I regard this to be very useful for the country that my citizens know as much about all important state matters as I do. All my talks with people touched upon the following items: first of all, I showed them that the will of the nation is invincible regarding the territorial integrity of our motherland.⁸⁸

In his report addressed to Molotov, V. Dekanozov explained İ'nönü's visit by the fact that the ruling circles of Turkey felt a necessity for explaining to their people all aspects of the country's foreign policy. He pointed out that the visits of the President indicated the population's anxiety about the existing economic situation of the country and the Soviet-Turkish relations.⁸⁹

In April–May 1946, the Foreign Ministries of Georgia and Armenia prepared reports which said that their territorial claims found no support in the world. Replies to articles of Georgian academics and statements of K. Charkviani were absolutely negative. Georgian territorial claims were received as a part of the Soviet expansionist plan.⁹⁰ Meanwhile, attitudes to Armenian territorial claims on the pages of the foreign press were different due to some subjective factors. In May 1946, on the instructions of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, Armenian Foreign Minister S. Karapetyan summed up appeals of foreign Armenian societies, letters and telegrams of Armenians, as well as foreign responses to the territorial claims of Armenians. Copies of his reports were sent to the Soviet Foreign Ministry, First Secretary of the Armenian Communist Party G. Arutyunov. The first, fifty-eight-page report was devoted to the appeals of Armenian societies to the heads of great powers and various international UN conferences regarding the annexation of Armenian lands to Soviet Armenia. The second, 18-page report reviewed foreign press and statements of foreign politicians regarding territorial claims of Armenians. The third, fifteen-page report was devoted to the review of letters, telegrams and appeals of foreign Armenian organizations to the heads of great powers and UN conferences concerning “Armenian lands in Turkey.”⁹¹

Analysis of archival documents show that the political circles of foreign countries and

statesmen, as well as related press organs, saw Armenian claims to Turkey as a means of pursuing the Soviet policy of expansion in the Near East and firmly rejected them. This also clearly manifested itself in the statements of Byrnes, Bevin, Poncet and other politicians who had great influence on the political climate and public opinion.⁹² Opposition of these postwar political figures to Armenian demands and their opinion that Soviet expansionism stood behind Armenian plays discouraged Armenian Diaspora leaders and put paid to the expectations of the Soviet and Armenian leaders for immediate success of their plans.

Data collected by Soviet special services on the Armenian matter openly demonstrated all signs of pessimism. For example, Iranian Professor Ashot Gasparyan noted:

The organizational work on sending Armenians home is not a resolution to the Armenian question. Erivan province may harbor 30,000–40,000, i.e., just a part of Armenian emigrants. The political situation is that we cannot even dream about Kars and Ardahan joining Soviet Armenia. Americans have repeatedly declared that they would protect Turkey's territorial integrity. Hence, we are again no better than before.⁹³

Reports prepared by the Armenian Foreign Ministry indicate that all Armenian organizations' "bombarding" of international conferences and heads of great powers with appeals, letters and telegrams was undertaken according to the Kremlin's instructions. Appeals of these societies to Stalin were different from those addressed to Truman and Attlee; sometimes appeals to Stalin sent from abroad and from the Armenian SSR were identical. Coincidences in the texts showed that all letters and telegrams were falsified at one and the same center. All the documents pointed out that it was only the USSR that stood for protection of the rights of nations to self-determination and only the Soviet Union protected the interests of minor peoples and saved Armenians from ruin. Armenian societies wrote that the government of the USSR and comrade Stalin could not agree that half of the nation, which was an equal member of the great family of the Soviet Union, remained far from its native land without any protection. They voiced their confidence that the Soviet government would not only back demands of the Armenian people but also fulfill the latter's century-long dreams. All foreign Armenian organization, without exception demanded the return of the "Armenian provinces" of Kars, Ardahan, Van, Erzurum, Trabzon and Bitlis, "forcibly captured by Turks," to Soviet Armenia, i.e., to the USSR.⁹⁴

In April-May 1946, meetings arranged by Armenians were held in some American towns, during which representatives of leftist movements and sympathizing Christians made identical statements. On 28 April, the American Committee for the Promotion of a Fair Attitude to Armenia and Armenian National Council in America convened a meeting at Carnegie Hall headed by former chairman of the National Council of the American-Soviet Friendship Edwin Smith and with active participation of the Secretary General of the Federation of Protestant Churches of New York. Speaking at the meeting were Senator Tobey, member of the House of Representatives Emanuel Celler, member of the municipal council of New York Stanley Isaacs, and well-known polar explorer Vilyalmur Stefansson. In the meeting, Celler stated: "The Armenian provinces of Turkey should unite with the free and independent Armenian Soviet Republic, and Armenians residing abroad, should be granted the right to return home." Ordinary Americans might not know, but the US Congressmen were well aware to what extent

the Soviet Republics were free and independent. The same was true of Senator Charles Tobey who declared: “Justice calls for Armenia to be freed from Turkish domination, as was the case with Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria and other countries.” Tobey noted that Armenians were loyal allies both in the First and the Second World Wars,” whereas Turks fought on the side of the Germans in the First and preserved neutrality in the Second World War.”⁹⁵ Of interest is the fact that these lofty phrases of Tobey coincided with the ideas of the Soviet Foreign Ministry as set forth in some documents on the territorial question.⁹⁶ However, these pro-Armenian statements were too unpersuasive to affect the US foreign policy.

In those days, these specifically Armenian and generally Soviet demands against Turkey were backed by some Communist Parties of Europe and their press.⁹⁷ The latest archival materials disclosed in the Russian Federation revealed that the Soviet Communist Party rendered financial aid to foreign Communist organizations during 1939–1976. Therefore, the “impartiality” of these parties is rather doubtful, especially as far as they upheld the “legitimate rights of the Armenian people” in anticipation of subsidies from M. Suslov. It has been found out that secret directives of the Kremlin accompanied Soviet financial aid to the European Communist movement.⁹⁸ Finally, Armenian demands were also backed by some European and American Christian organizations, religious societies and separate religious figures. The point here was about Christian solidarity, which came as a result of lobby-propaganda activity of the Armenian Diaspora.⁹⁹

It should be recalled that the Soviet demands to Turkey were not advocated worldwide; Turkey fiercely and unanimously rejected the Soviet Armenian-Georgian provocation. That’s why commencing from spring 1946 the Soviets started the so-called Kurdish factor. In January 1946, a Kurdish autonomy movement sprang up on the territory of Iraq and increasingly used Soviet aid. Soviet diplomatic bodies began collecting information and reported to Moscow about the quantity of arms and human resources under the leadership of Kurdish tribes in the consular district of Maku.¹⁰⁰ In April 1946, the Azerbaijani national government formed in Iran and the Kurdish autonomy signed a treaty, which increasingly aggravated tensions on the Turkish border. Whereas “Turkey saw just violation of integrity and sovereignty of Iran in the Azerbaijani question,” “the Kurdish question” was perceived as an infringement of security on the borders of Iran, Iraq and Turkey. The latter believed that Kurdish autonomy set up by the Soviets, might serve as center for training subversive groups to destabilize the situation in these bordering countries. Turkey considered this structure not as a republic, but rather an anarchist machinery to stir up anarchist sentiments in the countries bordering Iran. Turks believed that the establishment of semi-independent Kurdistan aimed to infringe domestic security of Iraq, Turkey and Syria in the future and that there could not be any positive aspects in this process.¹⁰¹

Turkey’s anxiety was not unfounded. On May 5, 1946, the Soviet Embassy in Ankara prepared an eleven-page report on the “Kurdish question” and sent it to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. In describing borders of “ancient Kurdistan,” the author of the report noted that Turks occupied a part of Kurdistan in 1470. It was pointed out that over 5 million Kurds reside presently in Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Syria; of them 2.7 million—in Turkey, 1.5 million—in Iraq,

700,000—in Iran, and the rest—in Syria. The report also added that Kurds were the most numerous national minority in Turkey.

Considering that Kurdish colonies were scattered beyond the boundaries of Kurdistan proper (i.e. in the eastern *vilayets*), the total number of Kurds in Turkey is, perhaps, 2.7 million. . . . Turkish newspapers openly write that the formation of the Kurdish government in Iranian Kurdistan threatens the security of the Kurdish countries bordered by Iran—Iraq, Turkey, and Syria. The newspapers called leaders of Kurds—Mullah Mustafa and Mohammed Qazi—“gangsters and robbers.”

To sum up, the Soviet Embassy came to the conclusion that Turks realized the seriousness of the Kurdish question and understood the fact that using police methods it would be impossible to deal with a huge mass of the Kurdish population. To remedy the situation, a program of assimilation was put in practice. Responsibility for this program was assigned to governor Ekrem Baydar, on the one hand, and Turkish propagandists, on the other. It should be noted that national liberation ideas among Kurds were increasingly intensifying and the bearers of these ideas were Kurdish intellectuals.¹⁰²

Beyond any doubt, preparation of this comprehensive report, distortion of some facts and events, and putting the Kurdish issue at the forefront were caused by the Soviet intentions to use the Kurdish factor as a means for pressuring Turkey. On June 15, 1946, a publication of the Soviet trade unions, the newspaper *Trud*, published an article by I. Vasilyev entitled “Is there the Kurdish question in Turkey?” The article began with the words “As it is known, a great number of Greeks, Armenians, Jews, Circassians, Kurds and Laz reside in Turkey. Despite this, the Turkish statesmen and Turkish press every time emphasize that there is no national question in Turkey and that the whole population of the country is Turkish.” Further, Vasilyev wrote: “According to official but underestimated statistics, there are about 1.5 million Kurds in Turkey. They are populated in eastern *vilayets* of Turkey bordered by Iran in the east, by Iraq in the southeast, by Syria in the south. This region is called ‘Turkish Kurdistan.’ There is an obvious connection between the report of the Soviet Embassy on the Kurdish question and the article of I. Vasilyev. At the end of the article Vasilyev concludes: “After the defeat of fascism, the national consciousness of all the nations rose thanks to joint efforts of freedom-loving nations. The same is true of consciousness of Turkish Kurds. It would be politically naïve to believe that the Kurdish question in Turkey might be solved by means of forcible assimilation of Kurds or through prosecutions.”¹⁰³

It was a publication on the Kurdish question in a central Soviet newspaper that attracted the attention of the Americans. Ambassador Walter Smith wrote to the Secretary of State that having failed to make progress on the Armenian and Georgian questions, the Soviet Union tried to rely on the Kurds to attack Turkey. He maintained that if the Soviet Union started a campaign for the autonomy of Kurdistan, these attempts would sooner or later be reduced to demands to return the Armenian and Georgian lands to the Soviets. As the Kremlin realized that it was impossible to create true Kurdistan, stirring up tensions among Turkish Kurds, nevertheless, might lead to a mass Kurdish movement both in Iran and Iraq. Ambassador Smith explained the Soviets’ interest in the Kurdish issue by the fact that the Soviet Union was trying to resume a “war of nerves” against Turkey. Besides, Smith supposed that this might be explained by the Paris meeting of Foreign Ministers. Incidentally or not, the meeting of Foreign Ministers in

Paris coincided with the above-mentioned publication in *Trud*. The Ambassador noted that simultaneously with the previous meetings of Foreign Ministers and the starting of the activity of UN structures, the Soviet Union had remembered the complaints of Armenia, Georgia, Greece, Egypt, Indonesia and other aggressive propagandistic publicity. These attacks had been aimed at stirring up disturbances, inciting debates over insignificant matters, and protecting the Soviet position.¹⁰⁴ However, the study of archival documents shows that the Soviet Union proved to be much more far-sighted than the American Ambassador supposed and pursued far-reaching strategic purposes. This is testified in a report entitled “The Kurdish Question and Iranian Kurds” prepared in December 1946 by the Department of Near and Middle East of the Soviet Foreign Ministry. One of the sections of this thirty-three-page report is called “Kurds and Turks.” It says that back in the end of the nineteenth century “the Tsarist government exploited the Kurdish movement to weaken the Ottoman Empire. Even worse, it stirred up discontent of Kurds with actions of the Turkish government and tried to win them over to their side with bribes and lavish gifts.”¹⁰⁵ This political line particularly intensified against the background of aggravation of the Russian-Turkish relations. An emphasis in the report is put on the Armenian-Kurdish relations, British attempts to exploit Kurds against Kemalists and the idea of an “Independent Kurdistan.” Touching upon territorial claims of the USSR to Turkey, the report noted: “In recent times, the Turkish authorities have been doing much work among Kurds to find support regarding the fate of Armenian and Georgian lands.”¹⁰⁶

At the end of 1946, after the collapse of the Azerbaijani national movement in Iran, leaders of the Kurdish Democratic Party headed by Mullah Mustafa Barzani with 2,000 like-minded persons emigrated to Soviet Azerbaijan together with Iranian Azerbaijani Democrats. Head of the Foreign Investigation Department under the Soviet Ministry of State Security P. Sudoplatov was sent to Azerbaijan with special instructions as a journalist. In his memoirs he writes that on Stalin’s instructions Minister V. Abakumov called Sudoplatov and warned that the First Secretary of the Azerbaijan Communist Party M. Bagirov remained unaware of the talks with Barzani and that no personal meeting between Bagirov and Barzani should take place. With reference to Stalin, Abakumov declared that Bagirov wanted to use Barzani and his armed grouping to destabilize the situation in Iran. Moscow wanted to entrust Barzani with a more important mission—to overthrow the pro-British government in Iraq.¹⁰⁷ Indeed, over the entire period of Barzani’s stay in Azerbaijan, he was first subordinated to Moscow and then transferred to Uzbekistan. Under the decision of the Soviet Cabinet of Ministers of 4 December 1947, a military camp was arranged in the territory of the Uzbekistan SSR. In January 1948, twenty-four officers of the 216th Azerbaijani division were sent to Uzbekistan to train armed Kurdish detachments.¹⁰⁸ Moscow would, after the establishment of a Kurdish state, back the idea of the annexation of lands of Iraq to the United Arab Republic.¹⁰⁹ In so doing, the Soviet Union tried to destabilize the situation in the Near East and concurrently pressure Turkey.

In June 1946, President of Lebanon Bashar al-Khori paid a visit to Turkey. On 22 June, talks were held between Saracog˘lu and Vinogradov during a reception organized in honor of the Lebanese guest. It should be noted that the Soviet party was very envious of the development of Turkish-Lebanese relations. The Soviets were irritated by responses of the Turkish press to the

visit of the Lebanese President and especially top-level receptions arranged by the Turkish President, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister in honor of the Lebanese President.¹¹⁰ Saracog˘lu explained to Vinogradov that the visit of the Lebanese President was of the nature of an early acquaintance. In turn, he asked what questions regarding Turkey would be discussed at the conference. The Ambassador replied that nothing regarding Turkey would be discussed. He added that Molotov had sent an agenda to the conference, which said nothing of Turkey. Back on 28 May in Moscow no questions concerning Turkey were touched upon during a meeting between Sarper and Dekanozov. Sarper did not ask politically important questions. Dekanozov wrote that the Ambassador hoped to hear something important from him, so, he asked if Dekanozov wanted to convey something to Vinogradov through Sarper. Dekanozov replied that Vinogradov wanted to go on leave now.¹¹¹

Saracog˘lu's talks with Vinogradov on 22 June were tougher than the Moscow meeting. Saracog˘lu recalled the Soviet demands on the eastern *vilayets* and bases in the Straits and said:

The Turkish government does not want to increasingly aggravate relations between the two countries. It opposes the distribution of materials that affirm Soviet claims. The Turkish government is hopeful that the Soviet government will find a more acceptable method of restraining its own demands. Otherwise, the Turkish government will have to tell the truth to the Turkish public.

Vinogradov angrily replied that he would not do it and that Turkish President İ'nönü and the Prime Minister should make efforts to reach an understanding with the USSR. Saracog˘lu reminded him of the impossibility of building relations on the basis of territorial concessions. Vinogradov tried to explain that Turkey would realize the USSR's interest in the Straits and the necessity of a military base to be stationed there in the event of a new war. If Turkey started talks on the Straits, the question of the eastern provinces would not be raised. However, the Prime Minister insisted that the Soviet claims to the bases or territories made it impossible to hold any talks and asked the Ambassador to influence his government. Vinogradov promised to do his best but without any hopes for success. In so doing, the Ambassador referred to the fact of US military bases in Turkey, saying that the Soviet Union could also have its bases here. Saracog˘lu rejected this idea, since Turkey had an agreement with the United States on civil aviation. Informing the US Ambassador about these talks, F. C. Erkin pointed out that the USSR was eager to attract Turkey to bilateral talks on the Straits and therefore tried to sow discord between Turkey, the USA and Great Britain.¹¹²

The Paris conference of June 1946 was notable for heated struggle between Byrnes and Bevin, on the one hand, and Molotov, on the other, despite Byrnes' statement that "it is impossible to build peace without the Soviet Union." Responding to Molotov's insinuations, Byrnes made an important statement. He declared that the only way out of the increasingly complicated situation was to urgently convene a peace conference. The Turks considered this proposal to be possible and acceptable.¹¹³

Finding out that the Soviet expansion in the Near and Middle East was becoming a reality, the US special services submitted in spring 1946 their proposals for the consideration of the White House. On July 23, 1946, the US special services prepared a secret report entitled "Foreign

and Military Policy of the USSR”—a very significant document, which noted that the Soviet Union intended to form “friendly” governments in Greece, Turkey and Iran and include them in its own security zone. Though local factors were conducive to these plans, the fear of possible opposition from Great Britain and the USA hampered the USSR from taking active steps in this regard.¹¹⁴ The US special services termed the Soviet policy in the region as follows: the Middle East region was an attractive location in which to expand the borders of the Soviet Union. The reasons for this attractiveness were the proximity of the Soviet Union to this region and its remoteness from other great powers; the weakness of related governments, except for Turkey, and their instability; numerous local conflicts and the discontent of national-ethnic minorities. Besides, this region was strategically of greater interest to the USSR than Eastern Europe because Baku oil, vitally important for the Soviet economy, was located here and vulnerable to air attack from the Middle East.¹¹⁵

Further developments demonstrated the correctness of the CIA’s forecasts. At the same time, this document played an important role in stepping up US policy with the purpose of backing Turkey in its struggle against the Soviet threat.

NOTES

1. From E. Aliyev to V. Dekanozov. 08.02.1946. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 1, v. 47, p. 208.
2. Ibid., p. 217.
3. Ibid., p. 137.
4. Ibid., p. 138.
5. From G. Kiknadze to K. Charkviani. Responses of Foreign Press to the Letter of Georgian academic to the Editorial Office of *Communist Newspaper*. 14.08.1946. GPA, f. 14, r. 20, v. 283, pp. 74–75; AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 47, pp. 138–139.
6. Ibid., pp. 74–75; AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 47, p. 140.
7. S. Pandol. International conventions on the Straits Prior to the Convention of Montreux and British and US Notes. 04–08.01.1946. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 47, pp. 154–174.
8. The Ambassador to Turkey to the Secretary of State. 09.01.1946. FRUS, 1946, vol. VII, pp. 806–807.
9. H. W. Brands. *Inside the Cold War: Loy Henderson and the Rise of the American Empire, 1918–1961*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991, pp. 141–146; The Ambassador to Turkey to the Secretary of State. 10.01.1946. FRUS, 1946, vol. VII, p. 807–808.
10. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 47, p. 186–188; *Communist*, November 1, 1939.
11. The Ambassador to Turkey to the Secretary of State. 15.01.1946. FRUS, 1946, vol. VII, p. 809.
12. From E. Aliyev to V. Dekanozov. 08.02.1946. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 47, p. 216.
13. Ibid., pp. 200–202.
14. The Secretary of State to the Acting Secretary of State. 18.01.1946. FRUS, 1946, vol. VII, pp. 809–811.
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Chapter Five

Soviet Plans on the Straits and Their Failure

In summer 1946, Turkey was the scene of heated political passions. Pressured by the Soviets and experiencing troubles of the emerging Cold War on the one hand, Turkey was preparing for elections to be held on a multi-party basis on the other. Under the influence of orientation toward a Western system of values, Turkish leaders introduced elements of western democracy to their domestic policy. Leaving the fundamental principles of the state system intact, Turkey applied a multi-party election system. Press, radio and other propaganda bodies started active work for the July Parliamentary elections. The Soviet Embassy in Ankara reported in April–May 1946 that from the second half of April the Turkish press focused on internal policy and the struggle between the People’s Republican and Democratic parties.¹

The Soviet Union closely watched the Turkish developments in an attempt to change this “undesirable” government into a “friendly” one. The Soviet’s shift to a “wait-and-see” policy, the lull after the Potsdam conference, lack of new proposals on the Straits, and the fading of the issue of eastern provinces—all these came from the new political situation in Turkey. Therefore, the Soviet diplomatic service in Turkey and Soviet Foreign Ministry’s Near Eastern Department closely watched the developing democratic processes, opposition activities, etc. On March 9, 1945, First Secretary of the Soviet Embassy S. Mikhailov sent a list of the Turkish Foreign Ministry top officials to the Foreign Ministry of the USSR.²

A week before the victory over fascist Germany, the Soviet Foreign Ministry “reviewed” the current government of Turkey and prepared personal reports on Turkish Cabinet members. These included Saracog̃lu, Saka, Ali Rıza Artunkul, Hilmi Uran, F. Sermen, Ali Rıza Türel, C. S. Sizen, S. Day, Şevket Rasıt Hatipog̃lu, Nurullah Esat Sümer, S. Konuk, Fuad Hayri Ürgüplü, Ali Fuat Cebesoy, Hasan Ali Yücel and others. For example, the report on Saracog̃lu, who led the Turkish government from July 1942, was notable for its severe nature: he was characterized as an “undesirable” politician for the Soviets. The same was true of Foreign Minister H. Saka. It was stressed that Saka was a well-known expert on the Balkans, participant of some Balkan conferences, and former head of the Economic Council of the Balkan Entente. At the same time, the report pointed out that Saka did not enjoy popularity in diplomatic circles, that he took his post due to İnönü’s patronage and that his political views were not different from those of Prime Minister Saracog̃lu.³

Analyzing postwar changes, political circles of Turkey realized the necessity of transition to the multi-party system and implementation of democratic reforms. In April 1945, head of the Turkish delegation to the San Francisco conference, H. Saka provided information about forthcoming democratic changes in the country and permitted the activities of various political

movements. A few days later, President İnönü declared that political restrictions of the war period would be lifted and democratic principles applied. It was the signing of the UN Declaration by Turkey and the above-mentioned statement of İnönü that encouraged the opposition within the People's Republic Party (PRP) to start decisive steps. An open split in the PRP occurred during debates over the land reform at the Grand National Assembly. Under these circumstances four MPs—Celal Bayar, Adnan Menderes, Fuat Köprülü and Refik Koraltan—handed on June 7, 1945 to the PRP parliamentary group a document entitled “Agreement of Four.” The document stressed the necessity of raising democracy among broader masses, enhancing control over the government by the Parliament, exercising rights and freedoms as set forth in the constitution, and introducing a multi-party system. However, a closed session of the PRP parliamentary group rejected the principles of the said agreement. As leader of the PRP, İnönü told the above-mentioned four MPs to create their own organization and then join the political struggle.⁴

Leader of the “Quartet” C. Bayar put forward a new project on changes in the law on the press and this enabled opposition circles to propagate their ideas in the press.⁵ Further contradictions within the PRP were aggravated by publications of A. Menderes and F. Köprülü. Consequently, first Bayar and then Menderes and Köprülü left the party. R. Koraltan who started discussions within the PRP, also had to leave the party. While the four mutineers were engaged in debates over the establishment of a new party, well-known industrialist Nuri Demirağ applied to the Ministry of Internal Affairs on July 7, 1945 for the registering the Party of National Revival (PNR).

The USSR watched these domestic developments. Back in June 1945, information about initiators of this new party as well as its charter, composed of thirty-eight clauses, were translated into Russian and sent to Moscow. The first clause of the Charter of the PNR provided for the change of the state system to counterbalance the pro-Western policy of the current government and called for Islamic unity and an Eastern Federation. Leading figures of the PNR were its Chairman N. Demirağ, Secretary General Hüsnü Avni Ulaş, L. Barınovalı, A. Şakar, M. Kacar, V. Bohac, Z. Ok and others.⁶

In early December 1945 C. Bayar declared the formation of a new party. On January 7, 1946, the Democratic Party (DP) was formed. The same day, Bayar held a press conference and informed journalists about goals of the new party, while R. Koraltan presented its program and charter. In the shortest possible period the DP succeeded in rallying broad masses around it. The manifesto goals of the DP were not much different from the goals of the PNR. However, Democrats demanded to apply the Constitution without any restriction, include popular masses in the country's administration and gain greater profits.

The creation of the DP caused great interest both inside and outside the country. While it was not received by the PRP as a serious rival, the DP was composed of prominent political figures and therefore the people set great hopes on it. Political circles and press were positive about the formation of the new organization. British newspapers such as, *The Times of London*, *The Manchester Guardian* and others welcomed the new party. As viewed by *The Manchester Guardian*, apprehensions of separate Turkish circles regarding disunity of Turks proved to be

unfounded. Neither the personality of Celal Bayar, nor the policy of the new Party gave grounds for troubles.⁷ However, the Soviet Union was anxious about the fact that the Turkish opposition had been led by Bayar and Köprülü.⁸ Bayar had long been reputed as enemy of the Soviets and when he was Prime Minister: the Soviet Embassy in Ankara, compared him to İ'nönü, Saracog˘lu and others, and characterized him as a pro-Westernized politician. The Soviet government considered Bayar's return to big policy as strengthening of Turkey's integration to the West.

The organization of the DP progressed so rapidly that the ruling PRP had to reschedule the 1947 elections to the Grand National Assembly, so that Democrats would not be able to come to power. In other words, the PRP deliberately dragged out the elections. Under such circumstances, the PRP had to rejuvenate its ranks and revise some issues. With that end in mind, an extraordinary congress of the PRP was convened in May 1946, which made changes in the manifesto and charter of the Party. İ'nönü declined from titles "permanent chairman" and "national chief." In connection with the formation of opposition parties, independent groups within the PRP were cancelled and changes were made in the charter to elect a *Bashkan* (chairman). However, it was still the PRP mission to control the elections and the authorities had to be in a hurry to hold elections.

In his speech to Congress İ'nönü declared his confidence that citizens of Turkey would disapprove of attempts to slander the country's domestic policy in the eyes of foreign powers. Efforts to create opposition parties and then dissuade people from voting were nothing other than to lead the people in a wrong way.⁹

Visiting the country's eastern *vilayets* in May 1946, President İ'nönü rendered people moral support and at the same time took the opportunity to postpone Parliamentary elections and increase the chances of the PRP. He came to the conclusion that it was possible to change the date of the elections. In substantiating his decision, President İ'nönü pointed out that the elections had initially been scheduled to take place in 1947. He said:

However, there are some problems of domestic and foreign policy that have made it necessary to consolidate power inside the country. The situation in the world is much more complex and obscure than we supposed it to be a year ago. We have no idea of what we will face in the future. We do not want to participate in a National Assembly, the authority of which has expired. Debates are underway in the country for more than a year over the bankrupt Assembly. There cannot be any novelties with the Assembly, deprived of any political influence.¹⁰

Under this concept, a draft law on elections had been submitted to the National Assembly on 31 May which was adopted on June 5, 1946. On 10 June, the National Assembly adopted with 385 votes a decision on holding extraordinary elections on July 21, 1946.

Note that the transition to the multi-party system was not restricted to the formation of the Democratic and National Revival Parties. In 1946, the Ministry of Internal Affairs gave its permission to create thirteen parties, including Socialist left-wing and Islamic parties. However, none of them proved to be as viable as the DP. In spite of the fact that this party boycotted the local elections of 1946 and opposed postponement of the Parliamentary elections, the Democrats unexpectedly agreed to take part in them. In May 1946, the Soviet Embassy reported to Moscow:

The influence of the Democratic Party has continued to rise and it has turned into a body capable of competing with the PRP. This led to the increased resistance from the ruling Party, which sought to strengthen its influence and impede consolidation of the DP. Intensified struggle between the parties resulted in splitting the press into two camps, of which one camp, consisting of PRP-backed newspapers, belongs to governmental circles and is fully supportive of the PRP; the second includes representatives of various groups and trends of which stand up for democratic freedoms and back the DP. The PRP continues activities to step up its propaganda through the press and put obstacles to the issuing opposition newspapers. At the same time, the ruling Party decided to increase circulation of *Son Telegraf* newspaper. In doing so, the PRP acted in an original manner. The newspaper has its own printing-house, which also issues opposition *Hürses* newspaper. Unexpectedly, in early April, under the pressure of party structures, Benice, editor of *Son Telegraf*, denied the *Hürses* editors permission to use its printing-house, following which the latter ceased to exist. Menderes, one of the leaders of the Democrats, indicated his satisfaction with the expansion of the DP, yet he stressed that some functionaries—members of the PRP—impeded the DP's development.¹¹

Newspapers, supportive of the DP, demanded from the government to put an end to such interference.¹² A Soviet Embassy report says: "Owing to the decision of the PRP on holding immediate Municipal Elections and then Parliamentary Elections to thus consolidate its power before the DP can enhance its authority, as struggle has emerged between the two parties. Newspapers, backing the DP, criticize the PRP methods, principles and actions of the government and the Grand National Assembly more harshly than before."¹³ As viewed by the Soviet Embassy, the PRP resorted to various tricks and thereby caused sharp protests from opposition parties and their press organs. In June, opposition newspapers published materials unmasking falsifications by the authorities. Against the background of attacks from the opposition, the authorities emphasized the necessity of pre-term elections, with the Parliament and government advocating the interests of the people. Note that the pre-election campaign of 1946 was fully based on anti-Soviet propaganda. According to the Soviet Embassy, the Turkish public was threatened with a "Bolshevik danger" which was to blame for the difficult international situation.¹⁴

Unprepared for the elections of July 21, 1946, the Democrats did not achieve a marked success. Suffice it to say they managed to nominate just 273 candidates for 465 seats at the Parliament. However, the list of candidates included several well-known political figures of the country (for example, Marshal F. Çakmak) that contributed to support for the Democrats. In the 21 July elections, the Democrats succeeded in big towns, while no marked results were obtained in the provinces. The elections were followed by complaints and discontent of the population with falsifications, such as pressures from directors and heads of offices, the ignoring of votes of Democrats, loss of ballot boxes, etc. These first multi-party elections became known in the history of Turkish democracy as the "insidious elections," following which the PRP obtained 395 seats, the DP—64, and independents—6. İ'nönü later confessed that the elections of 1946 were falsified.

The opposition press raised a hue-and-cry over falsifications in some regions of the country, especially in Istanbul, so censorship organs did not risk going deep into the details of abuse to thus avoid popular indignation. Meetings and marches arranged by the DP frightened the government. A huge meeting in Ankara condemned the PRP activity. Meanwhile, some opposition newspapers had to slow down after *Yeni Sabah* and *Gerçek* were closed.

In early August F. Köprülü gave an interview to *Vatan* newspaper, which stirred up political passions. In this interview Köprülü pointed out that the PRP propaganda campaign was

directed at discrediting the DP. In his opinion, the democratic movement of the country was a result of people's initiative, not the outcome of government's activity. Even worse, Köprülü criticized the foreign policy of the government, noting that if a truly democratic government had come to power, all democratic countries would have respected Turkey.¹⁵ Ruling circles and pro-governmental mass media responded that it was the PRP which initiated the democratization of political life of the country and that even the DP had appeared as a result of this initiative. Köprülü was condemned for his foreign policy ideas, and charged with underestimation of the "threat to Turkey." The press organs singled out as the government's greatest success the establishment of friendly and allied relations with Britain and the USA against the growing Soviet threat.

After the elections of 21 July, on the eve of the Grand National Assembly's session, rumors were afloat about the composition of the Cabinet of Ministers and candidacy of the Prime Minister. The most probable candidates were Saracog̃lu and Peker. The official press pointed out that whoever came to power would have to restore tranquility and order in the country. At the same time, the PRP called for reconciliation with the Democrats and proposed to forget the election confrontation.

On the eve of the first session of the eighth convocation of the Grand National Assembly, both competing parties had their own plans for the future government. The Soviet Embassy in Ankara possessed information that R. Peker would be appointed the new head of the government. Prior to the opening of the session, a meeting of the parliamentary group of the PRP put forward the candidacies of İ'nönü as President and Karabekir as Speaker of the Parliament. In its report to Moscow, the Soviet Embassy characterized Karabekir as an ardent opponent of Atatürk and advocate of reactionary views.¹⁶ This negative description of Karabekir came as a result of his speech in the Parliament in December 1945, when he unmasked the territorial claims of the USSR to Turkey. This speech primarily contributed to the formation of an anti-Soviet orientation in the thinking of the Turkish people.

In turn, the Democratic Party wanted the parliamentarian from Sinop, Yusuf Kemal Tengirsenk, to be elected Speaker of the Parliament and Marshal Fevzi Çakmak to be elected President of the country. The first session of the new Parliament opened on August 5, 1946 and K. Karabekir was elected Speaker of the Parliament and İ. İ'nönü—President of the country. In the course of taking the oath, opposition parliamentarians declined from congratulating those from the People's Republican Party. The official press termed this gesture as a "stain on the national history."

An analytical report addressed by the Turkish Communist Party to Moscow after the elections, pointed out that Communists had wanted the Democratic Party to win the elections. To their thinking, the DP could have created the necessary conditions for the liberalization of the economy and democratization of politics. The document noted:

That's why we wanted the victory of the DP, though it failed to unite into a single front. We are not to be blamed for this failure. Democrats avoided meeting us. . . . Today, there is a fierce struggle within the DP between supporters of compromises, headed by the well-known anti-Communist Fuat Köprülü and progressive elements. C. Bayar takes a neutral stand on the issue. The DP presents a heterogeneous panorama; there are various sections headed by our friends; there are Democrat MPs who consult with us on political issues. On the other hand, there are fascists who hold strategic positions in

the party.

As for Marshal F. Çakmak, the document said:

He is referred to as an opposition member who will never make a compromise. He stood for friendly relations with the USSR and opposed the current policy that reduced us to the role of anti-Soviet buffer state serving the interests of the British imperialism. Of interest are relations between him and the Democratic Party. These relations arise from the results of the last elections and the behind-the-scenes struggle. During the elections, the government Party indeed failed, though preserved its power. . . . The Marshal enjoys great prestige. İnönü does not dare to appear before the nation for about six months.¹⁷

On 6 August, İ. İnönü instructed R. Peker to form the Cabinet of Ministers.¹⁸ On 14 August, the new government submitted to the Parliament its program, composed of three parts: domestic, foreign and economic. The foreign policy section pointed out that the government would continue its previous policy with special emphasis on relations with Western countries, sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Turkey. It openly declared that the foreign policy of Turkey was based on a British-Turkish alliance.¹⁹

The appointment of Kazım Karabekir as Speaker of the Parliament and his former brother-in-arms R. Peker as Prime Minister, as well as the inclusion of several top officers in the government was caused by the growing Soviet threat. Right after formation of the Peker government, a Soviet note “On the Montreux Convention on the Black Sea Straits” was submitted to the Turkish Foreign Ministry on 7 August. The note said: “The war events demonstrated that the regime of the Black Sea Straits was consistent with security interests of the Black Sea powers and provided no conditions to prevent the use of the Straits against Black Sea powers.” Further, the note continued about the passage of auxiliary German and Italian warships through the Straits.

These facts were designed to demonstrate the inconsistency of the previous regime of the Straits and put the blame on Turkey. The Soviet note also mentioned the decision of the Potsdam conference and proposed to establish a new regime of the Straits to proceed from principles as follows: (1) The Straits should always be open for passage of commercial ships of all countries. (2) The Straits should always be open for the passage of commercial ships of Black Sea powers. (3) Passage of warships of non-Black Sea powers through the Straits is prohibited, except for cases shown specifically. (4) Establishment of the Straits regime as the single sea route from/to the Black Sea is in the competence of Turkey and other Black Sea powers. (5) Turkey and the Soviet Union, as the most interested powers, capable of ensuring freedom of commercial navigation and security in the Straits, will jointly organize protection of the Straits to prevent their use by other states for the purposes hostile to the Black Sea powers.²⁰ The same day, the Soviet government notified the governments of Great Britain and the United States of this note.²¹

Meanwhile, Turkish Foreign Minister Saka briefed the US and British Ambassadors to Istanbul about the Soviet note. He informed them that the most important Soviet demand was the joint responsibility of Turkey and the Soviet Union for the Straits regime. This proposal was a new pretext to create a Soviet military base in the Straits. Ambassador Wilson informed US Secretary State on 8 August that the Turkish government intended to respond to the note in ten days, after the governments of the United States and Great Britain had expressed their view

on the subject.²² Of course, this information was not new to London and Washington, DC. In April 1946, Stalin told W. Smith, newly appointed US Ambassador to Moscow: “Turkey is weak, and the Soviet Union is very conscious of the danger of foreign control of the Straits, which Turkey is not strong enough to protect. The Turkish government is unfriendly to us. That is why the Soviet Union has demanded a base in the Dardanelles. It is a matter of our own security.”²³

Meanwhile, the Near Eastern Department of the US Department of State discussed the Soviet proposals and on 9 August submitted its recommendations to the director of the Near East and Africa Department Loy Henderson. The recommendations pointed out that the positions of the governments of the USA and USSR on the passage through the Straits partly coincided; however, the Soviet proposals were far from the American idea to revise the Montreux Convention under the UN aegis. The Soviet proposals did not take into account the UN and ignored the interests of countries other than the Black Sea countries in the future regime of the Straits. France, Great Britain, Greece, and Yugoslavia, which signed the Montreux convention, and the United States, which had declined from signing the Convention, were considered to have lost their interests in the Straits, the Soviets held. That’s why the Near Eastern Department put forward a memorandum, which offered the following: (1) The United States should back the idea of disarmament of the Straits. (2) If not possible, the United States should oppose any idea of granting, except for Turkey, the right to have a base in the Straits or the right to directly or indirectly exert military control over the Straits. As for Ankara’s position on the Soviet note, the memorandum stressed the tranquility of Turkey. The United States had to reaffirm the invariability of its stand as announced on November 2, 1945. Turks were told that the United States would not back a regime inconsistent with the UN principles. At the same time, the United States recommended that Turkey indicate its view on the future regime of the Straits in a moderate manner. The United States believed that this would make it possible to gain time and ease tensions in the course of July 1946 Paris Peace Conference.²⁴

A day after the receipt of the Soviet note, Saka met with the British Ambassador to Ankara David Kelly. While discussing the note, he drew attention to clause 4, which provided for the Soviet demand to have bases in the Straits. Saka pointed out that the Soviets’ demand to revise the Convention was to be officially backed by two other countries. However, Turkey was not interested in the technical aspect of the matter and it agreed to convene a new conference to revise the convention, provided that Turkish sovereignty remains unaltered. The Turkish Foreign Minister specified that his country would respond to the Soviet note only after consultations and specification of the positions of the United and the United Kingdom.²⁵

On 9 August H. Saka met with adviser of the American Embassy Herbert Sidney Bursley and discussed the Soviet note. Saka stated that the Turkish government had its answers to the accusations regarding the war period. To his thinking, the heads of three states discussed in Berlin not the new regime of the Straits but the possibility of revision of the Montreux Convention. For this reason the Soviet note was inconsistent with the Berlin agreements. The Turkish party believed that the first three clauses of the note might be discussed under certain circumstances while the fourth and fifth clauses were unacceptable to Ankara. In its report, the

US Embassy advised that Saka looked like a man who expected the worst. He was concerned and received the situation very seriously.²⁶

On the basis of collected materials, Wilson sent on 12 August his recommendations on the Soviet note to the Secretary of State. He stressed that adoption of such a proposal would mean termination of Turkish independence. In so doing, Wilson emphasized that Turkish independence was vitally important for the United States. Should Turkey be subordinated to the Soviets, the latter would get access to the Gulf and the Suez Canal. Fortunately, Turkey was a nation capable of protecting its position. The Ambassador maintained that the Turks were taking an active part in the struggle for peace and stability in the Near East, and thus, the United States should not permit anyone to disturb this activity.²⁷

After this note, the newspaper *Pravda* started an anti-Turkish campaign. The newspaper began discussing documents on “German Policy in Turkey (1941–1943)” prepared by the Soviet Foreign Ministry. These were the documents dated from May 14, 1941 to May 9, 1943. An author named Y. Viktorov [in fact the name of Y. Viktorov was Goldberg Yakov Zinovievich; he was deputy head of the foreign department of newspaper *Pravda*] opened the debate with his lengthy article “Documents Testify . . .” published in *Pravda* on August 11, 1946. In his article, Viktorov paid particular attention to the activity of Franz von Papen as German Ambassador to Ankara, his meetings in the political circles of Turkey, and the signing of the Turkish-German Friendship Treaty. The author substantiated his accusations against Turkey with reports and telegrams from von Papen to Berlin. For example, *Pravda* commented on Saracog˘lu’s statement to the German Ambassador on the necessity of Turkish neutrality as follows: “The word “neutrality” could not mislead Papen. He knew it very well that ‘neutrality’ was designed to screen the broad expansionist plans of the Turkish ruling circles.” The article referred to documents indicative of the interest of Turkish ruling circles to the Turkic peoples residing in the USSR, primarily Azerbaijanis.²⁸ In fact, Viktorov’s article in *Pravda* and the documents collected by the Soviet Foreign Ministry served one and the same purpose: propagandistic support to the realization of Soviet demands as set forth in the note of 7 August. However, the issue was not restricted to this fact. A report by academic L. Ivanov entitled “Problem of Black Sea Straits” was published on 17 August in *Pravda* newspaper. The report provided information on the economic and political importance of the Straits, their significance for Russia commencing from Kuchuk-Kaynarca Peace Treaty of 1774, and pirate actions of German warships in the Black Sea during the First World War. L. Ivanov paid great attention to the conventions adopted in Lausanne and Montreux and tried to justify Soviet demands by commenting on each of the five clauses of the Soviet note. Ivanov summed up that the vital interests of the Black Sea countries called for non-interference of non-Black Sea countries in the Straits regime and non-admission of naval military forces of non-Black Sea countries in the Black Sea.²⁹ As is seen, Ivanov’s conclusions concerned not only Turkey but also the US, France and Great Britain. And finally, *Pravda* of 19 August 1946 published the travel notes of I. Zolin, *Pravda*’s special correspondent, entitled “In the Straits.” Though the route of the Soviet ships crossed the Baltic Sea, Kiel canal, North Sea, Biscay bay, Gibraltar and the Mediterranean, Zolin devoted his publication to the Turkish Straits only. Zolin wrote:

“Our sailors heard much of the Straits. They fought four years in the Black Sea and met with German and Italian warships, which were let through the Straits to the Black Sea by Turks. Sailors were interested as to why Turkey could violate the convention. Officers explained to sailors that the Straits had repeatedly been employed by our enemies.”³⁰ Publications of three such articles in Soviet newspapers within a week demonstrated the firm determination of the Soviets regarding the necessity of Soviet control over the Straits.

Strengthening of the Soviet pressure contributed to the intensification of Turkish consultations with the US and Britain. On 15 August, Foreign Ministry Secretary General F. Erkin informed E. Wilson about the draft version of the reply to the Soviet note. In their reply, the Turks, relying on incontestable facts, rejected Soviet accusations of alleged violations of the convention during the war. Turkey declared it would not permit the competence of the Turkish government to be called into question or the convention to be ignored as a whole. As a matter of fact, the Turkish party pointed out that the first three clauses of the Soviet proposal might be discussed at an international conference with the participation of the United States, while the fourth and fifth clauses were inadmissible. Turkey strongly protested against debates over the Straits at any conference without the participation of Montreux Convention signatories plus the USA. The same day, Wilson sent a text of the reply and a report on these talks with Erkin to the Secretary of State. In mid-August D. Acheson and the study group on this issue, jointly with the military leadership, recommended a course of action to the President.³¹ Undersecretary D. Acheson sent a secret telegram to Byrnes in Paris that in meetings with military and naval departments proposals had been developed for a memorandum on the relations between Turkey and the Soviets.³² D. Acheson advised that the memorandum had been submitted to Truman, who backed a chosen political line. He wrote that the US President was showing particular interest in their proposals. It had been agreed with the President that the text of the Turkish reply to the Soviet note would be urgently prepared. Acheson noted:

In our opinion, the primary objective of the Soviet Union is to obtain control of Turkey. We believe that if the Soviet Union succeeds in introducing armed forces with the ostensible purpose of enforcing joint control of the Straits, the Soviet Union will use these forces in order to obtain control over Turkey. If the Soviet Union succeeds in this objective, it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to prevent the Soviet Union from obtaining control over Greece and over the whole Near and Middle East.

He maintained that if Turkey, under pressure, accepted Soviet proposals, the US position in the UN and world public opinion would be weakened. According to him, the Turkish government still had faith in the authority of the UN and declared that if Turkey had to oppose Soviet attempts to station its bases in Turkey, the Turks would take up arms. Dean Acheson concluded: “The only thing which will deter the Russians will be the conviction that the United States is prepared, if necessary, to meet aggression with force of arms.” He believed that if the US determination to support Turkey against Soviet pressures was made clear to the Soviet Union, the latter would not “push the matter further.”³³

On 15 August, Ambassador Wilson informed Washington about Britain’s position on the Soviet note. The British party declared its agreement with the first three clauses, which were consistent with the US proposals. However, it categorically disagreed with the fourth and fifth

clauses. E. Mark notes that “during the meeting in the Oval Office on 15 August, President Truman agreed with the suggestion that the time had come to prepare public opinion for a new policy on Turkey and the dangers that attended it.”³⁴ On 16 August, the Undersecretary of State asked President Truman to reply to the Turkish telegram and whether or not he agreed with its text. Also, Acheson advised to make public the US note to the Soviet government. Truman agreed and Acheson sent an official reply of the Department of State. It said that the US government maintained its position of 2 November 1945, according to which the United States could not agree with the fact that the Straits regime would be established by the Black Sea countries only. Besides, the US government could not agree with the idea of joint protection of the Straits by Turkey and the Soviet Union. The US government believed that the Straits regime should be based on the goals and principles of the UN and it insisted on its position. It added that the US government would gladly attend a conference to revise the Montreux Convention.³⁵

On 17 August, Ambassador Wilson handed over the US reply to Prime Minister Peker. The parties exchanged views on the Straits and the domestic situation in Turkey. The Prime Minister promised to do his utmost to build democratic society in Turkey based on stable principles. He added that the political life of the country would no longer be based on such dominant figures as Atatürk and İnönü, and the country’s population should take part in the building of the new life.³⁶ Peker expressed his satisfaction with the US position on the Straits.

On 19 August, the US government conveyed its reply to the Soviet proposals, to deputy Soviet Ambassador to Washington F. Orekhov. D. Acheson wrote that the US government had thoroughly studied the proposals of the Soviet government as set forth in a note to the Turkish government. Comparison of the US statement of November 2, 1945, with the note of the Soviet government of August 7, 1945, appreciably showed that the first three proposals of the Soviet note coincided, to a certain degree, with the position of the US government. The fourth proposal of the Soviet note, as distinct from the Soviet proposal to the Turkish government of November 2, 1945, contained no idea of revision of Montreux Convention, but a concept of the new regime of the Straits, which included Black Sea countries and Turkey. The US government thought that the Straits regime should comply with the interests of not only Black Sea countries but also the USA and other parties concerned. Therefore, the United States could not agree with the position of the Soviet Union on restriction of the Straits regime to the Black Sea countries only. Regarding the fifth proposal of the Soviet government, the US reply conveyed the US government’s belief that Turkey should solely be responsible for protection of the Straits. If the Straits became an object of aggression, this would pose a threat to international security and in this case, the UN Security Council would take adequate measures. The reply also alluded to the fact that the Soviet note had not mentioned the UN, declaring that the US government was prone to think that the Straits regime should be linked to the activity of the UN, and based on its principles and goals. The American government also indicated its desire to take part in a conference to revise the Montreux Convention.³⁷ One day later, on 20 August, Acheson met with about fifteen leading journalists to explain the urgency of the situation concerning Turkey.³⁸

Following consultations with political circles of Turkey and the US, the British government

replied to the Soviet note on 21 August.³⁹ The British Foreign Minister E. Bevin handed the note to the Soviet Ambassador to London. Refraining from commenting on the first three proposals, the British government came out against the fourth and fifth clauses, recalling that it was internationally recognized that besides the Black Sea countries, there were other parties with interests in the Straits regime. Therefore, the British government could not agree with a proposal that Black Sea countries and Turkey alone would define the future Straits regime. As for the fifth clause, the British government considered Turkey to be responsible for protection of the Straits. Besides, the British party stressed the absence of any mention of the UN in the Soviet proposals.⁴⁰ On 22 August, Deputy British Ambassador to Moscow F. Roberts handed over the note to Dekanozov.

