Short Title:

BRITISH POLICY AND THE TURKISH QUESTION 1918-1923

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LA POLITIQUE BRITANNIQUE ET LA QUESTION TURQUE 1918-1923

Abstraite

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Le but le plus important de la politique britannique dans l'après guerre en Turquie fut l'établissement aux détroits turques d'un regime utile aux intérêts britanniques. Cependant, en résultat de sa croyance arrogante qu'elle eut fait la conquête militaire de tout l'Empire Ottoman à elle seul, et aussi à cause de son attitude fondamentale anti-turque dans la période de l'après guerre, la Grande Bretagne se refusa de concentrer son attention seulement vers son but primaire, et à la place, fut avancer des intérêts d'importance secondaire à l'intérieur de l'Asie Mineure. La Grande Bretagne s'opposa à toute résurrection turque, et en ce rapport supporta les aspirations nationales des Grecques et des Arméniens contre celles des Turques. A cet égard, la politique britannique fut essentiellement négative. Elle manqua aussi de sincérité. Et les Grecques et les Arméniens n'ont eut que l'offre de sympathie morale; ces "pions" furent sacrifiés l'orsque la pression militaire des Turques devint trop forte. La Grande Bretagne ne fut jamais prête à lutter pour des considérations de moins que d'importance primaire. Seulement à Constantinople et aux Détroits eut-elle l'intention de prendre une position militaire résolue. Parce que le gouvernement britannique ne fut pas prêt de faire d'éffort qu'à demi-esprit à travers l'Asie Mineure, quatre ans d'activité diplomatique fut perdue avant que la Grande Bretagne obtint son but fondamental à Lausanne en 1923.

BRITISH POLICY AND THE TURKISH QUESTION

1918-1923

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Abstract

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The most important aim of British policy in post-war Turkey was the establishment at the Turkish Straits of a regime conducive to British interests. However, as a result of its arrogant belief that it had conquered militarily the whole Ottoman Empire single-handedly, and because of its basically anti-Turkish attitude in the post-war period, the British Government refused to concentrate its attention solely on its primary goal and instead promoted interests of secondary importance in the heartland of Asia Minor. Britain was opposed to any Turkish resurgence and in this connection supported the national aspirations of both Greeks and Armenians against those of the Turks. In this respect British policy was essentially negative. It also lacked sincerity. Both Greeks and Armenians were offered no more than moral sympathy; these "pawns" were sacrificed once Turkish military pressure became too great. Britain was never prepared to fight for considerations of less than primary importance. Only at Constantinople and the Straits did it intend to make a determined military stand. Because the British Government was not prepared to give more than a half-hearted effort throughout Asia Minor, four years of diplomatic activity were wasted before Britain secured its fundamental goal at Lausanne in 1923.

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Preface

This thesis is an examination of the history of the peace settlement in post-World War I Turkey proper, with special reference to the important role played by Great Britain. There were a variety of problems and conflicts faced by Great Britain and the Allies in attempting to solve the Turkish Question. The difficulties encountered in effecting a lasting peace in the Turkish heartland are discussed here in detail. It is maintained that British policy, in supporting Greek and Armenian nationalism as well as French and Italian spheres of influence, originally operated under the illusory concept of having conquered militarily the whole of Anatolia and Thrace. However, despite its occupation of Constantinople in October 1918 Britain had primarily subdued only the non-Turkish portions of the Ottoman Empire. Hence, Turkish opposition under Mustafa Kemal was allowed to grow virtually unopposed in the almost inaccessible interior of the Turkish-speaking heartland. The British Government never really understood this latest Turkish national movement. It continually associated Kemalism with Moslem fanaticism and the wartime Committee of Union and Progress. The British were therefore deeply mistrustful of it

and initially refused to give it much serious recognition. One Young Turk Revolution had already been enough for Great Britain.

Most of this Turkish-speaking heartland, however, was only of secondary importance to Great Britain, her fundamental goal in post-war Turkey being always the establishment at the Turkish Straits of a regime conducive to British interests. Hence, British support for Greek and Armenian as well as basic Allied interests throughout most of Turkey proper generally lacked sincerety. Outside the area of Constantinople and the Straits, British policy varied with the ebb and flow of the political and military situation. Though arrogantly promoting in this region relatively secondary issues under the false concept of omnipotence, the British Government made a much less than determined stand in their favour. As a result, four years of diplomatic activity were wasted before it secured at Lausanne in 1923 what could easily have been accomplished in 1919. British policy, unfortunately, bit off more than it was either able or prepared to chew.

It is also maintained that Britain's Turkish policy did not suffer solely as a result of any one individual's idiosyncracies. Though differences of opinion often existed, the Coalition Cabinet was in no way ever a revolting body of statesmen being constantly overridden by the deep-seated Turkophobia of Lloyd George. More often than not the majority of the Cabinet acquiesced in the Prime Minister's often unrealistic schemes. External forces and domestic public opinion, more than divisions within the Government itself, were responsible for driving Britain out of the Anatolian wilderness and back towards a more practical policy based on the freedom of the Straits.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Prof. H. S. Weinroth, my director of research, for his guidance and encouragement in the undertaking of this thesis. I am also appreciative of the assistance given me by the staffs of the McLennan and Redpath Libraries of McGill University and by the Inter-Library Loans Department. In London I wish to thank the staffs of the British Museum, the Beaverbrook Library, the Public Record Office, and the India Office Library for their invaluable assistance in locating material. To the British Museum I must reiterate my appreciation for receiving permission to consult the Balfour Papers. At the Beaverbrook Library I am deeply indebted to Prof. A.J.P. Taylor, for his kindness in granting me special permission to examine both the Lloyd George and Bonar Law Papers, and to Mr. Igoe in particular for his tireless assistance in locating the relevant material.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to Miss Daniela Stern who kindly typed the final draft of this thesis. Lastly, but most gratefully, I would like to offer a very sincere thank you to my grandmother, Mrs. G.S. Hubbell, without whose financial assistance my summer of study in England would not have been possible.

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INTRODUCTION

The post-war settlement in Turkey has often been depicted as a romantic struggle of the Turkish nationalists, led by Mustafa Kemal Pasha, against the Western Allies, under the diplomatic leadership of Great Britain. The military and diplomatic victories of the Kemalist Movement against these seemingly overwhelming odds have been highly glorified by many historians. Unfortunately, this has tended to overshadow the problems and frustrations faced by the Allied Powers; even more significantly, their actual policies, with a view to the Turkish settlement, have tended to become submerged under this Kemalist tidal wave. As a result, Allied, especially British, policy towards the Turkish Question has been largely misunderstood.

The Turkish Question, as a part of the whole Eastern Question, was in itself a highly complex affair. Between 1918 and 1923 the entire situation in the Near East, as opposed to that of the nineteenth century, had been turned completely upside down. No longer was British policy aimed at maintaining the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire against the relentless encroachments of Tsarist Russia. By 1918 Britain had already been four years

at war with Turkey, its traditional ally. The first three of these years had even witnessed an Anglo-Russian coalition against the Turk. The time for partition appeared to be drawing near, the "sick man of Europe" being finally at the point of succumbing. But with the falling out of Russia in 1917 the Turkish Question took a further step towards unorthodoxy when it developed, in the post-war period, into a Turko-Russian combination against both British and Allied plans for partition. This Russian defection was compensated by the appearance on the Allied side of the United States, destined to play a major role in the diplomacy of the Near East, despite the fact that it had never been at war with Turkey. The Allies also won over the services of Greece, the traditional enemy of the Turk. From the outset of the peace settlement period in 1918 Britain and the Allied Powers geared themselves for partition. Yet the fundamental problem within the old, nineteenth-century Eastern Question had not been altered - how to divide the spoils of the old Ottoman Empire.

Examining British policy in post-war Turkey is impossible without first discussing the major aims of the four European Allies - Great Britain, France, Italy, and Russia - during the war itself. Between 1915 and 1917 four secret agreements were concluded among the above-mentioned Powers with a view to the ultimate partition of the Ottoman Empire. All contributed toward the final aim of a mutually acceptable settlement of the whole Near Eastern theatre. The Agreement of Constantinople regarding the future of Constantinople and the

Straits was completed on March 18, 1915 between Great Britain, France, and Russia. With this document Britain reversed its long-standing policy of opposition to Russian domination of Constantinople and the Straits. Accordingly Russia was to receive

> la ville de Constantinople, la rive occidentale du Bosphore, de la mer de Marmara et des Dardanelles, ainsi que la Thrace méridionale jusqu'à la ligne Enos-Midia, n'étaient désormais incorporées à l'Empire russe.
>
> De même, la partie du littoral asiatique comprise entre le Bosphore, la rivière Sakharia et un point à fixer sur le golfe d'Ismid, les îles de la mer de Marmara, les îles d'Imbros et de Ténédos devront être incorporées à l'Empire.
>
> Les intérêts spéciaux de la France et de la Grande-Bretagne dans la région ci-dessus désignée seront scrupuleusement respectés.[1]

Great Britain and France believed these large concessions necessary in order to keep Russia in the war.

The Treaty of London, under which Italy entered the war on the side of the Entente, was signed on April 26, 1915 between Great Britain, France, Russia, and Italy. With a view to the future partition of Turkey this agreement promised Italy "a just share of the Mediterranean region adjacent to the province of Adalia." The Treaty went on to delcare that

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[1] Sazonov to Buchanan, March 4, 1915. E.L. Woodward and Rohan Butler (eds.), Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939, First Series, vol. IV, London, 1952, p. 635 (Hereafter cited as D.B.F.P.).

> If France, Great Britain and Russia occupy any territories in Turkey in Asia during the course of the war, the Mediterranean region bordering on the province of Adalia . . . shall be reserved to Italy, who shall be entitled to occupy it.[2]

The Sykes-Picot Agreement was completed on May 16, 1916 between Great Britain, France, and Russia. Though this agreement dealt chiefly with the future of the Arab regions of the Ottoman Empire, it did take into consideration the two important questions of Armenia and Kurdistan. Both these areas were assigned to Russian administration, the general agreement stating that "Russia obtains the provinces of Erzerum, Trebizond, Van, and Bitlis, as well as territory in the southern part of Kurdistan."[3] Also concerning Turkey proper, France was to receive the Vilayet of Adana.

The Agreement of St. Jean de Maurienne respecting Italian territorial claims in Asia Minor was made between Great Britain, France, and Italy on April 17, 1917. This Agreement was the result of the secret pact of May 16, 1916, from which Italy was excluded. It promised Italy not merely Smyrna and the Vilayet of Aidin but a large sphere of influence stretching northwards almost to the Sea of Marmora. However, the final article of this Agreement stipulated

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[2] Article IX, Treaty of London, April 26, 1915. Command 671, "Agreement between France, Russia, Great Britain, and Italy, signed at London 26th April 1915", Accounts and Papers, vol. LI (February 10 - December 23, 1920), pp. 264-5.

[3] Article I, Sykes-Picot Agreement, May 16, 1916. The Manchester Guardian, January 19, 1918, p. 5.

that "il a été entendu que le présent memorandum sera communiqué au Gouvernement russe, afin de lui permettre de faire connaître ses vues."[4] As it turned out, the new, revolutionary Russian Government under Aleksandr Kerensky did not exist long enough to officialize this document. Bolshevik Russia not only renounced any connections whatsoever with all of the above secret pacts but proceeded to publish them all as well.