The negative response of the USA and Britain to the note came as no surprise to the Soviet leadership. After receiving the note on 11 August, Ambassador Vinogradov sent to Molotov his proposals on a “plan of actions for the future.” The plan pointed out: “It should be stressed that our note, especially the two last clauses of it, would cause a negative response from Turks, Americans and British.” For this reason Vinogradov considered it expedient “to publish articles in the press elucidating the history of the Black Sea Straits issue and the century-long struggle of Russia for its legal rights to ensure security of the Black Sea.” Molotov approved of these proposals. At the same time, he rejected other recommendations of Vinogradov, for instance, the necessity of explaining the justice and legality of Soviet demands to the world public opinion or publishing in the Soviet press the text of the note and an article with commentaries on the note or publishing of a number of articles and documents debunking the Turkish policy of “neutrality” during the Second World War. Indeed, the propaganda support to the Soviet note was restricted to articles by Y. Viktorov (Y. Z. Goldberg), L. Ivanov, I. Zolin in *Pravda*, two articles of 13 and 18 August in *Izvestiya* and an article by E. Adamov in *Izvestiya* of 24 August. Furthermore, Vinogradov supposed that

Turkey could, in principle, give its consent to the revision of the Montreux Convention; however, it could declare that since the Convention was an international document, it was necessary to convene a conference of Convention participants with the participation of the USA. . . . The USSR could not agree with the idea of such a conference and should reject this Turkish proposal as absolutely inadmissible and try to solve the question through diplomacy.⁴¹

Having familiarized himself with American and British opinions on the Soviet note, Ambassador Vinogradov sent a detailed report to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. At this time, Turkey had not yet given its official reply to the Soviet note. Vinogradov’s report again mentioned advantages, which the Montreux Convention granted to Turkey, including the latter’s control over the Straits. The report stressed that the security of the Black Sea borders of the Soviet Union was dependent on Turkey—“not only on its good will but also on its real capabilities.” The Soviet Ambassador insisted that the Montreux Convention was signed under absolutely different international conditions. He substantiated the ineffectiveness of the convention by the fact that German ships had penetrated into the Black Sea. Vinogradov concluded as follows: “The Montreux Convention cannot ensure the security of the Soviet Union in the area of Black Sea. . . . The Montreux Convention is directed against the interests of the Soviet Union and hostile to it.” Touching upon the history of the issue, the Ambassador

stated that the Turkish party had applied to the Soviet Union with the proposal to conclude a treaty of alliance, but the Soviet leaders had replied that as the treaty dealt with the joint protection of the borders of contracting parties, the Soviet government could not assume any obligations until territorial disputes with Turkey were settled. The Soviet government declared that conclusion of the treaty was possible on the condition that the question of territories taken from the Soviet Union and annexed to Turkey in 1921 was settled. Vinogradov's report also analyzed five clauses of the Soviet note of 7 August saying:

Though a reply of the Turkish government to the Soviet note of 7 August has not yet been received, the response of the Turkish ruling circles to the legitimate demands of the Soviet government put forward in a note of 7 August is negative. This is to say that the Turkish circles backed by the US and Britain are unwilling to settle this issue and thus assume responsibility for not ensuring the interests of peace and security in this important region.⁴²

The question of the Straits was of paramount importance for the Soviets, so the Kremlin was ready to do its utmost to attain its goal, even including collaboration with the Soviets' strong enemy—C. Bayar. Vinogradov's proposals of 11 August pointed out: "If Turks would grant us bases in the Straits in peace and wartime we could relinquish territorial claims to Turkey to ensure our most important national interests." Vinogradov advised pressuring Turkey to give up on the issue of the Straits. He wrote:

Owing to the fact that there is strong opposition to the ruling Party and the government in Turkey, it is essential to establish official relations with leader of the Democratic Party C. Bayar and try to clarify his attitude to our country, specifically the new regime of the Straits. If positive, it is essential to back Bayar and his party through our Soviet press and radio and thus intensify pressure on the Turkish government.⁴³

Finally, after consultations with Britain and the USA, the Turkish government announced its position on 22 August.⁴⁴ Under Article 29 of the Montreux Convention, the Turkish government considered it possible to hold a conference to revise the Convention.⁴⁵ The Turkish note expressed its agreement with the first three proposals of the Soviet note, yet it opposed the fourth and fifth clauses. The reply note of Turkey said:

As for the fourth clause, it is obvious that the Soviet Union wishes to build a new Straits regime on another basis—the participation of Turkey and Black Sea countries only. This approach is contrary to the revision of the Montreux Convention, its structure and existence to be in effect until 1956. Such an approach makes it possible to minimize the interests of other countries in the issue—members of the Convention, entitled to take part in the negotiations.

As for the fifth clause, Turkey pointed out that this proposal of the Soviets pursued an aim to make use of the joint protection of the Straits regime. The note said:

From the point of view of national interests, the Soviet proposal is consistent with neither the sovereign rights of Turkey nor the defensive capability of the country. Adoption of this proposal would lead to the weakening the Turkey's role in the Straits, so the security of Black Sea countries would be ensured at the expense of the loss of Turkey's own security. The Turkish government considers it necessary to protect the interests of the country by every possible means.

The note concluded that the most reliable guarantee of the Soviet security in the Black Sea was not in seeking a privileged strategic position in the Straits, i.e. a position inconsistent with sovereignty and independence of Turkey, but was in restoring relations with a strong Turkey.⁴⁶

France also indicated its position on the Straits issue in favor of Ankara. When the French Ambassador to Moscow handed over French declaration on the Straits to Dekanozov, the latter

stated that he could not understand the French position. Ambassador replied that France as a signatory of the convention would recognize amendments to the convention if other participants did the same. Dekanozov emphasized that the convention had actually been invalid because of numerous violations admitted by Turkey during the war and therefore, the question was not about changes in the convention but about the creation of a new regime of the Straits. As viewed by Dekanozov, the Soviet Union, sending its note to Turkey, relied not on Montreux Convention clauses but on Potsdam agreements. The French Ambassador disagreed with this, saying that the French government considered the Montreux Convention to be valid and that the convention could be changed with the consent of all parties concerned.⁴⁷

Having thoroughly analyzed the situation, Wilson sent a secret telegram to the US Secretary of State, which pointed out that the US interest was to preserve the Montreux Convention unaltered for the following five years and that the Americans and British should not initiate the convocation of any conference on this issue or grant this opportunity to the Soviets. Turkey was of the same opinion. The Ambassador wrote that it was not in the interests of the Americans, British and Turks to take any measures to accelerate the process; but it would be more appropriate to preserve the situation as it was.⁴⁸

Owing to tensions caused by the Soviet note, a committee of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff discussed the situation around the Turkish straits. Defense Minister Robert Peterson, Head of Air Forces J. Forrestal, his Deputy George Kennan and Admiral William Lehi sent a memorandum to Acheson, which said that Soviet participation in the protection of the Straits would create conditions for seizing control of vitally important territories of Turkey. Even if Soviet privileges were of a purely nominal nature, the Soviet Union would be able, within several days or even hours, to station its troops on the territory of Turkey. In other words, Turkey was under the risk of turning into a satellite state. Further the memorandum noted that Turkey was capable of opposing the Soviet expansion in the region. Considering the above stated, they suggested that if the United States were successful in urging Turkey to purchase materials and equipment to strengthen its military and political positions and if the issue of sending instructors to Turkey was considered, then Turkish military potential would increase immensely.⁴⁹

E. Adamov made the first Soviet response to the views of Turkey, the USA, Britain and France on the Straits in his article "From the history of Black Sea Straits" published in *Izvestiya* on 24 August. Summing up the international response to the Soviet note, the Soviet diplomat came to the conclusion that the main purpose of the Western countries in Turkey was to avoid revising the convention. To his thinking, this would strengthen the possibility of pressuring Turkey with regard to Kars and Ardahan, which Moscow considered to be "Armenian provinces."⁵⁰

In mid-August 1946, the Soviet note was at the centre of debates in the Turkish and world press. Most British newspapers opposed the fourth and fifth clauses. The British believed that, except for hostile countries, all other signatories of the convention should take part in its revision. The *Sunday Times* newspaper condemned the expansionist plans of the Soviets. Distinct from Soviet accusations of the penetration of German ships into the Straits, the British

press indicated its confidence in Turkey's compliance with its obligations. *The New York Times* and *New York Herald Tribune* newspapers mentioned intensification of the Soviet policy and toughening of relations between the USA and the USSR, President Truman's appeal to the American people, clarifying the recommendations of the military on the "endless nature of Russian hostile statements," and debates over Soviet demands to grant them control over the Dardanelles. Swedish *Göteborg Posten* wrote that if Turkey allowed the Soviets to establish their military base in the Straits, then it would be subordinated to Russia. In this case, the question of Kars and Ardahan provinces and the territories around Trabzon and bordering with Georgia would not matter.⁵¹

The Soviet note chronologically coincided with the formation of the new Turkish government. Reporting back to the Grand National Assembly, Prime Minister Peker touched upon this issue. He said: "We are not losing our hope that uncertainties between the USSR and us will be replaced by friendly relations on the basis of mutually advantageous treaties." Discussing the five clauses of the Soviet note on the Straits, Peker declared: "We are bound by the international convention and shall protect our integrity and sovereignty. In any case, the government has taken into account the Soviet claims. It is ready to negotiate on the revision of the Montreux Convention of 1936 with the Allies and other concerned states."⁵² On 15 August, during a session of the Parliament some MPs condemned the Soviet note. On 16 August, Peker told an American reporter that it was the vigilance of the Security Council and the British and American public opinion that had prevented the Soviets from invading Turkey and capturing the Straits and that many Turks believed that if there was not a mobilized Turkish army, this vigilance would be of no benefit.⁵³

From 12 August to the end of the month, the subject of the Soviet note remained central for all Turkish newspapers. Aimed against the territorial integrity of Turkey, the note gave impetus to the new anti-Soviet campaign. According to the Soviet Embassy, pro-governmental and opposition newspapers proved to be unanimous on the issue. The Embassy believed that the Turkish government had stirred up the campaign. It stressed that "long before the publication of the text of the Soviet note, all the newspapers had learned of its contents and given their comments on the main items of the Soviet proposals."⁵⁴ Following the publication of the text of the Soviet note, all the Turkish newspapers termed it "the first official document containing Soviet claims to the Straits. Some newspapers, especially pro-government, benefited from the note as a visible confirmation of government's warning against a foreign threat. Articles appeared in the government newspapers entitled "Attempts of the Soviet Union to bolshevize a neighboring country," and "Activities of the Fifth Column in Turkey." As viewed by the Turkish press, the Soviet Union overlooked real changes in its favor right after the formation of the new government and ignoring the real consequences of the "war of nerves," it rashly raised the question of the Straits. The Turkish press noted that Turkey fulfilled its obligations on the Straits during the war, and rejected the Soviet accusations as mercenary, and the Soviet proposals as damaging to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Turkey. The press believed that the Turkish authorities could not even submit the fourth and fifth clauses of the Soviet note for discussions as inconsistent with the Turkish interests.⁵⁵

The Soviet idea of solving the Straits regime in a narrow circle was categorically rejected by the Turkish press, which defined it as a Soviet maneuver to satisfy its interests and as an attempt to gain the upper hand at a future conference. At the same time, the newspapers of Istanbul and Ankara wrote that the Straits were not composed of the Bosphorus only, but also the Dardanelles, which were of interest to both Black Sea and Mediterranean countries. In the opinion of the Turkish press, the Straits had acquired a great international importance from the standpoint of the development of international trade. Even if the Turkish side had agreed with the Soviet proposals, the “great powers would not have reconciled with them.” These powers categorically rejected the Soviet proposal on joint Turkish-Soviet protection of the Straits. Some newspapers advised that the Soviet Union even demanded from Turkey a 400-hectare area in the Straits. “This proposal,” wrote *Tanin* newspaper, “was designed to seize Istanbul and turn Turkey into Turkistan, currently under the thumb of the Bolsheviks and Moscow.”⁵⁶

The categorical refusal of Turkey suggested that the country was going to protect its sovereignty even under threat of war. The Turkish press pointed out that it would have been mad to accept the Soviet proposal. *Tanin* wrote: “Should Russia insist on its demands, we would face a question: either war or peace, and we must prefer war.” The Turkish press forecast further developments as follows. The first possibility was that the Soviet Union would relinquish its claims and agree to attend a Straits conference on the conditions put forward by the USA and with which Turkey agreed. Such developments were considered unlikely, since this “would undermine the prestige of Soviet Russia as a great power.” However, they stressed that they would like to see such an outcome, recognizing that friendly relations between Turkey and the USSR “are the single guarantee of the Straits’ security.” The second possibility was that the Soviet Union continue to insist on its claims, in which case a war may break out. Journalists considered this threat to be hardly probable, since the Soviet Union “was exhausted by the war.” A third possibility was that the Soviet Union would neither refuse nor insist on its claims and take a wait-and-see position. This option, as viewed by Turks, was the most probable and advantageous for the Soviets.⁵⁷

These assessments of the Turkish press coincided with statements of Turkish Foreign Minister H. Saka during his talks with E. Wilson. Saka also concentrated on these three scenarios. First: attack against Turkey. Saka considered this impossible, since the USSR was not ready for war. Second: to organize an international conference to revise the convention. The Soviets might consider this conference to be advantageous even knowing that the fourth and fifth proposals would be turned down. The conference would enable them to take an advantageous position on the Straits. However, the probability of blocking the Soviet proposals was rather high, so Saka considered it unrealistic that the Soviets would show initiative in the issue. Third: to leave the issue until better times. Saka thought the Soviets would prefer this option.⁵⁸

The Soviet Embassy reported to Moscow on interesting facts about the Democratic Party. Right after the publication of the Soviet note, the Democratic Party made a special statement, which stressed that it “would act jointly with the government with respect to the Straits,” since the Soviet note “was adverse to the principles of sovereignty and independence of Turkey.” Besides, the leader of the Democratic Party told *Vatan* newspaper that his party considered it

necessary “to create national unity in foreign policy, since this issue is above Party disputes.” The Turkish newspapers received this statement of the Democratic Party as a hint at a foreign threat.⁵⁹

Beyond any doubt, the Soviet leaders could not be satisfied with the Turkish reply to the note of 7 August. The texts of both notes are clearly indicative of the incompatibility of approaches of conflicting parties to the subject. A US-suggested model of the Straits regime provided certain advantages to the Black Sea countries. Russian researcher B. Potskhveriya pointed out that “the Soviet leaders did not try to take advantage of the proposal and, instead, took an unrealistic, previous position, once more demanding a base in the Straits.”⁶⁰ Other Russian historians A. Danilov and A. Pyzhikov are of the same view. They wrote:

Right after the war, the Soviet Union demanded categorically to let them deploy military bases in Turkey. This demand far exceeded the limits of arrangements reached in Teheran and Yalta for the free passage of Soviet warships via the Straits. On August 7, 1946, the USSR demanded from Turkey to revise the Montreux Convention and allow the establishment of Soviet military bases. The United States and Britain viewed this not only as a threat to Turkey but also as a threat to their interests in the Near East and South-East Europe. As a result, the USA and Britain firmly opposed these plans and sent their fleets to the Eastern Mediterranean.⁶¹

Having examined all the replies to their note of 7 August, the Soviet leaders came to the conclusion that it would be appropriate to make a counter-note detailing the Soviet proposals. A draft reply to the British note of 21 August was submitted on 31 August to Molotov for approval. It said: “When thoroughly examined, it is obvious that the Soviet proposals are aimed at preserving the peace and stability in the Black Sea area and thus complying with the objectives and principles of the United Nations.”⁶² In late August and the first half of September 1946, Soviet Foreign Ministry experts drew up a draft of the reply note. On 8 September, the draft was ready. The same day V. Dekanozov informed Molotov that the final wording of the note had been prepared by Vinogradov, Samylovsky and Rodionov, while Yakov Malik and Vladimir Dekanozov had already looked through it.⁶³

Molotov submitted the final text, reflective of exclusiveness of the Black Sea countries, to Stalin on 21 September for approval and on 24 September it was published.⁶⁴ It pointed out that the Soviet party had closely studied the Turkish reply of 22 August to the note of 7 August and that the Soviet party was sure that the Montreux Convention was contrary to the security of the Black Sea countries and provided no conditions for the prevention of hostile actions against these countries using the Straits. The Soviet party indicated its satisfaction with the adoption of the first three proposals by the Turkish party and its disappointment with non-adoption of the fourth and fifth proposals. The note strongly emphasized that the Black Sea was a closed sea: “This is to say that the Black Sea Straits are a naval route leading to the coasts of a restricted number of powers, and, hence, the Straits regime should have a special status, meeting the security interests of Turkey, USSR and other Black Sea countries.” Earlier, this idea was not specified in the Soviet note. From now on, it was pointed out that it would be fair to define a regime, fully consistent with security of Turkey, USSR and other Black Sea countries, with related control over the Straits going into the closed sea. To substantiate this concept, they referred to the Russian-Turkish Treaty of March 16, 1921, the Treaty of October 13, 1921 between Turkey and the Soviet Republics of the South Caucasus, and the Treaty of January 21,

1922, between Turkey and Ukraine.⁶⁵

After harsh criticism of the Turkish note of 22 August, the Soviet note pointed out that the Turkish government, rejecting the joint security of the Black Sea countries, was inconsistent with its own statements about the desirability of restoring friendly relations with the USSR and put forward abusive aspersions about the USSR. Repeating its position on the joint protection of the Straits, the Soviet government insisted that the establishment of trade navigation or security in the Straits might be achieved through joint efforts only. Besides, the Soviet government believed that this proposal did not concern Turkish rights and should have satisfied the interests of Turkey, because joint Turkish-Soviet efforts would yield greater effect than the efforts of Turkey alone.⁶⁶ The Soviet note, approved by Molotov, was immediately submitted to the Turkish Foreign Ministry.⁶⁷

Though the Soviets kept on insisting on their own plan, the note of 24 September was much milder in tone than the note of 7 August.⁶⁸ Nevertheless, apprehensive of losing control over the Straits and losing initiative in the Mediterranean basin and the Balkans, the United States and Britain and, in the first place, Turkey preferred to strictly oppose the Soviet proposal. This followed from a conversation between a Turkish Foreign Ministry official and the US Chargé d’Affaires to Ankara. The US official explained that the Soviet government, in an attempt to persuade everyone of the ineffectiveness of the Montreux Convention, adduced insignificant details and although it insisted on the fourth and fifth clauses, the note proved to be more tranquil than could be expected. Besides, the Soviet proposal was uncertain with respect to the future international conference on the Straits. The Turkish party stated that it would never discuss the question of the Straits with the Soviet government.⁶⁹

For a week after the receipt of the Soviet note, the Turkish party was thinking over its reply. First, there was no sense in immediately responding to the Soviets. Second, it would be expedient to express its views after the United States and Britain announced their opinion. Third, Ankara agreed with the first three proposals, yet, it would be more correct to avoid debate over issues damaging to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the country. Hence, the Turks considered it quite unacceptable.

In early October the US Department of State prepared a reply to the Soviet note, it having already been discussed by President Truman and J. Byrnes. In the course of discussions it became obvious that the Americans pursued an aim to curb the Russians rather than protect Turkey. On 9 October, Ambassador W. Smith handed over a reply to the Soviet note. The reply reaffirmed the US position of August 19, 1946. The United States emphasized that the Straits regime worried not only Black Sea countries but other powers as well, including the USA. The American note said that the Soviet government, despite everything, kept on using the phrase “the Straits regime should be maintained under the control of Turkey and other Black Sea countries only” in its notes of 7 August and 24 September. However, the United States insisted on the convocation of an international conference and its participation in the work of the conference. The US also stressed that the Turkish government should have been solely responsible for the defense of the Straits and if a threat of attack arose, the UN Security Council should take measures.⁷⁰

After handing over the American note in Moscow, Dean Acheson sent a telegram to Chargé d’Affaires Bursley instructing him to inform the Turkish government. Acheson also advised to publish the American and Turkish replies to the Soviet note in the press. He explained this by the necessity of unmasking the true sense of seemingly attractive Soviet proposals. According to historian E. Mark, “American support for Turkey surely came as a great revelation for the Soviet leadership. It had been a fundamental postulate of Soviet diplomacy, well grounded in Marxist-Leninist thought, that the rival imperialisms of Britain and America must fall out to the ultimate advantage of the USSR.”⁷¹

Simultaneously with the American note, came the British one. M. Peterson handed a reply to Dekanozov, which stated that according to the Potsdam treaty, this issue should be the subject of direct talks between each of three governments and the Turkish government, but as viewed by the British government, “this next step” was completed through an exchange of opinions. So, it said that the British leaders saw “neither purpose, nor necessity for the continuation of direct correspondence on the issue.” The British government again confirmed its consent to the convocation of a conference without the participation of Japan, but with inclusion of the USA to revise the Montreux Convention.⁷² Thanks to combined British-American support, as historian Ekavi Athanassopoulou concludes, the Turkish government found itself in a strong position regarding Stalin’s designs.⁷³

Initially, the Turkish government planned to respond in brief form to the Soviet note of 24 September. However, on October 18, 1946, the Turkish Foreign Ministry handed a detailed note to the Soviet Embassy in Ankara. In the first part of the note, the Turkish party denied that it had allowed free passage of German and Italian warships through the Straits. The note also focused on the rights and obligations of Turkey on the basis of the Montreux Convention and the realities of wartime, then it said that Turkey was responsible for its historical mission. It was the vigilance of Turkey that had enabled the Soviet Union to maintain its positions in the Black Sea during the war. Responding to a part of the Soviet note that stressed the specificity of the Black Sea as a closed basin, the Turkish party pointed out that Turkey realized its obligations as a Black Sea state; yet, it did not forget that simultaneously it was also a Mediterranean state. Therefore, the Turkish government could not regard the Black Sea and the Straits as an issue concerning the Black Sea coastal states only.

As for the joint protection of the Straits, the Turkish party considered this proposal to be inconsistent with the sovereign rights and security of Turkey and declared that the consent to the joint protection of the Straits meant sharing sovereignty with a foreign state. The note said:

The Turkish government cannot understand how the right of the Soviets to their protection can be exercised on the territory of Turkey, contrary to the rights of the latter. The Turkish government wants to refer to the words of Mr. Chicherin at the Lausanne conference indicating dissatisfaction with the idea of depriving Turkey of the right to control over the Straits, as he declared his protest against violations of the sovereignty and independence of Turkey.

Similar to the note of 22 August, Turkey again pointed out that the most reliable method of the protection of the USSR in the Black Sea was to restore ties with a strong Turkey and not to infringe on the sovereignty of the state. Furthermore, the note said that in addition to guarantees given by Turkey, the USSR should trust the UN. The Turkish government indicated its

preparedness to discuss the Soviet proposals, except for the fourth and fifth clauses, at an international conference to be attended by the USSR, United States, Great Britain and France, as well as other participants of the Montreux Convention, except Japan in order to revise the convention.⁷⁴

Having read the note of 18 October, Soviet leaders realized that they had failed to reach a bilateral agreement with Turks on the subject. At the same time, they realized that it was not yet time to convene an international conference on the Straits. Therefore, the Soviet note of 26 October to the British government said that the discussions with Turkey were in progress and it was not time to convene an international conference on the new regime of the Straits. Dekanozov wrote to Peterson: "Owing to your letter of 9 October this year, I inform that the Soviet government does not share the opinion of the British government that the stipulations of the Berlin conference regarding talks between each of the three governments should be regarded as completed." However, in its note of 28 November, the British government plainly declared that any subsequent talks on the issue might take place only at an international conference.⁷⁵

The strengthening of the Soviet-Turkish confrontation led the United States to revise its Middle Eastern policy. According to Melvyn P. Leffler and David S. Painter, "these crises [Iran, Turkey and Greece] were part of a general restructuring of power relationships in the region, changes that threatened the Western position in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East."⁷⁶ Head of the Near East and Africa Department under the US Department of State L. Henderson submitted a secret memorandum on 21 October, which said that the Turks were going to ask the US and Britain to help them with weapons and it was probable that the British would be in no position to do that. He said that they did not know what exactly the Turks wanted, but were anxious that refusal might be regarded as inconsistent with their political line. Henderson wrote that the developments of that year put Turkey at the forefront. Turkey was one of few countries bordering the USSR that had contrived to avoid its control. For that reason, the Soviets were eager to seize control of this country. In expressing the position of the US government, L. Henderson wrote that the steps of the Soviet Union were directed at including Turkey in the sphere of its influence, as well as employing its territory not only to prevent attack from the Mediterranean but also as a bridge to expand the Soviet military and gain political influence in the Mediterranean and the Near and Middle East. The US government was prone to think that Soviet successes in this regard would be fraught with grave consequences. Strategically, Turkey was an important factor in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. L. Henderson wrote that geographically, Turkey was "the stopper in the neck of the bottle" through which the Soviet Union could effectively extend its military and political influence in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. Establishment of Soviet influence in Turkey would enable the Russians to go beyond, to Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Palestine, Egypt and the Arabian Peninsula. As viewed by Henderson, Turkey's falling under the Soviet influence would pose a danger for Greece and Iran too. The governments of these two countries were already facing difficulties in their relations with the Soviet Union and its satellites. Different from Turkey, these countries lacked order and unity and in case of the

defeat of Turkey, it would be senseless to expect that these countries would be able to endure Soviet pressures. As for the military issues, L. Henderson noted that if the Soviets seized military control over Turkey, political consequences of this act would be deplorable. The decisive importance of the Turkish counteraction was obvious, because other countries in the sphere of the Soviet threat were closely watching the most dramatic stages of this struggle. As viewed by Henderson, the slightest weak spot in this regard in favor of the Soviets might lead to tragedy for these countries.

As for the position of Turkey proper, the memorandum pointed out that Turkey was ready to withstand the current and future pressures of the Soviets. To Henderson's thinking, the Turkish people and the government united their efforts on this issue, unlike Greece, Iran, China and others. There was no difference in views concerning the weakening of the country's defensive capacity. Besides, Turkey, as a country in the Near and Middle East, disposed of comparatively effective means of withstanding military aggression, even if it was from the Soviet Union. L. Henderson considered it necessary to ensure Turkey's protection against foreign attack. He wrote that despite advantageous conditions, if Turkey remained alone, it could not endure Soviet pressures long. Turkey had deficiencies in economic and industrial resources to oppose the great power. He maintained that it was the "war of nerves" that had forced Turkey to keep a huge army, which had a negative effect on the country's welfare. Also, Turkey was in no position to independently manufacture up-to-date ammunition and weapons. Therefore, Henderson considered it necessary to render diplomatic, moral, economic and military assistance to Turkey from the United States. In his opinion, Britain's obligations to provide the Turkish army with an adequate level of materials and equipment should have been gradually transferred to the United States. Henderson considered it possible to examine the question of direct deliveries of American military machinery and technologies to Turkey.⁷⁷ A united front against the Soviet threat brought together the people and the state, the government and the opposition, and contributed to improving the situation both inside and outside the country. The press also played the role of a consolidating factor in shaping public opinion and disclosing the expansionist nature of the Soviet claims.

It was Moscow radio that provided the first news about the Soviet proposals. The text of the note was published on 29 and 30 September. All Turkish newspapers gave their detailed commentaries on the subject. The Turkish press unanimously called on the government to take a tough position and not retreat from its previous stand of 22 August on the inadmissibility of the joint Soviet-Turkish defense of the Straits. On 30 August, all the newspapers published the text of conversation between Byrnes and Bevin. They stressed that both Britain and the United States unreservedly backed the Turkish position.

Note that Turkish journalists regarded the second Soviet note as "further proof of the Russian imperialist policy," writing that "this note finally dispelled all doubts about the Russian political line." The Turks presented the Soviet proposals as an act aggression against Turkey aimed at depriving this country of its sovereignty and independence. The newspaper wrote about the "unceasing eagerness of the Soviet Union" in its aspiration to create military bases in the Straits and thus seize Istanbul and the Straits and ultimately the Mediterranean. Journalists

denied the violation by Turkey of the Montreux Convention, saying that even if any ships crossed the Straits, this was due to shortcomings in the convention, not deliberate actions of Turkey. Hence, these accusations were included in the note “with special purpose.” Journalists tried to prove that the Straits regime could not be defined by Black Sea powers only. Journalists Esmer, Nihat Erim and Sadak showed that the Black Sea was “an open, not closed sea.” Sadak wrote: “Turkey cannot agree with the proposals on defining the Straits regime by Black Sea countries only.” Turks also focused on the treaties of 1921–1922 between Turkey and the Soviet Russia, as well as Soviet Republics quoted in the Soviet note. Confirming that these treaties included clauses concerning the establishment of the Straits regime by Black Sea countries, journalists stressed that this clause had lost its effect following the signing of, first, the London treaty and then, the Montreux Convention, especially, as the latter was signed by the Soviets as well.⁷⁸

In October the Turkish press was engaged in analyzing the Soviet note of 24 September, and the replies of the United States, Britain and Turkey to this note. In its report to the Foreign Ministry of the USSR, the Soviet Embassy divided these articles and reviews into three groups. The first group noted that Turkey fully and honestly fulfilled its obligations on the Montreux convention and, if any violations were admitted, this arose from obsolete clauses of the convention proper, which Turkey agreed to amend. As a whole, the Convention was consistent with the contemporary requirements and all changes should have been made within the framework of the Convention only. The second group of publications pointed out that Turkey would undoubtedly turn down the Soviet proposal that Black Sea countries alone should define the Straits regime. The Black Sea was not a closed sea, since its coast was owned by several states. Besides, Turkey could not solve this problem by efforts of Black Sea countries only, since all other members of the UN, especially Britain and the United States, were, equally with the Soviet Union and other Black Sea countries, interested in the Straits. The third group of publications criticized the proposal on joint protection of the Straits as an infringement of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Turkey.⁷⁹

Addressing a regular session of the Grand National Assembly on 1 November 1946, President İ'nönü expressed his view on the Straits. He firmly rejected all Soviet insinuations as quoted in the Soviet notes. He pointed out that Turkey was supportive of the idea of improving the convention by means of debates at an international conference. The Turkish President declared that Turkey would open-heartedly receive proposals from all parties concerned, sticking to the principles of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Turkey. İ'nönü added that there were no obstacles to ameliorating relations between Turkey and the USSR, provided that the UN principles on territorial integrity and sovereignty were complied with. He also stated that Turkey had always hoped to establish friendly and trustworthy relations with the Soviet Union.⁸⁰

The *Encyclopedia Britannica*, which was published in the end of 1946, inserted an article about Turkey by İ'nönü. Comprising ten sections, the article was translated into Russian and brought to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. Touching upon 1945–1946 developments, İ'nönü wrote that the main thing for Turkey in the period in question was the establishment of relations with

the USSR. In March 1945, the treaty of 1925 was terminated and a harsh anti-Turkish campaign started. İ'nönü noted that Turkey had survived this period. As for the Soviet notes of 7 August and others, İ'nönü turned them down on behalf of the Turkish people.⁸¹

On October 28, 1946, R. Peker explained the foreign policy of the Turkish government, including with respect to the last Soviet note.⁸² On November 13, 1946, V. Dekanozov sent a detailed report concerning the Turkish reply of 18 October to the Soviet note of 24 September. Dekanozov wrote that the government headed by R. Peker tried to prove its cause in respect of the Soviet note. At the same time, Peker sought to attach international importance to the Straits issue by exaggerating the role of the United States, Britain and France. As viewed by Dekanozov, the Soviet Union would, in the end, agree to attend a conference of the parties concerned in the Straits and signatories of the Montreux Convention. Touching upon the next actions with regard to the Straits, Dekanozov conveyed the proposals of Chargé d'Affaires P. Ershov. Having analyzed the situation, Ershov suggested that (1) The USSR would agree to attend a conference of the parties concerned with the Straits; (2) The USSR would deliver an ultimatum to Turkey, and if not accepted, break off diplomatic relations with Turkey; (3) the USSR would not push for a conference of the parties interested in the Straits and prefer to continue the war of nerves against Turkey to exhaust the country financially.⁸³

F. C. Erkin confirmed the grave consequences of the war of nerves for Turkey's economy during his talks with US Ambassador E. Wilson. Erkin pointed out that if the Soviet Union refused to change its attitude to Turkey, the latter's future would be unclear. He emphasized that permanent Soviet threats forced Turkey to spend huge sums for military needs, so big problems arouse. Erkin confessed that the population was discontent with the economic situation, and this resulted in the political complications for the government. If it failed to get rid of Soviet pressures, Turkey would surely apply to the United States for economic help.⁸⁴

At the height of these events, the Turkish government sent a new Ambassador, Faik Zihni Akdur, to Moscow in November 1946. During a meeting on 23 November attended by İ'nönü, Peker, Saka and Erkin, the President instructed the new Ambassador to deal with the development of relations between the two countries. Following the instructions, Akdur was assigned the duty of avoiding any talks on the Straits and if there were any such talks, he was to convey this information to Turkey, ignoring any disputes.⁸⁵ In late November, Akdur arrived in Moscow and on 9 December handed his credentials to V. Dekanozov. The Ambassador told him that his main responsibility was to establish good neighborly and friendly relations between the two countries. In a report on this meeting, V. Dekanozov wrote that the Ambassador was very anxious; hence, he must have expected political disputes.⁸⁶ The Turkish party tried to avoid discussions of the Straits, while gaining advantages in the Dardanelles and Bosphorus was of paramount importance for the USSR. The Soviet Foreign Ministry sought a resolution to the "Straits crisis" in favor of the USSR. Ambassador S. Vinogradov sent a memorandum to Moscow dated December 10, 1946, which warned against an international conference to be held in the manner suggested by the United States, Britain and Turkey, and unacceptable to the USSR. To his thinking, the Soviet Union would be outvoted and fail to attain its principal goal in the Straits and the Black Sea. Vinogradov believed that it was

necessary to gradually change the idea of the conference. He explained this by the fact that changes that might be made at the conference might complicate implementation of clauses 4 and 5 of the note dated August 7, 1946. Vinogradov was confident that the conference would not decide on a new regime on the Straits but rather make some changes to the current regime. To exert pressure on Turkey, he proposed to annul the Soviet-Turkish treaty of 1921. He substantiated this idea by the fact that the Turkish government linked the Straits regime to the Montreux Convention, not to the Treaty.⁸⁷

On January 25, 1947, Vinogradov systematized his proposals. In a new memorandum, he stressed that the USA and Turkey were inclined to adopt the first three clauses of the Soviet proposals but turned down the next two clauses. Yet, the British note was slightly different. The British rejected the fourth and fifth clauses, however, Britain, as Vinogradov saw it, declined to assessing the first three clauses. In his memorandum Vinogradov produced numerous arguments against convocation of a conference. To his thinking, the USSR's participation at the conference would signal a radical change in its attitudes. Like the memorandum of December, Vinogradov repeated that the Soviet Union would be outnumbered at the conference and lose the chance to realize the fourth and fifth clauses of the 7 August note. Of interest in Vinogradov's memorandums was the desire to leave Turkey on the sidelines. He noted that it would suffice to agree with Great Britain and the United States to thus adopt a decision on the prohibition of non-Black Sea warships to pass the Straits. In Vinogradov's view, should the USSR deliberately turn away from Turkey and face its former allies and start talks on the Straits ignoring Turkey, then the risk of concessions from the USA and Britain in favor of the USSR would cause grave concern of Turkey. Further complicating the case would be the political consequences of annulment of the treaty of 1921, domestic problems of Turkey, and collapse of the country's economy. The Soviet Ambassador attached great importance to the formation of a unanimous attitude of the Black Sea powers on the basis of principles as put forward by the USSR. With that end in mind, Ambassador Vinogradov proposed to officially apply to Romania and Bulgaria and "simultaneously exchange unofficial views with the governments of the said countries and advise them to express their own point of view not only by means of sending notes to us and Turkey, but also through their press and statements of government officials." The Ambassador suggested linking the Straits issue to the question of "the regime of such international waterways as Gibraltar, and the Suez and Panama canals." In doing so, he emphasized that "such a formulation is tactically advantageous as it may lead to possible concessions from Britain, the United States and Turkey." As an option, Vinogradov proposed to collaborate with former allies in the debates over the Straits problems at a conference with the participation of Black Sea countries plus the four great powers—the USSR, USA, Britain and France. Mention of the four great powers was designed to demonstrate preparedness to make concessions to Great Britain in the hope of a reciprocal step from its side—to include Black Sea countries as the only other conference participants other than the Montreux Convention signatories. In doing so, it was supposed to agree beforehand on the participation of Georgia and Ukraine at the conference as independent voters. In this case, the distribution of votes at the conference would be as follows: five votes of the Soviet bloc

against four votes of the Western bloc.⁸⁸ However, this was an idle fancy of Sergey Vinogradov that finally resulted in his being recalled from Ankara. After Vinogradov returned to Moscow, US President Truman made a statement in March 1947, which touched upon the Turkish question and Vinogradov's proposals. On 25 March, he sent a letter to Molotov with a request to accelerate consideration of these proposals. The author of the letter pointed out that under current circumstances some of these proposals deserved attention.⁸⁹

S. Vinogradov was followed by Soviet Chargé d'Affaires P. Ershov. On February 16, 1948, Aleksandr Lavrishev was appointed the new Ambassador to Turkey.⁹⁰ On March 29, 1948, the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union approved a set of "Instructions for Ambassador to Turkey" prepared by the Soviet Foreign Ministry. The fourth point of the instructions said: "If Turks want to know our stand on the Straits, an answer would be as follows: the Soviet position has been thoroughly stated in the notes dated August 7 and September 24, 1946."⁹¹ This instruction was the last momentous Soviet document on the Straits.

Thus, the plans of the Soviet Union, which had been maturing since 1940, proved to be futile and the notes of August and September 1946 lost their significance. On May 30, 1953, Molotov officially disowned the Soviet claims on the Straits.

NOTES

1. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. Review of the Turkish Press for April–May and May–June 1946. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 29, fol. 282, v. 23, p. 3; AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 50, p. 15.

2. From S. Mikhaylov to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. A List of the Turkish Foreign Ministry Senior Staff. 09.03.1945. AFP RF, f. 132, r. 30, fol. 109, v. 9, p. 1.

3. I. Demytyev. Brief Information about Members of the Present Turkish Government. May 1945. AFP RF, f. 132, r. 30, fol. 111, v. 37, pp. 1–10.

4. Metin Toker. *Tek Partiden Çok Partiye*. Istanbul, 1980 (Metin Toker. *From One Party to Multiple Parties*. Istanbul, 1980), p. 91.

5. Celal Bayar was regarded by Soviet special services and diplomatic circles as protégé of the large bourgeoisie and man of the West. Besides, Bayar was not a military man and became Prime Minister as a civilian. Soviet diplomatic bodies were well aware of his life and biography. From the 1920s Bayar took up top positions. In 1920–1922, he was Minister of Economy; in 1922–1923—as Deputy Foreign Minister he was sent to Europe to carry on unofficial talks on Mosul oil. During the Lausanne Conference Bayar was adviser on economic affairs. Together with state affairs, Bayar was successful in private business. In 1924, he became a major shareholder of the Business Bank; a year later he became a member of the board of the French-Turkish insurance society "Anadolu." In 1932, Bayar was appointed Minister of Economy and worked in this capacity up to his appointment as Prime Minister. In the archives of the Middle East Department of the Soviet Foreign Commissariat, Bayar is characterized "as supporter of dictatorship, reactionary domestic policy and representative of the interests of large bourgeoisie. As for foreign policy, he backed retreat from the USSR and cooperation with this country in the international arena. At the same time, he tended toward rapprochement with imperialist states, including fascist ones interested in the policy of neutrality." (See O. Nikitnikova. Dossier of Mahmut Celal Bayar. 26.01.1943. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 3, pp. 141–142).

6. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. The Charter of the Party of National Revival. June 1946. AFP RF, f. 132, r. 30, fol. 111, v. 37, pp. 1–7.

7. *The Manchester Guardian*, January 15, 1946.

8. As viewed by the Soviets, Köprülü was "first pan-Turkist" and therefore the Soviet press and literature condemned him. Back in 1926, when Köprülü and A. Hüseyinzadeh went to Baku from Tbilisi to attend the first congress of Turkologists, Soviet special services tried to affect their views on the Soviet system of government. Even worse, there were specially trained persons to protest against their objection to the transition to the Latin alphabet. Thus, Köprülü, as leader of the opposition, was an "old pal" of the Soviets.

9. *Cumhuriyet*, May 11, 1946.

10. F. Çolak. *Türkiye'de Çok Partili Hayata Geçiş,de Demokrat Parti*. (1945–1950) *Türkler*, Cilt 16 (F. Çolak. "Transition to

Multi-Party Life in Turkey and the Democratic Party (1945–1950).” *Turks*, Volume 16), p. 777.

11. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. June–August 1946. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 29, fol. 282, v. 23, p. 111.
12. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. 07.05.1946. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 50, pp. 15–16.
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14. *Ibid.*, p. 122.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 244–245.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 249.
17. From the Central Committee of the Turkish Communist Party to the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. 1946. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 128, v. 178, pp. 77–79.
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30. *Pravda*, August 19, 1946.
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32. E. Mark. *The Turkish War Scare of 1946*, p. 120; E. Athanassopoulou. *Turkey-Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945–1952*, p. 50.
33. The Acting Secretary of State to the Secretary of State at Paris. 15.08.1946. FRUS, 1946, vol. VII, pp. 840–842.
34. E. Mark. *The Turkish War Scare of 1946*, p. 120.
35. The Ambassador to Turkey (Wilson) to the Secretary of State. 15.08.1946. FRUS, 1946, vol. VII, p. 842.
36. *Ibid.*, pp. 843–844.
37. The Acting Secretary of State to the Soviet Charge (Orekhov). 19.08.1946. FRUS, 1946, vol. VII, pp. 847–848; E. Mark. *The Turkish War Scare of 1946*, p. 121; Bruce R. Kuniholm. *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey, and Greece*, pp. 359–360; J. Hasanli. “The ‘Turkish Crisis’ of the Cold War period and the South Caucasian Republics.” *The Caucasus and Globalization*, Vol. 3, Issue 1, 2009, p. 126.
38. E. Mark. *The Turkish War Scare of 1946*, p. 120.
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41. From S. Vinogradov to V. Molotov. 11.08.1946. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 8, fol. 60, v. 1005, pp. 7–10.
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58. The Ambassador to Turkey (Wilson) to the Secretary of State. 09.09.1946. FRUS, 1946, vol. VII, p. 859.
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Chapter Six

The War of Nerves between the Republics of the South Caucasus

Events in Iranian Azerbaijan and the enhanced probability of its joining Soviet Azerbaijan made the territorial claims against Turkey seem increasingly more realistic. In turn, this inspired leaders of Georgia and Armenia to take advantage of the situation. Backed by Moscow in the matter of annexation of Turkish territories, leaders of these two Soviet republics intended to lay territorial claims to Soviet Azerbaijan as well. It should be noted that territorial claims of one republic against another within the Soviet Union were a rare occurrence, which was made possible by the Cold War underway in the region. It was no mere coincidence that in November 1945, first the Georgian leader and then the Armenian leader lodged their claims with Stalin and G. Malenkov. First Secretary of the Georgian Communist Party K. Charkviani told Stalin that the Balaken, Zakatala and Qakh regions of the Azerbaijan SSR once had a dominant Georgian population and therefore should be annexed to Georgia.¹

Agitators from Georgian academic and official institutions, including cultural organizations and the Orthodox Church, were sent to these regions and told stories about alleged resettlement of Georgian-Fareidans in Iran in the seventeenth century while Muslims seized their lands. As soon as this news reached the KGB bodies of the Azerbaijan SSR, an investigation was carried out, which found that in 1944 the Ministry of Education of Georgia had sent teachers, Georgian by origin, to these regions to start a targeted anti-Azerbaijan campaign and called the local population to break away from the Azerbaijan SSR and join the Georgian SSR.² Backed by Moscow, the Georgian authorities sent their teachers to Georgian-schools in the Qakh, Balaken and Zakatala regions of Azerbaijan and even opened new Georgian schools there.

On 28 November, Communist Party Secretary G. Malenkov sent a letter from Armenian leader G. Arutyunov to M. J. Bagirov for a first-hand view. In particular, G. Arutyunov wrote:

Mountainous Garabagh Autonomous Region is an area adjoining the territory of Armenia, a part of Azerbaijan SSR since 1923. The population of the region is largely Armenian: 137,000 out of 153,000 are Armenians. Agriculture of the region is identical to that in the mountainous part of Armenia. Mountainous Garabagh's joining Armenia would contribute to the region's development and thus improve its agriculture. Mass cultural and political services of the population in its native language would be intensified under the leadership of the Armenian Republic's structures. Mountainous Garabagh region's joining of Armenia would enable local cadres to continue their education in their native language at the higher educational institutions of Armenia. On the other hand, Armenian SSR could be staffed with qualified specialists from Mountainous Garabagh. Proceeding from the desire of the population of Mountainous Garabagh, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Armenia and the Council of People's Commissars of Armenia will submit for the consideration of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party and the Soviet Government the question of joining Mountainous Garabagh region of Azerbaijan SSR into Armenian SSR as Garabagh region. The Central Committee of the Communist

Party and the Council of People's Commissars of Armenia will also apply to the government with a proposal to restore the former center of Garabagh, the town of Shusha, destroyed before the establishment of the Soviet power.³

Malenkov asked Bagirov to instruct appropriate bodies and scientific institutions to collect the materials necessary to respond to this issue. A great number of materials on the belonging of mountainous and lowland parts of Garabagh to Azerbaijan, on changes to its demography and reasons for such changes, various statistical data, protocols on the status of Mountainous Garabagh region, etc., was rapidly collected and processed.