By 1918 the situation had changed to such an extent that it was impossible to carry out these secret wartime agreements as they stood. The situation was complicated by a whole series of intractable problems - the disappearance of Russian power and the growth of nationalism in the Near East; the desire of the Turkish Armenians, or at least of their leaders, for independence; the emergence after the revolution of 1917 of Georgia and the Russian parts of Armenia and Azerbaijan as precariously independent states; the separatism of the Kurds; and the anti-Entente and above all anti-British propaganda now being disseminated by the Bolsheviks. Moreover, the secret wartime Agreements were impossible to reconcile with the idea of self-determination for all national groups which had been embodied in President Wilson's Fourteen Points and accepted in principle by the Allies. Wilson's twelfth point argued that "the Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a

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[4] Article 9, Agreement of St. Jean de Maurienne, Balfour to Imperiali, August 18, 1917. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. IV, p. 641.

secure sovereignty."[5] Furthermore, on January 5, 1918 David Lloyd George, the British Prime Minister, declared to a conference of trade union leaders:

> Nor are we fighting to destroy Austria-Hungary or to deprive Turkey of its capital, or of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace, which are predominantly Turkish in race. Outside Europe we believe that the same principle [national self-determination] should be applied. ... we do not challenge the maintenance of the Turkish Empire in the homelands of the Turkish race, with its capital at Constantinople ....[6]

These open statements of the "new" diplomacy together with the secret agreements of the "old" diplomacy, combined with the rapidly-changing circumstances in the late- and post-war period, converted Turkey into first a diplomatic, then ultimately a military, battle-ground.

Britain's immediate post-war policy in Turkey was a very real attempt to combine the "old" diplomacy with the "new". This meant salvaging what it could from the secret wartime Agreements and making this compatible with the principle of national self-determination. Thus British policy both condoned French and Italian spheres of influence in Asia Minor and supported autonomy proposals for the Greeks, Armenians, and Kurds. The Turks, as enemies, were not included in this latter group, President Wilson's twelfth point being overlooked

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[5] Point XII, Fourteen Points, January 8, 1918. Ibid. , First Series, Vol. I, p. 508.

[6] Lloyd George to Trade Union Delegates, January 5, 1918. Lloyd George Papers, F/205/2/1.

rather badly. Unlike France and Italy, who had extensive economic interests in the Turkish interior, Britain was far more interested in the strategical importance of the region of Constantinople and the Straits. Primarily to keep Russia in the war Britain had agreed to hand this area over to the Tsar. But with Russia succumbing to internal revolution Britain looked to the United States to assume the responsibility of protecting "the freedom of the Straits," thereby acting as a bulwark of British policy. The significance of Constantinople and the Straits certainly revived in the eyes of the British Government after the war. Since the occupation of Egypt in 1882, and especially after the Franco-Russian alliance of 1894, this major maritime artery had appeared to be losing British attention. But the Turkish closure of this waterway during the war was the catalyst responsible in renewing concern for the security of the Straits. For the remainder of Turkey proper Britain would hardly lift a finger; for Constantinople and the Straits it would almost go to war in the early 1920s.

Though the disappearance of Russian military power relieved the peacemakers at Paris of some obvious embarrassments, it involved them at the same time in others. If Russia had not collapsed, its geographical and strategical position would have enabled it to enforce with ease whatever settlement the victorious Powers might have agreed upon for the eastern provinces of Turkey, the very cradle of Turkish nationalism. Its fall, however, had left an immense gap in the iron

ring of hostile armies by which Turkey had previously been encircled. The Western Allies, though able to break the Turkish resistance on the two southern fronts, to impose a severe armistice, to occupy the Arab provinces effectively, and to control the remainder of the Empire as far as this could be done from the sea, had not a sufficiently long arm to hold the Turkish population down by force in the Anatolian interior. Here they could only establish a military and administrative supervision. As it happened, this supervision was quite effective during the six months that elapsed between the Armistice of October 30, 1918 and the disembarkation of Greek troops at Smyrna on May 15, 1919. After this date, however, the Allies' military supervision of the Turkish interior proved inadequate. Their influence, therefore, came to be based precariously on their own prestige and the willingness of the Turks to accept a just verdict at their hands.

This was the crux of the whole problem for the British in Turkey. They had always regarded themselves as having carried the majority of the load in the struggle against the Ottoman Empire. In attempting to protect their traditional interests in the Near and Middle East, they looked upon themselves as being primarily responsible for the decisive victories against the Turks on the Syrian and Mesopotamian fronts which eventually forced the Sultan to sue for peace. In this sequence it was Britain alone who signed the Armistice with Turkey and it was Britain who led the way into Constantinople as conquerors of the Ottoman Empire. In reality, however, the British

had only been successful in the non-Turkish portions of the old Empire . British forces had never penetrated beyond Aleppo, in northern Syria, and Mosul, in northern Mesopotamia. Mosul was not even occupied until after the Armistice. Turkey proper, therefore, had been left virtually untouched. Britain's sole wartime assault against the Turkish heartland manifested itself in the Dardanelles campaign. This, of course, resulted in a humiliating failure for the British and in a glorious victory so far as the Turks were concerned.

Likewise in the east the Turks were ultimately successful. After three years of hard fighting Russia succumbed to internal revolution and Turkey regained more than just its lost territories in eastern Anatolia. Article IV of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk ran as follows:

> Russia will do all within her power to ensure the immediate evacuation of the provinces of eastern Anatolia and their lawful return to Turkey.
>
> The districts of Ardahan, Kars, and Batum will likewise be cleared of Russian troops. Russia will not interfere in the reorganization of the national and international relations of the districts, but leave it to the population of these districts to carry out this reorganization in agreement with the neighbouring States, especially Turkey.[7]

In April 1918 the Turks reoccupied without resistance all the territory in Anatolia and Armenia which they had lost in the previous three years. Ultimately the Turk would even reach Baku and the shores of the Caspian Sea.