For example, a report on borders and population of the former Garabagh khanate noted that the khanate was located between the Kur and Arax rivers, bordering Ganja khanate to the north along the Kurekchay river and along Goychay river with Sheki khanate; in the east along the Kur river by Shamakhy khanate and in the Mugan steppe by Karadag khanate; in the south-west by Nakhchivan khanate; and in the west by Erivan khanate. In the eighteenth century, the population of Garabagh khanate numbered 130,000.⁴

Initially, Turks comprised the absolute majority in the region; however, after the colonization of Mountainous Garabagh by the Russian Empire, there occurred demographic changes in the mountainous parts of the region. A document on the dynamics of the latest changes in the national-ethnic composition of Garabagh was "Description of Garabagh Province," compiled in 1823 and reputed as the most reliable source on the issue. The description provides information about the number of families and names of family heads in the Shusha town and all the villages. In 1911 Russian researcher N. I. Shavrov noted that in 1828–1830, 40,000 Armenians from Iran and 84,600 Armenians from Turkey migrated to Elizavetpol and Erivan provinces, which previously had no Armenian population at all. N. I. Shavrov wrote that over one million out of 1,300,000 Armenians in Transcaucasia were aliens.⁵

Well-known Russian writer and military historian Vasili Potto (1836–1911) provides extensive information about the migration of Armenians to the Caucasus, including Azerbaijan. It was his long-term military service in the Caucasus that enabled him to write a five-volume work *The Caucasian War*. In the third volume of his work, he discusses Armenian migration from Iraq to Transcaucasia, the practical implementation of this migration and many other questions. Potto writes:

The first and the biggest group (of Armenians) set off on March 16, 1828. It was fine spring weather; on the slopes of Azerbaijani mountains countless caravans of migrants were moving toward the Arax river. . . . The famous painter Moshkov created a big canvas that depicted the migration of approximately 40,000 Armenians headed by colonel L. A. Lazarev. . . . However, they were not welcome to their new homeland. When over 5,000 families approached the Arax, the Erivan provincial department informed Lazarev that due to the scarcity of bread they were in no position to help newcomers, and so, Lazarev was kindly asked to keep them on the Persian bank of Arax before the harvest was collected. Thus, Armenians stood in the open air and suffered hardships. There were no vacant land plots, so a greater portion of migrants had to move to Garabagh.⁶

Potto also refers to the religious-ethnic composition of the Erivan province. He notes that Ivan Paskevitch, Russian Governor of the Caucasus, approached A. V. Krasovsky, Head of the Armenian province created in 1828, to grant Archbishop Nerses unlimited authority to promote the interests of Armenians, while three-quarters of the population of the region were Muslims.⁷

Within the next hundred years of Russian colonization, more serious changes took place in the

national-ethnic composition of Garabagh. These changes found their reflection in collected documents.⁸ Of particular importance were the materials from different archives of Soviet Russia, which marked the borders between Azerbaijan and Armenia, as well as Azerbaijan and Georgia after the Sovietization of the South Caucasus.⁹

Of interest is an article by Anastas Mikoyan entitled “Armenian Imperialism” written in 1919. A member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, Anastas Mikoyan played an important role in 1945 and in the first years of the Cold War during the redrawing of the Turkish-Soviet border in favor of Armenia. However, in 1919 Mikoyan wrote:

The fact of Armenian imperialism is surprising and comical, even tragicomic; at any rate, it is notable for its specificity, reactionary character, and content. Today, Armenia is located on the territory of Erivan province, with a Muslim population slightly lower than the Armenians. This is the single territory where Armenians reside compactly and comprise a majority of the population. As a result of reactionary-chauvinist policy of the Armenian population, Muslims, comprising two-fifths of the total population, were not only deprived of all rights, but are in a sorry plight.¹⁰

After all the preparatory measures, M. J. Bagirov sent a detailed response to all the claims of Armenia and Georgia on December 10, 1945. Bagirov wrote:

Further to your telegram regarding the proposal of the Armenian Communist Party Secretary, Comrade Arutyunov, on annexing Mountainous Garabagh Autonomous Region to Armenian SSR, it should be noted that the territory of Mountainous Garabagh Autonomous Region has, from immemorial times, been a part of Garabagh khanate with its center in Panahabad since 1747, built by Panah from Garabagh. In 1826, Garabagh was annexed by Russia. Subsequently, the territory of current Mountainous Garabagh Autonomous Region became a part of Shusha, Javanshir, Karyagin and Qubadly *uezds* [districts] of Elizavetpol province. During the rule of Musavatists in Azerbaijan and Dashnaks in Armenia in 1918–1920, the Musavat government organized a general-governorship in Garabagh with its center in Shusha (formerly Panahabad) in the territory of Garabagh. After the establishment of Soviet power in Azerbaijan in 1920, by decree of the Azerbaijan Central Executive Committee of July 7, 1923 there was founded Mountainous Garabagh Autonomous Region with its center in Khankendi, now Stepanakert.¹¹

Thus, territorially, Mountainous Garabagh Autonomous Region has never been part of Armenian SSR.

At the same time, M. J. Bagirov deemed it necessary to inform the Central Committee that

when considering the issue of ceding Mountainous Garabagh Autonomous Region to Armenian SSR, it is also essential to consider inclusion of Azizbeyov, Vedi and Garabaglar regions of Armenian SSR adjoining the Azerbaijan Republic and populated primarily by Azerbaijanis into Azerbaijan SSR. Taking into account the unique cultural and economic backwardness of these regions, their transfer to Azerbaijan would make it possible to improve the material, cultural and political conditions of this population.¹²

K. N. Brutens, who held various positions in the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, issued in 1998 his memoirs, in which he described the situation differently: “There is an opinion, unconfirmed officially, that in 1946 the question of Garabagh had been raised by Arutyunov, then the Secretary of the Armenian Communist Party. Beria, whom Stalin instructed to deal with the issue, jointly with Bagirov suggested a combined deal: Garabagh to Armenia, Dagestan to Azerbaijan and Sochi to Georgia.”¹³ As is seen, this opinion is noticeably different from documentarily confirmed historical truth.

In the second part of his letter M. J. Bagirov wrote:

In addition to the above-mentioned, we kindly ask the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to

consider the following issues: comrades from Georgia are raising the question of inclusion of Balaken, Zakatala and Qakh regions of Azerbaijan SSR into Georgian SSR. In spite of the fact that just 9,000 Georgians out of a total population of 79,000 reside in these regions, we have no objection to considering the question simultaneously with the inclusion of Borchali region of Georgian SSR, populated exclusively by Azerbaijanis and adjoining Azerbaijan, into Azerbaijan SSR. And finally, we ask you to include Derbent and Kasumkend regions of the Dagestan Autonomous SSR into Azerbaijan SSR. Note that Derbent and Kasumkend regions, formerly part of Baku province, are largely populated by Azerbaijanis and half of them are involved in cattle breeding in the territory of Azerbaijan for nine months of the year.

At the end of his letter, Bagirov proposed to set up a commission of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party composed of the representatives of all republics concerned with a view of drawing up proposals on all the questions raised.¹⁴

It would be appropriate to recall that Azerbaijani historian Eldar Ismayilov links the start of the national liberation movement in South Azerbaijan with the idea of the unification of North (Soviet) and South (Iranian) Azerbaijan and as a result, an essential growth of the territory of Azerbaijan SSR. Of great importance was the belief of the higher echelons of the Soviet leadership in this idea.¹⁵ Following the Second World War, the Soviet Union became a mighty power and nobody doubted that this country would attain its goals. The war of nerves between Turkey and Armenia for lands and the re-division of borders in South Caucasus at the expense of the Azerbaijani lands came as a result of the deep confidence of Soviet leaders, as well as of South Caucasus Republics that all claims to Iran and Turkey would be complied with in the nearest future. After a grandiose military triumph, everybody expected the first victory to fall to the Soviets in the Cold War. The then Secretary of the Azerbaijani Communist Party M. H. Seyidov recalled:

In autumn 1945, M. J. Bagirov met with two members of the Political Bureau—Armenian A. Mikoyan and Georgian L. Beria—in the reception hall of Stalin. All of them assured Bagirov that the question of South Azerbaijan had been settled and shortly the territory of Azerbaijan SSR would be noticeably expanded. All of them humorously expressed their hope that probably then M. J. Bagirov would be more generous and agree to transfer Mountainous Garabagh to Armenia and several regions in the north of Azerbaijan (Balaken, Zakatala, Qakh, etc.) to Georgia. M. J. Bagirov evasively replied that it would be premature to think of this.¹⁶

Thus, on the eve of the December 1945 meeting of Foreign Ministers in Moscow, in addition to Soviet claims to Iran and Turkey, there occurred a “war of nerves” between the South Caucasian Republics.

In autumn 1945, the Armenian SSR and Georgian SSR laid territorial claims to Azerbaijan, which in mid-1946 assumed a serious character. Now these claims became widely popular and scientists of the two mentioned Republics tried to “substantiate” them from historical, ethnographic and political positions, as well as in the form of hidden or open anti-Azerbaijani propaganda by separate nationalistic groups. These persons raised, from time to time, questions of the belonging of some historical monuments and populated localities to Armenia or Georgia. They demanded that the borders be revised and thus contributed to strained relations between the neighboring republics.

In November 1945, Secretary of the Georgian Communist Party K. Charkviani applied to Moscow with a request to transfer the regions of Qakh, Zakatala and Balaken to Georgia. After this appeal, the Ministry of Education of Georgia and the Orthodox Church sent their nationalistic propagandists to these regions to carry out propaganda work. In November 1947,

chairman of the Azerbaijan KGB Stepan Yemelyanov prepared a report which pointed out that nationalistic propagandists from Georgia had been engaged in propaganda work in Qakh region of Azerbaijan and even accused the Azerbaijani people of grave crimes against the local Georgian population. The document noted: "Separate local residents, Georgian Ingiloyes influenced by Georgian nationalists, had also been involved in anti-Soviet, anti-Azerbaijani nationalistic propaganda."¹⁷

On the eve of his trip to Moscow in 1946, M. J. Bagirov instructed all the Ministries to collect historical ethnographic, economic, cultural and social information about the Qakh, Balaken and Zakatala regions. Following these instructions, these Ministries prepared a detailed report on the national and ethnic composition of the population, its economic conditions, administrative division, taxes, etc. A twenty-nine-page report on the historical past of the regions of Qakh, Balaken and Zakatala, sent to M. J. Bagirov by Internal Minister M. Yaqubov on 22 July 1946, informed that 74,449 people lived in these territories in 1891, of which 63,492 were Muslims and 7,592 Orthodox. According to the 1932 data, there were 235 Ingiloyes in Balaken and 5,161 Ingiloyes in Qakh, constituting 8.06 percent of the population.¹⁸ As of 1 January 1944, 4,881 were Ingiloyes in Zakatala out of a total population of 37,250, 802 in Balaken out of 27,550 residents, and 4,600 in Qakh out of a population of 19,449. As a whole, 10,283 were Ingiloyes out of 84,249 residents in these three regions.¹⁹

The question of organized anti-Azerbaijani propaganda conducted by emissaries of educational, cultural and religious institutions of Georgia was discussed on 11 November 1947 at the Bureau of the Azerbaijan Communist Party. The decision of the Bureau was sent to L. Beria on 13 November. A copy of the report, reflective of anti-Azerbaijani propaganda of Georgian emissaries, and a copy of the decision of the Bureau were also sent to Secretary of the Georgian Communist Party K. Charkviani.

The bureau discussed a detailed report on the illegal stay of a representative of the Georgian priesthood in the Qakh, Zakatala and Balaken regions of the Azerbaijan SSR and conditions of the Georgian schools in these regions. The report said that teachers and representatives of different organizations in Georgia

consider it their duty to carry out subversive work and disseminate among the Georgian population the idea that the territories of Qakh, Zakatala and Balaken regions are a part of the Georgian territory and that they became a part of Azerbaijan SSR by mistake. It turned out that emissaries from Tbilisi bring gifts to Ingiloy teachers and even sew suits for them for free. In other words, they try to bribe local Ingiloyes. Also, there are accounts of taking children away to Georgia to study, but these attempts were prevented and children returned home thanks to the efforts of local authorities.²⁰

All these facts were discussed at the Bureau of the Azerbaijan Communist Party and an appropriate decision adopted. Judging by remarks made by M. J. Bagirov, the question was of paramount importance. An appeal sent to the Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party asked to prevent the penetration of provocateurs onto the territory of the Azerbaijan Republic. At the end of the resolution Bagirov added: "This decision and copies of the discussed reports are to be sent to the Secretary of the Georgian Communist Party, Comrade K. N. Charkviani."²¹

Armenia also showed increased activity in the matter of territories. After the appeal of

Armenian Communist Party Secretary G. Arutyunov to Stalin in November 1945, Yerevan emissaries had taken to visiting Mountainous Garabagh and provocations against Azerbaijan assumed an organized nature.²² From April 1945 G. Arutyunov sent numerous letters to Stalin regarding the resettlement of foreign Armenians to Armenia and laying of territorial claims against Turkey. Of interest is the fact that none of these letters put forward territorial claims against Azerbaijan. The same was true of an appeal entitled “Problems of the Armenian People” and addressed to the conference of the Armenian National Council in San Francisco, and a memorandum “On the Armenian Question” published by the Armenian National Committee in April 1945. These documents were exclusively directed against Turkey and focused on Kars and Ardahan.²³

As soon as territorial claims to Turkey became senseless, Armenian nationalists pounced upon Azerbaijan. A student of the Yerevan State University, G. Khachatryan, told a teacher of Stepanakert Pedagogical Institute, K. Arutyunov, that “Armenia has raised the question of Garabagh’s joining the Armenian SSR. We students, have also raised this question and asked why Garabagh has not joined Armenia. One professor explained that it was impossible, since only intellectuals of Garabagh, not the entire Garabagh people, demand to join Armenia.”²⁴

After a plan of practical measures to repatriate foreign Armenians to Soviet Armenia was adopted in February 1946, it turned out that the work was done inappropriately. The propaganda campaign was contrary to the real situation. For instance, in September 1946, A. Isakyan told the Second Congress of the Armenian Writers Union that it was great Stalin who put an end to the torments of Armenians scattered across the world, and created opportunities for them to return home. According to him, the number of those willing to return reached hundreds of thousands, even millions. The same idea was echoed on November 29, 1946, at the celebrations devoted to the twenty-fifth anniversary of Soviet power in Armenia. In a salutatory letter to Stalin, it was pointed out that it was thanks to his care that foreign Armenians came back to their motherland and took part in the prosperity of Soviet Armenia. However, all these were mere declarations and the real number of those arriving was much lower than planned. On May 22, 1947, Armenian Communist Party Secretary G. Arutyunov reported to Stalin that the number of arriving Armenians consisted of 50,945, of whom 20,000 were able-bodied. They were provided with jobs at industrial and construction sites, *kolkhozes* and *sovkhoses*. Arutyunov added that the number of those who changed their mind and decided to go back was growing and that twenty-one repatriates illegally crossed the border and went to Turkey. Another 110 repatriates were arrested for violation of border regulations. Arutyunov reported that the number of those willing to leave Armenia reached 300. These people explained their desire to leave the Soviet Union for economic reasons. It was no mere coincidence that about 600–700 people were engaged in profiteering at markets. The Central Committee of the Armenian Communist Party and Council of Ministers planned measures to strengthen the border regime and prevent violations. These measures provided for the resettlement of repatriates from the countryside near the border to more remote areas of Armenian SSR. It was decided not to settle Armenians from abroad in the villages located within five kilometers of the border zone. Jointly with the Soviet Ministry of Internal Affairs,

measures were planned to raise the number of frontier posts and troops.²⁵ Administrative measures to retain deceived Armenians in Soviet Armenia and prohibition on residence in the border areas had a negative effect on the repatriation process. As a consequence, by 1947 just 35,401 out of 63,000 planned repatriates arrived in Soviet Armenia.²⁶

To strengthen the propaganda work among repatriates, the CC of the Armenian Communist Party drafted a “Program of Measures to Strengthen Ideological Work among Repatriated Armenians.” In November 1947, G. Arutyunov sent this document to the Secretary of the CC of the Soviet Communist Party Alexei Kuznetsov. The program pointed out that the mass repatriation of Armenians from abroad, where they had for long been affected by bourgeois ideology, raised, in front of the Armenian Communist Party, the new task of educating repatriated Armenians in political and ideological terms. With that end in mind, it was suggested “to create a permanent highly-qualified propaganda staff for systematic political work among repatriated Armenians, to draw them into circles and clubs, to attract them into political line of Marxism-Leninism, and to teach foreign intelligentsia the Russia language.”²⁷

The World Armenian Congress held in April–May 1947 in New York made attempts to encourage repatriation but without appreciable success. The Congress became the largest ever event concerning the “Armenian matter” in the second half of the 1940s. Attending the Congress were 715 representatives from twenty-two countries and seventy societies, including thirty-one eparchies. On 12 May, a delegation of prominent Armenian figures visited US Undersecretary of State D. Acheson with a request to put Armenian territorial claims against Turkey on the agenda of the UN session. Besides, Armenians handed a letter to Acheson requesting the Department of State to back the “transfer of Armenian lands, currently seized by Turkey, to the Armenian people.” Soviet Consul General in New York Y. Lomakin informed Molotov about this action. Familiarizing himself with this Armenian letter, D. Acheson asked what Armenians were going to do with this land, if it were granted to them. In reply, Bishop Nerses noted that the Armenians wanted these lands to be annexed by Soviet Armenia. Acheson asked if all the Armenians had become Communists and were going to move to the Soviet Union and openly stated that the Department of State could not back their request, since it would be suicide for US foreign policy.²⁸

After a meeting between the delegation of the World Armenian Congress and US Undersecretary D. Acheson, Dashnaks became filled with enthusiasm with Acheson’s idea of the establishment of “independent Armenia.” Azerbaijani security forces operating in Iran learned that rumors were afloat that Dashnaks of America intended to use US aid to seize territories of “Turkish Armenia” and build a new Armenian democratic state there. The new government would have nothing in common with Soviet Armenia. It was reported that this part of Armenia would be under a US and British mandate.²⁹

The Soviet Communist Party and special bodies explained the reduction of the flow of repatriates by the passivity of diplomatic officials and activity of Dashnak propaganda. On August 10, 1946, Deputy Head of the Department of the Ministry of State Security G. Ovakimyan wrote to I. Samylovsky: “According to information available, Soviet Vice-Consul Solomin, addressing a meeting of Armenians on the occasion of their repatriation from Iran to

Soviet Armenia, committed some errors. In particular, Solomin stated that it was “not necessary to settle down in Armenia only they could reside in any place in the Soviet Union.”³⁰ In all probability, Vice-Consul Solomin had not yet realized that the repatriation was required to pressure Turkey on behalf of Soviet Armenia, not to improve the living conditions of Armenians proper.

The sensational anti-Turkish campaign on the Armenian question did not enjoy unanimous support in the USSR. At the height of this campaign, there were even citizens who demanded to restore friendly relations with Turkey. They sent messages to Moscow stressing the necessity of this process. For instance, a citizen of Birsk town, Bashkiriya ASSR and a Russian by nationality, Izbash Nikolay Vladimirovich, who was representative of the Birsk Teachers Institute and Chair of History, sent in October 1947 an open letter to the CC of the Soviet Communist Party. The letter was entitled “To Friends in Turkey” and signed by seventeen intellectuals. The letter was not anonymous; it mentioned addresses and Izbash’s personal details. The author pointed out:

Even Professor A. Jivelegov in his purely nationalistic booklet *Armenia and Turkey* (Moscow, 1946) says that Turks, apprehensive of retorts from foreign Ambassadors, refrained from exterminating Armenians in Istanbul in 1915. In the meantime, a broadcast of Moscow Radio on October 19, 1947, narrating a biography of an Armenian musician who lived in Turkey during the First World War, alleged that Turkey inflicted reprisals against Armenian women and children in this period. The year 1915 remained in the memory of the older generation, particularly those serving in the Russian army, that it was not Turks, but Armenian gangs (endorsed by Russians) who exterminated the peaceful Muslim population of Eastern Anatolia and in addition, disgraced themselves by shooting Turkish prisoners of war when escorting them from the front-line to the rear. Why should we grossly discredit our radio and give occasion to the West to allege that it is not Truman who assists Turks in organizing defense against us, but we ourselves who stir up the anti-Turkish hysterics and that this instigates war? [. . .] In general, out-and-out lies about Turkey in the press and radio contribute to one single purpose: it bears out the insinuations of our enemies (adherents to the “Truman Doctrine”) that we are able to take the risk of capturing so-called “Turkish Armenia” where Armenians have never constituted even a relative majority. Recognizing this (and many other facts) we kindly ask you to publish this open letter in the press to thus refute our alleged aggressiveness against Turkey. In fact, our provincial letter is not sufficient; other, more authoritative measures are required but they are evaded. Even worse, the statement of the Soviet delegation at the UN General Assembly in September 1947 likened Turkish journalist dogs to American elephant-warmongers, with Great Britain as a baby elephant laying aside [sic]. This is typical Armenian hatred of Turkey (very useful for Truman and very harmful for us!)³¹

The letter continued:

We are well aware of the entirely legitimate banishment of Armenians by Turks from Eastern Anatolia in 1915 following the Armenian uprising arranged in the rear of the Turkish army by mercenary Armenian nationalists—Dashnaks. This uprising was meant to assist the annexation purposes of Russian imperialists in so-called “Turkish Armenia” where Armenians had never enjoyed even a relative majority.³²

At the end of the letter the signatories made a statement:

We believe that while there are Slavic or Anglo-American solidarities; hence, there must be Turkic ones as well. We are hopeful to assist, within the limits of possibility, in the solidarity of the Turkish people with Turkic peoples of the great Soviet family. In an effort to avoid errors and misunderstandings of the past, we shall assist mutual rapprochement in the future.³³

The authors of the open letter intended to publish it in the magazine *Novoye Vremya* and sent it to editors on September 23. However, N. V. Izbash received no reply. On November 23, he appealed to the Secretary of the CC of the Soviet Communist Party Andrei Zhdanov:

I have twice addressed you—on October 23 and November 13—regarding my unsuccessful attempts to publish the open

letter “To Friends in Turkey.” However, it was the actions of some supporters of the Armenian nationalism (well-known not only to me) that makes it impossible to publish any version of this open letter. Dashnaks and their accomplices are seeking war to be unleashed by us for their own interests to establish the so-called “Great Armenia” (and, finally, get rid of the USSR). I am not a mad man and proceed from indisputable facts, in every way possible hushed up in the USSR. But that’s not the most important thing. I declare in all good conscience, that our policy vis-à-vis Turkey creates in the West a widely spread confidence in our aggressiveness. It is essential to practically demonstrate our desire to peacefully resolve our questions with Turkey. That is the purpose of the draft open letter I have submitted to you on October 23, i.e. a month before I had sent it to the editor of *Novoye Vremya* (September 23). Remembering your statement in the press before the rupture of relations with Great Britain and France in 1934, I kindly ask you to assist the signatories of this letter in restoring the mutual Soviet-Turkish public understanding that was damaged in 1939, after Saracoglu was called to Moscow.³⁴

The letter of Izbash and his colleagues to the CC caused dissatisfaction in Moscow. In connection with this, Dmitri Shepilov, Deputy Head of Propaganda Department of the CC and V. Moshetov, Deputy Head of the Foreign Relations Department of the CC sent a report to A. A. Kuznetsov, Secretary of the CC, which noted the pan-Turkist nature of the letter from Bashkiriya. The report said:

In connection with the letter entitled “To Friends in Turkey,” it is necessary to draw attention of the Bashkir regional party organization to the necessity of strengthening of educational work to fight the bourgeois-nationalistic and pan-Turkist ideology and explain to the group of intellectuals—signatories of this letter—the erroneous and politically harmful theses set forth in the letter. At the same time, we consider it necessary to inform the Ministry of State Security of the USSR about this letter.³⁵

Following this instruction, Ministry of State Security officers interrogated all the signatories. Moreover, Novoselov, senior official of the Propaganda Department of the CC went to Bashkiriya to investigate the matter. Novoselov reported on the results of his visit to M. Suslov, the Secretary of the CC:

Since 1943 Izbash has been under surveillance of Ministry of State Security bodies. He repeatedly applied to the CC and NKVD (People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs) and personally to Comrade Beria with a request to use him as a Turkish expert. He also submitted to Beria “his research work devoted to the necessity of struggle against the Armenian nationalists in the Caucasus.”³⁶

As a result of the verification, it turned out that N. V. Izbash wrote a seventy-one-page letter to Beria entitled “Heighten vigilance and rout Armenian bourgeois nationalism!” The letter noted: “The Armenian nationalists are struggling for Great Armenia and laying claims to Turkish Armenia owned by Turkey.” In his letter Izbash described Armenian atrocities against Kurds, Turks and Azerbaijanis. He proposed the following: mobilize the Soviet public and security bodies to fight “this evil”; caution leading Soviet organs against Armenian information sources on the situation in the Near East; make amendments in the historically established thesis about “the long-suffering” Armenians.”³⁷

By the end of the 1940s, the flow of repatriates began decreasing and this worried Soviet organs. They explained this with the strengthening of Dashnak anti-repatriation propaganda. Head of the Soviet information bureau under of the Cabinet of Ministers of the USSR B. Ponomarev wrote to Secretary of the CC M. Suslov:

Over the most recent period, the reactionary circles of foreign Armenian Diaspora and, particularly the Dashnaktsutun Party, have engaged in campaigning against the repatriation of Armenians to their motherland and spreading of calumnies about the accommodation of repatriates in Soviet Armenia. Democratic circles of the Armenian Diaspora and its newspapers ask to provide them with materials about the life of Armenian repatriates (about twenty organs of press are to

be supplied with these materials). Upon the request of Armenian newspapers abroad, we applied to the CC of the Armenian Communist Party to write a collective letter of Armenian repatriates directed against the fascist calumny. We intend to send this letter to Armenian newspapers in the USA (six newspapers), France, and countries of the Near and Middle East and thus, give a resolute rebuff to hostile propaganda about the life of Armenian repatriates in the USSR. However, the CC of the Armenian Communist Party did not agree to arrange this collective letter on behalf of Armenian repatriates without the knowledge and consent of the Propaganda Department of the CC of the Soviet Communist Party. I kindly ask you to instruct the CC of the Armenian Communist Party to prepare such a letter.³⁸

At the request of B. Ponomarev, the CC of the Armenian Communist Party was instructed to prepare the required letter immediately. The document said:

The Secretary of Propaganda of the CC of the Armenian Communist Party, Comrade Grigoryan, was provided information about the necessity of preparing a collective letter of Armenian repatriates in the USSR directed against slanderous foreign propaganda. Comrade Grigoryan said that in addition to this letter, the CC of the Armenian Communist Party will take additional measures in order to assist Armenians return home, to the USSR.³⁹

However, the repatriation of Armenians remained a priority. In late 1947, the Soviet leaders considered it expedient to continue the repatriation process and, in doing so, they decided to take some additional measures to urge Armenians abroad to go to Soviet Armenia.⁴⁰ But it was evident that lands from Turkey could not be annexed. The Kremlin leadership also realized that remaking borders between Soviet Republics would yield undesirable results, so they did not raise the question of the Armenian and Georgian claims to Azerbaijan. Under these circumstances, it was decided to improve housing and economic conditions of the repatriates at the expense of the deportation of Azerbaijanis from their native places in Armenia.

How could it happen that leaders of Azerbaijan, so firm and unshakeable in protecting Mountainous Garabagh from Armenians and Qakh, Zakatala and Balaken from Georgians, suddenly gave up in the face of this deportation project? Some authors have already written about it however, Bagirov's position on the issue remains obscure.⁴¹ First of all, it has to be kept in mind that there is a joint letter of M. J. Bagirov and G. A. Arutyunov to Stalin of December 3, 1947 suggesting to move 130,000 Azerbaijanis to the cotton-growing regions of Azerbaijan. Copies of this letter, kept in archives of Azerbaijan and Armenia, are identical; both unsigned, but with a date on the Armenian copy—December 3, 1947.⁴² Note that in the period in question, copies of letters were not signed. In my opinion, the original of the letter was signed by the leaders of the two Republics and sent to Stalin.

The above-mentioned joint letter of Bagirov and Arutyunov to Stalin explained the deportation of Azerbaijanis by changes in the economic life of the Azerbaijan and Armenia. First of all, it stressed that there was a need to increase the population in the cotton-growing regions of Azerbaijan due to the lack of manpower in agriculture, which emerged after commissioning the construction of the Mingachevir hydroelectric power station. To settle the problem, it was allegedly expedient to settle in Azerbaijan 130,000 Azerbaijanis residing in Armenia. Further, the letter refers to the main grounds of the resettlement: "The resettlement of the Azerbaijani population from Armenia to Azerbaijan would facilitate, to a greater degree, the accommodation of Armenians returning home from abroad. Lands and houses remaining empty after the resettlement of the Azerbaijani population could be used for the accommodation of peasants among foreign Armenians returning to Soviet Armenia." The letter asked to set up a joint commission for the development of conditions and regulation of

resettlement, expenses, etc.

Finally, the reasons for Bagirov's pliability need to be sought in the special folders of the meetings of the Political Bureau of the CC of the Communist Party of USSR, in which issues like "CC of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan" and "Regular Leave of Bagirov" were discussed. Unfortunately, materials of these meeting have not yet been revealed and are kept in special funds of the Russian Social and Political History State Archive. Beginning from the meetings of the Political Bureau from late 1947 onward, a chain of strange events appeared: on November 21, 1947, G. Arutyunov sent a cipher telegram to Stalin and requested a meeting to discuss urgent issues; on November 29, Stalin and G. Arutyunov held a one-to-one meeting from 21:25 to 22:30; on December 3, 1947, M. J. Bagirov sent a letter to Stalin, in which the former gave consent to the deportation of Azerbaijanis from Armenia; on December 10, 1947, the Council of Ministers of the USSR adopted a decision on the continuation of the repatriation of Armenians; on December 14, 1947, Bagirov was sent on leave for four and a half months; and, finally, on December 23, 1947, the Council of Ministers of the USSR issued Decree No. 4083 "On Resettlement of Kolkhoz Farmers and Other Azerbaijani Population from Armenian SSR to the Kur-Arax Lowland of Azerbaijan SSR."⁴³

The decree signed by Stalin stated that 100,000 *kolkhoz* farmers and other Azerbaijanis were voluntarily settled in the Kur-Arax lowland, of whom 10,000 were settled in 1948; 40,000 in 1949; and 50,000 in 1950. The Council of Ministers of the Azerbaijan and Armenian SSR had to explain conditions of resettlement, settle accounts with *kolkhozes* not later than ten days before their departure, and ensure free-of-charge transportation, conveyance of cattle and property calculated as up to two tons per family. To compensate for the houses left in Armenia, settlers were granted a 20,000 ruble-credit for ten years.⁴⁴

These clauses of the decree indicate the rashness and unprepared character of the decision and incapability of Azerbaijan to receive this number of people in such a short space of time. Note that Azerbaijani settlers fell under the terms of the Resolution of the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR of November 17, 1937 (Ref. No: US-115/2043) "On Privileges for Agricultural Settlement." As it is known, this resolution applied equally to families exiled to Siberia, Kazakhstan and the Far East.

The decree of 23 December was based on a letter of Secretaries of the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of Armenia and Azerbaijan dated 3 December. The decree was hurriedly adopted and therefore, on 10 March 1948, the Council of Ministers of the USSR adopted a second decree entitled "On Measures Arising from Settlement of Kolkhoz Farmers and Other Azerbaijani Populations from Armenian SSR to Kur-Arax Lowland of Azerbaijan SSR." This decree gave benefits to the settlers and compensation was provided for properties left behind.⁴⁵ Yet, the decree of March 10, 1948, was of a compensatory character and had no impact on the deportation itself. It would be appropriate to add that the first phrase of the decree of December 23, 1947, hinted at the "voluntary principle" of the deportation. Its declarative nature was designed to color the deportation and present it as an "act of humanism." What was the attitude of the Turkic population of the Basarkechar, Vedi and Goycha regions to this decision? Responding to this question, let's look at a document

prepared by Armenian Internal Minister Major General Grigoryan, dated 3 May 1948, on the “Sentiments of Azerbaijanis about Their Resettlement in Azerbaijan SSR.” This eleven-page document prepared by the law-enforcement bodies of Armenia is indicative of the “voluntary nature” of the deportation. The report said: “Long before official announcement of the decision of the government on resettlement of Azerbaijanis from Armenian to Azerbaijan SSR, rumors have been afloat among the population of Armenian SSR and caused every kind of idle talk.” The Internal Minister of Armenia reported: “We have detected numerous statements of Azerbaijanis about their unwillingness to go to a new place of residence and a number of them began visiting cemeteries and entreating the souls of the deceased to help them remain where they live.”

The report noted that the enemy was not blind to these negative sentiments and made use of them to conduct anti-Soviet propaganda and interpret the resettlement as an inhumane act of the Soviet government toward Azerbaijanis in the event of a war between the USSR and Turkey. Special services showed that negative attitudes to the resettlement were spread among the mountainous regions of Armenia—Basarkechar, Amasya, Sisian, etc. Some anti-Soviet elements with relatives residing abroad expressed their desire to go to Turkey illegally. Grigoryan stressed: “It is typical that during the announcement of the forthcoming resettlement and explanation of this measure at meetings of *kolkhozniks*, all those present welcomed this decision of the Government and voiced their preparedness to go to Azerbaijan; however, in private conversations they indicated their discontent.” The report linked this discontent with insufficient explanatory work, on the one hand, and disinclination of residents of the high mountain regions to move to lowland regions with their unfavorable climatic conditions, on the other hand.⁴⁶

Of interest is the fact that Azerbaijanis deported from Armenia linked this action to Turkey. For instance, resident of the village of Tapakoy Yusif Ismayilov told his fellow villagers Ismail Ahmadov, Kafar Ismailov and Humbat Ahmadov that “resettlement of Azerbaijanis from Armenia was related to a forthcoming war of the USSR with Turkey.” A report says that the Azerbaijani population of Amasya region also linked the deportation to the war against Turkey. Resident of the village of Guzukend Khanahmed Ismayilov told *kolkhozniks*: “They say the resettlement will be voluntary. But it’s wrong. They will seat us on trains, like Azerbaijanis in Akhalkalaki, and take us to Kazakhstan.” Residents of the village of Chivinly Knyaz Mamedov, Mirza Aliyev and Mamed Ashurov believed: “We shall soon be resettled, but they are afraid of telling us about it. Perhaps they think we shall flee to Turkey. . . . I’m a fool to have not gone to Turkey earlier and now I’ll be sent where I’m ordered to.” The chairman of the *kolkhoz* in the village of Chivinly told his fellow-villagers: “The question of resettlement of Azerbaijanis from Armenia to Azerbaijan is wrong. Many *kolkhoz* farmers do not want to go.” The report added that Azerbaijanis from villages of Ibish, Dashkerin, and Chivinly were destroying their houses and selling off building materials.⁴⁷

The materials of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Armenian SSR are illustrative that Azerbaijanis from Zangibasar region were also dissatisfied with their forthcoming resettlement. Resident of the village of Zangilar, Sultanali Namazov informed his fellow

villagers that he was in the village of Karakyshtag, where a representative of the Central Committee declared that Azerbaijanis would be resettled to make space for Armenian repatriates. Resident of Khyrda-Demirchi village, Mashadi Teymur Mirzayev linked the deportation not to the repatriation, but to a forthcoming war against Turkey: “The Soviets do not trust us. That’s the main reason of our resettlement, since in case of war most Azerbaijanis residing in border regions will go to Turkey.” Resident of Renchber village I. Nasirov considered it important: “All Azerbaijanis will be resettled from Armenia by 1950. This is done because the Soviet government, afraid of the Turkish assault, does not trust Azerbaijanis residing along the Turkish border. Also, Soviet Armenia is planning to gather all foreign Armenians and create an Armenian state independent from the Soviet government.” Chairman of the kolkhoz in the village of Shurakend Humbat Aliev informed his fellow-villagers: “A commission from Azerbaijan has arrived and in a day or two all Azerbaijanis will be resettled from Armenia. The delay is occurring just because the Secretary of the Armenian Communist Party disagreed to give kolkhoz property to Azerbaijan.” The report says: “The Azerbaijani population of Armenia was apprehensive that in case of war with Turkey, Armenians would massacre all of them, so it was better to go to Azerbaijan.”⁴⁸ Resident of the village of Jomardly, Sisian region of Armenia, Jalal Qurbanov said: “Most people are unaware of the weather in Azerbaijan. In 1918–1919, we, Azerbaijanis, left Armenia for Nakhchivan. There were fourteen of us and in two years, only three of us survived; the rest died because of hot weather and diseases. This is Nakhchivan, while the situation is worse in Mingachevir. There will be a lot of victims.”⁴⁹

Of particular interest is Armenians’ attitude toward the deportation of Azerbaijanis. For example, teacher Minas Arakelyan noted:

The question of the resettlement of Azerbaijanis from Armenia is beyond any doubt. In the first instance, Azerbaijanis residing along the banks of the Arax and Akhurian rivers will be resettled, then Azerbaijanis from Yerevan. The cleansing of border regions of Azerbaijanis is obvious, because they often transgress the state border, while Turkey is engaged in creating its spy network here.

Resident of Yerevan Ervand Mesropyan told his neighbor: “It is necessary to banish Azerbaijanis not only from Armenia, but also from Nakhchivan and annex the latter to Armenia.”

The same sentiments were true of repatriates. A certain Smbat, formerly Dashnak Khmbanet, who arrived from France and registered in Kirovakan, declared: “At one time, Dashnaks raised the question of annexation of Nakhchivan to Armenian SSR, but failed. The time is ripe to raise this question, since Armenia is deficient in land.”⁵⁰ In fact, this opinion of the Dashnak was the opinion of the Armenian leaders. Secretary of the Armenian Communist Party Arutyunov learned the attitudes of the Soviet leaders, particularly that of G. Malenkov, on this matter.⁵¹

To execute the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, 34,382 Azerbaijanis were resettled in 1948–1950 and 37,387 by the end of 1951. A letter of the Minister of Agriculture of Azerbaijan SSR, sent on October 14, 1954, to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan and Council of Ministers, said that in 1948–1953 about 53,000

Azerbaijanis (or 11,914 farms) were resettled from Armenian SSR to Kur-Arax lowland. Despite all restrictions, a certain part of the deportees could not endure new climatic conditions and came back and thus perturbed the Armenian leaders.⁵²

As the deportation of Azerbaijanis from Armenia and the repatriation of foreign Armenians to Armenian SSR were closely related, on August 7, 1948, the Political Bureau again discussed the question of “Repatriation of Foreign Armenians to Armenian SSR.” During the debates it became clear that at least 2,000 Armenians arrived from France, 3,500 from Syria and Lebanon, and 750 from the United States. The Political Bureau recommended continuing with the repatriation process to comply with the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of December 10, 1947.⁵³

Nevertheless, the debates showed that the interest in repatriation had tended to reduce and consequently the repatriation plan for 1948 failed to be implemented. Failure to annex Turkish lands discouraged Armenian leaders. Considering numerous difficulties, the Central Committee of the Armenian Communist Party adopted a decision on 24 August to reduce the repatriation plan for 1948 and discontinue it in 1949.⁵⁴ The failure of the anti-Turkish plans troubled leaders of neighboring Azerbaijan and Georgia because of the possible inflow of huge masses of nationalist Armenians on their territories. Therefore, Azerbaijan and Georgia systematically informed Moscow about Dashnak territorial claims. Bagirov felt that powerful forces were involved in the struggle against Azerbaijan, arranging conspiracies and territorial claims against Azerbaijan. On March 7, 1949, he sent a new, more detailed letter to Stalin with fourteen documents attached, ten of which were related to territorial claims and provocations of Armenians against Azerbaijan. The Kremlin obtained these documents on 8 March with a note: “Letter addressed to Aleksandr Poskrebyshev has been accepted. Lieutenant Sotkin.”⁵⁵

In his letter of 8 March M. J. Bagirov wrote:

Dashnak organizations abroad continue their infamous anti-Soviet propaganda with a special emphasis on their claims to expand the territory of Soviet Armenia at the expense of Soviet Azerbaijan (Mountainous Garabagh, Nakhchivan Autonomous SSR, Kirovabad) and Soviet Georgia (Akhaltzik, Akhalkalaki, Borchaly, etc.). In doing so, they do not have any scruples about using any means, including provocations and calumniation against the Azerbaijani and Georgian peoples.

In an attempt to impress Stalin, M. J. Bagirov tried to link these activities of Dashnaks with the interests of world imperialism: “Beyond any doubt, British-American imperialists, especially Americans, are not only backing Dashnaks in their anti-Soviet work but are even willing to penetrate into Transcaucasia.”⁵⁶

In the meantime, Bagirov’s counterpart in Georgia, Secretary of the Communist Party of Georgia K. Charkviani was also troubled by the intensification of the Armenian nationalism in the South Caucasus and attempts of Dashnaks to create “Great Armenia” at the expense of neighboring Soviet republics. Charkviani sent a letter to Stalin entitled “On the Activities of Armenian Nationalists in Transcaucasia,” which provided information about territorial claims of Armenians to Georgia, the struggle against Armenian bourgeois nationalists, etc. Stalin gave this letter to Beria to clarify the situation.⁵⁷

As a result, in early 1949 the repatriation of foreign Armenians was discontinued: 162 repatriates from America were the last to arrive in Armenia in February 1949. A fire that

broke out on board the *Pobeda* motorship that brought a group of repatriates to Batumi on 1 September 1948, exasperated the Soviet leaders' patience. Stalin wired G. Malenkov: "There are American spies among Armenian repatriates who carried out an act of sabotage on board the *Pobeda*. Next day Malenkov replied to Stalin: "You are right. We'll take all necessary measures." On 13 September 1948, the Political Bureau discussed Stalin's proposals regarding the fire on the motorship *Pobeda*. The Minister of National Security was instructed to establish control over all repatriates who made their way to Armenia from the United States. At the same time, it was ordered to compile a list of Armenian passengers and establish surveillance over them. With that end in mind, it was decided to send a group of KGB agents to Armenia. This group was allowed to arrest suspicious repatriates and prevent them from arriving in Baku, where they could set oilfields on fire. Following this decision of the Political Bureau, another group of KGB agents was set up, whose mission was, jointly with local agents, to protect oilfields from British-American saboteurs. As viewed by the Political Bureau, the Baku oilfields were the principal object of the provocations of the British-American intelligence services. Finally, the decision of the Political Bureau indicated that the arrival of new Armenian repatriates to Armenia should be stopped.⁵⁸ On October 8, 1948, the Political Bureau permitted 260 Armenian repatriates to arrive in Armenia.⁵⁹

On September 14, 1948, the Council of Ministers of the USSR passed a secret decision on discontinuation of the repatriation.⁶⁰ Thus, as a result of the "great repatriation," just 90,000 Armenians from twelve countries worldwide instead of the planned 360,000–400,000 arrived in Soviet Armenia and Soviet plans to annex Turkish lands turned into a complete fiasco. Further, on April 4, 1949 the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union passed two important decisions. The first was "On Removal of Dashnaks Residing in Armenian SSR and Azerbaijan SSR." To purge Armenian SSR and Azerbaijan SSR from politically suspect elements, the Political Bureau resolved to order Minister of State Security Viktor Abakumov to evict Dashnaks residing in the Armenian and Azerbaijan SSRs to the Altai region for permanent deportation under the supervision of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.⁶¹

The same day, the second decision was adopted "On Removal of Turkish Citizens, Stateless Turks and Former Turkish Citizens with Soviet Citizenship Residing on the Black Sea Coast and in Transcaucasia." All clauses of this decision dealt with reasons for the removal of Turks, and the forms and procedures of the removal. Different from Dashnaks, Turks were sent to the Tomsk region. However, there was a great difference between the above-mentioned decisions: while Dashnaks were punished for their political activity, Turks paid for their national identity.⁶²

Following the above-stated appeal of the Georgian leaders, the Political Bureau twice returned to the issue in April and May 1949. On 11 April, the Political Bureau passed a decision "On Removal of Dashnaks Residing in Georgian SSR" and on 17 May—"On Removal of Greek Citizens, Stateless Greeks and Former Greek Citizens with Soviet Citizenship." Dashnaks were exiled to Altai region, Greeks to South Kazakhstan and Jambul region. The rules of the removal were the same.⁶³ According to the report prepared by A.

Khachidze, head of the Statistical Department of Georgian SSR, on the basis of the general census of the population in 1939, the number of Greeks residing on the Black Sea coast in the mid-1950s was 8,334.⁶⁴ On May 29, 1949, the Council of Ministers of the USSR adopted a resolution “On Ensuring Transportation, Settlement and Job Provision of Settlers Evicted from Territories of the Georgian, Armenian and Azerbaijan SSR, as well as the Black Sea Coast,” consisting of nine clauses. Heads of the Ministries of State Security, Internal Affairs, Communication, Finance, River Transport, Trade, Public Health, Petroleum Industry, Committee of State Supply, Altai Regional Committee, and Executive Committees of the Kazakhstan, Jambul and Tomsk regions were instructed to carry out the resettlement process. Implementation of the decisions adopted started from June 1949. It should be noted that tasks arising from this decision of the Political Bureau were secured by resolutions and orders of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, and the Ministries of State Security and Internal Affairs issued between May 28 and June 2, 1949. In June 1949, 3,620 Armenian families, i.e. 13,000 Armenians, accused of affiliation with Dashnaks, were removed to Altai region (among them were many repatriates who had recently arrived in Soviet Armenia); 1,500 Turkish families, i.e., 5,400 persons were evicted to Tomsk region; 7,500 families, i.e., 27,000 Greeks from Krasnodar, Crimea, Nikolayevsk, Odessa, Izmaylov region, and Georgian and Azerbaijan SSRs were evicted to Jambul and South Kazakhstan regions.⁶⁵

In the meantime, persecutions against Dashnaks abroad intensified. In April 1950, the Ministry of National Security distributed a top secret [Category A] document to the Ministers of State Security of Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, which warned:

Dashnak organizations abroad have finally gone over to the service of American intelligence and are stepping up their anti-Soviet activity on its instructions. Special Dashnak “security bodies” were created in Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Iran, and are financed by American intelligence. Their main mission is to carry out espionage and sabotage activities against the USSR.⁶⁶

Despite a tough stance against Dashnaks, correspondence between different organizations made it clear that the Soviet leaders tried to control not only Echmiadzin in Armenia but also the foreign Armenian Patriarch. Worthy of note is a report of the Chairman of the Foreign Political Commission of the CC Vahan Grigoryan sent on January 25, 1951, to Stalin regarding the election of the new Constantinople Patriarch in Istanbul, which said the following:

In December 1950, elections were held for the new Patriarch of Constantinople of the Armenian Church to replace Patriarch Mesrop Neroyan, who died in 1944. Note that the Constantinople Patriarch is subordinated to the Head of the Armenian Church, Catholicos Gevorg VI with residence in Echmiadzin (Armenia). As a result of the protracted struggle that preceded the elections, Archbishop Garegin Khachatryan (Buenos-Aires, Argentina) was elected as the Patriarch of Constantinople. When notified of his election, Archbishop Khachatryan asked for permission of Catholicos Gevorg VI to enter this position. The Catholicos considers it possible to give his consent to Khachatryan’s assuming his position as the Patriarch of Constantinople after a personal meeting with him and debates over his intentions. Preliminarily, Catholicos suggested sending telegrams to Khachatryan, the Presidium of the Istanbul General Congress, and former pretender to this post, Arslanyan, who sent a notification about Khachatryan’s election. According to the information available, Archbishop Khachatryan was a Dashnak in the past and while in Argentina conducted hostile work against progressive Armenians. Despite this, the Council for Religious Affairs under the Council of Ministers of the USSR (comrade Polyansky) considers it expedient to approve Khachatryan as Patriarch, because refusing to approve him would lead to confrontation with the Catholicos. Moreover, the Turkish government has already approved Khachatryan as Patriarch. The CC of the Armenian Communist Party (comrade Arutyunov) and the Soviet Foreign Ministry (comrade Vyshinsky) support this idea.⁶⁷

On January 30, following the debates at a meeting of the Political Bureau, Catholicos of All Armenians Gevorg VI was instructed to send a telegram to Archbishop Garegin Khachatryan. It said:

We are welcoming your public statement regarding your intention to assume the new post. We would like to know your views on the current state of the eparchy and your plans for its future development and your nomination of a candidate to fill your present position. It is very important to meet with me to discuss the above-stated and other major issues, as well as to receive our Patriarch's blessings regarding your new position and the hymn of the Presidium of the Istanbul General Congress on your approval. The given telegram is of consultative nature and is not to be made public.⁶⁸

Under the April 1949 decision of the Political Bureau, Turks were evicted from the Black Sea coast and the process, which started on July 30, 1944 by the State Defense Committee, came to an end. The governments of Turkey and Greece applied to the Soviet government inquiring about the reasons for the deportation of Turks and Greeks. However, the Political Bureau passed a decision “to drag out a reply to the inquiries of the Turks and Greeks.”⁶⁹ In May–June 1949, the Soviet special services were engaged in purging the Black Sea littoral from suspect elements. Later, a new order of the Council of Ministers was issued to deal with forgotten citizens residing on the territory of Georgian SSR. On October 11, 1949, the Political Bureau adopted a decision on the removal of all Iranian citizens residing on the territory of Georgian SSR, except for Armenians, for permanent deportation to the Jambul region. In effect, all deportees were Iranian Azeribaijanis.⁷⁰ On August 10, the Council of Ministers passed a special decision on those who were absent from home during the deportations in 1949–1950. Following this decision, an additional sixty-nine Iranians, Greeks, Turks, and Dashnaks were deported from Georgian SSR.⁷¹ This small figure is illustrative of how mercilessly the Soviet government observed and persecuted its potential opponents. On November 29, 1951, the Political Bureau passed a decision “On Deportation of Hostile Elements from the Territory of Georgian SSR” and thus completed the “cleansing” the South Caucasus. This decision set the task before the Communist Party of Georgia and the Ministry of State Security to arrest and prosecute those involved in acts of sabotage and disturbances. Note that the text of this decision was similar to those of the previous decisions on removal.⁷²

Thus, the “war of nerves” that started between the Soviet Republics of the South Caucasus in 1945 gradually evolved into an episode of the Cold War and came to naught after the Soviet leaders applied repressive methods. The process ended with the removal of 53,000 Azerbaijanis from lands of their ancestors annexed during the Sovietization, the removal of Armenians from the South Caucasus to the Altai region, the purging of Transcaucasia and Black Sea coast of Turks, and the deportation of innocent Greeks to Kazakhstan.

NOTES

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3. From G. Arutinov to J. Stalin. November, 1945. APDPARA, f. 1, r. 169, v. 249, part 1, p. 7.
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Chapter Seven

Turkey and the Truman Doctrine

In December 1946, the national-liberation movement initiated by the Soviets in South Azerbaijan collapsed and its national structures were defeated. It should be noted that the United States and Great Britain won their confrontation with the Soviet Union and dislodged it from a strategically important point in the Near East. The defeat of the Soviets in South Azerbaijan reduced the opportunity to pressure Turkey and the Turkish public opinion believed that the situation had improved.¹ It would be appropriate to recall that the Turkish press greeted the defeat of the USSR in South Azerbaijan as a heavy blow to its authority in the Near East. As viewed by the Turkish press, the determination of Qavam as-Saltanah to occupy Azerbaijan was attributable to the fact that the governments of the United States and Great Britain were standing behind him, while the Soviet Union had insufficient power to hamper the government of Iran. At the same time, the Turkish press feared that Qavam as-Saltanah, formerly a man of Moscow, would be able to strengthen his position in Iran and agree with the Soviet leadership on acceding North Azerbaijan to Iran. The Turkish press regarded this as a very dangerous project.²

It has to be kept in mind that events in Greece and the failure of Soviet plans in this country, as well as the defeat of Greek Communist guerillas, were linked to US and British aid to the government of Greece.³ The US Defense Minister, reporting back to President Truman about developments in Greece, informed him that the establishment of Soviet control over this country would ensure its predominance in the East Mediterranean, the subordination of Turkey, and increase pressure against countries of the Near and Middle East.⁴

Considering this danger, the United States and Britain applied their efforts in autumn 1946 to oppose Greek guerrillas and their foreign patrons. In doing so, Britain extended military aid to the Greek government, while the United States was engaged in rendering economic assistance. In the end of 1946, this aid yielded its results and the Soviets failed in Greece. The Turkish press pointed out that on Moscow's instructions, neighboring Slavic countries should have helped guerrillas in North Greece. Note that combat operations and the civil war were developing on areas along the Turkish-Greek border. Soviet initiative in this region enabled them to pressure Turkey from the west. Indeed, the visit of Turkish Prime Minister Peker to Thrace in October 1946 was caused by growing tensions in this region. Besides, the government learned about repressions against the Turkish population of Western Thrace by Greek guerrillas. The same information came from Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, which were under the Soviet influence.⁵

Therefore, Turkey was interested in defeating Greek guerillas and restoring stability on its

western borders. The Soviet defeat in Greece and South Azerbaijan inspired hopes among Turks that the Soviet Union would change its policy in the region. On December 30, 1946, a meeting was held between Ambassador E. Wilson and F. C. Erkin, during which the latter put forward the idea that Soviet concessions in Iran and Greece would enable the country to start improving relations with Turkey. He pointed out that if the Soviet government demonstrated a reasonable position on the issue, Turkey would, within the framework of its sovereignty and independence, concede to legitimate Soviet demands.⁶ However, the Americans did not share the premature optimism of the Turks. On January 8, 1947, US Ambassador to Moscow W. Smith sent a telegram to the Secretary of State, in which he expressed his doubt that the Kremlin would desist from the idea of strategically consolidating itself in Turkey. He was confident that the Kremlin would start attacking the sovereignty of Iran and continue its aggression against Turkey's sovereignty. Note that the Soviet attitude toward Turkey was accounted for not only by security interests but also by free access to the Mediterranean and Arab World, as well as by its desire to put an end to British hegemony in Suez. As viewed by the Kremlin, Turkey was a corridor along which to launch an offensive against the USSR and concurrently an obstacle in the path of Soviet interests. Until the Soviets seized control of Turkey, it would regard its southwestern borders as in danger and feel the incomplete character of its Near Eastern political line. As the diplomat specializing in Soviet policy, Walter Smith warned against creating illusions with respect to the Soviets' favorable stand on the subject, saying that this would be self-deception.

According to the Ambassador, Russia's desire to colonize Turkey went back to tsarist times and increasingly strengthened under the Communists. So, any manifestations of a cautious attitude to the rights of Turkey might, any moment, turn into a tactical maneuver to gain the upper hand and any inactivity or open ignorance was just a matter of waiting for an opportunity. He said that the Soviets launched aggression against Turkey after complicated and strained talks. One could not forget that the Soviet politics had certain attributes and most of them were eternal.⁷ W. Smith's sagacity proved to be correct after a short time. In the first days of 1947, the Soviet Union encouraged Syria to appeal to the UN Security Council regarding Hatay (Iskenderun) to thus start pressuring Turkey. Secret preparatory talks were held in early January 1947 in Ankara between Soviet Chargé d'Affaires P. Ershov and the Syrian Ambassador. P. Ershov informed Moscow about the talks. On 26 January V. Dekanozov instructed Ershov to tell the Syrian Ambassador that if Syria raised the question of Hatay *sancak* at the UN Security Council, the Soviet Union would back it.⁸ This maneuver of the USSR was directed not only against Turkey but also against some Arab countries seeking to draw nearer to Turkey. Back in November 1946, a Turkish delegation headed by Erkin visited Transjordan. King Abdullah subsequently visited Ankara in January 1947 and Turkey signed a treaty with Transjordan. All Arab countries except Syria welcomed the visit of King Abdullah. It was no mere coincidence that the Syrian press published articles distorting the essence of the Turkish-Transjordanian treaty, criticizing the British-Turkish policy in the Near East, and demanding the return of Hatay and Cilicia. The Turkish press argued that the Syrian government was going to apply to the UN Security Council concerning Hatay.⁹

Meanwhile, the Foreign Ministry of the Soviet Union, which was particularly interested in stirring up conflict between Syria and Turkey, prepared voluminous materials on Hatay *sancak* and Cilicia, “justifying” the necessity of transferring the issue to the UN Security Council. Head of Near Eastern Department of the Soviet Foreign Ministry I. Samylovsky sent an instructive letter to Soviet Chargé d’Affaires to Turkey Pavel Ershov, Soviet diplomatic representative to Egypt Alexei Shiborin, Soviet Ambassador to Syria and Lebanon Daniil Solod, and Soviet Ambassador to Iraq Grigori Zaytsev, which said that a report on Hatay *sancak* and Cilicia would be submitted to them. He added that sometime in the past the foreign press had provided information about transfer of the issue to the UN. However, the Syrian government did not confirm this information: “Taking into account the importance of the above-mentioned issue [Hatay and Cilicia], I ask you to send your remarks on the report, as well as your considerations, if any.”¹⁰ The Turkish policy of rapprochement with the Arab countries and the first successful steps in this regard were received by the Soviets with great anxiety. In a letter to A. Vyshinsky, P. Ershov stressed that Turkey had gained great successes in establishing ties with the Arab East. A treaty on friendship as well as a protocol on mutual aid between Turkey and Iraq and a treaty on friendship between Turkey and Transjordan was signed, which made it possible to claim that there was a sort of “Eastern Bloc” being shaped. Further steps of Turkey directed at creating the Eastern Bloc would be dependent upon the behavior of Syria and whether or not the Arab countries would support Syrian claims.¹¹ Meanwhile, the Soviet Embassy in Ankara linked attempts to create the Eastern Bloc to Britain, as well as to Turkey’s leadership efforts in the Bloc. A report of the Soviet Embassy to the Soviet Foreign Ministry tied the formation anti-Soviet blocs, including the Eastern Bloc, to the anti-Sovietism of British foreign policy and revealed the role of Turkey in the implementation of British plans.¹²

In setting Syria against Turkey, the Soviets attached a great deal of importance to the confrontation between Bulgaria and Turkey.¹³ With that end in mind, various Soviet special bodies discussed the political processes going on among the Turkish population of Bulgaria. In this respect, a report of M. Burtsev addressed to Secretary of the CC CPSU M. A. Suslov of February 20, 1947 is of interest. The report is entitled “On the Results of the Participation of the Turkish Population of Bulgaria in the Elections to the Grand National Assembly.” The document pointed out that there were 700,000 Turks in Bulgaria, stressing that the political administration officers were making visits across the Turkish regions of Bulgaria “for the purpose of propagating the truth of the Soviet Union.”¹⁴

It was pointed out that the sentiments of the Turkish population of the southern regions adjoining the Greek-Turkish border were different from those residing in the northern part of Bulgaria. For example, the political administration advised that anti-Bulgarian sentiments were strong among Turks residing in the southern regions and that they were seeking to reunify with Turkey. Soviet propagandists justified this claim by the intensive activities of Turkish saboteurs among the local population and even remembered that several years previously Turkish saboteurs had armed the local populations with the purpose of reunifying with Turkey by means of revolt. At the same time, the document stressed that Greece would also like to annex the southern Bulgarian lands populated by Turks and that Britain was supportive of this

plan.

Soviet propagandists were gravely concerned about the fact that the Bulgarian Turks tended to back the opposition, not the Communists. According to their information, Turks were asked to vote for the opposition. They were told that if the Communists come to power, the Russians would capture the Straits. At the same time, the Bulgarian Turks were apprehensive that in case of coming to power, the Communists would launch a campaign of assimilation.¹⁵ In fact, having come to power in Bulgaria, the Communists did immediately start such an assimilation process.

On May 23, 1947, B. Sapozhnikov in Bulgaria sent a new report of the political administration of the Southern Battle Group to M. Suslov. The report was entitled “On the Sentiments of the Turkish Population and Intrigues of Reactionaries in the Southern Regions of Staro-Zagorsk Region.” The document pointed out that the Turkish population crossed the borders and fled to Turkey because of unfair attitudes of the local executive bodies and “their chauvinistic views on the Turkish population.” Between February–April 1947, 138 Turks fled to Turkey and another 150 were detained when trying to cross the border. Besides, twenty-three transgressors were detained in Greece by guerrillas led by the Soviet Union. The Soviet special services explained these “flights” as the “intrigues of agents of Ankara.”¹⁶

In January 1947, chief of the General Staff of the British Army General Bernard Montgomery visited Moscow. Note that the British General was cordially received in the Soviet Union as a hero of the Second World War. However, the political circles of Turkey were anxious about this visit, since Turkish politicians perceived the visit as a Soviet attempt to split the Anglo-American bloc and draw Britain closer. Rumors were afloat in Turkey that Montgomery would discuss in Moscow a plan to create a united British-Soviet commission of the two General Staffs. The same day *Pravda* published a lengthy article about the exchange of views between Stalin and E. Bevin regarding the Anglo-Soviet treaty. In his letter to E. Bevin, Stalin stressed the necessity of removing restrictions from the Anglo-Soviet treaty, which lessened the effect of the treaty. The Turkish ruling circles realized Stalin’s desire to include Britain into his circle.¹⁷

Later, British officials explained their position and relieved the anxiety of Turkish politicians. Reports of the Soviet Embassy in Ankara pointed out that the British influence in Turkey was rather strong in early 1947. P. Ershov sent a report to A. Vyshinsky from Ankara entitled “On the Foreign Policy of Turkey and Soviet-Turkish Relations.” The report noted that the British, in every possible way, were helping the government of Peker and supporting the fighting spirit of Turks before their enemy—the Soviet Union. P. Ershov wrote:

In turn, the government of Peker has given its consent to the construction of Anglo-American military bases on the Turkish territory. These bases involve airfields, radar stations, repair bases, etc. British military instructors are admitted to the Turkish army and military colleges. Even worse, British Ambassador Kelly receives Turkish governors and gives them advice.¹⁸

Upon completion of the session of the Turkish Grand National Assembly in January 1947, the ministers traveled all over the country and explained to the population that the Soviet Union threatened not only Turkey but Britain and America as well, and therefore the interest of these

countries in Turkey is explicable.¹⁹ Meanwhile, the Soviets clearly guessed that the positions of Britain in the Near East and Turkey had increasingly weakened. According to the information of the Soviet Embassy in Turkey, in 1944 Britain took a leading position in the country; however, the situation changed after 1945 when the United States gained the upper hand. The share of the United States in the Turkish foreign trade turnover reached 34.2 percent, while that of Britain fell to 17.9 percent. A. Ershov's report to Vyshinsky entitled "On Anglo-American Relations in Turkey" said that the strengthening of US "patronage" over Turkey would end in Britain's being forced out of the country.²⁰

Changes in the alignment of forces in the postwar period and Britain's weakening had first manifested themselves with respect to Greece and Turkey. As John Lewis Gaddis put it: "Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin determined the timing of the February 1947 crisis over Greece and Turkey when he ended British military and economic assistance to those countries."²¹ On February 24, 1947, the British Ambassador to the United States handed over two interesting notes to the Department of State, which declared that the British government was in no position to continue providing aid to Turkey and Greece, and asked the United States to render economic and military aid to these countries.²² At the same time, the British government recommended that this be done without delay, as any delay in this regard would increase the risks to the sovereignty of Turkey and Greece. Britain warned that the Soviet Union would immediately seize the opportunity and gain control over the Middle East. They stressed the necessity of holding a meeting between the Chiefs of the General Staffs of the USA and Great Britain to identify problems in these countries. These notes and questions raised proved not unexpected for the United States. Yet, the Americans were unprepared for these developments.²³ It was not astonishing that the British aid to Turkey and Greece discontinued and the USA was faced with the need to take decisive action. Right after the receipt of the British notes, a special committee headed by D. Acheson, US Undersecretary of State, discussed aid to these countries. The participants of the discussions thoroughly examined the possible consequences of the cutting off of British aid to Greece and Turkey and forecasted the situation in the case of US refusal to help these countries.²⁴

On 27 February, US Secretary of State G. Marshall sent a memorandum, prepared on the basis of the results of a meeting with the War and Naval Ministers, to President Truman. The memorandum emphasized the importance of the crises in Greece and, to a certain degree, in Turkey and noted that these crises directly affected US security. G. Marshall stressed that America's interest in Greece made it impossible to confine the US role to humanitarian or friendly assistance. If a civil war started in Greece, the country would become communist and subject to the Soviets, in which case, Turkey would be encircled and the situation would be aggravated. Thus, Soviet domination would be extended from the Middle East to the Indian borders. He concluded that no country but the United States could cope with the crisis. After debates at the Department of State, G. Marshall wrote: "We can give you no assurance that American assistance to Greece will unquestionably save the situation, but it is plainly evident that the situation cannot be saved without American assistance. The choice is between acting with energy or losing by default." Marshall added that the Turkish problem was of a different

nature. The “war of nerves” started by the Russians kept the Turks mobilized, which proved to be a heavy burden for this country’s economy and its “antiquated economic structure” could not endure this situation for long.²⁵

President Truman treated the memorandum seriously, saying that economic and military assistance would be rendered to Greece and Turkey. In contrast with Greece, aid to Turkey was accompanied with certain difficulties.²⁶ The people and the US Congress wanted to know the importance of this aid. American public opinion should have perceived a threat to Turkey as a menace to US interests. Greatly contributing to the matter was a meeting attended by such influential persons as US Secretary of State G. Marshall, his Deputy D. Acheson, Chairman of the Senate Committee for Foreign Affairs Arthur Vandenberg and heads of US General Staff. The meeting decided to render urgent assistance to Greece and noted that there was no time to discuss Turkish needs. At the last moment, it was decided to extend aid to Turkey. According to a report of the Joint Chiefs of General Staff dated August 23, 1946, this aid was designed to improve the resistance of Turkey to Soviet pressure and enhance Turkey’s preparedness to repulse a possible attack from the Soviet Union. On March 1, 1947, Turkish Prime Minister Peker made a statement at a press conference and stressed the Turkish government’s interest in developing relations, especially economic relations, with the United States and Britain. Speaking about the economic life of the country, R. Peker specified that Turkey was in need of a \$500 million credit. He added that he was hopeful that questions of vital importance to Turkey would be considered at the meeting of Foreign Ministers in Moscow.²⁷ Here it would be appropriate to recall a statement of Peker to journalists: “Turkey attaches great importance to the Moscow conference, because it will possibly discuss some issues beyond the German problem, of particular significance for Turkey. It is natural that in connection with this we have already met with the representatives of countries with whom we maintain friendly and allied relations.” Peker was also apprehensive of the results of debates over the Straits.²⁸

Two days after opening of the Moscow Conference, on March 12, 1947, Truman appealed to Congress regarding assistance to Greece and Turkey.²⁹ This appeal had its effect on the work of the conference: Molotov and Vyshinsky condemned Turkey for its foreign policy. The hostile attitude of Soviet representatives toward Turkey clearly manifested itself during the debates over a peace treaty with Germany. Of the same disposition was Molotov in his statement to the conference. He mentioned twelve countries which had agreed to sign a peace treaty with Germany and expressed his astonishment that Paraguay, Turkey and the Philippines were among them.³⁰

From March 1947 the Turkish press began spreading information that in a day or two the United States would assume part of obligations of Britain to Greece and Turkey, in particular, in the sphere of armaments and military defense. This information filtered into the American and British press as well. The Turkish press bureau even had to prohibit such materials to be published in the Turkish press to avoid an outcry. Discussions on the subject took place on 4 March at the Cabinet of Ministers. President İ. İ. İ. İnönü instructed Foreign Minister H. Saka to meet with the American Ambassador to clarify the situation concerning the British notes on discontinuance of aid to Turkey. The same day Saka invited US Ambassador E. Wilson and

expressed to him the growing concerns of the Turkish government. He recalled that in the past Turkey had relied on the British arms deliveries and that in February 1946 he handed to Bevin a list of necessary equipment costing eighty million Turkish liras. However, Britain wanted to have money in cash, while Turkey hoped for a credit and so, the talks ended with deliveries of several airplanes. H. Saka advised that the American military attaché was informed that previous autumn about Turkish needs and now he asked to inform Colonel Roberts about current developments. He said that if press reports were reliable, Turkey should be applying to the United States, not to Britain. Saka emphasized that 80 percent of Turkish army equipment was manufactured in Germany, so it would be expedient if the United States could bring the spoils of war to Turkey. He added that Turkey would not be able to pay in cash and therefore the government would like to get an understanding of credit terms. Besides, Saka declared that if reports on the crisis were correct, then the Turkish army should have been ready for any danger and for this, it needed US aid. Wilson replied that if Britain had really sent these notes, this was to say that the situation was changing for the worse. The British had experienced the hardships of two world wars and now were living in a condition of economic crisis. At the same time, Bevin indicated his doubts that Britain could have ever have evaded complying with its previously assumed obligations. Considering the existing economic crisis, this step could be explained by quests for possible economic partners. As for Turkey, Wilson stressed that this country was confronted with threats from the Soviet Union only and it was evident that the strongest economic difficulties, tiredness caused by combat operations, and the fact that it had not yet attained the nuclear bomb would prevent the USSR from immediately beginning a war. Under these conditions, Wilson maintained, the Turkish government, taking into account US interests in the current situation, should remain calm and comply with principles of a gradual building up of its military effectiveness and avoid haste. Touching upon the list of military equipment handed to Roberts the previous October, Wilson reported that the latter had explained that the General Staff still actively discussed the Turkish demands. He noted that the situation in Greece was much more serious than in Turkey and it would be more appropriate to deliver arms to Greece in the first instance, and that Turkey should agree with this idea. The problem was that if the Communists seized Greece, the position of Turkey would be seriously undermined. Saka agreed with Wilson and said that Roberts would be called to the Turkish General Staff. He added that his country would appreciate any favorable news from Washington.³¹

After his talks with the Turkish Foreign Minister, Wilson sent a telegram to Marshall regarding assistance to Turkey. He wrote:

The probability exists that the present war of nerves by USSR will continue for several years, but not aggression resulting in general war. . . . We estimate that the Soviet policy towards Turkey is aimed at obliging Turkey to keep a large army, thereby disrupting the Turkish economy in the long-run. In any program to improve Turkish military establishment, we must be careful to not unconsciously play the Soviet game by saddling Turkey with too heavy a financial burden for the equipment furnished.³²

It should be noted that \$150 million out of the \$400 million that Truman had requested from Congress was designated for Turkey. The US President justified his request by explaining that

the US policy was to help free peoples to oppose foreign pressures and choose their own future. Therefore, he requested that Congress approve a program of assistance to Greece and Turkey.³³ This statement became famous in history as the “Truman Doctrine.” Turkish officials welcomed the Doctrine. Both President İnönü and Prime Minister Peker highly appreciated this decision of Truman.³⁴ In his commentaries on this statement Peker indicated his satisfaction with the fact that the United States was vigilant about the aggressive intentions of some powers and that America had decided to ease the burden on Turkey by protecting its independence and world peace. According to historian Melvyn P. Leffler, “In March 1947, while the Truman Doctrine was being discussed in Congress, the director of army intelligence maintained that the factors operating to discourage Soviet aggression continued to be decisive.”³⁵

Stressing that the statement of President Truman was of particular political importance, the Turks emphasized that its significance was accounted for by the fact that the statement contained proposals which proved to be a turning point in the history of modern international relations, because these proposals showed that America had irrevocably decided to relinquish its policy of pacifying Russians and was now resolutely prepared to fight against Russia and other aggressive states. In its report to Moscow the Soviet Embassy pointed out that the announcement of the Truman Doctrine encouraged Turks “to form the opinion that Turkish independence and territorial integrity was, indeed, under threat and hence, Turkey really needed assistance from Britain and the United States to protect its independence.” Turkish newspapers stated that through helping Turkey, the United States had not only declared its preparedness to defend Turkey but also demonstrated its desire to protect other countries from “Bolshevik and Slavic aggression.” They noted: “The Genuine borders of US security cross Turkey and Greece.”³⁶

Examining the Soviet press and its attitude toward the Truman Doctrine, the political circles of Turkey were extraordinarily satisfied with the fact that the Soviet press had for the first time declared that there was no threat to Turkey. But Turks did not believe these claims, saying, “the Soviet Union should desist from its claims to the eastern *vilayets* of Turkey and the Straits.” The Soviet Embassy published an article by former Turkish Foreign Minister R. Aras in *Kuvvat* newspaper of 18 March, which openly opposed the Soviet proposals and demanded from the USSR to desist from all of its claims and restore friendly relations between Turkey and the USSR. The same day, Prime Minister Peker spoke with a reporter from an Athens news agency about Truman’s message to Congress regarding Turkish-Greek relations. Enthusiastic about these relations, Peker pointed out: “The word friendship, which we repeat continually, is improper to demonstrate the proximity that exists between the two countries.” While commenting on Peker’s statement, the Turkish press explained the extraordinary proximity between Turks and Greeks: “These two peoples are the sole obstacle to prevent the penetration of Moscow’s tyranny, Bolshevik aggression, and Slavic expansion.” Nevertheless, there were differences between the authorities and the opposition with regard to the Truman Doctrine.³⁷

American Republicans and Democrats unanimously welcomed the decision on rendering aid to Greece and Turkey. The same was true of Turkey, where Turkish society welcomed the attitude of the Democratic Party to the Truman Doctrine and foreign policy of the ruling

People's Republican Party. It was the mutual agreement between leaders of the Democratic Party and the government in opposing the Soviet note on the Straits that had largely contributed to the strengthening of resistance and demonstration of the national will. In March 1947, the Turkish press published numerous articles on the attitude of the Democratic Party to the Truman Doctrine. In *Aksham* newspaper, N. Sadak commented on an article by R. Aras, which was published the previous day. He wrote:

Doctor Aras, who has always stressed the necessity of maintaining friendly relations with Russia, has realized that it was not practical. In his article published in an Ankara newspaper, Doctor Aras, replying to *Izvestiya* newspaper, asked why Soviet Russia did not abandon its claims to our eastern *vilayets* and the Straits. He argues that the security of borders is a major condition for friendly relations between two neighbors.

Sadak concludes: "As even such sincere adherents of friendly attitude to the Soviets as Doctor Aras have written these things, it is easy to guess what it means to confront Russia."³⁸

The inclusion of Greece and Turkey into the US security sphere and the US intention to render them economic and military aid caused indignation among Soviet leaders. The Soviet Foreign Ministry was ordered to urgently draw up proposals regarding the Truman Doctrine. On 25 March, Deputy Soviet Foreign Minister Y. Malik and Ambassador S. Vinogradov sent proposals to Molotov which were aimed at strengthening the personnel capacity of the Soviet Embassy in Ankara and General Consulate in Istanbul with security and intelligence officers in order to explore the situation in Turkey and send detailed information to Moscow. Malik and Vinogradov proposed to urgently select candidates to fill vacancies of military and naval attachés for a term of two years. As only one reporter and one interpreter were working in Turkey for TASS, General Director of the agency Nikolai Palgunov was ordered to urgently strengthen the number of correspondents in its branches in Istanbul and Ankara with top professionals. Finally, Malik and Vinogradov recommended that newspapers and journalists publish materials unmasking US expansionist policy in Turkey and the Near East.³⁹

On March 27, 1947, Soviet Chargé d'Affaires Ershov sent a fifteen-page report to Deputy Foreign Minister A. Vyshinsky, which examined the foreign policy orientation of Turkey after Peker's coming to power. Ershov wrote:

No changes occurred in the Turkish political line after Peker came to power in August 1946: the British-American orientation continued and a hostile attitude to the USSR has remained unchanged. The fact that Saka still is the Foreign Minister means that the Turkish government follows its previous anti-Soviet position, unwilling to meet our proposals on the Straits.

Ershov pointed out that the exchange of notes on the Straits proved that Turkey had lost its sovereign right to independently follow its foreign policy, thereby pleasing the British and Americans in their postwar diplomatic struggle against the USSR. Ershov added:

The government of Peker consists of persons notable for their pan-Turkist views, former military and police officials who fought against democratic organizations. As a result, a semi-fascist dictatorship has been set up in the country, tending toward the British-American political line in its foreign political activity. In his statement of 1 March, Peker stressed the need for foreign credits. Therefore, the public opinion welcomed Truman's proposal to allocate \$150 million to Turkey. However, when the terms of the credit and the attitude of the Soviet government to Truman's statement became apparent, Turkish officials became alarmed and some members of the government opposed the adoption of Truman's proposals under the terms set.

As for Soviet-Turkish relations, Ershov noted that the latest developments in Iran after the meeting of the UN General Assembly, and the conclusion of peace treaties with satellites of Germany had made Turkey believe that the Soviet Union would not complicate relations with Allies, but give preference to the continuation of the “war of nerves” aimed at the financial-economic smothering of the country. Furthermore, Ershov touched upon a very interesting topic:

The current foreign policy of the Turkish government with respect to the USSR is frequently criticized by Turkish business circles and progressive intellectuals. One often hears statements like, “It’s time to come to an agreement,” “let Peker or Saka go to Moscow,” “it is necessary to cease mutual enmity in the press,” “the present state of the Soviet-Turkish relations impedes trade, economic and cultural cooperation,” etc. However, the Turkish government ignores these facts, persists in its anti-Soviet foreign policy, and is unwilling to settle Soviet-Turkish relations and comply with our proposals and our security interests.⁴⁰

Besides diplomatic channels, Soviet military bodies located in Bulgaria provided Moscow with information about Turkey. On March 29, 1947, the political administration of Southern Battle Group drew up a report “On Turkish Troops in Eastern Thrace.” Addressed to L. Baranov, representative of the Information Department under the CC CPSU, this report pointed out: “First, the Turkish reactionaries spoke about a ‘Bolshevik threat’ coming from the East; later they spoke about a danger from the West, from democratic Bulgaria.” The report analyzed the position of Thrace in Turkish foreign policy, its importance for the defense of Istanbul and the Western coasts of the Straits, etc. It emphasized that ideological work conducted in the ranks of the Turkish troops in Thrace assumed an anti-Soviet and anti-Bulgarian, as well as anti-Slavic character. It said: “Soldiers are told: ‘The Russians have always been enemies of Turks and wanted to take the Straits from Turkey. Today, Bulgaria has been taken away from Turkey. Now Bulgarians are with them.’ They are also told that the Bolsheviks encroach upon Turkish soil and want to seize Kars and the Straits from Turkey.”⁴¹

On April 9, 1947, the political administration of Soviet troops in Bulgaria sent a message to Aleksandr Panyushkin, Head of the International Information Department entitled “On the Political Situation in Turkey in Early 1947.” The message pointed out that the neutrality policy of Turkey during the Second World War helped the government to enjoy popularity among the masses because they were “saved from the war.” It also noted: “Besides the expenses of maintaining a large army, the Turkish government has to carry out mobilization measures and backs spiteful propaganda against the Soviet Union and the closest neighbors of Turkey, intimidating popular masses with the threat of a new war.” As for foreign policy, the document noted: “The anti-Soviet spirit of the foreign policy of the current Turkish cabinet is reflected in Turkey’s unwillingness to meet the legitimate interests of the Soviet Union on the Straits.” The document advised that the authorities were engaged in conducting a partial evacuation of the population from the regions of Kars and Ardahan, explaining this as a response to the growing danger from the Soviet Union.⁴²

After the announcement of the Truman Doctrine, Ivan Samylovsky requested that Ershov send him the text of Bayar’s statements to the First Congress of the Democratic Party (DP) in January 1947. He said that Bayar’s speech was of great interest to the Soviet Foreign Ministry’s Near Eastern Department.⁴³ On 29 March, Samylovsky wrote a second letter to

Ershov, in which the former showed interest in the materials of the First Congress of the DP and, especially, in the DP's economic program. He pointed out that "at present, there is an apparent tendency in Turkey to withdraw from the policy of statism."⁴⁴

It was not a surprise that the Soviet Foreign Ministry showed interest in the Democratic Party. Despite the unity between the DP and the government in matters of foreign policy, there was an essential difference of opinions during the Party Congress of January 7, 1947. In his speech to the Congress, C. Bayar raised the questions of amending the laws on non-Party membership of the President, cancellation of anti-democratic prohibitions contrary to the Constitution of the country, lifting of the government's control of the DP, etc. Therefore, Soviet Ambassador Vinogradov sent a report to the Foreign Ministry on January 25, 1947, which put forward the idea of cooperation with C. Bayar and the DP concerning the latter's criticism of the domestic policy of the Turkish government. In contrast with the official press, the opposition press linked the American assistance to the process of forming a dictatorship in Turkey, not just to the US desire "to protect the country against foreign aggression." Besides, leaders of the opposition pointed out: "Turks must establish a democratic regime in the country to ensure the freedoms and rights of Turkish citizens, rather than to please the United States or any other country."⁴⁵

Right after Truman's statement, a meeting of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff was held on March 12, 1947, to discuss the question of "Military Assistance to Turkey." Meeting participants came to the conclusion that the weakening of Great Britain in the Mediterranean, its withdrawal from Egypt, and the possibility of withdrawal from its obligations to Palestine had a negative effect on Turkey's security. It was also stressed that unless Greece was protected against the Communist minority, the security of Turkey would be threatened. In spite of the fact that Turks with great difficulties managed to retain their independence and hated the USSR, the inevitable domination of the Soviets in the region and fear might force Turkey to make concessions to the Soviets. The Chiefs of Staff noted that under peace conditions, Turkey took a leading position in the Middle East and the Arab world. Turkey's persistence in opposing Russian pressure and the support to Turkey from the West based on democratic principles might become a good example for other countries of the Near East to follow. If the USSR succeeded in establishing its domination over Turkey, this would pose threats to other countries of the Middle East and the opportunities of the US to protect Turkey and other countries of the Middle East would be reduced to naught. Turkey was a natural barrier on the Soviets' path to the eastern coast of the Mediterranean and the Middle East, especially Palestine. After long debates, the Chiefs of Staff identified the objectives of US assistance to Turkey as follows: (1) to stiffen Turkey's will and ability to resist Soviet pressure firmly to the end; (2) to improve Turkey's military potential to enable the country respond adequately and effectively to Soviet attacks, if any. The memorandum of the Joint Chiefs of Staff noted that Soviet attack against Turkey, either in the form of a separate military operation or in the course of a global war, and further developments would be dependent on the Soviets' intentions to wage wars on other fronts, the season, the morale of the Turkish people and army, as well as on the ability of Allies to render military assistance to Turkey.⁴⁶

Beyond any doubt, the Turkish public was very much interested in the terms of this US aid. Prudent Turks were apprehensive that this aid could lead Turkey to fall under US control and that under the pretext of assistance, American advisors and experts would be able to interfere in the internal affairs of the country. In March 1947, the Turkish press commenced a broad discussion on the subject. Emphasis was laid on the fact that the American Congress had allowed US inspectors to arrive in Turkey and supervise proper use of the American aid, and representatives of the US press and radio had asked permission to collect materials and ensure proper use of US aid. Political circles, the press and public opinion in Turkey were concerned about all of these issues. For example, *Kuvvet* newspaper, close to the Democratic Party, wrote:

It follows from the speech of Mr. Truman that the point is not about Turkey's or Greece's desire to see inspectors. Inspectors are sure to arrive without the consent of these countries. The US government does not trust the Turkish government and its ability to adequately use its money and facilities. Therefore, the government of the United States intends to control the situation through its inspectors. The second condition can hardly be understood: a country with freedom of the press does not need such a clause. This is to say that the US government claims that the Turkish press is not free in reality and so, demands permission for American reporters to operate in the country. It can be easily seen that the moral burden put on us now is not more simple than the material and moral burdens once put on the Ottoman Empire.⁴⁷

This position of the article's author, H. Baydur, stressing the US desire to keep control over Turks, found its parallel in the views of the Turkish press, public opinion and political circles. The situation went so far that some newspapers even proposed to refuse this \$150 million aid. N. Erim in *Ulus* newspaper of 24 March made things clear, declaring that no documents had been submitted to the Turkish government concerning American conditions: "Our government tried to get a credit from America in accordance with the standard international terms of credit allocation. In his speech, Mr. Truman pointed out that Turkey has asked for aid; however, the Turkish government requested a credit, as stated above." Erim added: "We can resolutely state that there were neither talks nor agreements of such type between our and the US governments." Recently revealed archival documents confirm Erim's words. In April 1947, US Senator William Alben Barkley visited Ankara and made a special statement that the United States did not interfere with the internal affairs of Turkey, that aid would be rendered by political means through the US Ambassador to Turkey, and that as Turkey might need technical assistance, the Americans would consult and exchange views with their Turkish counterparts, not supervise them. The Soviet Embassy in Ankara considered Barkley's statement to be deliberately aimed at calming Turkish public opinion. Ershov wrote to Vyshinsky that terms like "adviser" or "supervisor" frightened Turks, and so the Americans were requested to use terms like "ordinary officials" or "diplomats from the US Embassy's staff."⁴⁸

At the same time, the Soviet Embassy informed Moscow that material assistance to Greece and Turkey would enable the United States to interfere with the internal affairs of these countries through the mediation of American instructors. Following the announcement of the Truman Doctrine, the Central Soviet press published a series of articles based on materials sent from the Soviet Embassy in Ankara. On 14 March, an editorial was published in *Izvestiya* newspaper entitled "Truman's Message to Congress." The article raised the question: "How can urgent aid to Turkey be explained, while Turkey has not suffered from the war?" Then the

article examined the US position on the issue and its justification: “Truman justified military-financial assistance to Turkey by the necessity of carrying out modernization to maintain the country’s integrity.” The next day, *Pravda* published another article under the same title. It said as follows: “There is no need to prove that nothing threatens the national integrity of Turkey. The essence of “modernization,” as referred to by Truman, is to establish American domination in Turkey.” Meanwhile, the Turkish press immediately reacted to such publications. N. Erim wrote in *Ulus* that over the previous two years Turkey had been subject to external pressures: Under the pretext of joint protection of the Straits, the Soviets were demanding to establish military bases in the region. Besides, there was the threat of annexation of the eastern *vilayets* of Turkey. Therefore, N. Erim concluded that Turkey had to be on the watch. In reply to the article by D. Zaslavsky published in *Pravda* on 31 March 1947, Yurdoglu wrote in *Democracy* newspaper as follows: “A policy aimed at drawing America nearer to Turkey and Turkey nearer to America and Great Britain is your own invention. The keys to the Third World are in the hands of Russia and its future policy will determine the possibility of war.”⁴⁹ In his article “Dollar Fever in Turkey,” D. Zaslavsky insulted all Turkish journalists: “It is quite obvious that a significant part of the Turkish press had lost its mind at the smell of American dollars.”

Following the announcement of the Truman Doctrine, the Soviet Union set into action all the leftist forces and Armenian organizations under its control in the US. Soviet Consul General to the United States Yakov Lomakin wrote in his secret letter to Vyshinsky on April 19, 1947 that the National Council of Soviet-American Friendship, Progressive Citizens of America, the American-Slavic Congress, Armenian National Council of America, and some church organizations of the country had launched a campaign of protest against American aid to Turkey. However, working class organizations and US trade unions did not support this campaign. The Armenian Diaspora in the United States regarded US aid to Turkey as a direct threat to the Armenian people. A report of the Consul General said that the Armenian National Council appealed to all Armenian organizations and called them to start protests. Simultaneously, Armenians bombarded Senators and Congressmen with thousands of letters demanding that they cease rendering aid to Turkey.⁵⁰

On May 7, 1947, Pavel Ershov sent a voluminous report to Vyshinsky entitled “American Assistance to Turkey,” which tried to “prove” the guilt of Peker’s government in economically subordinating Turkey to the British and Americans. Ershov pointed out: “Many Turkish officials stressed that America is foisting this credit on Turkey, threatening that in case relations between Turkey and the USSR become aggravated, this country could not hope for US aid unless it takes such measures now.” As for the form of the credit, Ershov wrote:

First Turks believed that Americans would allot the money in cash, so the Turks could spend it at their own discretion. However, debates over this question in the US Congress discouraged Turks. It became evident that the United States was not going to give money in cash, but just offer Turks weapons and military equipment previously used in Italy and the Near East and currently unnecessary to the Americans. This aid does not include land-lease, but requires special conditions including financial control. The government had to conceal this fact, while the Democratic Party criticized the government, though the DP did not object to American aid in principle.

Further Ershov advised that on May 3, 1947 H. Saka told Iranian Ambassador Esfendiyar that the American aid to Turkey was, first of all, “of a military and political nature.” Ershov added:

It is typical that even among members of the Grand National Assembly there are a great number of opponents to American aid, though there is an opinion that for fear of persecution none of the MPs, including opposition members, has dared openly oppose the credit. It may be concluded that the Peker-I'nönü clique is in the hands of the American dollar and ready to make the most disgraceful concessions to adopt the US military and economic aid, perceiving it to be the single guaranteed counterbalance to Soviet proposals on the Straits and eastern regions.

P. Ershov described how Turkish officials greeted E. Wilson, who returned from vacation to Turkey on 29 April. Meeting Wilson were Minister Saka, former Prime Minister Saracoglu, Secretary General of the Turkish Foreign Ministry F. C. Erkin and other top military officials. Ershov wrote that as a rule, persons returning from official leave were not met by anybody and the diplomatic corps rumored that the Turks welcomed Wilson “as their boss.”⁵¹ On 8 May, Ershov applied to Deputy Foreign Minister Y. Malik, saying that some Turkish businessmen indicated their desire to establish trade and economic relations with the USSR; for example, President of “Ziya Taner” firm Selahettin Taner and co-owners of a firm in Istanbul Naci Turac and Galip Deylani came to the Soviet trade representation and voiced their desire to develop relations with the Soviets. However, Ershov recommended that the Soviet Foreign Ministry make no concession at this issue, as the Turks could perceive this as Soviet abandonment of their claims to the Straits. At any rate, Ershov indicated his preparedness to collaborate, if the Soviet leaders would instruct the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Trade to meet the wishes of the Turkish businessmen.⁵²

On 2 May, under the command of Vice-Admiral Bernard Bieri, an American navy squadron, including the aircraft carrier *USS Leyte*, three battleships and six torpedo-boat destroyers arrived in Istanbul. Several months earlier, the squadron visited the ports of Izmir and Marmaris. After the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine, the arrival of the squadron was accompanied with magnificent festivities, banquets, cocktails, dinners, etc. A report of the Soviet Embassy said:

To express their gratitude for money granted, the Turks decided to prepare an unusual surprise for the Americans: President of the Turkish Republic I'smet I'nönü arrived in Istanbul on 5 May to meet with the Americans. Several hours after his arrival, I'nönü gave a reception in honor of American sailors, which was attended by representatives of the US ships accompanied by American Ambassador Wilson. During the reception, I'nönü had a long conversation with Bieri and Wilson in a separate room. Then he came to the general hall, where he spoke with his American guests separately. The Turkish President made a statement before the journalists and stressed his joy on the occasion of the American ships' arrival and spoke of the Turks' friendly relations with the American people.⁵³

On 7 May the US ships left Istanbul. Before departing, Admiral Bieri and Ambassador Wilson expressed their gratitude to the Mayor of Istanbul Lutfi Kirdar for the latter's attention and care of his guests and stressed that the Turkish-American friendship would be everlasting. Informing about the visit, Ershov described:

Last year Americans paid an identical visit and arrived in Ankara. This time the Turkish government abased itself: President I'nönü personally came to Istanbul on 4 May to thus please the American admiral on board. Rumors were afloat that there was a US top official who hid himself on board of the ship. Ershov thought that the Turks had to invent this story to thus excuse “a humiliating visit of their President, where the latter played a guest and the admiral—a host.”⁵⁴

On May 12, 1947, President I'nönü gave an interview to the British United Press, which was urgently translated into Russian and sent to Moscow. In the interview I'nönü declared: “Assistance that the United States of America is going to render us in the nearest days will be

used for military purposes. For the purposes of economic development, we intend to apply to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.” Of interest is a part of the interview, where he touched upon the Straits issue. Responding to the question of the destiny of the Straits and ways of resolving it, the Turkish President pointed out:

As it is seen from notes dated August 22, 1946 and 18 October of the same year, handed to the Soviet government, Turkey believes that the current regime of the Straits is just and appropriate to most effectively meet the interests of all parties concerned. In the event that any state is dissatisfied with the Straits Regime, it may convene a conference to make amendments to the existing regulations if required, within the framework of procedures as set forth in the Montreux Convention.

Asked by a correspondent, if “there is presently an Armenian question,” President İ̇nönü answered: “There is no Armenian question in Turkey, for each citizen of the country enjoys equal rights without differences in religion and race.”⁵⁵

Further in his interview İ̇nönü plainly stated that American aid was designed for military needs. When analyzing Turkish press materials, the Soviet Embassy stressed that journalists

focused their attention on the probability of an armed offensive against Turkey in order to justify the country’s military preparations. Journalists declared that neither America nor Turkey concealed the military nature of this aid and this fact confirms that both parties pursue no hidden agenda, that the United States and its supporters are too strong to be afraid of divulging measures and are not apprehensive of responses from those against whom these preventive measures are directed.⁵⁶

On 19 May, the first American naval mission headed by Admiral Connelly arrived in Ankara. During its four-day stay in the capital of the Turkish Republic, the Prime Minister of the country, Foreign and Defense Ministers, and Chief of the General Staff received the mission.

Following debates of 22 April in the Senate and discussions of 9 May in the House of Representatives, Congress approved the law “On Assistance to Turkey and Greece.” A day later, President Truman signed the law and thus, the military assistance to Turkey was legalized. Under the new law, the American President had the authority to send, in addition to financial aid, equipment and military and technical experts to Turkey and Greece, and to render military, technical and information services. However, the law prohibited the employment of this aid for other purposes without the President’s knowledge. With this support in hand, President İ̇nönü appealed to the American people:

Each Turk with all his heart welcomes this happy event, which is a manifestation of the sincere and friendly sentiments of the great American nation to our country and our people and a progressive step on the path of mankind’s transition to durable peace. This aid demonstrates that world public opinion acknowledges the services and ideals of the Turkish people during the Second World War and after its end. This aid is likely to meet the needs of Turkey, though partially, in terms of its defense, and thus contributes to the removal of the economic difficulties we are experiencing in the aftermath of the war.⁵⁷

Following the departure of the US squadron from Istanbul, İ̇nönü made an inspection of the fortified regions of the Straits, including Chanakkale, Gallipoli, Gemlik, Mudanya and Bonduma. After İ̇nönü’s appeal to the American people, “Radio Columbia” broadcast an interview of its reporter Leo Hodgsteter with Prime Minister R. Peker, which was wholly devoted to Soviet-Turkish relations. The Prime Minister advised that Turkey sincerely meant to establish friendly relations with the Soviet Union; however, the Soviet claims impeded rapprochement. Peker added:

To succeed in establishing a durable friendship, Russia should desist from its legally ungrounded, historically and ethnically baseless claims that are inconsistent with the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Turkey. Not momentary promises but resolute relinquishment of these claims may contribute to the restoration of good relations, such as those maintained between Russia and Turkey in 1919–1920.

The Prime Minister noted: “On no account will Turkey turn into a puppet government.” He emphasized that even if the Anglo-Americans backed the Soviet claims, though it was impossible, Turks still would not give in. “Even if four great powers wanted to deprive Turkey of its territorial integrity and independence, as was the case with Czechoslovakia in 1938, we will turn down any such proposal,” Peker said. To confirm the friendly attitude of Turkey to the Soviet Union and allied countries, Peker cited the example of Germany in 1941, when this country was the master in the Balkans: “Turkey refused to allow German troops into the Caucasus even at the risk of war.” As for the concentration of the Turkish army on the Black Sea coast, the Prime Minister explained this by the necessity of repulsing a probable German landing. He stated: “In this period, Russia thanked us for our actions, while today it declares that we had quite different intentions.”⁵⁸ Peker’s interview with Radio Columbia created a clamor on the international scene. On 22 May, when the Law on Assistance to Greece and Turkey was approved, a large American delegation, comprising 20 members and headed by General Lansford Oliver, arrived in Ankara with the purpose of exploring Turkey’s needs over the course of two to three months and drawing up a draft bilateral agreement on assistance to this country. On 24 May, Ambassador Wilson told Saka that he had been instructed by his government to start talks in this regard. Attending the talks on the Turkish side was Deputy Chief of the General Staff Muzaffer Tug̃savul. The first stage of the talks ended on 1 June. In the period in question, the US delegation was enlarged with new members, including Major-General of Aviation William Hall.