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[7] Article IV, Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, March 3, 1918. Jane Degras (ed.), Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, vol. 1 (1917-1924), London, 1951, p. 53 (hereafter cited as S.D.F.P.). Kars, Ardahan, and Batum were legally restored to Turkey following the results of plebiscites in these areas.

So within the confines of Turkey proper the Turks had not been defeated at all. In fact they had been quite successful in the defence of their homeland. Therefore a distinction must be made between the Turkish heartland and the Ottoman Empire. In World War I Britain may have been the one chiefly responsible for the conquest of the Ottoman Empire, but it did not conquer Turkey. Unfortunately, from the moment the Armistice was signed it acted as if it had, and was therefore deceived from the beginning. And the British Government laboured under this self-deception throughout the following four years. They exercised a tremendous lack of appreciation for Turkish protests against the various partition schemes designed for their homeland. But neither they nor their Allies could really afford to ignore these outcries, especially since they never had sufficient strength to hold the Turkish population down by force throughout most of Turkey proper. The only place where troops existed in large numbers was in the region of the Straits.

Constantinople and the Straits were always of special, traditional interest to Great Britain. In fact, as stated previously, this was the most significant problem for the British within the entire Turkish Question. Here, however, their military power proved to be of little value in quelling any uprisings in the interior of Anatolia. Yet, they quite sincerely believed that it did. The resultant Treaty of Sèvres and Tripartite Agreement are evidence of this. So while the British Government first failed to distinguish

between the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, it later failed to distinguish between Turkey and Constantinople.

But this was not the whole question by far. The British Government was forced to reckon with a multitude of sub-questions encompassing everything from a divided international entente. These problems, starting from the inside and moving outwards, began with the Prime Minister himself, Lloyd George. As a teenager he had minimized the threat to the Suez waterway by readily condoning the Egyptian nationalist revolt and severely attacking Gladstone's Liberal Government. Twenty years later he was quite unashamedly pro-Boer. In the 1920s, however, as a middle-aged statesman, he was willing to go to war with Turkish nationalists over the control of a maritime artery strategically similar to that of Suez. In true Gladstonian fashion he was originally prepared to concede it outright to Russia, but never did he want to see it in the hands of the infidel Turk. Apparently Turkish nationalism did not count. And for four years this Turkophobia exercised a very profound influence over British foreign policy. The Foreign Office under Lord Curzon was continually trying to temper the Prime Minister's grandiose schemes. Unfortunately, Curzon, the eighteenth-century aristocrat, never operated on the same wavelength as Lloyd George. As a former Viceroy of India, he believed himself the expert on Eastern affairs. This attitude resulted in a lot of good advice from the British High Commission in Constantinople being overlooked and in a great deal of bickering with the Prime Minister. Nevertheless, Lord Curzon, incapable of employing the

threat of resignation, generally acquiesced in Lloyd George's policies. At Lausanne in 1922-3 he skillfully conducted the Prime Minister's Chanak policy to its logical conclusion. War-Office policy at this time was generally quite uneven. The military was traditionally pro-Turkish, implying its estrangement from the Prime Minister. However, in this post-war period the attitude of the War Office was generally conditioned by the ebb and flow of the Greco-Turkish front. The War Office seemed to acquiesce in Lloyd George's anti-Turk policy whenever the Greek military position appeared most favourable. A solid alliance between the Prime Minister and the War Office was eventually formed in September 1922 when the Turks had gone so far as to threaten British supremacy at the Straits. Included in this alliance was the Colonial Office under Churchill who, as a result of the Turkish threat, precipitated a crisis in Commonwealth relations. In India Office, led for the most part by Edwin Montagu, seemed divorced from the Government and completely unto itself. In fact it appeared downright foreign. Being primarily concerned with Indian Moslem reaction on the subcontinent, it continually pressed for a lenient settlement with Turkey.

Montagu was the only Cabinet member faithful to both his principles and his opposition to Lloyd George. This unflinching attitude cost him his political career. Though many and varied were the opinions within the British Cabinet, they must not be over-emphasized. The British Government cannot really be pictured as a

revolting body of conflicting opinions being continually squelched under the thumb of Lloyd George. More often than not the majority of Cabinet members were prepared to acquiesce in the Prime Minister's quite blatantly anti-Turk policies. It was primarily the work of external factors which forced British policy towards a much more realistic line.

Outside the British Empire were the French, the Italians, the Americans, the Greeks, the Armenians, the Kurds, the Bolsheviks, and the Turks themselves. All of them provided Britain with at least one headache; all represented subsections of that highly complex problem called the Turkish Question. The French and the Italian attitudes revealed the pitfalls in attempting to resolve the nineteenth-century Eastern Question. The problem began by pitting France's and Italy's respective war roles against that of Great Britain. As there was no doubt in the British mind who had done all the work, the result was conflict and never-ending rivalry. But the French and the Italians were more flexible than the British; they did not suffer from Turkophobia or from an expertise of the East. As a result, they were not above concluding secret pacts with their so-called enemies. This seemed to appal Britain's sense of decency and literally drove Lord Curzon to tears. Greek and American policies provided a sound study in contrast. The Greeks were the bonus babies of Lloyd George, who wanted to see Greece as a friendly protector of the Aegean littoral. The Americans, for their part, were designated by the British as friendly protectors of Constantinople and Armenia. But unfortunately, while the Americans were not too accommodating, the Greeks were overly