With regard to the end of the first part of the talks, General Oliver made a statement to *Son Posta* newspaper, saying that he was satisfied with the success of the talks and that his delegation would start visiting economic and military-strategic regions of Turkey from 3 June to study the situation. On 7 June *Ulus* newspaper published Oliver’s first impressions from the trip: “I highly appreciate the quality of Turkish soldiers and it would be an honor for me to command a military unit made of Turkish soldiers. The Turkish soldier is very bright.” At a press conference in Istanbul Oliver declared, “If properly equipped, the Turkish army would immeasurably excel the German army, reputed as the best in the world.”⁵⁹

In June, the Americans traveled across Istanbul and the Straits regions, visited Izmir, Mersin, Adana, Hatay, Sivas, Diyarbakir, Erzurum, Kars, Van and other regions. By 17 June, all of them returned to Ankara and General Oliver held a press conference following the results of this inspection. He pointed out that the Turkish army was excellent, but it needed proper equipment and ammunition. The country was badly in need of roads to connect production facilities with centers of population. Oliver noted:

I think that American aid to your country is insufficient. The amount allocated is sufficient to refurbish weapons only. I do not know how much money out of this \$100 million will be spent on the construction of and purchase of equipment. Secretary of State Marshall and Ambassador to Ankara Wilson will discuss this question. It is not only me, but nobody knows, if we are going to render further assistance to your country besides this \$100 million.⁶⁰

On 18 June American representatives left for the regions of the country again and the same day, Ambassador Wilson was appointed head of the American office for assistance to Turkey. During talks between Erkin and Wilson, it was planned to prepare an agreement on extending military and economic aid to the country. On July 5, 1947, President İnönü gave a reception in honor of the American delegation. The Turkish press received this as a sign of the completion of US-Turkish talks on a draft agreement. The press wrote that this agreement would differ from the American-Greek one, explaining this by the fact that Greece had turned into “an arena of political clashes,” while there was a stable government in Turkey. As viewed by the press, there was no need to strictly supervise the use of funds by Turkey. Newspapers tried to persuade their readers that US foreign trade did not follow selfish ends. On June 11, 1947, a day before the signing of the US-Turkish agreement, Aleksandr Lavrishev, who had taken the position of Soviet Ambassador to Ankara, drew up a document entitled “American Assistance to Turkey.” The document focused on the importance of the President signing the US-Turkish agreement rather than the actual substance of the aid.⁶¹ In all probability, the text of the agreement was kept secret and remained unknown to the Soviet special services. At any rate, the Soviet Foreign Ministry carefully looked through an article entitled “The US-Turkish Credit Contract” published in *The Continental Daily Mail* on 28 June. The article pointed out that a credit contract in the amount of \$100 million was going to be signed.⁶²

Finally, on July 12, 1947 the US-Turkish contract was signed at the Turkish Foreign Ministry. The signatories were H. Saka from the Turkish party and E. Wilson from the American party. The contract consisted of eight articles. The preamble of the document said that considering the Turkish government’s appeal to the US government with a request to extend assistance to strengthen the former’s armed forces and maintain stability in the economy, as well as following the fact that the Congress of the United States had authorized the US President under the Law of May 22, 1947, to render the above-mentioned aid to Turkey on conditions consistent with the sovereignty and security of the two countries, the agreement was signed. It also said that the governments of Turkey and the United States were confident that this aid would make it possible to achieve the main goals set out in the UN Charter and to increasingly consolidate friendly relations between the American and Turkish peoples. Article 1 of the agreement said that the US President was empowered by the Law of May 22, 1947, to extend assistance to the Turkish government. Article 2 specified the rights and duties, forms of activity and functions of the head of the American mission. Article 3 established rules of assistance to the American press by the Turkish government for free coverage of all problems, while the Turkish government committed itself to publishing information about the goals, sources, nature, importance, and progress in implementing the US aid. Article 4 touched upon joint protection of supplies, services and information, and mutual consultations between the governments of Turkey and the United States. Article 5 prohibited the Turkish government from employing a part of this aid for the payment of loans and/or related interests to a third state. Article 6 stipulated causes for termination of the contract. Article 7 provided for the contract coming into effect from the date of signing. Article 8 dealt with registration of the contract by the UN and its retention in Turkish and English copies.⁶³

Saka and Wilson spoke at the signing ceremony of the agreement. They declared that the contract marked a new era in the relations between the United States and Turkey and was a momentous event in implementing the main principles and ideals of the United Nations. Wilson stated: "During our talks we have been guided by the principle of respect for the sovereignty and independence of our countries. This principle is an integral part of the agreement and in fact, forms its basis. The aim of the agreement is to enable Turkey to strengthen its armed forces and maintain the stability of its economy." In connection with this, Prime Minister Peker sent a telegram of congratulations to Ambassador Wilson.⁶⁴

The mayor of Ankara gave a reception in honor of the American delegation, during which General Oliver stated that Americans visited all parts of Turkey, familiarized themselves with ground, naval and air forces, and showed interest in factories, plants, ports, schools, etc. In light of the contract signed, the American delegation cherished great hopes for the prospect of developing good relations between the two countries. On 19 July, Oliver's mission left Turkey. Next came numerous experts in military, financial and economic spheres. Meanwhile, Deputy Foreign Minister of the USSR and concurrent Permanent Representative of the Soviet Union to the UN Security Council Andrei Gromyko responded severely to the Truman Doctrine. He emphasized that Truman's appeal to Congress with a view to assisting Turkey and Greece was of an aggressive and provocative nature. In his statement to the UN Security Council, A. Gromyko described Greece as an allied country that had suffered greatly from invaders and therefore, had the right to get aid from abroad. However, in his opinion, the situation was different with respect to Turkey and Turkey did not deserve aid from abroad and could not be treated as a victim-country of the war. He maintained that the Turkish territory had not been occupied and Turkey had not been in the ranks of democratic countries engaged in combating the Germans.⁶⁵

On June 12, 1947, an article by G. Vershinin entitled "American Plans to Modernize Turkey" was published in *Pravda*. The article tried to substantiate accusations put forward by Gromyko against Turkey at the UN Security Council. Vershinin wrote:

The objections of the Turkish public do not bother the new "patrons" of this country. The Americans are planning to establish control over spending of the credit granted to Turkey "to modernize" the Turkish army. In implementing this policy, Americans have poured scorn upon Turkish sovereignty; their authorized military agents were instructed to develop programs for forthcoming operations and supervise their implementation.

Having analyzed US actions in Turkey, *Pravda* came to the conclusion: "Militarily, Turkey has ceased to be an independent country. American capital is intensively penetrating in the country's economy. Thus, economically, Turkey is also losing its independence and now the British will have to give their place to a stronger and richer rival."⁶⁶ *Pravda* continued to exaggerate this topic in its 15 and 17 June issues. Joining this media campaign, Moscow radio reported that Turkey had lost its sovereignty as set forth in six clauses of the American-Turkish agreement.

On 17 July Ivan Bakulin, newly appointed Head of the Near Eastern Department of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, sent three letters to P. Ershov within a day. Issues mentioned in these letters were the same as those mentioned in the above-stated article by Vershinin in *Pravda*. In the

first letter, Bakulin demanded that he be informed about well-known Turkish firms that had collaborated with the American capitalists. In the second letter, Bakulin made an inquiry about the composition of the Grand National Assembly and its internal contradictions and trends in the People's Republican Party. And, finally, the third letter asked about the British-American contradictions in Turkey, spheres of British-American collaboration, the position of the British in the country, and the segments of the Turkish society that backed the British and Americans.⁶⁷

On 19 July, General Director of TASS N. Palgunov sent to Molotov materials regarding "a systematic campaign in Turkey aimed at unleashing a new world war."⁶⁸ According to one of these materials, during his visit to Western Anatolia, Deputy Chairman of the People's Republican Party. Saracoglu stated: "The Turkish people prospered incredibly. The strength of Turkey has risen ten-fold as compared with the beginning of the war. For six to seven years, we have been able to maintain the fighting efficiency of our army. Should Russians cease their pressures, we would be able to demobilize several contingents of our soldiers."⁶⁹

After the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine, on June 2, 1947, P. Romanov prepared a detailed 113-page report on the strengthening of an anti-Soviet campaign in American propaganda. He sent it to the CC CPSU, to T. Shuklin. The report focused on anti-Soviet campaigns in the United States, Britain, France, China, Germany, countries of the Near and Middle East, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Greece, Finland and Latin America. One of the parts of the report was entitled "American Propaganda in Turkey." It said that over the past few years US propaganda in Turkey had increasingly intensified. US educational institutions in different towns of the country, Turkish radio stations, especially "Voice from Turkey," and newspapers of Istanbul and Ankara were mentioned as centers of American propaganda in Turkey. It also indicated that American firms had delivered equipment for radio stations in Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir and thus, sought to appropriate the entire Turkish radio broadcast network. The report underscored the propagandistic nature of numerous visits of US officials to Turkey. According to the report, these visits were accompanied by a propaganda campaign to fortify the Turkish position in the Dardanelles and the eastern *vilayets*.⁷⁰

On August 7, 1947, P. Ershov sent a voluminous report to A. Vyshinsky entitled "The Political Situation in Turkey in Connection with American Aid." He pointed out that June–July of that year had witnessed talks on "military aid" and the conclusion of an agreement. Ershov's report touched upon some interesting aspects concerning the visit of General Oliver's group to Turkey, the arrival of British Ambassador Kelly, and the short-term stay of a British squadron in Istanbul. Ershov pointed out: "The US imperialistic plans attach a significant place to Turkey and the signing of the Turkish-American agreement is the beginning of the implementation of these plans not only in Turkey but also in the entire Near East. This agreement is designed to turn Turkey into the puppet of American imperialist circles."⁷¹

Despite negative forecasts of the Soviet specialists, the Truman Doctrine became a turning point in Turkish foreign policy. It was the Soviet expansionist policy in 1945–1947 that made Turkey a strategic partner of the US. The Truman Doctrine paved the way for military, economic and political integration of Turkey into the bloc of Western states.

Besides, the Doctrine changed the alignment of forces in the Near and Middle East in favor of the United States and reaffirmed the transition of the leading role in the region from Great Britain to the USA. However, the British-Turkish treaty of 1939 still remained in effect. From the standpoint of Turkish security, the political importance of the Truman Doctrine proved to be higher than the financial aid. Vis-à-vis the Soviet threat, Turkey had obtained US support without assuming any commitments, unlike the British-Turkish treaty. The Truman Doctrine created favorable conditions to join the Marshall Plan as announced in June 1947. At first, the American experts were interested in Turkey's involvement in the ranks of war-affected European countries. However, Turkey managed to prove that the assistance program within the framework of the Truman Doctrine could not fully support the reform process in the Turkish economy. Consequently, Saka could join the group of representatives of European countries who gathered in Paris in July 1947 to discuss the Marshall Plan. After many requests and long debates, the US government recommended Turkey be included in the plan for European reconstruction. The first aid under the Marshall Plan in the amount of \$10 million came to Turkey in March 1948.⁷²

Following instructions from Moscow, the Soviet Embassy in Ankara closely watched the military, political, and diplomatic processes in the country, especially, the changes in relations between Britain and the United States. P. Ershov sent an analysis of the situation to A. Vyshinsky on 4 September 1947. He wrote: "This month's developments demonstrate that the Turkish government has decided to adhere to the US military-political agenda and is currently following American directives in solving major domestic problems."⁷³ The same day, Ershov sent a second letter to A. Vyshinsky, which provided information about the data from I. Bakulin's report on British-American relations in Turkey. As viewed by Ershov, the British political line had until that time prevailed in Turkey. The British considered the countries of the Near and Middle East, including Turkey, as a sphere of their "imperial influence." However, the Soviet Embassy was prone to explain the weakening of the British positions by the reduction of trade turnover prior to the Truman Doctrine. According to the information of the Embassy for the first six months of 1947, British imports to Turkey exceeded five million pounds, which was up two fold from 1946. Nevertheless, the British share in the foreign trade turnover of Turkey was diminishing.⁷⁴

Another report from the Embassy said that after the signing of the American-Turkish treaty, a British squadron composed of eight ships came to Istanbul, thus demonstrating its unwillingness to give up its positions in Turkey. The visit of the British squadron headed by Admiral Willis, their reception by President İ nönü in Ankara, and visits to the General Staff and Defense and Foreign Ministries pursued the aim, as Soviet analysts put it, to remind Turks of the alliance treaty of 1939. The Embassy report said that the visit of the British squadron right after the signing of the American-Turkish agreement was not a mere coincidence. In doing so, the British wanted to emphasize that they were not going to leave Turkey; instead, they intended to consolidate their positions in the region. Further the report added that the British were anxious about the growing American influence in Turkey. A cordial reception and friendly statements in the press were meant to placate British worries.⁷⁵

The government crisis of September 1947 was also focused on by the Soviets. The crisis came as a result of confrontation between the authorities and the opposition. Commencing from May 1947, the confrontation between Peker and Bayar became increasingly aggravated and ended in the resignation of the Peker government in September. In July 1947, President İ'nönü tried to interfere in the conflict, but with no effect. During the summer break, MPs from the opposition visited the countryside, where they criticized the government. Of particular interest was Bayar's speech in Sivas, which condemned the economic program of Peker, his adherence to a dictatorial form of rule and, as a whole, his unpreparedness to adopt the multi-party system. Peker's response to the criticism through mass media looked unpersuasive. In *Ulus* newspaper he tried to inform the public about a seven-year plan of economic rehabilitation of the country and condemned the undesirable commotion caused by the criticism of the government by Democrats, spreading hatred to the government among Turkish citizens. In turn, Prime Minister Peker accused leaders of the Democratic Party of calling for a popular revolt and attempting to topple the legitimate government of the country.⁷⁶ Touching upon this interview, Chairman of the DP C. Bayar made the following statement:

The interview with Prime Minister Peker regarding my Sivas speech is indicative that the Prime Minister has once more proved his inability to meet the needs of the country in the sphere of domestic policy caused by the current conditions in modern Turkey and in the world as a whole. Since the Peker government first came to power, it has become obvious that it was the cabinet of terror. The purpose of the Peker cabinet is to render political criticism harmless and make the press shut up. Note that the Parliament and the government have been formed illegitimately. Thus, Recep Peker and his cabinet intend to charge the Democratic Party with intending to stir up revolt and anarchy. Even during the talks with President İ'nönü, the Prime Minister stressed that the Democrats jointly with the revolutionaries were preparing for an attempted coup d'état. In connection with this, I'd like to recall the threats of the government that it is ready to repulse these actions and deprive some MPs of their immunity.⁷⁷

Meanwhile, all mutual accusations of Peker and Bayar, as well as their statements and declarations, were carefully summarized by the Soviet Embassy, translated into Russian and sent to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. Prime Minister Peker was sure that İ'nönü would intercede, but the situation turned out differently. On 11 July, the day before the signing of the American-Turkish agreement, İ. İ'nönü spoke on the radio and said that, as President of Turkey, he would advocate the Democratic Party, which had been accused by Peker of revolutionary slogans. This statement was received as an important step toward democratization of the country. Published in the Turkish newspapers on 12 July, the statement came to be known as the "July Statement." This event contributed to the consolidation of the international reputation of Turkey and increased confidence in it as a partner, but weakened the position of the Peker government. On October 8, 1947, P. Ershov sent an eleven-page report on the governmental crisis in Turkey to A. Vyshinsky. The report contained analysis of Peker's activity and mentioned his mistakes. It stated that İ'nönü convened a meeting of the Cabinet and demanded Peker's resignation. P. Ershov wrote: "On 8 September, İ'nönü demanded that the Prime Minister resign. In reply, Peker demanded that İ'nönü do the same." In Ershov's words, the dispute ended with emergency aid to rescue Peker. It was no mere coincidence that on 9 September Peker had to resign. A new government headed by former Foreign Minister H. Saka was formed on 10 September. Necmettin Sadak, a well-known journalist, became Foreign

Minister of Turkey. He stated that not a single change would be made in the foreign policy of the country.⁷⁸ Some time later, N. Sadak wrote in *Foreign Affairs* journal with regard to the Truman Doctrine, which played an important role in the foreign policy of Turkey: “The Truman Doctrine was a great comfort to the Turkish people, for it made them feel that they were no longer isolated.”⁷⁹

On 10 September, the new Prime Minister H. Saka announced his governmental program. Commenting on the government’s foreign policy, Saka repeated that no significant changes would take place in Turkish policy. Nevertheless, a permanent American mission was set up in Turkey to demonstrate that the relations between the United States and Turkey formed the pivot of Ankara’s foreign policy. A visit of US Ambassador to Iran G. Allen to Ankara and his meetings with Sadak, Saka and İ’nönü became an appreciable event in the formation of the US Near Eastern policy. In these meetings, an American plan for rapprochement between Iran and Turkey was discussed. On behalf of Mohammed Reza Shah, G. Allen invited İ. İ’nönü to visit Teheran, saying that President Truman had given his blessing to this voyage.⁸⁰

Following the defeat of the national movement in Iranian Azerbaijan, the question of the importing of Iranian oil to the Soviet Union remained increasingly undecided.⁸¹ Heightened cooperation between Iran and Turkey under active US mediation, as well as growing interest of some Arab countries in collaboration with Turkey, essentially weakened the Soviet positions in the region. While in Moscow on 2 September, Muzaffar Firuz, former Deputy Prime Minister, and now exiled by the Shah as Ambassador to Moscow, said in a meeting with Sychev: “The Iranian ruling circles are seeking to maneuver around the oil deals. They believe that the international situation is in their favor.” Betraying his government, Firuz claimed, “It is in the interests of the USSR to accelerate the process of unmasking Iranian reactionary circles, preventing them from confronting the Soviet Union in a similar fashion to Turkey.” In doing so, Firuz advised to avoid any concessions to the Iranian government concerning the terms of the oil deal; otherwise, the international prestige of the Soviet Union would be damaged.⁸²

Moscow was very cautious of rapprochement between Iran and Turkey. I. Bakulin, Head of the Near Eastern Department of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, wrote to Ershov that talks were held in October 1947 between Iran and Turkey on the construction of Tabriz-Hatay railway. Also, Bakulin informed him that a meeting of the representatives of Arab countries and Turkey was held in mid-September in Istanbul to discuss the question of the construction of railways and highways in the Near East. P. Ershov was instructed to watch this process closely and send regular reports to the Soviet Foreign Ministry.⁸³

In early October 1947, Chief of the Turkish General Staff, General Salih Omurtak, accompanied by top Turkish military officials, paid a visit to the United States.⁸⁴ Analysts believed that he would negotiate the acceleration of military aid to Turkey. The delegation also spent two days in London, where it held consultations with Chiefs of the British General Staff. The delegation was received by D. Eisenhower on 7 October, and by President Truman on 8 October. The same day, Eisenhower gave a reception in honor of the Turkish guests. Note that the political circles of the United States attached great importance to the visit of top officials of Turkey. To their thinking, the importance of Turkey for America increased in line with growing

Soviet aggression against Turkey and the Communist threat as a whole. During a press conference on 9 October, General Omurtak affirmed that \$100 million American aid to Turkey was insufficient, adding, "This aid should be equal to the military might of a supposed adversary." The General assured that irrespective of the size of American military aid, Turkey would be able to oppose any enemy, as it had done during the Second World War. Then Omurtak added that the main thing was to render American aid to Turkey regardless of its size and noted that ten days previously the first batch of arms had already been sent to Turkey. Over the course of a month's stay in America, the delegation planned to visit fifty ground, naval and air bases of the US Defense Ministry.⁸⁵

During his talks with top US officials, Omurtak confirmed that the risk of Soviet aggression made Turkey maintain a huge army. Back in August 1947, the Turkish government held consultations with the American and British governments and indicated its desire to reduce the Turkish army from 485,000 to 330,000, explaining this by the fact that the modernization of the Turkish army by means of US weapons would compensate for a reduction in its number.⁸⁶ On the other hand, there was a risk that the Soviets could perceive this as Turkey's retreat and increase their pressures. This issue was discussed during Washington talks. Secretary of State G. Marshall informed Saka and Sadak about the US stand on this issue. On October 10, 1947, G. Marshall wrote: "Turks should be careful to prevent any impression that demobilization implies a change in foreign policy or lessening of their determination to maintain their sovereignty, independence and integrity."⁸⁷

During a reception in honor of the Turkish delegation, General Eisenhower remembered that back in 1940, when the Allies fought against the Germans and Italians in North Africa, General Omurtak arrived on the battlefield. Eisenhower made a conclusion: "Then we struggled against the Germans. Your arrival demonstrated that you supported us. The situation is clear. Your presence here shows that you are with those who are fighting for freedom. You, like us, have not yielded to foreign pressure."⁸⁸

In October 1947, Deputy Foreign Minister of the USSR A. Vyshinsky spoke at a session of the UN General Assembly and a meeting of one of the UN committees. These speeches illustrated that the threats against the Soviet Union were not without reason. A. Vyshinsky's statement entitled "Against Propaganda and Warmongers" and addressed to a meeting of the UN five-member Committee was full of accusations against the Soviets recent Allies. A. Vyshinsky characterized American assistance to Turkey, Greece and sixteen countries of Western Europe as "buying the road to peace with dollars."⁸⁹ A large part of Vyshinsky's speech to the Political Committee of the UN General Assembly on 24 October was devoted to Turkey. The new Turkish envoy to the UN, former Ambassador to the USSR Sarper pointed out in his speech that attacks of the Soviet delegation against Turkey were unjust. He called for Vyshinsky to be fair, since nobody in Turkey wanted war, while Moscow radio every day, even in Turkish, criticized the public relations and domestic policy in this country. *Izvestiya* went so far as to write that after the signing of the agreement with the United States, the Turkish economy would be attached to US foreign policy and the Americans would seize control over Turkey. Sarper also touched upon the Soviet territorial claims as set forth in Soviet propaganda. On 8 October

1947, Ershov wrote to the Soviet Foreign Ministry that the Turkish government through Sarper had attacked the USSR at the UN General Assembly. Thus, Sarper, as Ershov put it, advocated all of the anti-Soviet proposals of Marshall and accused the Soviet press and radio of violating the peaceful atmosphere in Turkey and thrusting “a war of nerves” onto its audience.⁹⁰

While responding to Sarper, A. Vyshinsky relied on documents on “German Policy in Turkey” prepared by the Archives Department of the Soviet Foreign Ministry in 1946. For instance, he referred to the fact that on December 2, 1941, German General Warlimont received a note, which talked about “the idea of creation of independent or quasi-independent Turkic states in Crimea, the Caucasus and Russian Azerbaijan, as well as to the east of the Caspian Sea.” In connection with this, Vyshinsky exclaimed passionately: “It is the ever-lasting dream of Turks to destroy half of the Russian human potential and seize vast territories, including the Caucasus.”⁹¹ On 7 November, Ershov wrote to A. Vyshinsky that the Turkish envoy to the UN openly acted against the USSR and that “the Turkish press has distorted Vyshinsky’s answer to Sarper in an effort to conceal the aggressive plans of Turkish rulers with respect to the Soviet Union.”⁹²

The speech by Vyshinsky at the UN Political Committee gave an impetus to a new wave of anti-Soviet cartoons. The first day, the Soviet Union was depicted as an old man with a dagger and the inscription “veto.” The old man throws the dagger at a scared angel but misses. The second day, Uncle Sam appears with a pistol and intimidates the Russian. So the Russian retreats and the angel of peace triumphs. The third day, the Russian throws himself upon the angel and stabs him in the heart. The angel and Uncle Sam are in horror. There is an inscription under the cartoon: “One fine day, everything will end like this.” The Soviet Embassy informed Moscow that the Turkish newspapers and magazines published such provocative cartoons to please Turkish warmongers. Meanwhile, A. Daver, who was criticized by Vyshinsky at the UN, called his statement “the fury of a madman.”⁹³

In late September 1947, a meeting of the Communist parties of nine countries of Eastern Europe, held in Poland, decided to set up a Cominformburo. Faced by the unity of the Western countries within the framework of the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan, the Soviet leadership had to respond adequately. Eastern Europe rejected the Marshall Plan and a new situation arose. It was the meeting of the heads of the Communist parties in Poland, attended by Molotov and A. Zhdanov, that personified the unity of these countries.⁹⁴

The meeting in Poland and the establishment of the Cominformburo became a subject of criticism in the Turkish press, which perceived Zhdanov’s report as Moscow’s attempt to reanimate the Communist International. Turkish journalists demanded to create a united front against the Soviet Union. *Cumhuriyet* of 6 October wrote that a devilish network was expanding its activities aimed at destroying non-communist regimes. Some observers perceived the establishment of the Cominformburo as a strong blow against the UN, saying that this step would aggravate conflicts between the Soviets and Anglo-Americans. Newspaper *Tasvir* of 9 October wrote that the main purpose of Cominformburo was to carry out a world revolution and destroy the United States. Yalman wrote in *Vatan* that the creation of the Cominformburo meant open confrontation between the world civilization and red barbarians.

To his thinking, defenders of civilization should unite their efforts to combat Slavic imperialism. The Soviet Embassy informed Moscow that the Turkish press made use of the Cominformburo as a pretext to stir up hatred toward the Soviet Union and Communist parties. Practically all Turkish press organs considered the Soviet Union to be responsible for the economic difficulties of Turkey. Some newspapers indicated that the USSR damaged the financial-economic structure and economic activity of the Turkish people.⁹⁵

On November 1, 1947, President İ'nönü made a speech at the opening of the session of the Grand National Assembly in which he touched upon some important aspects of the country's foreign policy. He emphasized that the major task was to serve peace and mutual security between peoples. President İ'nönü said: "We are not going to attack anybody, but we shall not allow any actions against our territorial integrity and our rights. This is our direct and open policy, which has experienced all kind of trials." While speaking about the continuation of alliance relations with Britain, İ'nönü pointed out that the relations between the United States and Turkey were also strengthening. He noted that the people of Turkey had become a stronghold of peace, and testimony to this fact lay in the growing defensive capacities of Turkey and assistance from the United States. As for relations with the Soviet Union, İ'nönü stressed: "While we are looking for new opportunities to create friendly relations with the Soviet Union, the latter is criticizing us for far-fetched sins. Even worse, the Soviet Union lays insolent claims against our country."⁹⁶ Informing Moscow about the speech of President İ'nönü, P. Ershov pointed out that after this statement, the anti-Soviet campaign in Turkey increased and the Turkish government intensified military propaganda among the population. He wrote: "Over the past few months this propaganda has intensified and changed from 'protection of motherland' to preventative war with the support of the American military."⁹⁷

On November 7, 1947, Soviet Defense Minister Nikolai Bulganin received Turkish Ambassador F. Z. Akdur and criticized Turkey for its role in the anti-Soviet plans of the United States. Bulganin stressed that he had been proud of Turkey, but now this country was under US hegemony and tried to create every opportunity for the United States to build its bases in the region to oppose the Soviet Union. Akdur replied that he was very surprised with Bulganin's statement and that no country was intending to wage war, while the military structures of Turkey were of defensive nature only. Attending the conversation was S. Vinogradov, Soviet Ambassador to Turkey. It should be noted that the talks between Bulganin and Akdur proved to be the first talks over the past one and a half years in which officials did not touch upon the question of Soviet claims to Turkey.⁹⁸

At the same time, Turkish Foreign Minister N. Sadak gave an interview to Radio Columbia which indicated the desire to establish friendly relations with Russia that complied with the national dignity of Turkey. Certain circles perceived this statement of Sadak as an attempt to ease relations with the Soviets. Talks were held on November 27, 1947 between Soviet Chargé d'Affaires Ershov, former Turkish Foreign Minister Tefvik Rüştü Aras and former Turkish Ambassador to Germany Hamdi Arpak, which hinted at Sadak's ability to normalize Soviet-Turkish relations. Aras advised that his friend Arpak had connections with a big company and intended to found a society of trade with the Soviets. If appropriate Soviet bodies

agreed, Aras would join this project.

In Aras' view, the beginning of trade exchanges with the Soviets would prevent the flow of American goods to Turkey and weaken US influence on the country. Aras considered that the quality and cheapness of Soviet goods would contribute to gaining the sympathy of the Turks. On the other hand, the commencement of trade relations with the Soviet Union would come as an "unexpected surprise" to the Americans and demonstrate that the US positions in Turkey were not very durable. Aras pointed out that the spread of Soviet goods among the Turkish population would serve as "counter-propaganda, capable of shattering anti-Soviet sentiments, which the Turkish press, radio and Party propagandists were disseminating among the population." Ershov replied that the propaganda of anti-Soviet sentiments had lately turned into war propaganda against the Soviet Union, which was contrary to normal diplomatic relations. Arpak interfered in the conversation, saying that the newspapers were free in their choice. Ershov indicated that this "freedom" manifested itself in anti-Soviet propaganda. Then Arpak specified that the newspapers could have written articles in favor of the USSR, however, nobody had so far written such articles, since he would immediately be announced "an agent of Moscow," "A Communist" or "a traitor of his motherland." Should trade relations develop between the two countries, this would contribute to the easing of tensions and influence the Turkish press. Ershov asked: "Given Turkey's dependence on the United States, will the Turkish government allow trade relations to develop with the USSR?" Aras denied that Turkey was dependent on the United States. He tried to prove that US influence was restricted to economic relations only and had no relation to the political sphere. Ershov cited several examples of US interference in the domestic affairs of Turkey. However, Aras and Arpak reaffirmed that the American aid did not threaten the country's independence. Aras added that resumption of trade relations between the two countries would improve political relations. Following this meeting, P. Ershov wrote to the Soviet Foreign Ministry as follows: "Aras believed that the new Turkish Foreign Minister Sadak is in the position to take some serious steps, though he is not responsible for major decisions. In Aras' view, Sadak may influence both the President and the Prime Minister and even influence the Turkish press, since he is a former journalist."⁹⁹

After acquaintance with Ershov's report, A. Vyshinsky put forward the following conclusion: "It is doubtful that Aras and Arpak could have put forward such proposals without Sadak's or the Prime Minister's consent."¹⁰⁰ On December 3, 1947, Deputy Foreign Minister of the USSR F. Gusev sent a report to Molotov based on Ershov's telegram. He wrote:

With regard to the telegram of Ershov concerning a conversation with Aras and Arpak, I think that comrade Ershov has committed a mistake when interpreting Aras' proposal on resumption of trade relations between the USSR and Turkey as an ordinary commercial proposal. The contents of the conversation between Aras and Arpak and comrade Ershov showed that their proposal to resume trade between the two countries and thus "open doors" for the improvement of the Soviet-Turkish relations is an attempt to politically test the Soviet Union's position with respect to Turkey. Of interest was Aras' view that Sadak was in the position to take some positive steps in this regard, and in particular, to influence the Turkish press and opinions of the President and Prime Minister. It is doubtful that Aras risked saying these things without Sadak's or the Prime Minister's consent. It is no mere coincidence that Aras and Arpak were entrusted to carry out unofficial talks with the Soviets. Turkish political circles are confident that these people enjoy a certain trust among the Soviet leaders. It is also known that Aras and Arpak, even after the aggravation of Soviet-Turkish relations, maintained regular relations with the

Soviet Embassy. Attempts of the Turks to explore the situation and identify priorities might be explained by the fact that unregulated relations between Turkey and the Soviet Union have troubled top governmental and Party circles of Turkey.¹⁰¹

In the following week, I. Bakulin instructed P. Ershov to draw up a comparative analysis of the dynamics of the development of American capital in the Turkish economy.¹⁰²

Thus, one more year of the Cold War—full of tensions in Soviet-Turkish relations—ended. Following the announcement of the Truman Doctrine and the signing of the American-Turkish agreement on assistance, the “war of nerves” with respect to Turkey became increasingly intense.

NOTES

1. For more details, see Bruce R. Kuniholm. *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey, and Greece*, pp. 383–405; J. Hasanli. *At the Dawn of the Cold War: The Soviet-American Crisis over Iranian Azerbaijan, 1941–1946*, pp. 354–384; E. Athanassopoulou. *Turkey-Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945–1952*, p. 52.

2. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. Review of the Turkish Press for December 1–31, 1946. 15.01.1947. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 82, pp. 131–133.

3. For more details, see Thanasis D. Sfikas. “The Greek Civil War.” In Melvyn P. Leffler and David S. Painter. *Origins of the Cold War: An International History*, pp. 134–152; E. Athanassopoulou. *Turkey-Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945–1952*, pp. 53–60.

4. L. Wittner. *American Intervention to Greece, 1943–1949*. New York, 1982, pp. 85–86.

5. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. Review of the Turkish Press for December 1–31, 1946. 15.01.1947. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 82, pp. 127–129.

6. The Ambassador to Turkey (Wilson) to the Secretary of State. 30.12.1946. FRUS, 1946, vol. VII, p. 898.

7. The Ambassador to the Soviet Union (Smith) to the Secretary of State. 08.01.1947. FRUS, 1947, vol. V, the Near East and Africa, pp. 2–3.

8. From V. Dekanozov to P. Ershov. 26.01.1947. // AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, p. 1.

9. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. 27.03.1947. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 89, pp. 123.

10. From I. Samylovsky to P. Ershov, A. Shibarin, V. Solod, and G. Zaytsev. 18.04.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, p. 20.

11. From P. Ershov to A. Vyshinsky. On Foreign Policy of Turkey and Soviet-Turkish Relations. 28.03.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, pp. 9–10.

12. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. 27.03.1947. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 89, p. 166.

13. For detailed information on Soviet policy in the Bulgaria, see Vesselin Dimitrov. “Communism in Bulgaria.” Melvyn P. Leffler and David S. Painter. *Origins of the Cold War: An International History*, pp. 190–204.

14. From M. Burtsev to M. Suslov. On the Results of the Participation of the Turkish Population of Bulgaria in the Elections the Grand National Assembly. 20.02.1947. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 128, v. 269, pp. 4–5.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 6–9. For detailed information on the activities of Soviet special services in Bulgaria against Turkey, see: Yordan Baev. KGB v Blgaria. Strudnichestvoto mezhdu Svetskite i Blgarskite tayni sluzhbi, 1944–1991. “Voenno izdatelstvo” EOOD, 2009 (Yordan Baev. KGB in Bulgaria. *Cooperation between Soviet and Bulgarian Secret Services, 1944–1991*. Voenno izdatelstvo EOOD, 2009), pp. 127–134.

16. From B. Sapojnikov to M. Suslov. On the Sentiments of the Turkish Population and Intrigues of Reactionaries in the Southern Environs of the Staro-Zagorsk Region. 23.05.1947. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 128, v. 269, pp. 19–26.

17. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. 17.02.1947. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 89, pp. 4–6.

18. From P. Ershov to A. Vyshinsky. On the Foreign Policy of Turkey and Soviet-Turkish Relations. 28.03.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, p. 16.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

20. From P. Ershov to A. Vyshinsky. On British-American Relations in Turkey. 04.09.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, pp. 73–76.

21. John Lewis Gaddis. *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History*, p. 43.

22. H. Dalton. *High Tide and After: Memoirs, 1945–1960*. Muller London: 1962, pp. 206–209.

23. Ays, egül Sever. Sog’uk Savas, Kus, atmasında Türkiye, Batı ve Orta Dog’u. 1945–1958. (Ays, egül Sever. *Turkey, the*

West, and Middle East in the Siege of the Cold War, 1945–1958), p. 45.

24. Bruce R. Kuniholm. *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey, and Greece*, p. 407.

25. Memorandum by the Secretary of State to the President Truman. 27.02.1947. FRUS, 1947, vol. V, pp. 60–61.

26. M. P. Leffler. *Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War*. Stanford University Press, 1992, p. 144.

27. From P. Ershov to A. Vyshinsky. 08.05.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, pp. 16.

28. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. 23.04.1947. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 84, pp. 4–7.

29. For more on the decision of the Truman administration to extend military and economic aid to Greece and Turkey, see John Lewis Gaddis. *The Cold War: A New History*, p. 31; D. Acheson. *Present at the Creation: My Year in the Department of State*. W. W. Norton. New York: 1969, pp. 217–225; Bruce R. Kuniholm. *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey, and Greece*, pp. 383–410; C. M. Clifford. *Counsel to the President*. Random House. New York, 1991, pp. 130–143; Jonathan Bell. *The Liberal State on Trial: The Cold War and American Politics in the Truman Years*, pp. 100–107.

30. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. 23.04.1947. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 84, pp. 9.

31. The Ambassador to Turkey (Wilson) to the Secretary of State. 04.03.1947. FRUS, 1947, vol. V, pp. 88–89.

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 90–91.

33. Dankwarth A. Rustow. *Turkey—America's Forgotten Ally*. Council on Foreign Relations. New York 1987, p. 89; George S. Harris. *Troubled Alliance: Turkish-American Problems in Historical Perspective 1945–1971*. American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research. Washington, DC, 1972, p. 26; Ays, egül Sever. Sog'uk Savas, Kus,atmasında Türkiye, Batı ve Orta Dog'u. 1945–1958.(Ays, egül Sever. *Turkey, the West, and Middle East in the Siege of the Cold War, 1945–1958*), p. 47.

34. George S. Harris. *Troubled Alliance: Turkish-American Problems in Historical Perspective, 1945–1971*, pp. 26–30; Altemur Kılıç. *Turkey and the World*. Public Affairs Press. Washington, DC, 1959, pp. 138–139.

35. Melvyn P. Leffler. “National Security and US Foreign Policy.” Melvyn P. Leffler and David S. Painter. *Origins of the Cold War: An International History*, p. 23.

36. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. 23.04.1947. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 84, pp. 10–11.

37. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. 23.04.1947. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 84, pp. 12–16.

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 61–63.

39. From Y. Malik and S. Vinogradov to V. Molotov. 25.03.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 9, fol. 69, v. 1071, p. 1.

40. From P. Ershov to A. Vyshinsky. 27.03.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, pp. 3–18.

41. Report on Turkish Troops in Eastern Thrace. 29.03.1947. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 128, v. 1115, pp. 166–168.

42. Report on the Political Situation in Turkey in Early 1947. 09.04.1947. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 128, v. 1115, pp. 156–164.

43. From I. Samylovsky to P. Ershov. 29.03.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, p. 2.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

45. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. 23.04.1947. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 84, p. 16.

46. Memorandum by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Secretary of War (Patterson) and the Secretary of the Navy (Forrestal). 13.03.1947. FRUS, 1947, vol. V, pp. 111–113; For additional information, see E. Athanassopoulou. *Turkey-Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945–1952*, pp. 60–65.

47. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. April, 1947. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 84, pp. 56–57.

48. From P. Ershov to A. Vyshinsky. On American Aid to Turkey. 07.05.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, p. 33.

49. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 9, fol. 73, v. 1130, pp. 27, 38.

50. Sovetsko-amerikanskie otnoshenie. 1945–1948. Dokumenty (*Soviet-American Relations, 1945–1948: Documents*), pp. 415–416.

51. From P. Ershov to A. Vyshinsky. 07.05.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, pp. 21–34.

52. From P. Ershov to Y. Malik. 08.05.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, pp. 38–39.

53. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. June 1947. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 84, pp. 139–140.

54. From P. Ershov to A. Vyshinsky. On American Aid to Turkey. 07.05.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, p. 34.

55. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. June 1947. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 84, pp. 173–174.

56. *Ibid.*, pp. 145–146.

57. *Ibid.*, pp. 201–202.

58. Interview of Prime Minister R. Peker to Columbia Radio Station. May 1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 9, fol. 73, v. 1130, p. 42.

59. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. 07.07.1947. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 85, pp. 4–6.

60. *Ibid.*, pp. 50–52.

61. A. Lavrishev. On American Aid to Turkey. 11.07.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 9, fol. 69, v. 1071, p. 10.

62. Ibid., p. 9.
63. Ibid., p. 21–23.
64. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. 07.07.1947. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 85, pp. 100–102.
65. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, p. 85; *Ivestiya*, April 9, 1947.
66. *Pravda*, June 12, 1947.
67. From I. Bakulin to P. Ershov. 17.07.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 29, fol. 280, v. 3, pp. 40–42.
68. From N. Palgunov to V. Molotov. 19.07.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 9, fol. 273, v. 1130, pp. 3–51.
69. Ibid., p. 9.
70. From P. Romanov to T. Shuklin. Report on Strengthening of Anti-Soviet Campaign in American Propaganda. 02.06.1947. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 128, v. 1129, pp. 24–26.
71. From P. Ershov to A. Vyshinsky. On the Political Situation in Turkey Owing to American Aid. 07.08.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, pp. 44–50.
72. George S. Harris. *Troubled Alliance: Turkish-American Problems in Historical Perspective, 1945–1971*, pp. 32–33; Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası (*Events in Turkish Foreign Policy*), pp. 219–222; Ays, egül Sever. Sog'uk Savas, Kus,atmasında Türkiye, Batı ve Orta Dog'u. 1945–1958.(Ays, egül Sever. *Turkey, the West, and Middle East in the Siege of the Cold War, 1945–1958*), pp. 53–55.
73. From P. Ershov to A. Vyshinsky. On the Situation in Turkey Concerning the Starting of the Turkish-American Treaty of July 12, 1947. 04.09.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, p. 61.
74. From P. Ershov to A. Vyshinsky. On British-American Relations in Turkey. 04.09.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, pp. 71–73.
75. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. August, 1947. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 85, pp. 83–84.
76. Ibid., pp. 109–116.
77. Ibid., pp. 116–121.
78. From P. Ershov to A. Vyshinsky. Report on Governmental Crisis in Turkey. 08.10.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, p. 108–120.
79. N. Sadak. “Turkey Faces the Soviets.” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 27, No. 3, 1949, p. 461.
80. From P. Ershov to A. Vyshinsky. The Political Situation in Turkey in October 1947. 07.11.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, p. 134.
81. J. Hasanli. *At the Dawn of the Cold War: The Soviet-American Crisis over Iranian Azerbaijan, 1941–1946*, pp. 255–284.
82. Talk between S. Sychev and Iranian Ambassador to Moscow M. Firuz. 02.09.1947. AFP RF, f. 094, r. 38, fol. 363, v. 4, p. 58; Dzh. Gasanly. SSSR-Iran: Azerbaydzhansky krizis i nachalo kholodnoy voyny (J. Hasanli. *USSR-Iran: Azerbaijan Crisis and Beginning of the Cold War*, pp. 464–465.
83. From I. Bakulin to P. Ershov. 26.11.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, p. 136.
84. As far back as 1937, Omurtak led exercises of the Turkish army in Thrace and won high appraisal from Atatürk. They said that Atatürk called him “Omurtay” in honor of the ancient Turkish commander, but he interpreted it as Omurtak. From 1940, Omurtak was a member of the Supreme Military Council. In 1942, Omurtak was appointed commander of the fourth army; in 1943, on British invitation he went to North Africa (Egypt and Tunisia) as head of the Turkish military mission. Turkish media circles considered him to be an enemy of the Bulgarians. While in North Africa, he repeatedly boasted that if permitted, he would, in several days, rout the Bulgarian army. (See Brief Biographical Information about the Deputy Head of the Turkish General Staff, General of Army Salih Omurtak. 29.12.1944. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 4, pp. 77–78.)
85. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. November 1947. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 87, pp. 179–181.
86. E. Athanassopoulou. *Turkey-Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945–1952*, p. 70.
87. The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Turkey. 10.10.1947. FRUS, 1947, vol. V, pp. 364–365.
88. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. November 1947. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 87, pp. 181.
89. *Ivestiya*, October 24, 1947.
90. From P. Ershov to A. Vyshinsky. On the Situation in Turkey Concerning the Governmental Crisis and Advent of the Saka Cabinet to Power. 08.10.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, p. 119.
91. *Ivestiya*, October 28, 1947.
92. From P. Ershov to A. Vyshinsky. The Political Situation in Turkey in October 1947. 07.11.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, p. 135.
93. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. November 1947. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 87, pp. 169–171.
94. For detailed information on this meeting, see: G. Adibekov. *Kominform i poslevoennaya Evropa*. Moskva, 1994 (G.

Adibekov. *Cominform and Postwar Europe*. Moscow, 1994), p. 53; A. B. Edemsky. Ot konflikta k normalizatsii. Sovetsko-yugoslavskie otnosheniya v 1953–1956 godakh. Moskva, Nauka, 2008 (A. B. Edemsky. *From Conflict to Normalization: Soviet-Yugoslav Relations in 1953–1956*. Nauka Moscow, 2008), p. 11.

95. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. November 1947. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 87, pp. 173–176.

96. İsmet İnönü'nün TBMM'deki Konuşmaları. Cilt II (*Speeches of İsmet İnönü at the Turkish Grand National Assembly*. Second volume), pp. 71–72.

97. From P. Ershov to A. Vyshinsky. The political situation in Turkey in October 1947. 07.11.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, p. 135.

98. The Ambassador to Turkey (Wilson) to the Secretary of State. 21.11.1947. FRUS, 1947, vol. V, pp. 417–418.

99. From P. Ershov to A. Vyshinsky. 27.11.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 31, fol. 293, v. 6, pp. 1–4.

100. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, p. 140.

101. From F. Gusev to V. Molotov. 03.12.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 9, fol. 73, v. 1128, p. 1.

102. From I. Bakulin to P. Ershov. 11.12.1947. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 30, fol. 287, v. 2, p. 138.

Chapter Eight

Escalation of the Cold War and Turkey's Entry into NATO

Turkey greeted 1948 in uneasy conditions: the country's economy remained unhealthy and from autumn 1947 Soviet pressures had increased, which made it impossible to reduce military expenditures. Cuts of military personnel, following consultations with the United States, created some positive tendencies but nothing more. Military assistance provided in the framework of the Truman Doctrine proved to be insufficient. Marshall Plan consultations also did not yield desirable results. Nevertheless, Turkey was backed politically by the United States, which helped the country to stand up to the Soviet threat. Turkey turned out to be the only country from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea, except for Finland, that remained beyond Soviet control. *Ulus* newspaper of January 1, 1948, thoroughly analyzed the foreign policy of the Soviet Union and condemned this country for attempts to dictate its will to other nations. At the same time, the newspaper acknowledged the role of the United States in suppressing Soviet expansionism. *Ulus* wrote: "Russia declares that the peace will not occur until all its demands are met."¹ Despite all the difficulties, Turkish political circles and the press were united in thinking that the year of 1948 would be crucial in the country's path toward democracy.

In late 1947, the Balkan countries signed an agreement on mutual aid and Turkey saw "the hand of Moscow" behind this action.² Some newspapers, close to governmental circles, noted, "if Turkey and Greece fell, the Soviets would establish control throughout Europe and Africa and encircle India."³ Addressing the January session of the Grand National Assembly, MPs Nihat Erim, Cahit Baban, Fuat Köprülü, Kemalettin Kamu, Ethem Izzet Benice, Asim Us, Resat Aydinli, Vice-Speaker Fikri Dügünel and others strongly criticized the Soviet Union. Kamu stated that the Second World War had come as a result of Soviet imperialism. MP Aydinli declared: "At present, red imperialism is seeking to carry out what Hitler and his followers intended to do. The Kremlin wants to reign over Muscovite colonialism. Sovietism means Slavism. Communism is the foreign policy of bloodthirsty Muscovites. These are chains instead of freedom. The heads of the red order are the same as the Romanovs." N. Erim published in the press: "According to our information, Russian generals are discussing the question: What will we do with Turkey after we occupy it? And their answer is: What Turks did with Armenians."⁴ Some MPs were informed of Soviet plans to destroy Turkey and annihilate the Turks.

In the first days of January 1948, MP from Isparta Sait Köksal sent a parliamentary inquiry to the Foreign Ministry regarding Turks interred in the concentration camps of different European

countries and unwilling to return home. These were Soviet citizens from Turkic Muslim republics of the USSR. Turkish Foreign Minister N. Sadak explained the situation in detail on 12 January. He pointed out that the Turkish government had long been engaged in resolving the matter:

Following the Second World War, as a result of occupation, capture and migration, approximately 1.5 million people came to West European countries. To remedy the situation, the UN General Assembly set up a special international commission in 1946 to deal with displaced persons and refugees. The primary mission of this international organization was to return 1.5 million people home. However, among those people, there proved to be persons unwilling to go home. Around 7,000 of them wished to move to Turkey. Considering the importance and political significance of the problem, the government decided to form a special governmental commission headed by Director General of the Migration Department. The commission started its work on 11 July in Greece, then in Italy, Austria, Switzerland, as well as in the British and American occupation zones in Germany. Following the results of the commission's activity, a report was prepared. The commission found 7,170 Muslims willing to settle in Turkey, of whom 4,700 were kept in Italian, Swiss and German camps under the supervision of the international organization for displaced persons; 2,470 were outside the camps.⁵

Based on the commission's assessment, the government decided to move 7,000 displaced persons to Turkey, provided some conditions were met. For example, "No war criminals or traitors could be included in the list of settlers and persons willing to come should not consider Turkey as a transit country, but adopt its citizenship."

N. Sadak explained that the work was carried out in association with security bodies and international organizations. He emphasized that the Turkish government did not create artificial obstacles to these people, especially to those from Muslim and Turkic countries; however, the Turkish land could not be a shelter for war criminals and traitors.⁶

A major problem of the postwar world was the return of Soviet citizens to the USSR. The point was about prisoners of war and persons forcibly displaced during the war. According to preliminary estimates, they numbered 4,109,304. As of 1 March 1946, the figure stood at 4,199,488. Note that 2,660,013 of them were civilians and 1,539,475 were prisoners of war.⁷ A greater portion of the prisoners of war was repatriated to the USSR via the Turkish territory. In the meantime, the Soviet government sent a note to the Turkish government requesting the return of former POWs who had settled in Turkey. The note alleged that there was a large group of Soviet citizens, former POWs and displaced persons at a Turkish camp in the town of Kastamonu who had come to Turkey from Western Europe. Some of them had managed to inform the Soviet Embassy that they wanted to return home, however, they could not do that due to the circumstances beyond their control. The note mentioned names of six Soviet citizens and indicated hope that the Turkish government would provide the opportunity for other citizens to go home as well. Copies of the note were sent to Malenkov, Molotov, Gromyko, Beria, Bulganin, and Lazar Kaganovich.⁸ The problem was that neither the above-mentioned citizens nor other persons applied to the Turkish government with such a request.