so. The United States eventually opted out of the entire Turkish Question, leaving Britain to figure out the next play. Greece, on the other hand, was not afraid of becoming a British pawn and of putting the British Government's anti-Turkish policy into action, much to the chagrin of both France and Italy. The Kurdish question basically pitted the British against the Turks, the Kurds themselves counting for little. In fact, the Foreign Office even had difficulty in finding a representative Kurd, while Mustafa Kemal claimed that the Kurds were really Turks. The Armenian and Bolshevik questions were closely linked. Armenia, after the Americans had refused a mandate, faced a rather formidable Turko-Bolshevik combination. Britain assured the fledgling nation of its sympathy but, in the face of such opposition, refused to take any positive action. It stood aside and watched all its diplomatic labours in eastern Anatolia destroyed on the battlefield. Of course, one must not overlook the Turks themselves. But even they were divided and Britain was forced to contend with two Turkish administrations: not only the official, central Government of the Sultan in Constantinople but also an upstart nationalist assembly of deputies in Angora. The British treated the Constantinople Government as a mere puppet regime and at first it was quite receptive to British demands. Later, however, under increasing nationalist influence, it refused to ratify the Treaty of Sèvres and grew increasingly more hostile. The Angora Government, on the other hand, was from the beginning regarded by the British as no better than an offshoot of the wartime Committee of Union and Progress. Britain was thus deeply mistrustful of the nationalist ideals in Mustafa Kemal's revolutionary

programme; it had already had its fill of Turkish revolutionary movements after the Young Turk episode of 1908. Angora, however, flourished in the Allied disunity and became a master at Turkey's time-honoured game of playing off one Power against the other.

In groping for various odds and ends throughout Anatolia and Thrace, the British Government pitted Greek and Armenian nationalism against that of the Turks. This policy was practised as long as it proved profitable to Great Britain. Once external opposition became too strong, the British backed off. They were never prepared to take up arms in support of these basically secondary issues in Asia Minor. After four years Britain was induced to concede virtually everything to the Turks save its own fundamental goal. Ultimately, at Lausanne in 1923, British policy won a diplomatic victory in the question of Constantinople and the Straints. By eventually acceding to British designs for the Straits the Turks demonstrated a willingness to overthrow their Bolshevik alliance and to resume traditional Anglo-Turkish friendship. Yet this eventual outcome, acceptable to both the British and the Turks, could have easily been accomplished by Great Britain as early as 1919. However, it was achieved only after four years of political turmoil - four wasted years in which Britain, believing itself all-powerful in Turkey as a result of the outcome of the war, felt justified in pursuing issues of secondary importance. These British plans for most of Anatolia and Thrace were destroyed by both inter-Allied rivalry and Turkish force of arms.

Recent documentary publications on the subject have shown the Turkish Question to be a rather difficult jig-saw puzzle. The major source for this study has been the British Government publication of Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939. The Turkish correspondence up to the Treaty of Lausanne is now complete. Unfortunately it begins only with the Treaty of Versailles, and thus there is a significant gap between then and the preceding Armistice of Mudros. This gap must be fulfilled by still unpublished Foreign Office documents (series #371) at the Public Record Office in London. Also very useful in this early period are the published American documents in the Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: The Paris Peace Conference 1919, and in David Hunter Miller's My Diary at the Conference of Paris, which includes 22 painstakingly-detailed volumes of documents, memoranda, official minutes, and memoirs. Other documentary sources covering the period of the Turkish Question include Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, 1917-1941, edited by Jane Degras; Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East, edited by J.C. Hurewitz; and the appropriate World Peace Foundation Pamphlets.

The most significant documentary works pertaining to Great Britain apart from the Foreign Office documents, consist of Hansard's Parliamentary Debates of both the British House of Commons and House of Lords and the various published Command Papers respecting the Turkish Question. Of particular significance and value, however, are the private papers of Lloyd George, now available to the general public in the Beaverbrook Library in London. Lloyd George's own assessment of the peace settlement can be found in The Truth about the Peace Treaties.

His War Memoirs of David Lloyd George, though not at all concerned with the peace settlement, provide interesting background material and are a must for the correspondence leading up to the Armistice of Mudros. A most interesting study of the Prime Minister is contained in Lloyd George: A Diary by Frances Stevenson, edited by A.J.P. Taylor. An equally useful work was done by the Prime Minister's brother, William George, entitled My Brother and I. The best biography of Lloyd George is Frank Owen's Tempestuous Journey. Except for Robert Blake's The Unknown Prime Minister, little work has been done on Bonar Law, who succeeded Lloyd George as Prime Minister in 1922. His private papers, however, are also available in the Beaverbrook Library. They are of particular significance in dealing with his attitude towards the final peace conference in Lausanne.

The private papers of A.J. Balfour, Foreign Secretary until October 1919, are located in the British Museum in London. They are somewhat disappointing in regard to the Turkish Question, but are useful none the less, especially in dealing with the initial phases of the Peace Conference of Paris. A good insight into Balfour's political ideas is his own Opinions and Argument from Speeches and Addresses of the Earl of Balfour, 1910-1927. His official biography is Kenneth Young's Arthur James Balfour. Much material on Lord Curzon, who succeeded Balfour as Foreign Secretary, can be found among the Foreign Office papers. His private papers, however, are quite inaccessible and have not been used in this study. Curzon, unfortunately,

wrote no memoirs. His wife's Reminiscences are not particularly useful. Still, two excellent biographies have been produced: Lord Ronaldshay's very detailed Life of Lord Curzon and Harold Nicolson's Curzon: The Last Phase 1919-1925, a good study of the post-war period. As in the case of Curzon, Winston Churchill's private papers have not been accessible for this study. His post-war memoirs, however, are published in The Aftermath. The private papers of Edwin Montagu are located in the India Office Library and Records, Orbit House, London. Unfortunately, time has not permitted a thorough examination of them. The best biography of the Indian Secretary is S.D. Waley's Edwin Montagu. Various India Office documents, especially those pertaining to the revision of the Turkish peace treaty, have been found most useful in the preparation of this thesis.