Further complicating the case were developments in the Balkans, growing Soviet control over the Balkan countries, and persecutions of Muslims and Turks in these countries. Suffice it to remind that Soviet puppet regimes in Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and especially, Greece were engaged in banishing and humiliating Turks. The Turkish government stressed the necessity of putting things in order in the Balkans through the involvement of Britain and the United States and refusal of Soviet interference in the affairs of the region. As viewed by the Turkish press,

the Balkan developments came as a result of the actions of the “Communist dictatorship of Moscow.” Turkish newspapers assessed the formation of General Markos government in the north of Greece as “a torch for warmongers.” To their thinking, this “torch” was lit in Moscow and stealthily placed in Greece via Albania. Member of the Democratic Party F. Köprülü wrote that after the toppling of monarchy in Romania, this country, like Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Albania fell fully under Moscow’s control with simultaneous intensification of Soviet provocations in Syria, Iran, Palestine and China. In 1947–1948, the Soviet special services approved the training of “operative agents” and terrorist groups to carry out special operations in Eastern Europe and the Balkans.⁹ The Soviet-led heads of these groups were instructed directly by the Political Bureau. For example, protocol No. 63, dated April 12, 1948, contained “Advice to Comrade Kim Ir-Sen.”¹⁰

In January 1948, Turkish political circles were engaged in discussing the Marshall Plan. The Turkish press considered the plan of the American assistance to Europe as a progressive step to oppose the penetration of communism in the region. On 16 January, all the newspapers published the US Department of State’s plan to economically reconstruct Europe. The plan placed special emphasis on Turkey. The same day, President İnönü discussed together with Sadak and Wilson the “Turkish component” of the plan.¹¹ Leaders of the country were anxious about Turkey’s insufficient involvement in the plan. *Istanbul* newspaper wrote on 19 January: “the Marshall Plan stands out amongst other political and economic issues. The meeting between İnönü and Wilson gives grounds to believe that the Turkish government is not very satisfied with the form and amount of aid and that it would like changes to be made.” According to the newspaper: “Under the Marshall Plan, Turkey has largely been considered as an agricultural country . . . the industrialization of the country has not been given priority.”¹² It is natural that leaders of the Democratic Party considered this embarrassing situation as proof of the government’s inability to present reliable and persuasive information about the economy and to obtain US assistance in quantities sufficient to meet Turkey’s needs. Finance Minister Halit Nazmi Kesmir and participant of the Paris meeting of the “Sixteen” Ali Rıza Türel announced that the annual deficit of the Turkish budget for 1948–1951 had been estimated at \$615 million and a report of the US Department of State indicated that aid to be rendered within four years would be enough to compensate this deficit.¹³ The Turkish newspapers criticized the Marshall Plan for designating insufficient sums of money to Turkey. They tried to persuade Americans that Europe could not be restored without Turkey’s active participation and implementation of the Truman Doctrine and related Marshall Plan. Leader of the Democrats F. Köprülü, advocating the necessity of rendering effective aid to Turkey, wrote that “depriving Turkey of assistance under the Marshall Plan was a great political and psychological mistake.”¹⁴

In late January, an inquiry was made at the Grand National Assembly concerning the Marshall Plan and on 2 February, Foreign Minister Sadak gave his detailed reply to the inquiry. The reply showed the grave concern of official circles with the terms of the aid under the Marshall Plan. The Turkish press examined the terms of the Marshall Plan and concluded: “This is nothing other than Turkey being cast out of Europe’s reconstruction.” The Foreign Minister

advised that talks were being held in Ankara and Washington to increase aid. In mid-February, the Senate reduced the amount of the first year of aid to Europe to \$5.3 billion,¹⁵ which upset the Turkish government and lessened Turkey's chance of getting adequate financial support. To ease the Turks, Truman, Marshall and McBride promised to increase military aid to the country. In mid-February, Secretary of State Marshall clearly declared that before the Soviet threat, the United States would not leave Turkey alone and defenseless and would render adequate military and political aid. US top officials asserted that Turkey would play a major role in American strategic plans. Chief of the Turkish Information Bureau in America Ahmet S,ükrü Esmer wrote an extensive article which stressed that Turkey would, sooner or later, receive its full due.¹⁶

Turkish official circles showed great interest in a January 1948 speech of the British Foreign Minister E. Bevin to the House of Commons. Note that Bevin put forward the idea of the establishment of a Western Bloc to oppose the Soviet threat. The Turkish press evaluated this speech as the most crucial event since the end of the Second World War. It was the formation of the Soviet-led blocs and the threat of dissemination of communist ideas that encouraged Britain to initiate not only the Western Bloc, but also the so-called Middle Eastern bloc to embrace the Near and Middle East and the Mediterranean. Turkey's interest in these initiatives was accounted for by its apprehension concerning Soviet policies in the Balkans. The only way out for Turkey was to take part in the "security bloc." An atmosphere of friendship between Turkey and Iran, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Trans-Jordan and Egypt enabled Turkey to play a leading role in the bloc. Thus, the British idea of the creation of the Western and Middle Eastern blocs, backed by the United States, aroused a great deal of interest in Turkey.

In mid-January Brooman White wrote an article entitled "Turkey and Cold War," published in *The Glasgow Herald* and reprinted in *Le Journal d'Orient*. The article traced Turkey's position in the light of developments in the Balkans, particularly in the north of Greece. He wrote: "Though Russian radio keeps insulting Turkey, reminiscent of those used by Goebbels before the annexation of the Sudetenland, these insults produce an increasingly insignificant effect. It is evident that these radio broadcasts are unlikely to discourage Turks from resisting any attacks against them." White pointed out that: "Bravery, national pride and honor are typical features ingrained in the Turkish people. The Soviets know it very well, so they resort to other methods to undermine the economic life of the country." As viewed by White: "The political line, established by Atatürk, is currently being pursued by his heir, President İsmet İnönü."¹⁷

On January 26, 1948, Turkey lost a prominent figure of its national rebirth, hero of the Eastern front and Chairman of the Grand National Assembly—Kazım Karabekir Pasha. On the occasion of his death, İnönü published an article in *Ulus* newspaper of 29 January, which acknowledged his activities and personal qualities. İnönü stressed that Karabekir Pasha, as a talented military leader, headed military campaigns in the name of Turkish national independence. Commenting on the text of İnönü's words, First Secretary of the Soviet Embassy to Turkey S. Kiktev reported to the Soviet Foreign Ministry:

In January this year, President İnönü joined the campaign of slander against the Soviet Union and thus, personally

contributed to the aggravation of Soviet-Turkish relations. It is no mere coincidence that he wrote an article on the occasion of the death of the Speaker of the Grand National Assembly Karabekir, which openly expressed the intentions of Turkish ruling circles to disturb Soviet foreign policy and thus encourage hostile publications in the Turkish press directed against the Soviet Union.¹⁸

In February 1948, the US Department of State published documents “On Soviet-Nazi Collaboration” which the US special services had seized. These publications caused indignation in Turkey. Chief of the Turkish Information Bureau in Washington Ahmet S,ükrü Esmer prepared a review of these documents for publication, which were published in *Ulus* newspaper with the titles “Documents on the Nazi-Soviet agreement” on 5 February and “Documents and Turkey” on 6 February. These publications demonstrated that secret agreements concluded between the USSR and Germany, secret talks, and documents signed by Stalin and Molotov shed new light for the American people about the imperialist appetite of the Soviet Union.

As viewed by Esmer, the published documents once again demonstrated that the Soviet Union posed a threat to world peace. The US Department of State tried to explain to the American people that the Soviet threat could be prevented through the help of the Marshall Plan and to persuade the opposition in Congress to support this plan. Esmer stated:

The more documents on international relations during the Second World War are published, the clearer is the policy pursued by Turkey during the war. Documents on the Soviet-Nazi conspiracy revealed by the US Department of State are illustrative of the correctness of the political line of Turkey. This country realized that the Axis powers posed a threat and aggression, so it negotiated with Britain and France. In doing so, Turkey did not ignore Russia with which it had maintained close relations since the Treaty of Friendship. The documents are indicative that the Soviet government had started talks with Nazi Germany when Deputy Soviet Foreign Minister Potemkin arrived in Ankara and the notorious pact was signed on August 23, 1939.

The documents also revealed that while in Moscow, Ribbentrop discussed with Stalin their countries’ attitude toward Turkey. Asked by Stalin about his view on Turkey, Ribbentrop replied: “In spite of the fact that Germany has for several months tried to establish friendly relations with Turkey, the latter, in association with Great Britain, became the first power to have joined the policy of containing Germany.” Stalin said that he was dissatisfied with this political line of Turkey.” Another published document, “Agreement,” shows an attempt Russia made during the Berlin talks on 26 November 1940 to separate Turkey from Britain and ally it to Germany and Italy. The document said that the USSR was ready to apply political and military measures in exchange for military bases in the Bosphorus and Chanakkale. Ahmet S,ükrü Esmer asks: “Under these circumstances, it seems strange that Russia accused Turkey of aspirations to join Germany, as it did at the last session of the UN General Assembly during Vyshinsky’s speech.” Noting that on the basis of these documents the Nuremberg trial sentenced Ribbentrop, he set his hopes on world public opinion with greater impartiality than that of the Nuremberg trial.¹⁹

In February 1948, the Soviet Union appointed its new Ambassador to Ankara. S. Vinogradov formally remained Ambassador, but for the last two years had not resided in Turkey. Nevertheless, he took an active part in devising plans against Turkey. The candidacy of the new Ambassador A. Lavrishev was approved by the Political Bureau on 16 February and on 17 February Valerian Zorin informed Turkish Ambassador Faik Zihni Akdur about this

appointment.²⁰ On 24 February, Lavrishev was officially appointed the Soviet Ambassador to Turkey.²¹ The same day, Sadak convened a press conference and reported: “There are no changes in our relations with Soviet Russia. . . . For two years their Ambassador has been on leave. They asked for an agreement and we gave it.” However, many in Turkey differently received the news of this new appointment. On 1 March, *Istanbul* newspaper published an article about the anxiety of Turkish political circles about Lavrishev’s appointment. It said: “The Soviets are again seeking to establish absolute control over the countries in their zone of influence.”²²

The Turkish press stressed that this appointment was a prelude to the fact that in a day or two the Soviet Union would propose to conclude a treaty of alliance with Turkey. *Her Gun* newspaper wrote: “Communist thieves, stretching their hands to Finland, will, sooner or later, pressure us politically, since Turkey is the only neighbor that has not concluded a political treaty with Soviet Russia. This country rejoices that all neighboring countries bowed their head to Russia. A testimony to this fact is the appointment of Lavrishev, well versed in Balkan affairs.” Indeed, rumors were spread throughout the world that the Soviet Union intended to conclude a treaty of alliance with Turkey. Responding to a question of Agence France Presse on the eve of his visit to London and then to Paris to attend a meeting of the Sixteen, N. Sadak reported that the Turkish government had not yet received such a proposal and, if received, would reject it. Turks were confident that collaboration of Turkey with Russia would lead to the loss of the country’s independence. Therefore, political circles of Ankara considered it impossible to conclude a treaty of alliance with the Soviet Union.²³

On 11 March, Sadak arrived in London and discussed with British Foreign Minister E. Bevin some pressing issues on the eve of the second meeting of the Sixteen in Paris. The official press release of this meeting said that the parties had discussed the program of Europe’s reconstruction, as well as the current state of the British-Turkish relations set forth in the alliance treaty of 1939, and underscored their firm intention to deepen friendship and cooperation between the two countries.²⁴

The meeting of Foreign Ministers of sixteen countries was held on 15 March in Paris to discuss the Marshall Plan. The same day, the US Senate approved the program of aid to Europe and President Truman, having examined current world processes, revealed the US attitude toward them. His speech was devoted to communists and their methods of sabotage and aggression. In mid-March, five European countries signed in Brussels an agreement on economic cooperation and joint defense against any aggression for a term of fifty years. Truman acknowledged this fact, noting that the formation of the Western Bloc was a major step toward the establishment of a union of European countries to protect civilization. In particular, Truman stated that America would always remain strong and render assistance to countries, whose independence was threatened by a police state until freedom-loving European countries became stronger.²⁵

On 19 March, Turkish Foreign Minister N. Sadak made a statement to the Paris *Le Monde* newspaper as follows: “The fact that opening of the conference in Paris concurred with the approval of the Marshall Plan at the US Senate, as well as the Brussels pact and finally,

Truman's speech—all these once again confirm the significance of today's meeting." Touching upon US assistance to Turkey, Sadak noted: "Turkey cannot be ranked among such countries as Portugal and Switzerland, which are assisted in purchasing goods for cash settlements. It is vitally important for us to obtain the machinery needed for our industry and agriculture. In particular, should this aid be rendered immediately, Turkey would be able to urgently assist Europe before the expiration of the Marshall Plan." Responding to a question of the correspondent about Turkey's position on the formation of the Western alliance, N. Sadak stressed:

Turkey is a European country, which greatly suffers from lack of security. Turkey is the only country in the world that had to keep its army ever mobilized from the very outset of the war. Over the course of eight years, Turkey has had to refrain from employing one million people in the country's production. Also, 48 percent to 54 percent of the budget is spent on national defense. Upon the termination of the war in the Balkans, a series of political agreements, allegedly defensive, has been concluded between "countries of Soviet orientation." It is time to do the same in the other part of Europe.²⁶

After the US Senate approved the Marshall Plan, it turned out that Turkey was not on the list of countries the United States had undertaken to help. Some countries were to obtain aid in the form of loans; others—partly in loans and partly free of charge; a third group—neither in loans, nor free of charge. The latter would meet their needs in cash. Turkey, together with Portugal and Switzerland, was included in the third group. Note that twenty-eight pages of the Plan dealt with these countries. Experts in charge of the Plan were guided by considerations as follows: the political regime of Turkey remained stable; the trade balance during the war years was in favor of Turkey; the volume of production remained at a pre-war level; the budget deficit was insignificant. At the same time, Americans had to confess that Turkey was strongly pressured and therefore, had to keep its army permanently mobilized. For this reason, it became necessary to extend the Marshall Plan to Turkey. Americans believed that the Truman Doctrine would enable Turkey to obtain all necessary aid and thus demobilize a part of the Turkish army. Demobilized soldiers would be able to join economic activities, and thus the situation in the economy would improve.²⁷

Turkish politicians and press seriously criticized such an attitude of the US experts. As a whole, the campaign of criticism was so widely spread that Hoffman, the Marshall Plan coordinator, announced on April 20, 1948, the allocation of a credit to Turkey in the amount of \$10 million. On the one hand, this was an act of great political importance; on the other, this amount was symbolic, since it failed to meet needs of Turkey. *Cumhuriyet* newspaper offensively noted: "Germany, which fought against the Allies, will obtain \$549 million, while Turkey, which declared war on Germany and Japan and kept its armed forces in permanent fighting capacity for nine years, will receive just \$9.5 million."²⁸ In late April 1948, E. Wilson told the Soviet Ambassador that under the Marshall Plan, Turkey would receive a \$10 million credit and assured them that this aid would be increased several times in the near future. The Ambassador explained that it had first been decided to deliver equipment to Turkey for a cash settlement. Yet, Turkey was in a hurry to get increased credits and Wilson assisted Turkey in obtaining these credits. The US Ambassador told the Soviet Ambassador that the American aid to Turkey was free of charge and that a plan of military deliveries would be implemented in the

coming months.²⁹

On 29 March, the Political Bureau approved “Instructions for in the Ambassador to Turkey” consisting of nine clauses and drawn up by Molotov for A. Lavrishev. The first clause said:

Considering that the policy of the present Turkish government is pushing Turkey to turn into a British-American military springboard against the Soviet Union and Balkan countries with their new democracies, the Soviet Embassy in Turkey should show initiative in improving relations with Turkey. Also, it is essential to give no occasion to the Turkish government to interpret the appointment of the Soviet Ambassador to Ankara as a sign of the improvement of the Soviet-Turkish relations or deviation of the Soviet government from its previous position on Turkey and its current policy. Relations between the Soviet Ambassador and his staff and representatives of the Turkish government should not exceed the limits of official duties.³⁰

The second clause made it incumbent upon the Embassy to maintain purely official contacts with the leaders of the ruling People’s Republican Party. The third clause warned: “In case of appeals to the Ambassador from opposition leaders, you should display prudence, because the government may send its disguised agents.” The fourth clause, concerning the Straits, recommended to confine oneself with replies that “the position of the Soviet Union on the subject has been detailed in the Soviet notes of 7 August and September 24, 1946.” The fifth clause recommended to clarify Turkey’s position on a political treaty with the Soviet Union and if the question of the Soviet-Turkish border was raised, to reply that the issue “remains unsettled.” The sixth clause recommended saying that trade relations with the USSR were dependent on commercial profitability of this trade. The seventh clause advised the Ambassador to closely watch US and British policies in Turkey and inform the Soviet Foreign Ministry about progress in the implementation of the Marshall-Truman plan. The eighth clause instructed, “regularly watch for US-British underhand plotting aimed at shaping an eastern bloc with Turkey and Iran.” The ninth clause put an important task before Lavrishev: “To watch closely the development of relations between Turkey and the Arab countries, Iran, Greece, and inform the Soviet Foreign Ministry about any significant developments in this field.”³¹

Having been properly instructed, Alexander Lavrishev arrived in Ankara on 3 April. Attending the reception ceremony of the Ambassador were all Embassy personnel, as well as Ambassadors from Eastern European countries and the Balkans. Asked by a journalist if the Ambassador wanted to say a few words for the press, Lavrishev replied that it would be appropriate to get more closely acquainted with Turkey and then express his views.³² On 16 April Lavrishev handed his credentials to President İ’nönü. During the ceremony the President of Turkey indicated his confidence that the Ambassador would do his utmost to normalize relations between the USSR and Turkey, and that he could count on the Turkish government’s assistance in this regard. Lavrishev replied that the Soviet Union was seeking to maintain friendly relations with its neighbors, but improvement of these relations depended on reciprocity. İ’nönü noted that Turkey had always sought to keep friendly relations with the Soviet Union and that relations between the two countries in the recent past were friendly, so, he was hopeful that the Ambassador would witness sincerity of the Turkish government in establishing friendly relations with the USSR. On 19 April Lavrishev was received by Prime Minister Saka, who said: “I ask you to take into consideration that if you want to discuss the political situation, Foreign Minister Sadak is always at your service.”³³

On 21 April, Lavrishev received the Polish Ambassador to Ankara Jan Druto, who informed the Soviet Ambassador about his talks with N. Sadak. Asked about the state of the Soviet-Turkish relations, Sadak, knowing that his words would be conveyed to the Soviet Ambassador, answered that Turkey was dissatisfied with these relations and as the Soviet Union was a close neighbor of Turkey, he wished to establish friendly relations with the Soviets. Sadak recalled that back in 1945, Turkey wished to extend the treaty on friendship or conclude a new one. However, these attempts proved to be futile, because the Soviet Union laid claims to Kars and Ardahan. Sadak said:

Turkey is concerned that the Soviet Union has not yet made any statement about its refusal from any territorial claims to Turkey and the Turkish government, being uncertain of the policy of the Soviet Union with respect to Turkey and unaware of demands to be laid on Turkey, has to strengthen its borders with the Soviet Union and maintain a big army.

N. Sadak again underlined that Turkey was ready to establish friendly relations with the Soviet Union, if the latter declined from its territorial claims.³⁴

In late April, the Soviet Ambassador held courtesy meetings with his counterparts from Canada, Britain and the United States in Ankara. Canadian Ambassador Victor Odlum told Lavrishev that in 1944, the Soviet Union had gained international repute, but it had lost much of this reputation today. Odlum plainly stated that the policy of the Soviet government was unacceptable for many countries, particularly his country, since this policy pursued expansionist purposes and hampered collaboration between the great powers. During his meeting with British Ambassador David Kelly, the Soviet Ambassador showed interest in his views on the participation of Arab countries and Turkey in a Near Eastern bloc. Kelly considered the idea of such a bloc to be opportune and welcomed the establishment of regional blocs for protecting peace and security. Kelly said that the question of blocs was not new and that an Eastern European bloc headed by the USSR had already been established. Lavrishev tried to deny the existence of any bloc in Eastern Europe and insisted that bilateral agreements were concluded between the countries of Eastern Europe and the USSR. These agreements, Lavrishev maintained, were designed to oppose possible aggression from Germany in the future.³⁵

In the second half of May, some members of the Turkish Grand National Assembly and the government went to the countryside to explore the situation. From the political point of view, the visits of the Chairman of the Foreign Policy Commission of the Grand National Assembly, Nihat Erim, to attend the regional congresses of the People's Republican Party in Kocaeli and Sivas were of great importance. Erim pointed out:

We are facing a single problem in our foreign policy: Russia demands from us some eastern regions and wants to establish its bases in the Straits. For five hundred years, the destiny of the Turkish nation has been closely related to the policies pursued by our northern neighbor. Our basic principle is to live in friendship with Russia. However, a main condition of this friendship is not to damage the national dignity and territorial integrity of Turkey. When Russia observed these two conditions, we lived in peace and friendship, and this friendship formed a major component of our foreign policy.

Erim noted that regretfully, Russia proved to be the only country that had made territorial claims against Turkey. As for Turkey, he went on: "Our country has not changed its foreign policy." On 23 May, Sadak made similar statements in Sivas and said: "Turkey is willing, with

all its heart, to restore friendly relations with the USSR and the Soviet leaders are well aware of it. At any rate, Turkey is not going to give even a single inch of its land or its sovereignty.” He added that Turkey did not intend to haggle on this issue.³⁶

Some journalists perceived Sadak’s statement in Sivas as a peculiar response to Lavrishev’s intrigues in Ankara. Upon the return of Sadak from Sivas on 27 May, a dinner in honor of Lavrishev was given at the Turkish Foreign Ministry. Note that the Turkish Foreign Ministry, as a tradition, arranged dinners in honor of each newly appointed Ambassador to Ankara. During the dinner, Lavrishev showed interest in the plans of the government to desist from the policy of statism and sell a part of state enterprises to private structures, as the Turkish press had already informed. In reply, Sadak said that the ruling party would never depart from the principles of statism and so, the publication of such information in the local press “was caused by the aspiration to follow the Americans.” Lavrishev pointed out that rumors were afloat in Ankara that the Americans allegedly recommended the Turkish government to abandon the ideas of statism. Sadak answered: “Indirectly, the Americans advised to do so; but they did not try to influence the Turkish government directly.”³⁷ During the reception, Lavrishev avoided touching upon Soviet-Turkish relations at all costs.

On July 4, 1948, the American-Turkish treaty on rendering economic assistance to Turkey under the Marshall Plan was finally signed.³⁸ The signatory from the Turkish government was Sadak, with Ambassador Wilson signing on behalf of the United States. Then Wilson read out the appeal of the Secretary of State G. Marshall to the Turkish government. It should be noted that G. Marshall addressed, in written form, all countries with which the United States had entered into bilateral agreements. In the address, the Secretary of State evaluated the signed agreement as an important step forward in the implementation of the reconstruction program in Europe. Sadak pointed out that the signing of the agreement indicated Turkey’s preparedness for international collaboration and stated that Europe’s rebirth was possible due to the US aid only. On behalf of the Turkish people, he expressed gratitude to the American nation. Three days later, the agreement was put on the agenda of the Grand National Assembly of the country. Sadak informed MPs about the essence of the agreement. He said: “The initial project proposed by the United States faced objections from our country and other countries. As a result of counter-proposals and talks that lasted several weeks, some amendments to the above-mentioned project were finally made and submitted to us for approval.” Sadak cited specific figures, for example, a \$10 million credit to Turkey for the first trimester, and provided information about Turkey’s annual needs in credits in the amount of \$85 million. Applauded by MPs, Sadak finished his speech, saying: “Turks have much in common with the US government concerning the protection of peace in this part of the world. We are thankful for the aid the US has rendered and will render in accordance with the signed agreement.”³⁹

The Turkish-American agreement of July 4, 1948, consisted of eleven articles setting forth the goals of the aid, rules and obligations of the parties and other issues. Article 11 specified that the period of the agreement expired on June 30, 1953. Though the aid was not great, Turkey’s involvement in the list of countries obtaining credits under the Marshall Plan and the gaining of US political trust were viewed as “a great victory for the Turkish diplomacy.”⁴⁰

Right after the ratification of the agreement on economic aid within the framework of the European reconstruction program, Deputy War Minister of the United States Drainer, Head of the Operations Department of the US General Staff, General Albert Wedemeyer, as well as representatives of the Department of State arrived in Ankara. Also, a US squadron headed by Admiral Forrest Sherman arrived in Istanbul. The Ministers of Defense and Foreign Affairs, and the Chief of the General Staff of Turkey received the American guests.⁴¹ In August 1948, US Aviation Minister Steward Symington and Chief of the General Staff of US Air Forces, General Hoyt Vandenberg arrived in Ankara. Chief of the Turkish General Staff, General Omurtak, Prime Minister Saka and President İnönü, received the American guests. The meetings largely considered the question of military aid. Symington announced that 77 percent of the military aid had already been rendered and that P-47 airplanes were of top quality. He added: “With airplanes of this type, you may oppose any threat. Coordination between air and land forces is enough to beat off any unexpected attack.” In August 1948, the diplomatic mission of the American Ambassador to Turkey E. Wilson came to an end. During a press conference, Wilson declared that the program of aid for 1948 would be over in November, following which the program for 1949 would start. He emphasized that great quantities of aircrafts, tanks, artillery and military trucks had already been delivered to Turkey and that the Turkish army, from the point of view of modern weaponry, was daily reinforced. Touching upon Turkish-Soviet relations, Wilson pointed out: “Turkey has been firm and resolute in opposing Soviet pressures, which have now lasted for several years. Turkey plays an important role in this part of the globe [i.e., in the Balkans, Near and Middle East]. The foreign policy pursued by Turkey is far-sighted.” Wilson acknowledged Turkish statesmen as clever and experienced politicians.⁴² It has to be kept in mind that the Turkish government appointed a new Ambassador to Washington, the experienced diplomat Feridun Cemal Erkin, acting Secretary General of the Turkish Foreign Ministry. After handing his credentials to President Truman, the new Ambassador held a press conference for American journalists on 17 September. Touching upon some international problems and policies of the Western powers with respect to the formation of various blocs, Erkin noted: “The Turkish government will follow a hard line regarding Russian claims concerning the establishment of bases in the Straits.”⁴³

Expectations in Turkish political circles that the new Soviet Ambassador would put forward new ideas and initiatives proved futile. Observing Lavrishev’s passivity, Foreign Minister Sadak told foreign press representatives that Turkey hoped that the new Soviet Ambassador would put forward new initiatives and apply all efforts to normalize Soviet-Turkish relations. However, no changes occurred in these relations.⁴⁴ In November 1948, Prime Minister Saka managed to persuade Lavrishev to start discussing Soviet-Turkish relations; yet, the parties did not intend to meet each other halfway. Saka stressed that as a representative of the Atatürk generation, he realized the importance of good relations between Turkey and the USSR. Lavrishev responded as follows:

Perhaps there are people in Turkey representing “the old guard of Atatürk,” who realize the significance of the development of Soviet-Turkish relations, but it seems to me that some people in your country are prone to think that Soviet-Turkish

relations might be normalized through the mediation of America, while in reality these problems can be solved by only by those countries directly involved in this process, i.e. the Soviet Union and Turkey. I think that some Turkish officials, impressed by the delivery of several hundred US aircrafts and tanks, have been infected with military hysterics and ignore the actual interests of Turkey and have no idea about the horrors of modern warfare. To cite as example, suffice it to mention the cases where hundreds of German tanks and aircrafts were destroyed within a day during the Second World War.⁴⁵

Threats of this kind and attacks on Turkish-American collaboration were fruitless. Instead, it was the lack of initiative of the Soviet leadership and incessant pressures on Turkey that made the latter increasingly collaborate with the United States as the principal line of the Turkish foreign policy. Nevertheless, in 1948, President İ'nönü told American journalists: "Even if the Soviet Union had relinquished its claims, I would have preferred to collaborate closely with the United States."⁴⁶

It was no mere coincidence that the development of ties with the United States finally bore its fruits in 1948. To combat the Soviet threat and secure its territorial integrity and sovereignty, Turkey had to rely on American support. It became obvious that the United States stood in the way of the Soviet expansionism. Meanwhile, Turkish officials pointed out that the amount of American aid to the country was insufficient to hold out against the powerful Russian army and turn Turkey into an advance post of the struggle against the Russian expansion. It was the example of Eastern European and Balkan countries that convinced Turkish public opinion that "if the USSR had relinquished its territorial claims to some regions of Turkey, it would have done so only for the sake of ruling the entire country." For this reason, statements stressing the necessity of improving relations with its "great neighbor" on the basis of Atatürk's principles were of a declarative character.⁴⁷ Instead, American-Turkish collaboration had intensified. In late 1948, Sadak told Marshall: "I'm confident that in case of war, American soldiers will stand side by side with Turkish soldiers."⁴⁸ Finally, on 6 December, the Anatolian Agency read out a text of the fifth quarterly report of Truman to the US Congress on US military aid to Turkey. The President pointed out that this aid contributed to the strengthening of Turkey's economy and democratization of the state regime. He emphasized that the military training of Turks advanced more quickly than was previously supposed. The President based his report on three major areas: military, economic and morale.⁴⁹

Americans considered the strengthening of the Turkish armed forces and raising of its morale to be the major result of this aid. Turkish officials attached great importance to the arrival of US Defense Minister Kenneth Royal who inspected several military installations in Ankara and received audiences from İ'nönü, Saka, Sadak, Turkish Defense Minister Hüsnü Çakır and Chief of General Staff Salih Omurtak. Following important talks Royal assured Turkey that the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan–stipulated aid would be delivered. He pointed out that Turkey was the strongest among the Middle Eastern countries and fully resolved to oppose any aggressive intentions. Royal expressed his confidence that the implementation of the Truman Doctrine would be continued.⁵⁰ The position of US officials on the subject coincided with that of the National Security Council, which in late November passed a decision that the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East were vitally important for US security. The US Joint Chiefs of Staff decided on November 24, 1948 to transmit this position personally to Greece and

Turkey and formulated it as follows:

From a military point of view, vis-à-vis the continuing expansionist policy of the USSR, the security of the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East is of paramount importance to future US security. The Soviet Union has included Greece and Turkey in the zone of its interests, while US interests also concentrate on the same countries. There are military bases in each of them, which may be used for war purposes against the islands of Cyprus, Rhodes, Crete, as well as the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. Strategically, Turkey is more important than Greece, since the main air, land and sea routes to Suez and oil-rich regions of the Middle East cross this country.⁵¹

It would be appropriate to recall that the United States attached great importance to Turkey; yet, Americans did not initially plan to include Turkey in the membership of NATO. In turn, Turkey considered itself to be geographically separated from the North Atlantic, though members of the Turkish government voiced their discontent with the country's being not involved in the new bloc. A new government headed by Şemsettin Günaltay was formed on January 16, 1949, in which Sadak preserved his post of Foreign Minister. On 25 January, a meeting was held between Sadak and Lavrishev, during which the Soviet Ambassador asked his Turkish counterpart to answer the question: "Does Turkey really intend to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization or are these the inventions of journalists?" Sadak said: "Turkey does not intend to and cannot assume military obligations with respect to countries located so far away from it."⁵² Sadak reaffirmed this point of view on the eve of his departure to Paris to attend a conference of Foreign Ministers. He pointed out that the range of NATO should embrace a certain geographical area. The very title "North Atlantic Treaty Organization" indicated that this organization might be formed of countries close to the North Atlantic, while Turkey was far from the coasts of the Atlantic Ocean. Hence, Turkey was located in an absolutely different geographical area. At the same time, Sadak stressed, the system of security was an integral entity and he did not believe that security could be confined to a part of Europe only. He noted: "As far as the protection of peace and security in Europe is concerned, we consider it natural that this goal cannot be achieved only in one part of Europe."⁵³ The Paris talks of Sadak with his French counterpart Schumann reaffirmed Turkey's estrangement from the Atlantic Pact for geographical reasons. Still, there sprang up the idea of a Mediterranean bloc, but Britain considered this to be untimely.⁵⁴ To ease Turkey, Bevin confirmed that the Anglo-French alliance with Turkey and the Truman Doctrine were the most reliable guarantors of Turkey's security.⁵⁵ Upon his return from Paris, Sadak made a speech at the Parliament on 16 March, informing MPs that no specific decision on the Mediterranean pact had been adopted.⁵⁶

In turn, the Soviet Union had been anxious since 1949 about European attempts to establish various blocs and involve Turkey in this process. In March, Lavrishev made an inquiry to the Turkish Foreign Ministry regarding the Mediterranean bloc and Turkey's attitude toward this bloc. The Turkish party replied that this pact would be formed for defensive purposes only and that Turkey was ready to join the pact. This "informal démarche" of Lavrishev stirred up debates in the Turkish press. Further complicating the case were the endless attempts of the USSR to make territorial claims against Turkey and make the latter give up efforts to ensure its security. All of the above-mentioned questions, including "the Soviet démarche," were discussed on 10 March in London between Turkish Ambassador C. Açıkalın and E. Bevin.⁵⁷

In March 1949, a cadre reshuffle took place in the Soviet leadership: acting Foreign Minister

Molotov yielded his position to A. Vyshinsky and Foreign Trade Minister A. Mikoyan to M. Menshikov. This reshuffle increased hopes among some Turkish political circles for changes in the foreign political course of the Soviet Union. The Turkish press termed Molotov's resignation as "the most important event of the recent years" and the former Minister was characterized as "a representative of the expansionist and imperialist policy." However, the main political forces of Turkey, considering the realities of the Soviet Union, foresaw no radical changes. Asked by press representatives, N. Sadak replied that Molotov's replacement by Vyshinsky would not change the Soviet position on Turkey. In other words, regardless of Turkey's good will, the Soviet Union would never desist from its hostile stance towards Turkey: "It is useless to expect that the Bolshevik policy will ever change and the Soviets unexpectedly show sympathy and friendship to Turkey just because Vyshinsky has been substituted for Molotov." Press organs agreed with this view: "Considering that Russia's contemporary policy is entirely determined by Stalin, it is obvious that everything will remain the same, irrespective of who takes the post of Foreign Minister."⁵⁸

A draft Atlantic Pact was prepared in mid-1949. Reporting back to Parliament on the results of the Paris meeting of Foreign Ministers, N. Sadak touched upon the question of the formation of NATO. He reaffirmed that the pact embraced a well-known geographical area, so there was no question of Turkey's involvement in the project. Still, talks with Britain and the USA were in progress to secure peace in the region where Turkey was located. On 18 March, Bevin and Acheson announced that the process of NATO's formation did not distract Britain and America's attention from Turkish affairs. Bevin stated

Although a North Atlantic Treaty cannot be extended to cover all parts of the world, nevertheless, the area from Greece to Persia includes many countries with whom we have had special and longstanding relationships. . . . Here I should like to make a special reference to our relations with our ally Turkey and with our old and faithful friend, Greece. . . . Our actions in supporting . . . [their] independence and integrity are clear expressions of our interest in the security of those countries and represent a policy which we shall continue to pursue.⁵⁹

On 22 March the US National Security Council submitted an extensive report to President Truman regarding US policy with respect to Greece and Turkey directed against Soviet attempts to undermine the US political course. The report singled out several methods employed by the Soviet Union to seize control over Turkey: (1) attempts to establish control over the Straits; (2) attempts to station bases on Turkish territory for the purpose of joint control over the Straits; (3) claims to the north-eastern territories of Turkey, including Kars and Ardahan; (4) use of political propaganda to pressure Turkey from the West; (5) conducting of propaganda actions to weaken the Turkish government; (6) demonstrations of a hostile attitude to Turkey, including threats and blackmailing. The document said that Turkey tried to protect itself through the creation of a defensive alliance in association with other countries. The success of these attempts was dependent on the direct participation of the United States in this process. The document added that Turkey indicated its desire to join the North Atlantic bloc but was refused.⁶⁰ On 23 March Secretary of State D. Acheson rejected at a press conference the attempts of journalists to link Turkey's not joining NATO with weakening interest in this country. President Truman also reaffirmed his country's interest in Turkey during the signing

ceremony of the treaty on 4 April.

Following the adoption of the pact on the formation of NATO and signing of the treaty in Washington on April 4, 1949, N. Sadak immediately left for the USA and met there with D. Acheson.⁶¹ The latter told a briefing that he had discussed with Sadak all the issues arising from Turkish and US interests. The Turkish party wanted US military and economic aid to remain stable. In turn, Acheson told Sadak that an application would, in a day or two, be submitted to Congress for the granting of greater volumes of aid to Turkey.⁶² Nevertheless, Italy, a Mediterranean state, was admitted to NATO, while Turkey was tricked. Acheson did not like the Turkish initiative to create a bloc of Mediterranean states: he believed that the security of the Middle East was guaranteed by US aid to Turkey, Greece and Iran. On 13 April, President Truman received Sadak. The Turkish Minister handed him a letter from President İ'nönü. In reply, Truman asked Sadak to convey his letter to İ'nönü. On 14 April, Sadak arranged a press conference, which repeated the thesis that the Atlantic Pact was insufficient to maintain peace in Europe and that the pact had to be "supplemented with a Mediterranean pact." Responding to a question on Turkey's security, Sadak noted: "This security is guaranteed, in the first instance, by the Turkish army . . . at present, the Turkish army is in a position to repel any aggression against Turkey on its borders." He added: "Turkey considers itself to be morally associated with the policies of the Atlantic Pact countries and moral and material ties between Turkey and the United States are very close, so Turkey looks like a member of the Atlantic Pact." Sadak said he had no opportunity to discuss with Acheson the question of a Mediterranean pact, for the United States are currently busy with arranging the Atlantic Pact, though Turkish-American relations have been thoroughly discussed." Upon completion of the talks in Washington, the Turkish Foreign Minister made his way for New York to attend the UN General Assembly's third session.⁶³

On 11 May, Sadak reported to Parliament on his talks in Washington. He informed MPs that Turks could be confident in their future. Though Turkey did not participate in the Atlantic Pact, it nevertheless remained an adherent of the idea of collective security. Sadak told the Parliament that in case of Soviet aggression the United States would help Turkey, because while in the USA, he had obtained American support.⁶⁴ Besides, Sadak provided information about his talks with the French Foreign Minister that the Anglo-French Treaty with Turkey of 1939 remained valid. On June 13, 1949, the French government officially affirmed its position on the issue. Thus, Turkey obtained additional assurances on the matter.⁶⁵

Turkey's joining the Council of Europe in summer 1949 was an important step towards its integration into Europe. In July, the Turkish government was officially invited to attend a session of the Council of Europe in Strasburg. Sadak acknowledged this invitation, saying that Turkey was satisfied that it ranked alongside Atlantic Pact members. President İ'nönü emphasized: "This is an organization of nations sharing European culture and civilization, and governed by democratic methods."⁶⁶ Meanwhile, the Soviet Union was pleased that Turkey was not allowed to join NATO and had refused to set up a regional pact in the Mediterranean or Near East. The Soviet Foreign Ministry considered the possibility of Turkey, Greece and Italy joining the Atlantic Pact or being represented in regional blocs as a serious threat to its policy

of penetrating into the Balkans and Near East. In connection with this, the Political Bureau approved in summer 1949 a note of protest concerning Italy's membership in NATO. The same notes were forwarded to the United States, Great Britain and France regarding the formation of a NATO bloc. The Political Bureau approved the text of these notes.⁶⁷

In spring and summer 1949, some developments occurred, which increasingly aggravated tensions in Soviet-Turkish relations. First, Sanubar Hasanova, the wife of the arrested Second Secretary General of the Soviet Embassy Karyagdı Hasanov, asked the Turkish authorities for political asylum; second, a diplomatic courier of the Turkish Foreign Ministry Fuat Güzaltan committed suicide in Sochi; third, Soviet pilot V. Bort landed in Sinop and asked for political asylum. S. Hasanova held a press conference in Ankara and stated that her husband was forcibly taken to the Soviet Union for his attempt to obtain asylum in Turkey. Turkish newspapers allotted much space to the incident. Meanwhile, Sanubar Hasanova explained the situation as follows:

Knowing that I would also be forcibly abducted by Soviet agents, I had to apply to the Turkish authorities. My request was granted, and I wished to settle down in Adana.⁶⁸ However, they did not leave me alone and tried to apply force against me, as they did with my husband. Thanks to the efforts of the Turkish authorities, they failed to attain their goal. I think that Moscow radio will broadcast slanderous news about me, so I considered it necessary to arrive in Ankara to prove that I decided to stay in Turkey of my own free will and I declare that they will not be able to steal me forcibly.

The Turkish Foreign and Internal Ministries permitted the Soviet Embassy in this country to communicate with the defector; however, the Embassy showed no interest in this initiative.⁶⁹

Meanwhile, the Turkish Foreign Ministry, quoting Soviet bodies, informed that the Turkish diplomatic courier Güzaltan had shot himself in Sochi and despite the "heroic efforts of Soviet doctors, died in hospital." These two scandalous incidents aroused great alarm in Turkish society. Turkish analysts realized that the Güzaltan's death was not accidental. The Turkish press underlined that modern criminal science was in no position to establish if it was suicide or murder. The Turkish press spread information that Sadak and Foreign Ministry Secretary General met with President İnönü to discuss the situation. Anti-Soviet statements accompanied parliamentary discussions on 11 June. When a coffin with Güzaltan arrived in Ankara, Turkish Ministers, Generals and MPs laid wreaths on the coffin. Güzaltan was later buried in Istanbul with the participation of senior executives, military, and other officials. In doing so, the authorities meant to emphasize that they were not burying a suicide, but rather a victim of murder. During a 10 July press conference Sadak, responding a question of the Güzaltan's death, declared that the Turkish Ambassador to Moscow would in a day or two bring the personal effects of the diplomatic courier, including his pistol and the bullet that had killed him. Meanwhile, the Soviet Ambassador to Turkey reported to Moscow that the Güzaltan funeral was accompanied by a harsh anti-Soviet campaign attended by Turkish officials.⁷⁰ On 19 June, Turkish Ambassador to Moscow F. Akdur met with Deputy Soviet Foreign Minister F. Gusev. He advised that he would be substituted for Muzaffer Teker, former Turkish Ambassador to Canada. Akdur added that he would later take up the position of Secretary General at the Turkish Foreign Ministry.⁷¹ Upon his return to Turkey, Akdur confirmed that the Soviet special bodies conveyed to him the personal effects of Güzaltan and that in a day or two

he would report on the “Güzaltan case.”

Another problem in the Soviet–Turkish relations arose in summer 1949 when pilot V. Bort landed in Sinop and asked for political asylum. He explained this step by his refusal of Soviet authority, starvation and infringement of human rights in the USSR. The Bort case was discussed at the Political Bureau and a note was adopted demanding that the Turkish authorities deliver Bort to Soviet frontier guards as a criminal who committed a crime in the USSR.⁷²

In July 1949, the Soviet Embassy in Ankara prepared a thirty-one-page secret document, “On the Strengthening of Religious Reaction in Turkey.” The preamble of the document stated:

In connection with the strengthening of reaction in the internal political life of Turkey after the country’s falling under the influence of the American imperialism, religious reactions have appreciably intensified. There are no purely religious political parties in Turkey. Representatives of the Islamic religion do not hold meetings; they merely follow their political line to comply with internal and external reactions. The state of religious affairs in the country is analyzed from October 29, 1923, i.e., from the date of declaration of the Republic in Turkey.

It was pointed out that as a result of Atatürk’s reforms the Muslim clergy who formerly dominated not only in religious life but also the foreign and domestic policy of Ottoman Turkey, had lost its previous significance. The author of the document N. Knyazkov wrote:

Measures such as liquidation of the caliphate, closing of the Ministry of Sharia, closing of *madrasahs* and *vakifs*, prohibition of *dervish* sects, introduction of secular courts, bringing of European clothes into fashion, creation of the national Latin alphabet and, finally, the ban on teaching religion in schools—all these have noticeably undermined influence of religion in the country.

On 9 April 1928, the Grand National Assembly unanimously had adopted a law on separation of the mosque from the state to turn the Turkish Republic into a secular state. In 1931, a congress of the People’s Republican Party introduced laicism as one of its basic principles. Even more, the Theology Faculty of Istanbul University was closed. In doing so, the then authorities of the country drew Turkey increasingly closer to becoming a secular state. However, Knyazkov pointed out that the transition to the multi-party system in 1946 had encouraged the opposition to employ religion for its own purposes, but the government stopped it at once. In November–December 1947, addressing the seventh congress of the PRP Hamdullah Subhu Tanrıöver, Sinan Tekeliog̃lu and other MPs advocated the thesis that “the nation cannot exist without religion.” As a result of intensive offensive of clericals it was decided in February 1948 to reconsider the appropriateness of religious education in schools.⁷³

Some press organs linked this offensive with the fact that Prime Minister Günaltay was a well-known professor and author of works on the history and theory of Islam. A memorandum of the Soviet Embassy paid particular attention to the opposition parties, in the first instance, the Democratic Party and its attitude to religion. It was no mere coincidence that in March 1949 these Party activists distributed leaflets in Samsun, which called for a struggle against Communism. In doing so, the DP linked the nationalistic ideology to the religious one: “Communism recognizes neither God, religious worship, nor nation and property. . . . The Turkish nation will remain united with its God, Fatherland, freedom and independence.” In early April DP delegates suggested a regional conference of the party in Bursa to withdraw the principles of laicism from the party program. Delegate from Mudanya Hacıog̃lu declared: “A

country without religion has no law, no traditions. This country is doomed to ruin.” Addressing the conference, C. Bayar noted, “Turkey cannot be ruled under Sharia laws. We are Muslims, but, first of all, we are Turks.”

The Soviet Embassy explained the intensification of the religious factor and growth of religious reaction as being due to the increase in 1948–1949 of budget allocations for religious affairs. These allocations reached 2,800,100 Turkish liras in 1948. The figure amounted to 2,859,213 in 1949, with 1,750,900 lira of that from the Ministry of Labor. The Günaltay government considered the issue from the opposite point of view, explaining the strengthening of religious factor in the country as being linked to Communist campaign against Turkey. In an interview with *Tan* newspaper the Prime Minister explained the growth of the religious factor in Turkey by the influence of Soviet Azerbaijan. He declared: “Subversive propaganda, relying on religion, is backed from abroad. Subversive propaganda in Erzurum came from Soviet Azerbaijan. Those realizing the failure of Communism in Turkey are interested in stirring up disturbances.” A report of the Soviet Embassy explains the political line of the government with the following:

- (1) The government is apprehensive that the clergy and a portion of the population may be employed by its political rivals;
- (2) The government is eager to employ religion to combat communism;
- (3) The government plans to distract the people from the difficult economic situation it has found itself in as a result of its subordination to American imperialism.⁷⁴

In summer and autumn 1949, the continuing Soviet anti-Turkish campaign led to the growth of anti-Communist sentiments in the big towns of the country. Defectors from the Balkans who fled to Turkey from Soviet domination arranged protests in front of the Soviet consulate in Istanbul and the Soviet Embassy in Ankara, screaming out anti-Soviet slogans. In connection with this, A. Lavrishev met with N. Sadak and directed his attention to these hostile actions. The Turkish Minister assured the Ambassador that the Istanbul authorities had been properly instructed on how to act to avoid these actions. However, on 11 April, 15 September and 9 October anti-Communist actions took place in front of the General Consulate. In reply to the latest verbal warning of the Soviet Embassy, director of the Political Department of the Turkish Foreign Ministry Virgin told adviser of the Soviet Embassy V. Belyaev that it was practically impossible to forecast these actions and respond to them. Meanwhile, the Soviet Political Bureau immediately discussed the issue and sent a secret telegram and appropriate instructions to Lavrishev.⁷⁵

At the same time, the Political Bureau, for the first time in many years, passed a decision on behalf of the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR Nikolai Shvernik to congratulate the President of Turkey on 29 October on the occasion of the national holiday, Day of the Republic. Note that it was the Soviet Foreign Ministry that raised this question on 28 October before the Political Bureau.⁷⁶ During the opening of the eighth convocation of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, President İnönü made a speech addressing Turkish foreign policy. He expressed his satisfaction with the development of relations between Turkey and Great Britain, France and the United States and said that no positive changes had occurred so far in relations with the Soviet Union. Even worse, relations with Bulgaria, based on the principles of international law, also remained unsatisfactory. He said: “All our attempts have

not been required.”⁷⁷

In December 1949, new Ambassador M. Teker entered into his duties. Handing over copies of his credentials to Deputy Foreign Minister A. Gromyko, Ambassador Teker advised that he would apply all his efforts to develop friendly relations between Turkey and the USSR. His mission, the Ambassador stressed, was to improve the international situation.⁷⁸ At the same time, new Foreign Minister of the USSR A. Vyshinsky, addressing the UN General Assembly, detailed the problem of US aid to Turkey, harshly criticizing the pro-American foreign policy of Turkey. Commenting on Vyshinsky’s speech, Turkish newspapers insisted that US aid to Turkey was a result of Soviet ill will to its neighbors. *Yeni Sabah* wrote: “Azerbaijani developments, as well as claims regarding the Straits, Kars and Ardahan are still engraved on Turkey’s memory.” Turkish newspapers gave a hostile reception to Vyshinsky’s proposal to the UN General Assembly on concluding a peace pact between the five great powers, holding that this proposal was designed “to divide the globe into zones of influence.” *Vatan* newspaper in December 1949 began publishing memoirs of the former press-attaché of the Turkish Embassy in Moscow M. Tezel. He wrote that “Russians, notwithstanding that they are Communists, remain the same Muscovites with their views, mode of life and, finally, temper.” Touching upon the attitudes of the Turkic peoples of the USSR to Turkey, M. Tezel noted: “Azerbaijanis, despite all pressures and negative propaganda, consider us [Turks] their elder brothers and nourish a feeling of infinite love and respect towards us.”⁷⁹ In the second half of the 1940s, cultural and political organizations of emigrants from Azerbaijan and other Turkic countries stepped up their activity in Ankara and other Turkish towns. According to the secret information of the Ministry of National Security of the Azerbaijan Republic, Azerbaijanis M. E. Rasulzade, M. Mehtiyev, M. Hajizade, A. Shamkhorsky, S. Rustambeyov were engaged in active anti-Soviet propaganda in Turkey. In September 1948, organization the “Azerbaijani Mudafie Cemiyeti” (Azerbaijani Defense Society) headed by A. Azizbey, I. Saryal and others was set up in Ankara; organization the “Azeri Dost Eli Yardımlaşma Cemiyeti” [Azeri Friendship and Cooperation Society] headed by Esref Odkan and Mehmet Emircan was set up in Istanbul.⁸⁰

In December 1949, the Soviet Embassy reported on the intensification of different pan-Turkic societies. Operating in Ankara was the so-called “Azerbaijani Cultural Society,” which regularly held anti-Soviet lectures at Ankara People’s House. Part of the report read,

“Delivering a lecture entitled “Cultural Traditions of Azerbaijan,” Head of the Azerbaijani Musavat party Mammad Emin Rasulzadeh claimed that the struggle was in progress in Soviet Azerbaijan, and cultural traditions, going back to ancient history, were still alive despite all obstacles. Rasulzadeh touched upon KGB persecutions and accusations concerning cosmopolitanism. The lecture delivered on May 28, 1949, has recently been published in a brochure circulated by Ankara bookshops.”