The published memoirs and/or biographies of the major British diplomats concerned with the proceedings of the Turkish Question include Sir George Buchanan's My Mission to Russia and Other Diplomatic Mrmories; Lord Hardinge's Old Diplomacy; Sir Harry Luke's Cities and Men; Sir James Rennell Rodd's Social and Diplomatic Memories 1883-1919; General Sir Charles Harington's Tim Harington Looks Back; and Harold Nicolson's Peacemaking 1919. Nicolson also produced a useful biography of King George the Fifth. But all of the immediately preceding works barely scratch the surface. Virtually everything is left up to the indispensable Foreign Office documents.

Among contemporary literature on the subject is Harold Temperley's old standby, A History of the Peace Conference of Paris. Arnold J. Toynbee's

Survey of International Affairs 1920-23 is disappointing on the whole but useful for questions relating to post-war Transcaucasia. E.G. Mears' Modern Turkey, though outdated, contains a veritable gold mine of documents on the subject of the Turkish Question.

Among secondary works David Walder's The Chanak Affair is the most recent publication on the subject. Unfortunately, it lacks any footnotes and rambles from start to finish in a rather slapdash style with misquotations running rampant throughout. Nevertheless, it provides valuable information on military proceedings and can be useful generally, if handled with care. The Partition of Turkey by Harry Howard is a thoroughly documented work but the unavailability of Foreign Office documents at its time of publication has now made it somewhat outdated. H.H. Cumming's Franco-British Rivalry in the Post-War Near East is quite an interesting study of Allied relations but the influence of Howard is obvious throughout in its somewhat anti-British bias and in its romanticization of the Kemalist Movement. Among more general works the most useful sources include W.N. Medlicott's British Foreign Policy since Versailles 1919-1963; G.D. Clayton's Britain and the Eastern Question; C.J. Lowe and M.L. Dockrill's The Mirage of Power; and M.S. Anderson's The Eastern Question 1774-1923. The most comprehensive work on post-war Transcaucasia is Firuz Kazemzadeh's The Struggle for Transcaucasia (1917-1921).

Among Turkish sources The Emergence of Modern Turkey by Bernard Lewis is the standard work in the English language on Turkish

policy in this period. But this should still be read in conjunction with Edward R. Vere-Hodge's Turkish Foreign Policy, 1918-1948. Mustafa Kemal's own viewpoint can be traced from beginning to end in his famous seven-day Speech and in Lord Kinross' excellent biography, Ataturk. The Greek viewpoint is best described in A.A. Pallis' Greece's Anatolian Venture, with a more general overview in The Eastern Question: The Last Phase by Harry J. Psomiades.

Ten years ago little in the way of primary sources were available for this historical question; today there is a wealth of material. This enables us to look much more closely at the many problems and frustrations of the various diplomats concerned, and to understand why the Turkish Question could cause political crises in such distant world capitals as Washington, New Delhi, and Canberra.

As is perhaps obvious by now I shall be limiting myself throughout the course of this study to the problem of British policy with respect to Turkey proper. I shall make no attempt to dwell upon the immediate post-war history of the Arab regions of the old Ottoman Empire. Geographically, this will limit the scope of this thesis to the area from Armenia and Kurdistan in the east to Thrace in the west. Generally speaking this study will be presented in chronological order from the signing of the Armistice of Mudros on October 30, 1918 to the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne on July 24, 1923. The various sub-questions of this thesis are really too intertwined to permit a suitable presentation in any other way. A

thematic scheme is possible, but only at the expense of exhausting repetition which would ultimately cloud the overall views and trends of British foreign policy in post-war Turkey.

CHAPTER I

BRITAIN AT PARIS: DIVIDING THE SPOILS

On October 8, 1918 Turkey's Committee of Union and Progress, by then utterly discredited, resigned from the Government. The new administration was formed by the Liberal Entente party which was not only prepared but anxious to collaborate with the Allies, particularly Great Britain. Sultan Mohammed VI appointed Ahmed Izzet Pasha as Grand Vizier with the task of seeking an armistice. The new Turkish Government, in attempting to gain favourable terms from the British, released General Townshend, who had been a prisoner of war in Turkey since his surrender at Kut-el-Amara in 1916, to serve as intermediary. He advised them to ask for the aid and protection of Great Britain. This suggestion was accepted, and Izzet Pasha sent Townshend to Mudros on October 20 to propose the suspension of hostilities. To that port Vice-Admiral Sir Somerset Gough-Calthorpe, the Commander of the British Mediterranean Fleet at Malta, had already hastened on October 11. Having borne the brunt of the fight against the Turks, the British were determined to have their own way in the fashioning of the peace.

The French Government was not unaware of this and Georges Clemenceau, the French Prime Minister, was under no illusion regarding British intentions to play the leading role in the occupation of the Constantinople region. Thus he did not fail to protest vigourously against the single-handed British action in precipitating the Armistice. The Supreme War Council of the Allies, sitting on October 9, discussed the question as to who would command the Allied naval forces operating at Constantinople. Lloyd George insisted he be British, in view of the fact that the Allied fleet was at least 75% British, and the British had undertaken almost all of the military operations against Turkey. Clemenceau urged a French admiral be put in charge, and the French representative at Versailles strenuously maintained the validity of this point.[1] The fact that the supreme naval command in the Mediterranean was in French hands lent some weight to this argument.