On 4 December, the same society arranged a regular lecture of M. E. Rasulzadeh entitled “Modern Azerbaijani Literature,” which claimed that, “modern Azerbaijani literature, despite Soviet totalitarianism infringing national rights and freedoms, is developing in the spirit of nationalism, freedom and independence.”⁸¹ Another report of the Embassy noted that the “Azerbaijani Cultural Society” was actively engaged in various activities and enjoyed great

popularity.⁸²

It is not astonishing that from the end of 1949 Soviet leaders started persecuting Turkism in Azerbaijan. State security bodies started hunting “pan-Turkists” within the Communist Party, state and economic institutions, cultural and educational organizations, and art associations. A genuine campaign erupted against the ancient literary works of the Azerbaijani people—the epic *Kitabi Dede Korkut*. On the Kremlin’s instructions, “theoretical studies” claimed that this ancient epic had no relation to Azerbaijan, as Azerbaijanis had no relation to Turkism. Those who demonstrated the common roots of all Turkish nations were mercilessly persecuted.⁸³ Even worse, the Minister of National Security made a list of persons with their relatives in Turkey. For example, a list with twenty-eight names mentioned famous figures of Azerbaijan: President of the Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan SSR M. Aliyev; poets R. Rza, O. Sarivelli, M. Rahim, Z. Khalil; teacher J. Jabrayilbeyli; Assistant Professor of the Azerbaijan State University M. Tahmasib and teacher I. Efendiyev; Minister of the Cinema Industry V. Seyidzadeh; Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers M. Seyidov; Deputy Chairman of the State Plan Committee M. Allahverdiyev; instructor of the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist Party S. Rashidov; director of the philharmonic society S. Badalbeyli and others. It was recommended to punish the above-mentioned figures for fabricated crimes, not for their ties with Turkey.⁸⁴

However, the analysis of KGB materials is illustrative that repressions and persecutions failed to make Azerbaijanis betray their Turkic roots. Thus, junior researcher of the Institute of Literature of the Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan SSR M. Efendizadeh welcomed Ankara’s idea to unite Turkic Islamic peoples; teacher of secondary school from Ujar K. Shahmaliyev believed that “the Turkish army is the world’s bravest army and we, Azerbaijanis, sold ourselves to Russians and struggle against Turks instead of advocating them”; school teacher from the village of Poylu, Akstafa region, Alamdarov Novruz declared that in case of war between the USSR, Iran and Turkey Azerbaijanis will not fight against Turks; head of the Muslim community of Goychay, Veliyev Sharif, stated that “İ smet İ nönü takes much care of saving Muslims of Transcaucasia from Communism;” train driver of the “Dashkesankobalt” A. Veliyev proved to be a good analyst, saying:

Azerbaijanis residing in Armenia have been evicted from this country. Turks have always supported us Azerbaijanis residing in Armenia against Dashnaks. Should Turks desist from protecting Muslims, Armenians would exterminate all Azerbaijanis. Muslims cannot live without Turks. The Turkish government consists of Muslims who care about Muslim peoples.⁸⁵

Another report prepared by the Head of KGB S. Yemelyanov refers to words of engineer I. Heydarov: “Beyond any doubt, our Muslim intellectuals are in sympathy with Turkey. Our intellectuals do not support the unfriendly political line of the USSR with respect to Turkey.” Housewife Tahirova Zinyat Jafar qizi was persecuted by the KGB for her statement that “Turkey is our deliverer. The Azerbaijani people will be grateful if Turkey takes measures to change the state structure here in Azerbaijan.” Teacher from a vocational school in Baku G. Muzaffarov noted: “Turks should liberate their brothers, currently under the Russian yoke. The leader of our Azerbaijanis is Mamed Emin Rasulzadeh, who is presently in Turkey. He is sure to liberate us. Turks are an invincible nation, and the future belongs to them.”⁸⁶

As is seen, materials of the Soviet security bodies once again confirm M. Tezel's idea that neither pressure nor propaganda could change Azerbaijanis' well-disposed attitude to Turkey. On December 24, 1949, the Turkish Foreign Minister addressed a party regional conference in Sivas devoted to the international situation and foreign policy of the country. In discussing international developments, he pointed out that the nation was apprehensive of a new war. He linked international uncertainties with the threat coming from the Soviet Union. These uncertainties influenced Turkey, so Sadak had to concentrate on "well-known propaganda" directed against Turkey. In saying so, he meant the Soviet Union. Immediately, the Soviet Ambassador reported back to Moscow that the Turkish ruling circles had applied anti-Soviet rhetoric to distract the people from difficult economic conditions.⁸⁷

As viewed by the Turkish political circles, the propaganda campaign of the Soviets continued into the early 1950 along the following lines: (1) depict Americans as terrible imperialists and show that the Turkey's independence was infringed by America; (2) picture the Turkish revolution as reactionary; (3) discredit prominent figures of Turkey and defame Turkish sacred concepts; (4) displease all Turkish citizens; (5) instigate workers; (6) employ Atatürk's name, juggle with facts in Russia's interests. As estimated by the Soviet Embassy, in the beginning of the 1950s, thanks to the military, political, economic and diplomatic support of the United States, Turkey became a devoted US ally in the Near and Middle East. According to the Minister Cemal Sait Barlas:

In 1948–1949, under the Marshall Plan, Turkey obtained \$49,700,000; and in 1949–1950, 114,300,000 lira, i.e., \$164 million. In the opinion of the Soviet Embassy, this aid enabled the United States to employ Turkey to pursue US policy in the Near and Middle East. Soviet diplomats put forward the idea that the United States, with the help of Turkey, tried to force Britain out of the East. In their view, Turks would take advantage of contradictions between the United States and Britain when dividing the Near and Middle East, with special emphasis on the position of the US Department of State. On January 31, 1950, the United States and Turkey signed a protocol on granting a free credit to Turkey worth \$199 million.⁸⁸

Debates over this protocol in the Grand National Assembly and assessment of the state of international relations showed that the lines of the opposition Democratic Party (DP) and the ruling party concurred. F. Köprülü, one of the leaders of the DP, speaking at the Parliament on 16 February 1950, pointed out:

Turkey faces the last and most dangerous threat of imperialism. . . . Some unfortunate wretches, incapable of thought and under the influence of the fifth column, believe that the country may be saved from a new war by establishing a friendly policy with Russia. These are either unconcerned people or blockheads who misunderstand the lessons of history. . . . The Turkish nation is well aware of the risks arising from such views and the genuine goals of the Russian imperialism. Therefore, Turkey advocates its current foreign policy.⁸⁹

Of the same opinion was President İsmet İnönü, who in March 1950 declared: "We see that our motherland is in great danger. Our citizens cannot forget about it."⁹⁰

A Turkish-American military conference, which took place in Istanbul on April 20, 1950, was devoted to measures aimed at removing this danger. Attending the conference were top Turkish military and representatives of the American military mission in Turkey. The purpose of the conference was to ensure complete interaction between land, marine and air troops in case of a possible Soviet attack on Turkey. In his report to Moscow, Soviet Embassy official E. Revin concluded, "Americans attach great strategic importance to Turkey." In doing so, he

referred to a statement of the Chief of General Staff of the US Army, General Collins, who while at Cairo declared: “The United States will mobilize all available resources to protect regions of paramount importance. These are Western Europe, Turkey, Greece and Iraq.”⁹¹

The question of Turkey’s joining the North Atlantic Treaty was discussed in the course of agitations surrounding the Parliamentary Elections of May 14, 1950. Note that both competing parties of the country, the People’s Republican Party and the Democrats, concentrated on the Soviet claims against Turkey and the Communist overall threat as the main directions of their election campaigns. The ruling party tried to convince the masses that the coming of the DP to the power might weaken Turkey before the Soviet threat. The Soviet Embassy reported to Moscow that “none of the Turkish Parties in their pre-election declarations put forward any proposals to settle Soviet-Turkish relations.” The DP declared:

At present, there is no need to speak about any changes in our foreign policy, which is a manifestation of the common view of the entire nation. We are confident that our peaceful foreign policy, based on our traditional alliance with Britain and France and close friendship and collaboration with the United States, is a major factor for the democratic front and universal peace. . . . An important pre-requisite for the well-being of our motherland is confidence that any change of power in the country would not lead to any changes in our foreign policy.

The People’s Republican Party made similar statements.⁹²

During the 14 May Elections, the DP won 420 MP seats and thus gained a historical victory, while the ruling PRP obtained just 63 seats.⁹³ The first session of the ninth convocation of the Grand National Assembly opened on 22 May. Leader of the DP C. Bayar was elected President; Refik Koraltan was elected Speaker of the Parliament, and Adnan Menderes, Prime Minister. After having been elected President, Bayar resigned from the post of Chairman of the Party and was substituted by Menderes. Thus, a new period in the history of Turkey was announced, the Bayar-Menderes period, which lasted ten years: until May 27, 1960. Right after the Parliamentary elections in Turkey the Soviet Foreign Ministry had drawn up a report entitled “On the Elections of 14 May to the Turkish Grand National Assembly,” which attempted to link the creation of the Democratic Party with the intrigues of the United States and Britain. It stressed that in the course of the elections the Democratic Party had been successful in exploiting the demand to transfer enterprises under state monopoly to private entrepreneurs and skillfully made use of the problems of the population in the social and economic spheres. The document read as follows:

The Democratic Party for demagogical purposes before the elections introduced in its program demands for the insurance of workers, and on recognition of the right to create trade unions and arrange strikes. The Democratic Party promised peasants to carry out agrarian reform, to grant credits to peasants and criticized the government tax policy as robbing from the villages. With a view to attracting numerous religious sects, leaders of the Democratic Party promised to grant them scores of privileges, and to open new mosques and religious schools. One of the leaders of the Democratic Party, F. Köprülü, made a statement after the elections concerning the foreign policy of the future government. He promised to collaborate with Western countries and the United States.

The memorandum added:

Köprülü is known to be a vehement enemy of the Soviet Union. Note that he was a member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and for open hostile démarches against the Soviet Union was expelled from the Academy of Sciences in 1948. During a parliamentary meeting of 16 February this year Köprülü stated: “Some unfortunate wretches, influenced by damned propaganda of the fifth column, have lost the ability to see and understand anything, in thinking that the country may

be saved from the threat of war or by maintaining friendly relations with Russia. These are either thoughtless people or blockheads who have misunderstood the lessons of history.

As for the leader of the Democratic Party, C. Bayar, the authors of the report specifically underlined his preparedness to be loyal to his allies and maintain friendly relations with the Western world. The document concluded that the Democratic party had come to power through the support of the United States and Britain. Despite differences within the British-American bloc, they were interested in bringing this party to power. Account has to be taken of the fact that the Democratic Party would continue to pursue the political line of the previous People's Republican Party government, which emphasized the economic and military support of the United States and American monopolists.⁹⁴

Following the elections, Molotov's secretariat drew up on 17 May a detailed memorandum about the National Party of Turkey headed by Hikmet Bayur. The memorandum pointed out that in August 1948 H. Bayur made a statement: "Should the Soviet Union relinquish its territorial claims to Kars and the Straits, we would support the restoration of friendly relations with this country." Subsequently, Bayur retracted this statement as taking a purely anti-Soviet position. The National Party of Turkey was of interest to the Soviet Union since it was going to oppose the Democratic Party in the new parliament after the defeat on 14 May.⁹⁵ Chairman of the Special Commission of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union for Relations with Foreign Communist Parties Vahan Grigoryan submitted a note to Molotov entitled "On Activities of the Democratic Party of Turkey," which condemned the domestic and foreign policy of the Democratic Party, defining the government of Bayar-Menderes as agents and apprentices of American monopolies.⁹⁶ In compliance with tradition, Menderes delivered his political program to the Parliament; however, he paid little attention to foreign policy. This was a manifestation of the will of the new government to continue the previous policies of the postwar period. In particular, Menderes declared: "The peaceful nature of our foreign policy, with a traditional emphasis on union with Britain and France and closer friendship with the United States, remains loyal to the principles of friendship, and respect for the independence and territorial integrity of big and small nations worldwide." In his speech the Prime Minister promised that the government would focus on strengthening the security of the Eastern Mediterranean and Near East. As for equipping the Turkish army, Menderes promised to increase the volume of deliveries of American military aid and arms. The Prime Minister passed over the relations between Turkey and the Soviet Union in silence.⁹⁷

On August 10, 1950, A. Lavrishev delivered a lecture in Moscow to the Soviet Foreign Ministry entitled "On the Situation in Turkey." In the first place, he focused on the Truman Doctrine and the military, political and economic aid of the USA to Turkey under the American-Turkish treaty. In stressing that this aid leads to the full control of the United States over Turkey, A. Lavrishev noted: "Following US aid and Trumanization and Marshallization of the country, it is quite clear that under current circumstances the economy, policy and army of Turkey are under US control." Touching upon the question of the Straits, Lavrishev reported: "It should be noted that Americans, as well as the British, pay great attention to the Straits. The present Convention on the Straits Regime signed in Montreux in 1936 does not meet the

security interests of the Black Sea states but still restricts access of military ships of non-Black Sea states to the Straits.” Concerning relations between the USSR and Turkey after the establishment of the new Turkish government, the Ambassador said:

Nothing is mentioned in the new program about relations between Turkey and the Soviet Union; at any rate, no Soviet Union is referred to in it. However, in the same statement of May 27, an Agence France Presse correspondent noted that they are seeking to maintain friendly relations with all neighboring countries, including the Soviet Union; so when relations between the West and the East are normalized, good relations will be restored too. This idea is not new and has been stated by leaders of the Democratic Party before their coming to power (in other instances, they expressed this concept more clearly) and the problem is that under current circumstances it is not sufficient for the settlement of Soviet-Turkish relations. According to them, the Soviet Union should relinquish any claims and normalize differences with the Western world. The hidden meaning of this position is that Soviet-Turkish relations may finally be resolved with the mediation of America. So, the government of the Democratic Party continues to pursue a hostile policy with respect to the Soviet Union. Testimony to this is given in the fact that Köprülü has been appointed Foreign Minister, though the Turkish government is well aware that Köprülü was deprived of the title of Associate Member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR for his racist propaganda.⁹⁸

Meanwhile, Fuat Köprülü took the post of Foreign Minister in the new government. On 17 May, he announced that no changes would take place in the foreign policy of the country. He said: “Our foreign policy, which has been oriented towards the West since the Second World War, will become more active in that direction.”⁹⁹ A strange incident occurred during the elections. A. Lavrishev and other Ambassadors of the Soviet bloc left Ankara and returned home, supposedly on leave. However, the political circles of Turkey were lost in conjectures, primarily due to the results of the elections. The day following the victory of the DP, the head of the American economic mission Dorr came to the DP headquarters and held debates with Bayar on a wide range of questions. He advised that the change of power would have no effect on the granting of aid to Turkey and that the US would proceed with its mission. Another representative of the American economic mission, Hochstetter declared that the program of the DP attached great importance to free entrepreneurship. Commenting on the results of the 14 May elections, he pointed out that even the Russians had to recognize the high level of democracy in Turkey. As for former President İ. İnönü, Hochstetter noted that İnönü’s defeat proved to be his greatest personal victory. He is likely to play a great role in the new political life of Turkey. Thus, the Democrat government focused on two major tasks in its foreign policy: to seek Turkey’s membership of the North-Atlantic Pact and to increase US aid to improve the situation in the Turkish economy.¹⁰⁰

In May 1950, new Foreign Minister Köprülü attended the Paris conference of recipients of American aid under the Marshall Plan and held consultations on strengthening security in the Eastern Mediterranean. He believed that “there cannot be complete security without an appropriate agreement on the subject.” Political circles of Turkey believed that Turkey’s position “outside the iron curtain” weakened the security of the Western powers and that the “security of all anti-Communist countries was dependent upon Turkey’s security.” Upon his return from Paris, Köprülü gave an interview to an Agence France-Presse correspondent in which he stressed: “I’m confident that the Eastern Mediterranean is an integral part of the European system of solidarity.”¹⁰¹ The same day Köprülü spoke to the Parliamentary faction of the DP and explained some aspects of the Turkish foreign policy and the results of the Paris

meeting.

One of the first steps of the new President was to intensify struggle against the Communist threat. He remembered Atatürk's will: "Beware of the threat from the north." At a meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers he organized discussions regarding Turkey's attitude toward the USSR. Köprülü and Menderes informed meeting participants about the subject of the discussions. They reminded the audience that Turkey maintained friendly relations with the United States and allied relations with Britain and France. However, the Allies, they insisted, did not want to admit Turkey into their ranks. Therefore, Turkey should revise its position in the system of international relations and strengthen its ties with other countries. To sum up results of the discussions, C. Bayar said: "My brothers, we shall join the Atlantic Pact."¹⁰²

Contributing to Turkey's joining NATO was the Korean War, which started on June 25, 1950. After the defeat of Japan in 1945, the Allies concluded a special treaty on the division of Korea into two parts along the Thirty-Eighth Parallel, with Soviet troops in the north and American troops in the south. Moreover, with the Communists in control of mainland China and with Communist forces pressing into Indochina and Indonesia, the loss of South Korea might disturb the balance of power in the Far East.¹⁰³ In 1948, governments were formed in North and South Korea, and they were dependent on the USSR and the USA, respectively. In late 1948, Soviet troops and in spring 1949 the American troops left Korea. However, archival documents indicate that the Soviet Union continued to supply the Kim Il Sung regime with arms and military advisers and maintained tight control over this client state.¹⁰⁴ The visits of Kim Il Sung in March 1949 and April 1950 to Moscow, successful talks with Stalin, the appearance of nuclear weapons in the USSR, the victory of the revolution in China, etc., encouraged Kim Il Sung to attempt to unite the country using military force.

In April 1950 during talks in Moscow Stalin told Kim Il Sung that due to the "changing international situation," he agreed with the Korean proposal to start reunifying the country.¹⁰⁵ The parties agreed that leaders of South and North Korea would finally resolve the question jointly and if the Chinese would not support the decision, the question was to be settled after new debates. Upon his return from Moscow, Kim Il Sung told the Soviet Ambassador that the North Korean Ambassador to China had informed him about his talks with Mao Zedong. The latter declared that the reunion of Korea was possible only through the use of military force and that there was no need to fear Americans, for they were unlikely to start a third world war for such a small country as Korea. On 13 May Kim Il Sung arrived in Beijing and met with Mao Zedong, who expressed his consent with the Soviet and Korean appraisal of the situation in the south and north of the country.¹⁰⁶

On May 29, 1950 Kim Il Sung told Shtykov that arms and equipment, as agreed upon during the Moscow talks in April, had arrived in North Korea. The plan of attack against the south was approved with the participation of Soviet military advisers. On 21 June, Stalin agreed "with Kim Il Sung's idea for an immediate advance along the whole front line."¹⁰⁷ Three days before the war, on 22 June, the Kremlin ordered to immediately stop ciphered correspondence as it proved to be unreliable. Upon completion of all preparations, the army of North Korea assumed the offensive.¹⁰⁸

On 25 June, the UN Security Council urgently discussed the Korean issue. On 27 June, Trygve Lie distributed a decision of the UN Security Council to all member countries of the United Nations, which provided for the rendering of aid to South Korea. In reply to this appeal of Trygve Lie, Köprülü replied that Turkey was ready to comply with its obligations to the UN Charter and would implement all decisions of the UN Security Council on the Korean issue.¹⁰⁹ On 30 June, Köprülü made a speech to the Grand National Assembly. In response to the UN call, on 18 July, the Turkish government passed a decision to send a 4,500-strong military contingent to Korea, the number of which was later increased to 6,086.¹¹⁰ In connection with this, Senator Harry Caine pointed out that this decision of the Turkish government facilitated Turkey's joining the Atlantic Pact.¹¹¹ Thus, Turkey proved to be next to the United States in responding to the UN call. This was the first case in the history of the Turkish Republic in which Turkey had sent its army outside the country's borders. The Turkish government explained this decision by the fact that in case of aggression, Turkey would be entitled to demand from the UN the same kind of aid as was being rendered to South Korea.¹¹² Soviet Embassy official S. Yevseev prepared a report, which indicated that this decision of the Turkish government had been adopted under US pressure. Turkish Foreign Minister F. Köprülü declared: "Turkey has always stated that it adheres to the UN charter. As viewed by the government, the most reliable guarantor of peace is adherence to its clauses. We consider it necessary that each UN member-country comply with its obligations."¹¹³

It is obvious from diplomatic correspondence of summer 1950 that diplomatic representatives of the Soviet bloc in Ankara showed a great interest in the number of the Turkish contingent, date of its dispatch to Korea, etc. The Soviet Embassy reported to Moscow:

It is quite evident that Turkey is not in a hurry to send its troops to Korea. To all appearances, they are awaiting the results of military actions in Korea before they participate in the conflict. On the other hand, it may be supposed that Turkey awaited the start of the Council of the Atlantic Pact, especially as the Turkish political circles linked the decision on sending troops to Korea with the country's intention to join the Atlantic Pact.¹¹⁴

In late July, Köprülü met with the Ambassadors of Britain and France to initiate the question of Turkey's joining NATO. Turkish Ambassador to the UN Sarper made a statement that stressed his country's aspiration to join the Atlantic Pact. On 30 July, Adnan Menderes received the American Ambassador George Wadsworth and had a three-hour meeting with him. Meanwhile, Köprülü attended a meeting of the Council of Ministers of the members of the European Union in Strasbourg in the first half of August. He held talks there with representatives of NATO member-states on Turkey's admission to the pact. After his talks with Bevin and Shuman, Köprülü gave an interview to Agence France-Presse, which confessed:

I've exchanged opinions with my European counterparts, primarily our Allies, concerning the current international situation, particularly, the security of the Eastern Mediterranean. . . . At present, the Atlantic Pact is incomplete. The system of joint security in the Mediterranean is applied to the Adriatic Sea only. This is rather dangerous for international peace. The Eastern Mediterranean as a point of great strategic importance cannot stay outside the joint system of defense. I don't think that Turkey's admission to the Atlantic Pact would be met with any objections.

Upon his return to Turkey, Köprülü told reporters in Istanbul "the government has done its utmost to promote Turkey's membership of the Atlantic Pact." In late August, the Turkish

Ambassador to Washington, on the instructions of his government, applied to Secretary of State Acheson and asked him to back Turkey's request to join the Atlantic Pact.¹¹⁵ Official representative of the Soviet Embassy V. I. Startsev in his review entitled "The Turkish Press on Turkey's Efforts Aimed at the Country's Joining the Atlantic Pact" wrote: "The government of the Democratic Party believes that the current situation is suitable for Turkey's admission to the Atlantic Pact, so the government is doing its best to attain its goal, ignoring even the risks in the foreign policy of the previous PRP government."¹¹⁶ Thus, after May 1950 the Turkish government again asked to join NATO in August.

It was the active involvement of the Soviet Union in the Korean developments that aroused indignation worldwide. Soviet representative to the UN Security Council left the meeting with a view of frustrating debates over the Korean issue, but in August, on the Kremlin's order, he returned to his place. He was instructed to use the UN as a podium from which to counter an anti-Soviet propaganda campaign. On August 15, 1950, the Political Bureau discussed the issue and gave appropriate instructions to the Soviet Foreign Ministry: in the first instance, a text of the instructive telegram was sent to the Soviet representative to the UN Y. Malik; and in the second, A. Vyshinsky was instructed "to recommend," on behalf of the Soviet government, as well as the governments of Poland, Czechoslovakia, China, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Albania and Mongolia, to send telegrams to the Chairman of the Security Council and the UN Secretary General supporting proposals on peace resolution to the Korean issue put forward by the USSR to the Security Council. Also, these telegrams advocated the demands of the government of the Korean People's Democratic Republic (KPDR) on the cessation of American bombardment of towns and populated localities of the KPDR. It was recommended to forward the telegrams at different times. In the first instance, it was instructed to send the telegrams from Poland, Czechoslovakia and China; then from Albania and Mongolia; next from Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania. Then the Soviet Foreign Ministry was instructed, through the mediation of Shtykov, to recommend that the government of the KPDR: (1) to send letters of the former Rhee Syngman government and the Parliament officials to the UN Security Council to unmask American aggression in Korea and the anti-national policy of Rhee Syngman, to stop war in Korea; (2) to send letters of a group of American prisoners of war to the US President, Chairman of the Security Council and the US Secretary General demanding to cease the war in Korea and withdraw all foreign troops from this country; (3) to speed up the publication of the documents of the Special Commission for Korea reviewing the atrocities of American aggressors and forward these documents to the Chairman of the Security Council and the UN Secretary General; (4) to document damages perpetrated by US armed forces in towns and populated localities in Korea, and other atrocities with respect to the civilian population of Korea.¹¹⁷

Political circles of Turkey dismissed the increasing provocations of the Soviet Union in the Security Council as "new games of the Bolsheviks." At the same time, these circles linked this intensification with the retreat of North Korean troops from Seoul and with "the defeat of the Russian policy" as a whole. On 15–18 September 1950, a meeting of Foreign Ministers of the Atlantic Pact member-states was held in New York. It discussed the candidature of Turkey.

Preliminary discussions showed that the United States, Britain and France were not favorable to Turkey's membership in NATO. They considered it inexpedient to expand the geographical framework of the Atlantic Pact. On 11 September, US Ambassador George Wadsworth met with President C. Bayar. President openly told the Ambassador that he was apprehensive of the low spirits of Turks, should unexpected developments occur in New York. "It is impossible to intimidate our nation through propaganda pressure only. But there are some doubts. We feel that our future is in danger." Bayar explained to the US Ambassador that within the framework of the Korean issue Turkey had demonstrated the purity of its intentions in respect of the United States and that now America was concerned about Turkey's facing pressures in isolation.¹¹⁸

After Turkey's request to join NATO was denied, President Bayar held consultations with the Chief of General Staff Nuri Yamut and Foreign Minister F. Köprülü, and then convened an urgent meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers. The Soviet Embassy reported that NATO's refusal to admit Turkey to the organization caused a strongly negative response within the country's political circles. Turkish newspapers published a series of articles condemning NATO member-states' unfair attitude toward Turkey. Some newspapers even hinted at the oncoming resignation of Menderes. To sugar the pill, NATO member-states, pressured by the United States, had to hint at Turkey's possible participation in military plans within the Mediterranean. On 20 September, US Secretary of State Acheson submitted to Turkish Ambassador F. C. Erkin proposals of NATO Foreign Ministers on the probability of Turkey's involvement in the Mediterranean security projects, as well as on the formation of "particular military connections" between the NATO Mediterranean Military Committee and the Turkish General Staff. It was pointed out that Turkey might take part in devising Mediterranean security plans jointly with the United States, France, Italy and Britain. Acheson's note said that "the North Atlantic Council, owing to the debates over security issues, indicated its desire to take adequate measures. Should Turkey wish it, Turkey may attend the work of the Atlantic Pact on military planning of the Mediterranean defense." A similar proposal was forwarded to Greece as well, and the latter accepted it.¹¹⁹

A joint meeting of the Supreme Military Council and the Cabinet of Ministers was held under the leadership of A. Menderes on 21 October. The meeting announced the adoption of the aforementioned proposal; in other words, Turkey agreed "to establish special relations" with the Atlantic Pact Mediterranean group. A group of officers from the General Staff military mission was formed to prepare and discuss a draft agreement on the subject.¹²⁰ The government presented this action as one more step toward joining NATO. In early October, a delegation of officers under the command of the head of the Operations Department of the Turkish General Staff Ü. Egili left for Tokyo, then visited Korea and finally arrived in the United States. Concurrently, debates over a bilateral security pact between Greece and Turkey started. The debates embraced Turkey and Greece's participation in Mediterranean security planning. Dealing with identical questions were the talks of 20–21 October in Rome, also attended by Köprülü. Irrespective of countries being presented to this organization, the Turks welcomed this as anti-Communist action. In the meanwhile, the Soviet Embassy in Ankara was of a different opinion—it did not consider relations between Turkey and Greece to be strong

enough—and informed Moscow that this friendship rested on flimsy foundations. Touching upon relations between Turkey and the Near Eastern countries, the Embassy wrote:

Following the failure of the Turkish *démarche* concerning the country's membership of NATO, Turkish diplomacy has tried to secure Turkey's election to the UN Security Council. As is known, Lebanon and Turkey advanced their candidatures from the Near Eastern group of states. Also, twelve rounds of voting did not bring the necessary quantity of votes to the competitors. After Lebanon withdrew its candidacy, Turkey was elected to the UN Security Council by fifty-three votes.

The Soviets tried to take advantage of the voting process to force a wedge between Turkey and the Arab countries and hamper Turkey's election to the UN Security Council as a temporary member of this structure. In connection with this, Sarper maintained that Turkey's election to the Security Council would not damage Turkish-Arab or, specifically, Turkish-Lebanese relations. Of the same view was Syrian Ambassador Emir Adil Aslan who came out on behalf of all Arab Ambassadors accredited in Ankara.¹²¹

Addressing the Turkish Parliament on November 1, 1950, C. Bayar clarified the issue of the country's foreign policy. In the first instance, he clarified the situation around the Korean War, the appeal to the UN and the dispatching of Turkish troops abroad. Bayar pointed out that this war tested the strength of the UN and concurrently uncovered some weakness within the structure. To his thinking, Turkey had performed its duty, adequately responding to the UN Security Council's call. Then the President shifted to the question of the Atlantic Pact, saying that Turkey wanted to extend the system of collective security to the Eastern Mediterranean. On behalf of NATO Council, the US Secretary of State invited the Turkish government to take part in planning the Mediterranean defense system. Turkey accepted this proposal, hoping this would strengthen its own defensive potential. Bayar said: "We're hopeful that the talks will yield fruitful results for Mediterranean security, both from military and legal points of view." Bayar's speech focused on the development of relations between Turkey and Britain, the USA, France, and Italy. As for relations with the USSR, Bayar stressed the following: "No changes in our relations with the Soviet Union, as compared with the previous year, have so far occurred." And nothing more. The Turkish President even spoke more about Ireland than he did about the USSR. In the final part of his speech Bayar noted the growth of Turkey's role in the international arena, explaining this by the fact that

the Turkish Republic, from the date of its establishment, has been based on Atatürk's principle "peace in the country and peace in the world." This policy finds its parallel in our fidelity to international obligations and fulfillment of duties arising from these obligations. The correct foreign policy of our government based on these obligations, the legal equality of peoples and principles of international political, economic and cultural cooperation, joint security and good neighborhood relations, is welcomed by all freedom-loving nations which adhere to the same ideals. Turkey's election to the Security Council is direct evidence of this understanding and appreciation of our country's prestige in the international arena.¹²²

Contributing to the Turkey's authority was also the heroism of Turkish soldiers in Korea. On the one hand, it strengthened the ambitions of the DP government to join NATO; on the other hand, it reduced to naught all the attempts of the opposition to criticize the government for participating in the war. In response to the inquiry by the deputy from the National Party O. Bölükbası, debates started in the Grand National Assembly on 11 December. The author of the inquiry declared that he did not oppose Turkey's involvement in the Korean war in principle. But this was done without the consent of Parliament and contrary to the Constitution of the

country and Article 43 of UN Charter. They insisted that the government had sent its troops outside Turkey without serious guarantees from the United States. National Party Deputies to the Parliament also affirmed the unconstitutional nature of the troops' dispatch to Korea.

To justify the decision of the Turkish government, Prime Minister A. Menderes and Foreign Minister F. Köprülü produced the following arguments:

(1) No decision of the Grand National Assembly was required to send troops to Korea, since the question was about measures aimed at protecting peace, not a declaration of war; (2) actions of the government were in line with Article 42 of the UN Charter; (3) the dispatch of Turkish troops to Korea had strengthened the UN and thus contributed to the security of Turkey.

During the discussions Menderes and Köprülü repeatedly stated that the views of the authors of the inquiry and their interpretation of the UN Charter were consistent with the Soviet point of view, and not those of most UN member-states. Asked if the Turkish military unit in Korea was strong enough, Menderes replied: "I have no right to make any statements on the issue, because the interests of my country are involved." Nevertheless, the discussions ended with the passage of a vote of confidence in the government: 311 votes against 39 with one abstention, and the government of Menderes stood its first test.¹²³

From the first days of 1951, military and political contacts between Turkey and Britain and the United States had assumed a more intensive character. C. Bayar instructed his Ambassador to America, Britain and France to be persistent in pushing for membership of NATO. The Turkish Foreign Ministry maintained close relations with these Ambassadors. On 10 January, commander of the US Navy in the Atlantic and Mediterranean, Admiral Robert Carney arrived in Ankara and was received by President Bayar. The head of the state indicated his satisfaction with a level of military and political collaboration between Turkey and the United States. With its population of twenty million, Turkey could have been useful in making a contribution to the democratic world; however, it was not allowed into the Atlantic Pact, while weaker countries were members of this structure. At the same time, Bayar declared, "Turkey's non-participation in the pact is unlikely to change its policy. We shall uphold our principles."¹²⁴

Admiral Carney also had meetings with the Chief of the General Staff, and commanders of naval and air forces of Turkey. On 12 January he made a statement to the press, saying that the General Staff had discussed questions of mutual interest, and negotiated on the issue of Mediterranean defense.¹²⁵ Commander of British land forces in the Near East General Robertson, who had discussed the role of Turkey in ensuring security in the Near and Middle East, was visiting Malta on 22–24 January 1951. General Robertson believed that Turkey was receiving weapons from America. Hence, it was America's responsibility to decide on the appropriate employment of Turkish influence, i.e. in the Near East.¹²⁶ On 22 February, Robertson came to Ankara and acquainted the Turkish military and politicians with his arguments. In particular, he was received by Turkish Defense Minister Inge, Chief of the General Staff Nuri Yamut, Foreign Minister F. Köprülü and, finally, President C. Bayar. During his meetings Robertson tried to dissuade Turks from joining NATO, and instead recommended them to create a security system in the Middle East in association with Britain. Note that Robertson also inspected military colleges and institutions of Ankara and Istanbul. In

connection with this, the Soviet Embassy reported to Moscow that “Robertson’s tour across the Near East and his visit to Turkey were attributable to the attempts of Americans and the British to intensify Near Eastern countries’ involvement in the US-British aggressive plans.”¹²⁷

To consolidate Turkey’s security, the Turkish Ambassador F. C. Erkin applied to the US government with a proposal to join the Anglo-French Alliance with Turkey of 1939. Turkish political circles believed that US participation in the treaty would enhance its defensive capability. However, the United States declared, “they are not ready to join the trilateral treaty or prepare a new formula.” It was necessary to strengthen US power before assuming new obligations. On the other hand, reports came from Washington that “the United States did not wish to separate Turkey from Greece and even Iran and strove to extend guarantees to all three countries as the first line of defense of the Middle East with its huge oil reserves.”¹²⁸

The incompatibility of the British and American views on Turkey’s role in the region encouraged the United States to step up its activity in the region. A conference of American diplomatic representatives in the countries of the Near and Middle East was held in mid-February 1951 in Istanbul under the chairmanship of US Assistant to the Secretary of State George McGhee. Concurrently, a conference of US aviation attachés in the same countries was held in Ankara. Also, US Aviation Minister Thomas Finletter visited Turkey to attend the Istanbul Conference of 14–21 February. Attending this conference were also Assistant to the US Secretary of State, Head of Near and Middle East and Africa Department G. McGhee, Head of the Turkey, Greece and Iran Department William Rowntree, Head of the Near East Department Jones Lewis, commander of the US Navy in the eastern part of the Atlantic and Mediterranean Robert Carney, US Ambassador to Ankara George Wadsworth, US Ambassador to Teheran Henry Grady, US Ambassador to Athens John Peurifoy, US Ambassador to Baghdad Edward Crocker, US Ambassador to Saudi Arabia and Yemen Raymond Haye, US Ambassador to Israel Monnett Davis, US Ambassador to Pakistan Avra Warren, American Delegate-Envoy for Palestinian Settlers in the Near East John Blandfort, US Delegate-Envoy for the Israeli Conciliatory Commission Joseph Palmer, US Envoy in Lebanon Lowell Pinkerton, US Envoy in Syria Kavendish Cannon, US Ambassador to Cairo Gordon Mattison, US Chargé d’Affaires in Transjordan David Fritzlan, First Secretary of the American Embassy in London Ely Palmer, etc.¹²⁹ Prior to the conference McGhee had a two-hour meeting with Köprülü; on 12 February with Bayar and Menderes.¹³⁰ McGhee explained that “the United States attached paramount importance to Turkey’s security and this country would be the first to receive military aid.” McGhee added that in case of Soviet aggression against Turkey a big war would break out. He explained that the question of American obligations on the matter had first been raised in the course of the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty. The question became more pressing due to Turkey’s aspiration to join NATO. “For the United States, relations with the North Atlantic Treaty are the first obligation. The decision has been adopted by Congress following long debates and reflections.”¹³¹ McGhee acknowledged Turkey’s participation in the Korean War and the heroism of the Turkish army. In fact, according to UN statistics, up to December 1951, Turkey was in fourth place, after the Republic of Korea, the US and Britain, in terms of its casualties of war (456 dead, 1,352 wounded, 404 captured or

missing).¹³² The Assistant to the US Secretary of State pointed out that owing to the combat operations US expenditures rose from \$13 billion to \$50 billion. Nevertheless, McGhee promised that if the opportunity presented itself the United States would conclude a security pact with Turkey. Also, McGhee reaffirmed that US membership in NATO could not be interpreted as disregard for Turkey. Bayar thanked his American interlocutor for his openness, stating:

We live in an indivisible world divided into two. . . . The world is divided; blocs are formed. We have accepted military aid from one of these blocs. If we are attacked, you will fortify us. However, there is a bloc ready to attack, and we have no security guarantees. Turkey cannot reconcile itself with the situation where one bloc is adverse to us and another declines from admitting us.¹³³

Bayar repeated this idea on 23 February when receiving British Ambassador Noel Charles and Brian Robertson. By all appearances, Turkish requests to join NATO apparently evolved into demands. It was meetings in Ankara and the conference of American diplomats in Istanbul that helped create a favorable atmosphere for Turkey to join NATO. On May 11, 1951, a report of the National Security Council specified that Turkey proved to be the single anti-Communist state in the vicinity of the USSR capable of withstanding the Soviet aggression. It was the geographical location of Turkey that made its defense a strategically important task for the United States. Considering the great interest and moral obligations of the United States before Turkey, the Joint Chiefs of Staff considered it necessary to conclude a security treaty. A report of the National Security Council read as follows: “Before signing a treaty on mutual security between the two countries, the United States should render necessary aid to Turkey and thus prevent Turkey’s falling under the Soviet control. Otherwise, there is a probability of serious political and military damage to US interests.”¹³⁴

Four days later, the United States sent a letter to all NATO members which stressed the necessity of admission of Greece and Turkey to the bloc. On 15 June, a special CIA report provided information about possible Soviet responses to Turkey’s admission to NATO, as well as to the signing of an agreement on the protection of the Mediterranean. The document said as follows: “We consider it unrealistic that the Kremlin could involve itself in a big war because of the signing of a security treaty by Greece and Turkey. Responding to Turkey and Greece entering into the Western treaty, the USSR might unleash intensive psychological warfare, exert political and economic pressures and diplomatic activity within the framework of the UN, and emit strong anti-West propaganda.” The document admitted that the Kremlin might interpret Greece and Turkey’s accession into NATO or the Mediterranean pact as a great threat to its security. The CIA also believed that while the United States openly suggested admitting Greece and Turkey to NATO, Britain and France could desist from rendering aid to these countries, and this may, in turn, excite the Kremlin’s illusions that there were differences between the Western Bloc members.¹³⁵

In mid-July 1951, Britain changed from its previous position and on 18 July, Foreign Minister Herbert Morrison told the House of Commons that Britain would back Turkey and Greece’s entry to NATO.¹³⁶ Finally, on 16–20 September NATO Council of Ministers unanimously voted for Turkey’s invitation to the bloc as a full member of the community.¹³⁷ As soon as the US

initiative was announced, the Political Bureau, with a view to stirring up tensions in international relations, repeatedly discussed the Turkish question. Thus, on August 20, 1951, it discussed an incident of the violation of the state border by a foreign aircraft from the territory of Turkey. However, the Ministry of Defense rejected this information. Meanwhile, the Political Bureau demanded to study the issue once again.¹³⁸ The same meeting of the Political Bureau unilaterally cancelled a trade agreement with Turkey of 8 October 1937, though it decided not to divulge this fact.¹³⁹

In August 1951, Deputy Head of the Near and Middle East Department under the Soviet Foreign Ministry Semyon Bazarov sent a 135-page memorandum to the CC CPSU, personally to Y. M. Lomakin, Deputy Chairman of the Foreign Political Commission. The report discussed the formation of the People's Republican, Democratic and National Parties, their position after the 1950 elections. In comparing the activities of the People's Republican and Democratic Parties, Bazarov wrote "the PRP at one time initiated a policy to subordinate Turkey to American imperialism, while the DP continues to pursue this line." The author explained this by the recommendations of Americans. With reference to the information of the Soviet Embassy in Ankara, Bazarov noted that "the United States are interested in preserving order and tranquility in Turkey, so they "recommend" leaders of the DP and PRP to keep to a more conciliatory policy with each other." The memorandum paid much attention to analysis of the confrontation between the political parties of the country.¹⁴⁰

At the same time, the Soviet leaders decided, for propaganda purposes, to exploit the flight of well-known poet Nazım Hikmet from Turkey, who in June 1951 emigrated to the USSR. Deputy Chairman of the Foreign Policy Commission under the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union B. Ponomarev informed Stalin on 29 June 1951 that Hikmet opposed the sending of Turkish troops to Korea on US instructions.¹⁴¹ After Hikmet's arrival in Moscow, on the suggestion of the Turkish Communist Party, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR passed a decision to intensify anti-Turkish propaganda from the Soviet territory. With that end in mind, it was decided to improve the quality of radio broadcasts in Turkish and strengthen their ideological orientation. It was decided to set up a so-called "Independent Turkish radio station" in the territory of Romania. It was considered to be expedient to attract Hikmet for collaboration, as well as to draw specialists from Bulgaria, Transcaucasia and Central Asia.

Chairman of the Special Commission of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union for Relations with Foreign Communist Parties Vahan Grigoryan sent on August 31, 1951, a note to Molotov entitled "On the Quality of Radio Broadcasts to Turkey of the Radio Committee under the Council of Ministers of the USSR," which proposed to focus the attention of radio listeners on the treacherous political course of the government of Bayar-Menderes, which attempted to link Turkey to the North Atlantic bloc, to unmask the British-American differences in Turkey and the anti-popular policy of the Turkish government which sent troops to Korea, as well as the reactionary nature of "working legislation."¹⁴²

The Soviet leaders meant to use Hikmet in the struggle against Turkey and especially the Near Eastern policy of the United States. It has to be kept in mind that the Soviets were, at the same

time, apprehensive of Hikmet. It was no mere coincidence that two weeks after Hikmet's arrival in Moscow, head of the First Department under the special section of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union A. Struchkov had prepared "compromising materials" on Hikmet and on July 12, 1951, forwarded them to Molotov and V. Grigoryan. The materials mentioned that back in 1935, G. Dimitrov received a report, which complained of the fact that Hikmet was engaged in creating groupings of intellectuals and students around him. The report added that his grandfather Farid Enver Pasha was a retired general, and his uncle Ali Fuat Pasha was Turkish Ambassador to Moscow, and finally his uncle (father's brother) Rifat bey was governor (*vali*) in Konya and had later distributed a pan-Turkist newspaper in Ankara.¹⁴³

In a letter addressed to Stalin dated January 15, 1952, V. Grigoryan provided information about suspicious behavior of N. Hikmet at an international youth festival of 1951 in Berlin. He advised "Arabs were carrying Hikmet in their arms from a car stop to a tribune of the meeting. After that incident Hikmet bragged several times: 'You see how they are welcoming me. Tell comrades in Moscow about it. Should my authority be exploited, this would help reunify democratic forces in the Orient.' Grigoryan pointed out that while in Berlin, Hikmet, in the presence of strangers, openly discussed with the representatives of Middle East Communist Parties questions arising from the organization of illegal communication between the Parties and the possibility of illicit crossings over the Turkish border. He also put forward an idea for the creation of an information bureau of Middle East Communist Parties. Simultaneously, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Syrian and Lebanese Communist Party Hasan Koreytem stated that N. Hikmet behaved imprudently and "may commit very many serious political mistakes, including violation of the rules of security."¹⁴⁴ In September 1951, Hikmet visited Bulgaria. Soviet special services remained dissatisfied with his behavior, especially with respect to Turkish political emigrants. Hikmet's attempts to meet with these emigrants were resolutely suppressed by his escort and previously arranged meetings were frustrated.¹⁴⁵

On 15 October 1951, Greece and Turkey's entry into NATO was officially formalized in London (formal accession came into effect on February 15, 1952).¹⁴⁶ Two weeks later, on 31 October the Political Bureau approved the text of a note to the Turkish government. The note underlined that Turkey's invitation into the bloc pursued an aim to employ its territory for aggression against the Soviet Union and create a military base near its borders. The Soviet government demanded explanations from the Turkish party and warned that it would not remain indifferent to the issue.¹⁴⁷ The Soviet leaders reacted angrily to the results of a meeting held by military representatives of the United States, Britain, France and Turkey on 13-14 October 1951 in Ankara.¹⁴⁸ A related report explained Turkey's desire to enter NATO as being due to the pro-American policy of the Menderes government. The Radio Committee and press organs of the Soviet Union were "recommended" to intensify "unmasking" of the anti-popular policy of the Democratic Party and US aggressive plans in the Near and Middle East.¹⁴⁹ On 24 November, the Political Bureau reacted favorably to a Bulgarian proposal on closing borders with Turkey and instructed the Soviet Ambassador to Sofia to make the Bulgarian government announce its decision.¹⁵⁰

The idea of Turkey's entering into "the Middle Eastern Command" received an angry response from the Soviet government. On November 24, 1951, the Soviet Foreign Ministry sent a note to the governments of the United States, Britain, France and Turkey. It said that the creation of the Middle Eastern Command along the borders of the Soviet Union was a manifestation of the West's aggressive plans and Moscow could not remain indifferent to this fact. Simultaneously, Soviet leaders applied to Middle Eastern countries warning them against the purposes of this Command and exploitation of the countries of the region within the context of preparations for a new world war. The response of the Turkish government dated December 18, 1951, told the Soviet government that the countries of the Near and Middle East were "absolutely free to join or not" the Middle East Command. The note explained the "Command" as being the result of "joint efforts in the system of defense of the region specifically and the world as a whole as a necessary pre-requisite for the development of social and economic progress." The note added that this step was based on the right of nations to self-defense, as set forth in the UN Charter.¹⁵¹ It should be noted that the note of the Turkish government of 18 December provoked a new note from the Soviet government. On January 28, 1952, the Turkish Ambassador to Moscow was invited to the Soviet Foreign Ministry where Deputy Foreign Minister A. Gromyko handed him a note of the Soviet government concerning the Middle Eastern command.¹⁵²

Meanwhile, the Soviet Embassy in Ankara drew up a report for 1951. In April 1952 Vyshinsky distributed three parts of the report to the Political Bureau members. The parts dealt with the political situation in Turkey, Turkish-American relations and Turkey's attitude toward the USSR. Vyshinsky wrote:

In 1951, the Turkish government showed no intentions to improve relations with the Soviet Union; instead, it demonstrated an openly hostile anti-Soviet policy. Fully backed by Turkish political circles, pan-Turkists intensified their anti-Soviet activity. Americans support them, hoping to exploit them for subversive work in the USSR and the country of people's democracy.¹⁵³

Thus, despite all the attempts of the USSR, the Grand National Assembly unanimously approved on 18 February 1952 the fact of Turkey's accession to NATO. However, the USSR kept on struggling against Turkey up to the death of Stalin on March 5, 1953. On March 11, 1953, Molotov received a Turkish delegation headed by C. Açıkalın to attend the funeral ceremony of Stalin. Molotov declared: "Since the government of Turkey decided to send a delegation to Moscow, the Soviet government welcomes this fact."¹⁵⁴ It was no mere coincidence that the Soviet government changed its attitude toward Turkey. On May 30, 1953, Molotov invited Ambassador Faik Hozar to come to the Soviet Foreign Ministry, where he read a text of the statement:

As is known, owing to the expiry of the Soviet-Turkish treaty of 1925, the question of the settlement of the Soviet-Turkish relations has been touched upon during official talks between representatives of the two states. These talks dealt with territorial claims of the Armenian and Georgian SSR, as well as some ideas of the Soviet government regarding the Black Sea Straits. . . . To maintain good friendly relations and consolidate peace and security, the governments of the Armenian and Georgian SSR consider it possible to relinquish their territorial claims against Turkey. As for the Straits, the Soviet government has revised its previous position on the issue and considers it possible to ensure the security of the USSR in the Straits on conditions equally acceptable both for the USSR and Turkey. Thus, the Soviet government declares that the Soviet Union has no territorial claims to Turkey.