On October 15 Lloyd George wrote a letter to Clemenceau outlining Britain's argument concerning the supreme naval authority:

> We have taken by far the larger part of the burden of the war against Turkey in the Dardanelles and in Gallipoli, in Egypt, in Mesopotamia and in Palestine. The British Government has agreed that the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies in France should be a French General; it has agreed that the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies in the Balkans should be a French General. I do not see how I could possibly justify to the people of the British Empire that at the moment when the final attack upon Turkey was to be delivered, the command of the Naval Forces which are overwhelmingly British, in a theatre of war associated with some of the most desperate and heroic fighting by troops from nearly every part of the British Empire, should be handed over to a French Admiral as well.[2]

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[1] Supreme War Council, October 9, 1918. David Lloyd George, War Memoirs of David Lloyd George, vol. VI, London, 1936, pp. 3309-10.

[2] Lloyd George to Clemenceau, October 15, 1918. Ibid., p. 3310.

Clemenceau replied on October 21 emphasizing France's contribution to British security on the Western Front as a reason for the negligible amount of French troops in the Near East. He also declared that as France was Turkey's principle creditor, and as most of the banks and business concerns in Constantinople were French-owned, the French had the greatest interest there. He reminded Lloyd George that he had agreed that General Sir George Milne, the British commander in Salonica, should take charge of the operations in the Balkans against Turkey, and that he could not agree to naval operations being in British hands.[3] Lloyd George remained adamant, however, and in reply, on October 25, merely reiterated more strongly his views of the merits of the British case and the absolute necessity of British supremacy in that area of the Mediterranean. He believed that French insistence on such a view would inevitably "imperil the operation of the all-important principle of unity of command in every department of the War ..."[4]

Meanwhile the troubled correspondence between the two statesmen was rendered somewhat academic by the arrival of Townshend at Mudros on October 20, and Calthorpe's cabling of this news to the British Government, in which he declared that the Turks particularly wanted to deal with the British and not with the French. He was of the opinion that

> the effect of a Fleet under French command going up to Constantinople would be deplorable, nor

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[3]Clemenceau to Lloyd George, October 21, 1918. Ibid., p. 3311.

[4]Lloyd George to Clemenceau, October 25, 1918. Ibid., pp. 3311-2.

> could anything be more unpopular with the Greeks in Turkey. General Townshend thinks that the Turks would be willing to send plenipotentiaries and that they would allow the British to take over the forts of the Dardanelles if they were assured of support against the Germans in Turkey and the Black Sea.[5]

Already it appeared as though Britain would have little difficulty in securing a predominant influence at Constantinople and the Straits - the primary aim of British post-war policy in Turkey. Calthorpe was thereupon told to inform the Turkish Government that he was empowered to sign an armistice, and on October 26 three envoys from Turkey were brought to Mudros. These included Rauf Bey, the Minister of Marine; Reshid Bey, the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs; and Lieutenant-General Sadullah Bey of the General Staff. The French, on learning of this action, sent Admiral Amet to work in conjunction with Calthorpe in the negotiations. The British Admiral, however, firmly refused to share the business of the Armistice with him.[6] Such was the importance to Great Britain of both the immediate and future regime at Constantinople that France was to be denied all participation in the Armistice conversations.

Despite Turkish attempts to favour the British, of which Britain took full advantage, the terms of the Armistice of Mudros were quite severe. The signing of this document opened up the Dardanelles, guaranteed access to the Black Sea, and provided for Allied

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[5] Calthorpe to Geddes, October 20, 1918. Ibid., pp. 3312-3.

[6] Ibid., p. 3313.

occupation of the forts along the Dardanelles and Bosphorus. The Turkish forces were to be demobilized immediately, except where necessary to preserve order. Their disposition was to be "determined by the Allies after consultation with the Turkish Government." All war vessels in Turkish waters were to be interned in such ports as indicated,while free use of all ports for Allied vessels was to be allowed. Article VII gave the Allies the "right to occupy any strategic points in the event of any situation arising which threatens the security of the Allies." The Turks were ordered to withdraw all troops from northwestern Persia and Transcaucasia. The Allies were placed in control of all railroads. They were to occupy Batum, and Turkey was to permit also the occupation of Baku. (The British, in fact, had already established themselves there.) Compliance with orders regarding the disposal of equipment, arms, and ammunition was mandatory. An Allied representative was to be attached to the Turkish Ministry of Supplies to safeguard Allied interests. Article XIII stipulated that "in case of disorder in the six Armenian vilayets, the Allies reserve themselves the right to occupy any part of them." Finally, Turkey was to cease all relations with the Central Powers. The Armistice of Mudros was signed by Britain and Turkey on October 30, with hostilities to cease at noon the following day.[7]

Turkey's surrender technically to the Entente, but actually to Great Britain, left the Straits pretty much in the hands of the latter.

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[7] Armistice of Mudros, October 30, 1918. Command 53, "Terms of the Armistice concluded between the Allied Governments and the Governments of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey", Accounts and Papers, vol. LIII (February 4 - December 23, 1919), pp. 123-5.