Having read out the text, Molotov handed over the note to the Turkish Ambassador. Faik Hozar thanked Molotov, saying that he would inform his government about the note and added that he could not respond to the note without the instructions of his government. But in his personal opinion, “This statement of the Soviet government is a friendly gesture with respect to Turkey.” Molotov expressed his hopes that Hozar and the Turkish government would correctly and adequately receive this statement.¹⁵⁵

On 18 July, the Turkish Government made a statement in which it acknowledged the Soviets’ decision of 30 May. Nevertheless, this delayed decision of Moscow could not prevent Ankara’s integration to the West. It should be noted that when the Soviet Union officially relinquished its territorial claims to Turkey on May 30, 1953, this question had already lost its currency. As compared with 1945, the international situation had noticeably changed by 1953: Turkey turned into an ally of the US and Western countries and had become a NATO member. In spite of the fact that the misguided and venturesome policy of Stalin turned the Soviet-Turkish relations into a testing ground for the Cold War, Turkey had successfully stood the test.

NOTES

1. *Ulus*, January 1, 1948.
2. See L. Y. Gibiansky. Forsirovanie sovetsoy blokovoy politiki Kholodnaya voyna. 1945–1963 gg. Istoricheskaya retrospektiva (L. Y. Gibiansky. Enforcing the Soviet Bloc Policy *Cold War: 1945–1963. Historical Retrospective*), pp. 137–186.
3. From S. Kiktev to V. Zorin. 20.02.1948. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 114, pp. 8, 11.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 92–94.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 94–96.
7. The NSA at the G. Washington University, Doc. 3085; A. Toptygin. Neizvestnyj Beria. Moskva, 2002 (A. Toptygin. *Unknown Beria* Moscow, 2002), p. 170.
8. Decision of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. Draft Note of the Soviet Foreign Ministry to Turkey Regarding a Group of Soviet Citizens Kept at the Turkish Camp. 13.11.1949. // RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 162, v. 41, p. 42; v. 42, p. 130.
9. For more details, see C. Andrew and V. Mitrokhin. *The Sword and the Shield: The Mitrokhin Archive and the Secret History of the KGB*. Basic Books. London, 1999, pp. 89–136; Vostochnaya evropa v dokumentakh rossiyskikh arkhivov. 1944–1953. T. 1, 1944–1948. Moskva-Novosibirsk, 1997 (*Eastern Europe in the Documents of Russian Archives, 1944–1953*. Volume 1. Moscow-Novosibirsk, 1997); Sovetsky faktor v Vostochnoy Evrope. 1944–1953. Dokumenty, T. 1, 1944–1948. Otv. red., vved. T. V. Volokitina. Moskva, 1999 (*Soviet Factor in Eastern Europe, 1944–1953. Documents*. Volume 1, edited by T. V. Volokitina. Moscow, 1999); V. V. Poznyakov. Razvedka, razvedyvatelnaya informatsiya i process prinyatiya resheniy: povorotnye punkty rannego perioda kholodnoy voyny (1944–1953) // Kholodnaya voyna. 1945–1963 gg. Istoricheskaya retrospektiva (V. V. Poznyakov. “Intelligence, Intelligence Information and Decision-Making Process: Turning Points in Early Periods of the Cold War (1944–1953).” In *Cold War, 1945–1963: Historical retrospective*), pp. 321–368.
10. Decision of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. Advice to Comrade Kim Ir-Sen. 12.04.1948. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 162, v. 39, p. 31.
11. E. Athanassopoulou. *Turkey-Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945–1952*, p. 71.
12. *Istanbul*, January 19, 1948.
13. George S. Harris. *Troubled Alliance: Turkish-American Problems in Historical Perspective, 1945–1971*, p. 33.
14. From S. Kiktev to V. Zorin. 20.02.1948. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 114, pp. 13–19.
15. Jonathan Bell. *The Liberal State on Trial: The Cold War and American Politics in the Truman Years*, p. 114.
16. From S. Kiktev to V. Zorin. 13.03.1948. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 115, pp. 12–14.
17. From S. Kiktev to V. Zorin. 20.02.1948. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 114, pp. 86–88.
18. From S. Kiktev to V. Zorin. 20.02.1948. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 114, p. 7.
19. From S. Kiktev to V. Zorin. 13.03.1948. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 115, pp. 37–39.

20. From Diary of V. Zorin. Reception of the Turkish Ambassador F. Z. Akdur. 17.02.1948. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 31, fol. 293, v. 4, pp. 1–2.

21. A. Lavrishev headed the Department of the Balkan Countries from 1946 and later the IV European Department. From 1939, Lavrishev had been on diplomatic service. In 1939–1940, he was the First Secretary of the Soviet Embassy in Bulgaria; in 1940–1944, the Charge d'Affairs of the USSR to Bulgaria; in 1944–1945, the Political Adviser of the Control Commission of the Allied Powers in Bulgaria and Romania.

22. From S. Kiktev to V. Zorin. 13.03.1948. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 115, p. 6.

23. From S. Kiktev to V. Zorin. 17.04.1948. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 115, pp. 99–100.

24. Ibid., p. 164.

25. Ibid., p. 193.

26. Ibid., pp. 194–195.

27. From S. Kiktev to V. Zorin. 18.05.1948. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 116, pp. 90–92.

28. Ibid., pp. 10–12.

29. A. Lavrishev. Record of the Talk with US Ambassador E. Wilson. April 1948. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 31, fol. 293, v. 6, p. 22.

30. Decision of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. Instructions to the Ambassador to Turkey. 29.03.1948. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 162, v. 39, p. 41.

31. Ibid., pp. 41–42.

32. From S. Kiktev to V. Zorin. 18.05.1948. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 116, p. 40.

33. Record of the Talk between A. Lavrishev and Turkish President İ. İnönü. 16.04.1948; Record of the Talk between A. Lavrishev and Turkish Prime Minister H. Saka. 19.04.1948. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 31, fol. 293, v. 6, pp. 27–29.

34. Record of the Talk between A. Lavrishev and Polish Ambassador Druto. 21.04.1948. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 31, fol. 293, v. 6, pp. 25–26.

35. Record of the Talk between A. Lavrishev and British Ambassador Kelly. April 1948. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 31, fol. 293, v. 6, pp. 15–16.

36. From S. Kiktev to V. Zorin. 22.06.1948. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 116, pp. 102, 164.

37. Record of the Talk between A. Lavrishev and N. Sadak. 27.05.1948. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 31, fol. 293, v. 6, p. 30.

38. E. Athanassopoulou. *Turkey-Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945–1952*, pp. 71–72.

39. From S. Kiktev to V. Zorin. 16.08.1948. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 118, pp. 4–5.

40. Ibid., pp. 5–6; For more information, see C. P. Kindleberger. *Marshall Plan Days*. Allen & Unwin. Boston:1987, p. 123.

41. From S. Kiktev to V. Zorin. 16.08.1948. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 118, pp. 7–11.

42. From S. Kiktev to V. Zorin. 28.08.1948. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 119, pp. 78–80.

43. From S. Kiktev to V. Zorin. 09.10.1948. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 119, pp. 98–99.

44. Record of the Talk between A. Lavrishev and Bulgarian Ambassador Angelov. 10.08.1948. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 31, fol. 293, v. 6, p. 70.

45. Record of the Talk between A. Lavrishev and Turkish Prime Minister H. Saka. 07.11.1948. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 31, fol. 293, v. 6, p. 123.

46. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 142, p. 40.

47. Record of the Talk between A. Lavrishev and Turkish Ambassador to Moscow Akdur. 20.11.1948. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 31, fol. 293, v. 6, p. 120.

48. The Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. Results of 1948. 31.12.1948. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 142, p. 42.

49. The Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. Review of Press for December 1–31, 1948. 31.12.1948. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 146, pp. 4–5.

50. Ibid., pp. 6–8.

51. Report to the President by the National Security Council on US Objectives with Respect to Greece and Turkey to Counter Soviet Threats to US Security. March 22, 1949. Washington, p. 8.

52. Record of the Talk between A. Lavrishev and N. Sadak. 25.01.1949. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 32, fol. 300, v. 7, p. 33.

53. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. March 1949. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 142, p. 134.

54. See E. Athanassopoulou. *Turkey-Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945–1952*, pp. 107–113.

55. Ibid., p. 133.

56. Turgay Merin. *Sag'uk Savas, ve Turkiye. 1945–1960*. Ankara, 2006 (Turgay Merin. *Cold War and Turkey, 1945–1960*. Ankara, 2006), p. 137.

57. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. April, 1949. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 143, pp. 6–7.

58. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. April, 1949. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 143, pp. 4–6.

59. *Parliamentary Debates, Commons Official Report*. Volume 462. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1948–1949,

cols. 2335.

60. Report to the President by the National Security Council on US Objectives with Respect to Greece and Turkey to Counter Soviet Threats to US Security, pp. 2–4.
61. See Feridun Cemal Erkin. *Dis, I's,lerinde 34 Yil. Washington Büyükelçilig'i. Cilt. 2, (Feridun Cemal Erkin. Thirty-four Years in Foreign Affairs: Washington Embassy. Volume 2),* p. 48; E. Athanassopoulou. *Turkey-Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945–1952*, pp. 135–136; Cüneyt Akalın. *Sag'uk Savas, ABD ve Turkiye-1. Olaylar-Belgeler (1945–1952).* Istanbul, 2003 (Cüneyt Akalın. *Cold War: USA and Turkey—Events, Documents (1945–1952).* Istanbul, 2003), p. 139
62. The Secretary of State to the Ambassador to Turkey (Wadsworth). 20.03.1950. FRUS, 1950, Vol. V: the Near East, South Asia, and Africa. Washington, DC, 1978, p. 1238.
63. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. May 1949. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 143, pp. 120–123.
64. See E. Athanassopoulou. *Turkey-Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945–1952*, p. 137
65. Y. Lazarev. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. Results of the Political Year. 18.01.1950. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 170, p. 46.
66. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. 10.08.1949. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 145, pp. 111–112.
67. Draft Replies to the Note of the Italian Government on Italy's Joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Notes of the Governments of the USA, Great Britain, and France. 18.09.1949. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 162, v. 41, p. 8.
68. After K. Hasanov was arrested, the Central Committee of the Azerbaijan Communist Party wanted to have a testimonial on him. Dated July 17, 1948, the testimonial said that he was born in 1913 in Jabrayil region of Azerbaijan SSR; in 1935–1937 studied in Moscow, Supreme School of Trade Union; in 1940–1944 attended the Higher Party School under the CC CPSU and collaborated with different party and Soviet bodies. Upon completion of diplomatic faculty of the Higher Party School, Hasanov got was diplomatic rank of attaché and to sent on the Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry. In autumn 1945, he went to work in Iran, but in December of the same year he was recalled by Vyshinsky to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. On January 22, 1946, he was sent to the Soviet Embassy in Ankara for a probation period, upon completion of which Hasanov was appointed Second Secretary of the Soviet Embassy. The testimonial stressed that this appointment occurred without agreement from the Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry. See Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan. Report on K. Hasanov. 17.08.1948. APDPARA, f. 1, r. 33, v. 211, pp. 2–7.
69. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. July 1949. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 144, pp. 164–169.
70. *Ibid.*, pp. 133–137.
71. From a Diary of F. Gusev. Reception of Turkish Ambassador F. Z. Akdur. 19.06.1949. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 32, fol. 300, v. 5, p. 2.
72. Decision of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. Draft Note of the Soviet Foreign Ministry to Turkey on Delivery of Pilot Bort V. K. 26.10.1949. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 162, v. 41, p. 35.
73. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. On Strengthening of Religious Reaction in Turkey. July 1949. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 144, pp. 97–101.
74. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. On Strengthening of Religious Reaction in Turkey. July 1949. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 144, pp. 114–130.
75. Decision of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. To Approve a Draft Telegram Submitted by the Soviet Foreign Ministry to USSR Ambassador to Ankara Lavrishev. 19.11.1949. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 162, v. 42, p. 157.
76. Decision of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. To Agree with the Proposal of the Soviet Foreign Ministry on Sending a Telegram of Congratulations to İ'nönü on behalf of N. Shvernik on the Occasion of the National Holiday. 28.10.1949. RSPHSA, f. 17, r. 3, v. 1078, p. 92.
77. From V. Kostylev to A. Lavrentyev. 04.11.1949. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 146, pp. 139–140.
78. From Diary of A. Gromyko. Reception of Turkish Ambassador M. Teker. 08.12.1949. AFP RF, f. 06, r. 32, fol. 300, v. 2, p. 6.
79. From V. Kostylev to A. Lavrentyev. 11.01.1950. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 170, pp. 122–124.
80. From S. Yemelyanov to M. J. Baghyrov. 16.04.1953. APDPARA, f. 1, r. 39, v. 181, pp. 74–76.
81. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. 17.12.1949. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 170, pp. 6–7.
82. Report on Attitude of the Turkish Government to Anti-Soviet and Nationalistic Organizations. 13.05.1953. AFP RF, f. 0132, r. 36, fol. 325, v. 1, p. 17.
83. See E. Ismayilov. *Vlast i narod. Poslevoenniy stalinizm v Azerbaydzhane. 1945–1953 (E. Ismayilov. Power and People: Postwar Stalinism in Azerbaijan. 1945–1953),* pp. 278–279.
84. T. Kuliyeu, T. Yagubov, S. Yemelyanov, and A. Atakishiyev. Proposals with Respect to Senior Officials and Representatives of Intelligentsia Having Their Relatives in Turkey and with Respect to Persons Who Proved Their Role in the Pro-Turkish Development. 06.10.1950. APDPARA, f. 1, r. 225, v. 15, p. 395.

85. S. Y. Yemelyanov. Report on the Activity of pan-Turkists in Turkey and Iran and on Separatist, Nationalistic, Pan-Turkist, and Pan-Islamist Manifestations in Azerbaijan SSR. 16.04.1953. APDPARA, f. 1, r. 39, v. 181, pp. 80–81.
86. S. Y. Yemelyanov. Report on Hostile Activity of Musavatist and Other Nationalistic Elements against the USSR. 1953. APDPARA, f. 1, r. 37, v. 165, pp. 15–17.
87. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. 07.01.1950. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 170, pp. 120, 123–124.
88. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. 17.12.1949. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 170, pp. 4–12.
89. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. 08.03.1950. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 170, pp. 80–81.
90. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. 07.04.1950. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 172, p. 6.
91. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. 11.05.1950. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 172, p. 119.
92. From the Soviet Embassy in Turkey to the Soviet Foreign Ministry. 10.06.1950. AR CSA, f. 28, r. 4, v. 173, p. 8.
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Conclusion

Archival documents that have become available after the disintegration of the USSR have since made it possible to clarify some details of the Cold War. Analysis of new documents and materials shows that Soviet territorial claims to Turkey and demands to establish joint control over the Straits constituted one of the main episodes of the Cold War. At that period, the term “Cold War” had not yet come into fashion, so diplomatic correspondence, military and political communiqués attributable to Turkey refer to the notion of a “war of nerves.”

At the end of the Second World War, the Soviet leader Joseph Stalin was dissatisfied with the borders between the USSR and Iran and Turkey. Owing to the euphoria of the triumph in the war, the Soviet leadership was engaged in an ambitious redrawing of the map of the world, though it failed to do this in practice. This research shows that the Turkish episode of the Cold War came as a result of Stalin’s intrigues and the whims of Kremlin. However, the illegal demands and claims of the Soviets and their military and political blackmail yielded no desirable results. The Turkish people and state, and its political parties, came out of the Cold War with credit. While Soviet pressures in Eastern Europe and the Balkans led to political splits in those countries, the situation in Turkey caused unprecedented unity in its political circles. In the first instance, this was a great historical victory of the nation and its leaders.

It should be noted that the foundations of this victory were laid in the pre-war and war years owing to Turkey’s prudent political course. Different from many countries, in its relations with leading powers of the globe, Ankara emphasized the security of Turkey. This became apparent in concluding a treaty of alliance with Britain and France, entering into alliance with the USSR and concluding a treaty on neutrality with Germany.

It should be taken into account that Turkish political figures, even in the crucible of combat operations, succeeded in getting the country out of the war without any losses. In contrast to the opinion of British and American politicians, Ankara did not let the Soviet army onto Turkish territory and thus prefigured its postwar destiny. The historical experience once again confirmed that Soviet domination in the countries of Eastern Europe and the Balkans commenced after the Red Army entered the region as liberator but later turned into an army of occupation. After the war, the Soviet Union launched an anti-Turkish propaganda campaign, which accused Turkey of collaboration with Germany; however, the latest archival documents make it possible to identify Turkey’s place in the World War.

During the war, leaders of the Allies repeatedly pointed out that Turkey’s neutrality contributed to the victory of the Allies. This was reflected in a Soviet Foreign Ministry note to the Turkish government. However, the Soviet army subsequently seized the initiative and began pressuring Turkey, and Turkish-Soviet relations became strained. It would be appropriate to

note that Turkey had always been a subject of various talks; however, the territorial claims, the question of bases in the Straits and the idea of joint control over the Straits became a part of the Soviet strategic plans in 1944 only.

During the years 1945–1953, when the Soviet Union was transformed into a super-power, Turkey was the only country from the Baltic to the Black Seas that escaped the Soviet yoke. However, Ankara paid a heavy price to attain this goal. Inspired by the triumph over fascist Germany, the Soviets put forward claims to the Straits and the regions of Kars, Ardahan, and Artvin, and these claims remained effective until May 1953. Perpetually threatened and blackmailed, Turkey had to survive in the “war of nerves” and maintained a great army, thus damaging its economy, which served the interests of the Soviet Union. Contributing to the Soviet plans of suppressing Turkey were the South Caucasian Republics of Armenia and Georgia. A wave of nationalism stirred up by Moscow proved to be the weakest link in Stalin’s intrigues. Attempts to exploit Armenia and Georgia as a means of overwhelming Turkey received no positive response abroad.

The world realized who stood behind the repatriation of Armenians to Armenian SSR. This primitive trick was opportunely unbridled, so the policy of making territorial claims did not prove to be fortuitous for the Soviets. Even worse, the “great repatriation” of 1946–1949 left its distressing imprint on the fate of Armenians. However, the program of repatriation failed to seize Kars, Ardahan and Artvin, and it was Azerbaijanis residing in Armenia who had to pay for this mistake. To resettle repatriates in Soviet Armenia and improve their living conditions, in December 1947 Stalin evicted 53,000 native Azerbaijanis from Armenia.

The deportation of Azerbaijanis from Armenia proved to be a tragedy for peoples of the South Caucasus. Georgia’s and Armenia’s appeals to Moscow demanding territorial concessions from Azerbaijan, as well as identical territorial claims of the foreign Armenian political parties and nationalistic organizations to Azerbaijan and Georgia, became manifestation of the “war of nerves” in the region. Henry Kissinger’s term “Stalin’s Bazaar” is an eloquent testimony to the matter. The “Stalin’s Bazaar” policy regarding the eastern provinces of Turkey and the Straits manifested itself in November 1940 when Stalin instructed Molotov during his talks with G. Dimitrov. Kissinger wrote: “Territorial demands were being made against Turkey, along with a request for Soviet bases in the Straits—very much along the lines of the demands Stalin had made to Hitler on November 25, 1940.”¹

It would be appropriate to recall that Stalin’s plan of evicting Turks from Europe resulted in subsequent tragic events. Under a decision of the State Defense Committee dated May 21, 1944, Turks were evicted from the Crimean peninsula. Note that in conformity with this decision, 183,135 Crimean Turks were exiled to Uzbekistan and remote regions of the Russian Federation. Under another decision of the State Defense Committee dated July 30, 1944, deportation of Turks started on 20 September from bordering regions with Turkey, and 69,869 were exiled from Georgia to Central Asia. On Stalin’s instructions, deportation of Azerbaijanis from Armenia started on December 23, 1947. Under a decision of the Political Bureau dated April 4, 1949, the remaining Turks were evicted from the Black Sea littoral and Transcaucasia to the Tomsk region “for eternal deportation.” So came an end to Stalin’s

purges. In the second half of the 1950's when the cult of Stalin's personality was unmasked, the tragic history of his deeds was disclosed and repressed people rehabilitated, yet none of them was allowed to return home. Turks' appeal to the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the USSR for permission to return to native places in the southern parts of Georgia was rejected on April 8, 1956. Crimean Turks shared their fate. Secretary of the Georgian Communist Party P. Kovanov wrote:

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia objects to the return to their native places of persons previously evicted from border regions of the Republic, since lands in these regions have already been occupied and developed by new settlers. The return of the former residents will create instability on the border; especially because many of those evicted in 1944 had kinship ties with residents of Turkey. Therefore we consider it necessary to leave the Decree of the Presidium of Supreme Council of the USSR dated 8 April 1956 in force.²

Note that the Turkish population in the Balkan countries suffered the same tragedy. Stalin failed to establish his standards in the Straits; still, he succeeded in evicting Turks from Bulgaria and other Balkan countries. All these actions aimed to pressure Turkey. Under powerful Soviet pressure, Turkey had to fix its eyes on the West. After the liquidation of the Soviet-Turkish treaty of 1925 there remained no legal basis for the protection of Turkey from Soviet encroachments. The strengthening of the Transcaucasian military district after the war, military preparations in Iranian Azerbaijan and in Bulgaria, plans to deploy military bases in the Mediterranean and the Near East—all these were an eloquent testimony to the aspiration of the Soviets to encircle Turkey. Beyond any doubt, the Truman Doctrine and Turkey's entry into NATO came as a military and political result of Soviet pressures. In February 1955, the US National Security Council prepared a memorandum on US policy regarding Turkey, which indicated that from 1947 to 1954 the United States had rendered military aid to Turkey worth \$704.3 million, and from April 1, 1948 to 1954—technical and economic aid worth \$262 million. Turkey employed this aid to carry out large-scale programs directed at developing the country's economy and modernizing military objects.³

So, it was the Soviets with their blackmail and threats that compelled Turkey to become a strategic ally of the United States. This strategic partnership, which had been formed at the end of the 1940s and the beginning of the 1950s, still endures. Thus, the start of the Turkish crisis was the first stage of the Cold War. Some researchers date the completion of the crisis at the end of 1946, others at the beginning of 1947. However, new archival documents are indicative that this crisis lasted until the last days of Stalin. True, commencing from the end of the 1940s the political and military importance of the Soviet claims had already lessened; nevertheless, the USSR did not officially relinquish its claims, and therefore, "the northern danger" still proved to be a source of worry for Turkey. It has to be kept in mind that the Soviet claims were so absurd and groundless that during his conversation with F. Chuyev, Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov had to admit that they were unfair. When discussing the Straits' issue, Molotov declared that if Turkey were a socialist country, it would be worth discussing.⁴ Molotov wrote that in the last days of his life Stalin was particularly obstinate and Molotov had to insist on demanding the Dardanelles, as Milyukov did. Stalin instructed Molotov to focus on joint control over the Straits. However, Molotov confessed that this formulation was not correct.

But he had to do as he was ordered. The question was raised in 1945, which, to Molotov's thinking, was inopportune and had no prospects for success.⁵

Some authors, including American researcher G. Roberts, linked the Soviet Black Sea policy and aspiration for the Straits with the "Georgian heart" of Stalin. Roberts wrote in *Stalin's Wars* that "Soviet Black Sea bases were close to Stalin's Georgian heart and as always he accorded high priority to the control of vital economic resources such as oil."⁶ We mainly agree with this phrase. However, the analysis of documents provides for strong evidence regarding the roots of the Soviet policy in the Black Sea, which go far beyond Stalin's Georgian origin.

It is noteworthy that the expansion of the borders of the USSR in the postwar period and the establishment of "friendly governments" along the new borders was a starting point of the Stalin-Molotov doctrine. Despite the powerful ideological expansion of the Soviets, the attraction of researchers and scientific institutions to the process, and the search for "ethnic supporters" on the shores of the Black Sea and in the eastern *vilayets* of Turkey, in spite of "Bolshevik experiments" among Communists and leftists, no political force was found in Turkey to perform a function of "friendly government." As is seen from a report of the US Embassy in Turkey to Washington, the Soviet pressures actually intensified Turkey's resolve to withstand them. Note that there were no differences between the authorities and the opposition in the matter of resisting the Soviet threat. It was no mere coincidence that the government of Bayar-Menderes continued the political course formed by İsmet İnönü.

Research into archival documents reaffirms that when laying claims against Turkey the Soviet Union concurrently created problems for itself. In revising the political line of Stalin and battling against the Malenkov-Molotov-Kaganovich grouping, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Nikita Khrushchev skillfully made use of the mistakes of his political opponents. During June 1957 plenum of the Communist party, Khrushchev moved onto the offensive against Molotov:

We had close relations with Turks after the bourgeois revolution. For example, comrade Voroshilov was an honorary citizen of Izmir. Turks have not yet renounced his citizenship though they have had all grounds to do that. We defeated Germany, and we had our head filled with success. The Turks are our friends. Let us write a note and do you think they will immediately give us the Dardanelles? Not on your life! The Dardanelles is not Turkey; it's the pivot of the nation. In fact, we spat upon Turks. And they say we harbored a grudge against them. It was Georgians headed by Beria and some others who stirred up this provocation. There are 300,000 Ukrainians in Canada but that's not to say that Canada belongs to the Soviet Union. It's stupid. At any rate, we've lost friendly Turkey and now there are American bases in the south that are targeted against our south. Comrade Molotov was Foreign Minister and it is interesting how he argued his claims when he handed his notes to Turkey.⁷

Then Khrushchev pointed to the difficult consequences of this policy, saying that these mistakes helped American imperialism consolidate itself in the region.⁸

Harsh criticism against the Stalin cult of personality at the twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was followed by a tendency toward normalization of relations with Turkey. Senior Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party officials Boris Ryurikov and V. Ivanov considered Hikmet's application for adoption of Soviet citizenship as inappropriate with the spirit of the epoch. They pointed out that

important steps have to be made to normalize relations with Turkey, having been intentionally torpedoed by Beria's gang. . . . Hikmet's admittance to Soviet citizenship in 1956 could be interpreted as a challenge to the Turkish government and damage the normalization process. In appreciating Hikmet's aspiration to link his destiny with the Soviet Union, it would, nevertheless, be inappropriate to raise this question today.⁹

After Molotov's statement in May 1953 and Khrushchev's declarations in the mid-1950s, relations between the two countries still remained unsettled. Turkey was still under the effect of threats and the intimidation campaign carried out by the Soviets in the second half of the 1940s and beginning of 1950s. At the same time, newly discovered documents are indicative that Turkish political circles and press exaggerated, as a rule, the Soviet threat. It was attributable, on the one hand, to the lack of information about the subsequent steps of the USSR, and, on the other hand, it was dictated by the necessity of re-orientating the public opinion toward integration into Western structures. Also, in the second half of the 1950s there occurred some crisis events that intensified tensions in Soviet-Turkish relations. In September 1957, in conformity with KGB plans regarding the Kurdish problem and territorial issues between Syria and Turkey, Moscow sent a note to Ankara. Simultaneously, Soviet troops began concentrating in the Caucasus, and Marshal K. Rokossovsky was appointed commander of the district. However, in October 1957 the Soviet leaders declared that no war with Turkey would be unleashed. An identical situation took place in Iran in the course of the coup d'état of 1958.¹⁰ Relations between the two countries did not reach the point of war; however, the Soviet leaders conceded that the country's high missile and nuclear potential seriously worried Turkey. In summer 1958, during his talks with the Chinese leader Mao Zedong, Khrushchev reaffirmed that he kept his enemies in awe by his missiles: "Turks were told that three or four missiles would be enough to destroy the country."¹¹

Despite the calls of Soviet leaders to improve relations with Turkey, Soviet special services went on exploiting in the 1950–60s the Kurdish and Armenian factors in the Near East to oppose Turkey. The intentions of Aleksandr Shelepin, chairman of KGB, to exploit Kurds residing on the territory of Turkey to destabilize the situation in this country and expand ties with foreign Armenian organizations were designed to weaken Ankara. Foreign Armenian organizations, which laid territorial claims to Turkey and other neighboring countries, fell under the influence of the Soviet Communist Party. On January 15, 1952, the Political Bureau, instigated by the Soviet Foreign Ministry and foreign policy commission, adopted a secret decision on allocating financial aid worth 40,600 rubles for the issue of *Lusarsakh* newspaper by the Culture Union of the French Armenians. The money was transferred to the account of the Soviet Embassy in Paris and then for its intended use. The mission was entrusted to Foreign Minister Molotov, his Deputy A. Gromyko, Chairman of the commission for foreign policy Vahan Grigoryan and Minister of Finance Arseni Zverev.¹² Soviet assistance to foreign Armenian organizations lasted until the collapse of the USSR. For example, a decision of the Central Committee, dated August 14, 1986, and prepared on the basis of recommendations of the Head of KGB V. Chebrikov and Secretary of the Central Committee A. Yakovlev, instructed the Soviet Ministry of Finance to allot the KGB 60,000 rubles (US\$ 85,000) to be sent to the editorial offices of Armenian newspapers published in Lebanon, France, USA and Argentina.¹³

In mid-1950s, the Armenian Church intensified its activities concerning territorial claims to

Turkey and the neighboring Soviet republics. On 12 May 1956, Head of the Armenian Church, Catholicos Vazgen I sent two letters to the Chairman of the Soviet Council of Ministers N. Bulganin. In one of them, he talked about the role of the Armenian Church in the history of the Armenian people and said that the wishes of the Armenians had come true under Soviet rule. Among other hopes, he expressed his wish that the privileges granted to the Armenian Church in Stalin's period would be implemented. The letter particularly noted: "According to the kind decision of the former Chairman of the Soviet Council of Ministers, the late J. Stalin, of April 19, 1945, Echmiadzin was given privileges, which, due to the passivity of either clergymen of the church or local executive bodies, have not been implemented up to now."¹⁴

In the second letter, Vazgen I put forward more serious issues. On behalf of foreign Armenians, he demanded to join the territories of Mountainous Garabagh and Nakhchivan regions of Azerbaijan, as well as Akhalkalaki region of Georgia to Armenia. In connection with this issue he wrote:

More than one million Armenians living abroad look towards St. Echmiadzin and their motherland—Soviet Armenia. They are impatiently awaiting the resolution of the Armenian question in order to return to their motherland, as they have been wishing for decades. . . . Foreign Armenians hope that the benevolent Soviet government will create all necessary conditions, concerning economy and accommodation, so that they can return to their homeland and settle alongside their brothers here. . . . Let me add one truth that the stronger the Armenian people and Armenia in Transcaucasia, the stronger will be the security of the southern borders of our country.¹⁵

In the last phrase of his letter, he tried to substantiate ideologically the resolution of the Armenian question.

So, the idea of territorial claims also covered the issue of Armenians living abroad. This posed threats to the territorial integrity of the neighboring republics, in the first place, Azerbaijan. In August 1957, the Soviet leadership gave its permission to Parunak Tovmasyan, leader of "Ramkavar Azatakan" Party, to secretly arrive in the USSR. While in Yerevan, Tovmasyan met with leaders of Soviet Armenia, First Secretary of the Armenian Communist Party Suren Tovmasyan, and while in Moscow—with D. Solod, Deputy Head of the Near Eastern Department of the Soviet Foreign Ministry. In their letters to Moscow, heads of the Armenian Communist Party proposed to increase the number of staff members of the Soviet Embassies abroad at the expense of Armenian diplomats for further expansion of relations with foreign Armenian organizations in favor of the Soviet Union. In turn, during his talks in Moscow Tovmasyan suggested a secret collaboration with the USSR in exchange for transfer of Mountainous Garabagh to Soviet Armenia.¹⁶

In summer 1961, on the eve of Khrushchev's visit to Armenian SSR, local Armenians raised a question of the return of "ancient Armenian lands" in Turkey, Azerbaijan and Georgia to Armenia. In numerous anonymous letters sent to Moscow, all-Union organization threatened that Armenians would have to apply to the UN if the Soviet leadership declined from meeting this demand.¹⁷ It should be noted that Khrushchev did not justify Armenian expectations as regards the territorial claims to Turkey. He positively evaluated the fact that in 1918 Lenin returned Kars and Ardahan to Turkey. During his talks with Mao Zedong on October 2, 1959 Khrushchev cited this historical episode as an example, adding: "I follow the example of Lenin, who gave Kars, Ardahan and Ararat to Turkey. At present, there are people in

Transcaucasia who are dissatisfied with Lenin's steps. But I consider his actions to be correct."¹⁸ KGB documents dating from the early 1960s indicated that Yerevan was engaged in stirring up the situation in Mountainous Garabagh; however, local Armenians did not back the idea of separation from Azerbaijan SSR.¹⁹ Deputy Head of the KGB N. Zakharov wrote to the Central Committee:

Beginning from 1962, nationalist circles of the Armenians living abroad have been carrying out a campaign for "fair" resolution of the Armenian question and annexation of former Armenian territories from Turkey. In connection with this campaign, leaflets and anonymous letters are spread in Armenian SSR, in which they demand the annexation of not only territories from Turkey, but also Mountainous Garabagh Autonomous Region and Nakhchivan Autonomous Soviet Republic from Azerbaijan and Akhaltsik and Akhalkalaki regions from Georgia.²⁰

One of the disputable questions exploited by the Soviet Union to oppose Turkey was the Cyprus question. In 1956, Chairman of the Deputies' Chamber of the Greek Parliament Constantine Rodopulos sent a secret letter to the Supreme Council of the USSR, which read as follows:

Representatives of the not numerous Turkish minority in Cyprus, with the connivance of the British administration, kill and wound Greek Cypriots, which make up over 80 percent of the island's population, rob, set on fire and destroy their property in Nicosia, Larnaka, Famagusta and other localities of Cyprus. The British administration takes no measures to punish criminals and put an end to this arbitrariness aimed at exterminating the Greek population of the island. This tactic of the British authorities gives this Turkish riff-raff a free hand in committing new crimes.²¹

Protesting the above-mentioned actions, the Greek Parliament asked for help from all freedom-loving peoples, including the USSR. In connection with this, Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Supreme Council of the USSR, A. Gorkin wrote to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on 16 June 1956:

We're sending you a translation of the telegram obtained from Chairman of the Deputies' Chamber of the Greek Parliament Constantine Rodopulos with a request to render necessary assistance to their protest against the criminal activities of the Turkish minority of the island and against the criminal tolerance of these actions by the British administration directed against the population of Cyprus, currently battling for its freedom. We kindly ask you to instruct the Soviet Foreign Ministry to draw up and submit proposals to the Central Committee for approval.²²

Documentary research shows that the developments of the mid-1960s in Cyprus and Turkey's attitude to them were the focus of attention for Soviet leaders. Military intelligence service data on political processes in the Mediterranean and Cyprus were regularly forwarded to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR. For example, on 20 March 1965 the Soviet Defense Minister Radion Malinovsky sent a report to the Central Committee of the Communist Part of the USSR on tensions in the region of Cyprus. He pointed out that in connection with this the Turkish armed forces remained in combat readiness in the southern part of the country. Groupings of the Turkish naval forces in the regions of Iskenderun and Mersin were fortified. The Chief of the Turkish General Staff, Army General Cevdet Sunay and the commander of land forces, Army General Cemal Tural, left for Iskenderun.²³ The Minister's letter of 22 March said that the Council of the National Security of Turkey passed a decision to replace personnel of the Turkish regiment on the island irrespective of the nature of the probable actions of the Greek government. On 24 March, exercises of land, air and naval forces of Turkey were planned, during which personnel of the Turkish regiment might be

replaced.²⁴ On 27 March, R. Malinovsky reported to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union that the Makarios government agreed the partial reinforcement of the personnel of the Turkish regiment from 29 March, and the situation in Cyprus stabilized. As viewed by the Defense Minister, this step of Makarios deprived the Turkish command a pretext for armed interference with the internal affairs of the Republic of Cyprus.²⁵

A political report of the Soviet Embassy in the United States for 1965 forwarded by the Soviet Foreign Minister to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR said, "American-Turkish relations have noticeably been affected by the Cyprus question." Nevertheless, the US government, attaching great importance to maintaining good relations with Turkey, has continued to render considerable military, financial, economic and technical aid to this country in exchange for loyalty to its obligations by NATO and support for the US position on major international questions.²⁶

Correspondence between the parties started in the mid-1950s and subsequently evolved into secret deliveries of arms to Greek Cypriots following the complication of the situation on the island. An eloquent testimony to this was a letter of Y. Andropov, Chairman of the Soviet KGB, to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR dated July 8, 1974, which advised:

Under the resolution of the Central Committee of July 19, 1971, the KGB has been ordered to illegally deliver and give secretly to our Cypriot friends a batch of infantry weapons and ammunition. The KGB was ready to carry out this operation at any time. However, at the request of Comrade Papaioannu, Secretary General of AKEL Party, the operation was postponed. In June 1974, owing to sharp aggravation of the political situation in Cyprus, comrade Papaioannu urgently asked us to give him weapons for the personal guarding and protection of AKEL leader and progressive state and political figures against provocations and terror from the reactionary organization EOKA-2. Considering Papaioannu's request, the KGB illegally delivered weapons on June 13, 1974, including 100 Walther pistols and 2,500 cartridges, in Cyprus, and on 4 July the weapons were secretly turned over to our friends.²⁷

The Cuban Crisis also had its effect on the Soviet-Turkish relations. In October 1962, rumors were afloat that the American bases in Turkey could be closed in exchange for liquidated Soviet missiles in Cuba. Officials in Ankara were very anxious. The liquidation of these bases could have disabled Turkey against the perpetually increasing missile might of the Soviet Union. On 18 October during his talks with the US Secretary of State David Dean Rusk, Gromyko expressed Soviet concerns about the US military bases in Turkey.²⁸

It is thought that the idea of exchange of the Soviet missiles in Cuba for the American bases in Turkey belongs to political expert Walter Lippman who was close to the White House. His articles published in *The Washington Post* on 23 and 25 October were, indeed, based on White House information. Back on 16 October President John Kennedy held a closed press conference with journalists where he first declared the idea and confirmed that it could be realized. A telegram of the Soviet Ambassador to Washington Anatoli Dobrynin to the Soviet Foreign Ministry says that this question had already been discussed with the President's brother, Robert Kennedy, who expressed the President's preparedness to withdraw missiles from Turkey. But the President could not raise this question openly, since this could damage NATO's authority. However, the President promised to withdraw missiles from Turkey and it would take four to five months to do that.²⁹ Proceeding from this information, Khrushchev sent

on October 28, 1962 a message to J. Kennedy, which gave consent to such an exchange and agreed to refrain from public discussions.³⁰ However, correspondence on the Cuban crisis failed to be kept in secret. Right after the Khrushchev's message, the Soviet Ambassador to Ankara N. Ryzhov hinted to Turkish authorities that if the Soviet proposal failed to be adopted, a blow would come to Turkey. For this reason, Turkish armed forces were brought to combat readiness and the government began drawing up plans for evacuation of the population from Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir and other big towns.³¹

After long frictions, Soviet-Turkish relations tended toward rapprochement in the 1960s. On June 28, 1960, Khrushchev appealed to Turkish Prime Minister Cemal Gürsel, asking him to return to the previous status of neutrality, however, in vain. In May 1963, a protocol on raising trade turnover was concluded between the two countries. In 1965, Soviet Foreign Minister A. Gromyko visited Ankara; in 1966, Chairman of the Soviet Council of Ministers Alexei Kosygin visited Turkey; in 1967, Süleyman Demirel paid an official visit to Moscow, and thus the relations between Turkey and the USSR were fully normalized. Following visits to Azerbaijan and Central Asia, S. Demirel gave an interview to *Milliyet* newspaper, which pointed out: "We are entering into a new era of relations with Russians. As it is known, great tensions existed between our peoples and in the postwar period no relations were maintained. Today, there is no enmity between Turkey and the Soviet Union."³²

In November 1969, Turkish President Cevdet Sunay visited the Soviet Union, had meetings with Leonid Brezhnev and other Soviet leaders and thus finished normalizing the relations between the two countries. In December 1984, Chairman of the Soviet Council of Ministers Nikolai Tikhonov arrived in Ankara and signed a program of long-term collaboration in economic, trade and scientific-technical spheres for a term of ten years. In 1986, Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Özal paid a return visit to the USSR, which increasingly consolidated the Soviet-Turkish relations. It should be noted that Mikhail Gorbachev's coming to power in the 1980s was accompanied by the strengthening of the Armenian lobby in Moscow and intensification of the activities of foreign Armenian organizations. It was no mere coincidence that Gorbachev tried to force all Turks and Muslims out of the Political Bureau and Soviet leadership. Note that the anti-Turkic tendency of Gorbachev manifested itself even before his taking the post of the Secretary General. After Chernenko's disease, Gorbachev, as second figure in the Communist party of the Soviet Union, chaired a meeting of the Political Bureau on February 21, 1985 with the agenda "On Measures Concerning the Seventieth Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide." The meeting considered a proposal of the Armenian Communist Parts with regards to declaring 24 April as "The Day of the Memory of Genocide Victims." However, during the debates, the opportunist position of Gorbachev, Karen Demirchian, and members of the Central Committee Secretariat clashed with obstinacy and non-acceptance of Political Bureau members. With huge foreign experience, A. Gromyko stressed: "We must discuss this question without emotions. Of course, this was an infamous crime of Ottoman Turkey and Russian tsarism." Chairman of the Soviet Council of Ministers N. Tikhonov pointed out:

When I read the proposal of the Armenian Communist Party, I was greatly alarmed. We've just begun establishing relations

with Turkey. During my stay in this country, Turkish leaders called the Soviet Union a friendly country . . . the President and Prime Minister complained for forty minutes about anti-Turkish sentiments in Armenia and referred to the statements of this Republic's officials. It should be remembered that Bosphorus and Dardanelles are owned by Turks and that they are entitled, in accordance with the Montreux treaty, to lock up the Straits.

Though the Political Bureau desisted from the proposal of the Armenian party, Gorbachev contrived to win their consent to publish an article on the genocide in *Pravda* and on 24 April the article was published.³³ It would be appropriate to recall that the Communist Party of Turkey was, as a rule, exploited by the Soviet Union as means of pressuring Turkey and interfering with its domestic affairs. In an atmosphere of secrecy, Turkish Communists were taught legal and illegal methods of subversive activities at training centers of the KGB and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, following which they were dispatched to Turkey. Of interest is a resolution of the CC CPSU entitled "On the Request of the Turkish Communist Party Leaders," dated March 2, 1988. It was decided to comply with the request of the leaders of the Turkish Communist Party (TCP) and accept twelve activists of the TCP (groups made of three to four people) to teach them strategy and tactics of communists in the modern epoch, as well as to undertake both legal and illegal work in the process of legalizing the party in Turkey. Reception and accommodation of the Turkish "comrades" was entrusted to the international department and administration section under the CC CPSU, while the Institute of Social Sciences under the CC CPSU was responsible for legal and illegal work methods in the course of legalization and the KGB took charge of measures to ensure TCP security in case of a change in legal status.

It was supposed to pay for the trip expenses of twelve people from Western Europe to Moscow and back to Istanbul. Their stay in Europe was calculated at \$80 a day per person (totaling \$28,800 a month) and the expenses for staying in the USSR—as 150 rubles, to be paid from the party's budget. Item 4 of the resolution, instructed the Ministry of Finance of the USSR to allocate foreign currency to the administrative department of the CC CPSU to defray expenses under the Resolution.³⁴

As for direct financial flows into the Communist Party of Turkey, the figure was insignificant. For instance, a report for 1973 says that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union conveyed \$2,250 million to the Italian Communist Party and \$1.5 million to the US Communist Party, while just \$15,000 to the Turkish Communist Party.³⁵ The Soviet program of aid to the US and French Communists for 1981 provided for \$2 million to the Finnish Communist Party—\$1.4 million. The figure for the Turkish Communist Party stood only at \$50,000.³⁶ This program of aid created during the period of Comintern and Stalin continued until the collapse of the Soviet Union. Besides funding Communist organizations, considerable amounts of money were allocated for maintaining the network of KGB residents in Turkey. For example, 30,600 rubles (in freely convertible currencies) were allotted to the KGB resident office in Ankara and 14,100 rubles to the Istanbul resident office in 1975; these figures increased to 46,000 and 21,300 rubles, respectively, in 1979 and amounted to 54,600 and 21,300 thousand rubles, respectively, in 1980.³⁷

The crisis of socialism in the 1990s resulted in the dissolution of the USSR. The cooperation between the USA and Turkey, which was formed from the beginning of the Cold War, later

turned into a strategic partnership and successfully passed the test of time. The dissolution of the USSR increased the importance of Turkey in the Black Sea and Caspian Sea region. Turkey became a major actor in the US-led project of bringing hydrocarbon resources from the Caspian basin to the world markets.

The confrontation between Georgia and Russia in August 2008 brought the issue of the security of the South Caucasus region back to the agenda. Turkey, which once used to be a target of Stalin's intrigues, was among the first countries to support the territorial integrity of Georgia, a strategic ally of USA and NATO. At present, given the strengthening of aggressive tendencies and revival of Stalinist traditions in Russia's policies, the historical experience of the Turkish crisis once again seems topical.

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15. Catholicos of All-Armenian Vazgen I to N. A. Bulganin. 12.05.1956. AR CSAH, f. 409, r. 1, v. 5787, pp. 6–7. For more details, see Dzh. Gasanly. Khrushchevskaja "ottepel" i natsionalnyj vopros v Azerbajdzhane (1954–1959). Moskva, 2009 (J. Hasanli. *Khrushchev's Thaw and the National Question in Azerbaijan (1954–1959)*. Moscow, 2009), pp. 132–133.
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