This was certainly in accordance with the fundamental desires of British policy. But each ally's desire for supremacy in the Levant continued to furnish grounds for bitter recriminations on both sides. On October 30 Lloyd George and Clemenceau were attending an inter-Allied conference in Paris, and the former reported that the Armistice would be signed that evening. Clemenceau and Pichon, his Foreign Secretary, immediately raised the question of Calthorpe's action in refusing to associate himself with Admiral Amet in the carrying out of the negotiations. A heated argument ensued, the French insisting on the legal point that the supreme command in the Mediterranean was held by them, while Lloyd George maintained that the local command in the Aegean, and the whole of the operations against Turkey, were in British hands. The official record of the debate has recorded the British Prime Minister as remarking that

> except for Great Britain no one had contributed anything more than a handful of black troops to the expedition in Palestine. I was really surprised at the lack of generosity on the part of the French Government. The British had now some 500,000 men on Turkish soil. The British had captured three or four Turkish Armies and had incurred hundreds of thousands of casualties in the war with Turkey. The other Governments had only put in a few nigger policemen to see that we did not steal the Holy Sepulchre! When, however, it came to signing an armistice, all this fuss was made.[8]

British Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour supported Lloyd George, and stated that if the French made a point of it, the British would refer the problem to the Inter-Allied Military Council at Versailles for a general ruling whether an armistice must be signed

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[8] Lloyd George, Inter-Allied Conference, Paris, October 30, 1918. Lloyd George, op. cit., vol. VI, p. 3314.

by representatives of all the Allies. The armistice with Bulgaria, it was pointed out, had been negotiated by the French General, Franchet d'Espérey, single-handedly; General Milne had not even been associated with him. The peace overtures at that time had been made to the British Government just as they were, in the case of Mudros, to the French Government. Britain was thus arguing that since it had given France virtually a free hand in the Bulgarian armistice negotiations, the French should return the compliment by permitting the British a similar measure of liberty in dealing with the Turk. But just how valid was this British argument? British interests in Bulgaria could hardly be compared with those of France in Turkey. While Bulgaria meant virtually nothing to Great Britain, the French had very extensive financial and economic interests in Constantinople and throughout the Ottoman Empire. At this late stage in the negotiations, however, there was little that the French could accomplish in the way of blocking Britain's first step in its determined drive towards supremacy at Constantinople and the Straits. In the end Clemenceau consulted with Pichon, concluding that since the Armistice had probably already been signed, the French Government would have to accept the fait accompli.[9]

On November 13 Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Maitland-Wilson took over as General Office Commanding of the Allied forces in Con-

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[9] Clemenceau, Inter Allied Conference, Paris, October 30, 1918. Ibid., pp. 3314-5.

stantinople. The Turks, with their own authorities and police force, were left to administer themselves. Throughout Asia Minor British officers in twos and threes began supervising the surrender of Turkish arms and munitions as prescribed by the Armistice. The process of disarmament went on smoothly; weapons and warlike stores flowed in and were collected in enormous dumps guarded by handfuls of British and Indian soldiers. Indeed mere "handfuls" they were. As late as December of the following year Winston Churchill, the Secretary of State for War and Air, revealed that British troops in the Turkish heartland continued to hold only Constantinople and the Straits, Thrace, and Batum, and were only sparsely scattered along the Anatolian Railway.[10] Even Lord Curzon, the Lord President of the Council, admitted that "In Asia Minor (outside the region of British military occupation) no Allied forces had appeared."[11] On December 29, 1918 the War Office intimated that "the Turks still have to learn that they are a defeated nation."[12] Yet, in spite of these revelations, the British Government persisted in the illusion that Great Britain was the all-powerful conqueror of Turkey proper. It is interesting to note that in Lloyd George's statement of October 30 he kept referring to Palestinian Turkey where a half million British troops had secured the decisive victory. He made no attempt to distinguish between the Arab regions and the Turkish-

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[10] Churchill, December 9, 1919. 122 H.C. Deb. 5s. (December 1-12, 1919), col. 1112.

[11] The Rt. Hon. Winston S. Churchill, The Aftermath (The World Crisis, 1918-1928), New York, 1929, p. 382.

[12] Milner to Deedes, December 29, 1918. F.O. 371/4190/4021.

speaking heartland. This was typical of British thinking throughout the post-war period: that the conquest and military occupation of one part implied the conquest and control of the other. This illusion was not easily overcome. Such was the situation at the opening of the Paris Peace Conference in January 1919 - a precarious hold on the Turkish nation, now even more resentful owing to the severity of the Armistice terms, by the Entente Powers, whose prospects for mutual co-operation had suffered a serious blow over the establishment of the Armistice itself.

The Peace Conference of Paris opened on January 18, 1919. The British Delegation, insofar as the peace settlement with Turkey was concerned, arrived in a somewhat confused or, at best, open frame of mind. Two months previously the Foreign Office had drafted a memorandum outlining the general desiderata and policy of the British Empire with regard to the Turkish Question. It was a somewhat curious attempt to combine what remained of the secret wartime Agreements with the increasingly popular principles of nationalism and local self-determination. In those areas where there existed a predominantly Turkish-speaking population the British Government declared that it had no interest in preventing the maintenance of an independent Turkish national state. Along this same line of argument it also demanded some effective safeguard for the non-Turkish elements in the population, especially for the Greeks in Smyrna and other important centres on the west coast of Anatolia. However, despite proclaiming

these general principles of "no annexations" and "self-determination," Britain still believed that it was "perhaps not inconceivable that the Turks in the region adjoining Adalia, which alone was contemplated as the Italian zone originally, might seek Italian support and assistance."[13]

With a view to the future of Constantinople, British strategic and economic interests demanded a strong British influence. Political considerations, however, played a large part as well. The Government argued that "since the prestige with which the Ottoman Sultan is invested by the possession of Constantinople is one of his chief supports in the retention of the Caliphate, and since the transference of the Caliphate from the Turks to the Arabs is distinctly desirable from the British point of view ..., the expulsion of Turkey from Constantinople may perhaps be regarded as a British desideratum on political grounds." The memorandum, though, went on to advise that "we should not be too hasty in making up our minds." It was desired that the Straits be placed under effective international control, but the British Government was prepared to discuss the methods by which this control was to be established and did not commit itself to any particular solution in advance.[14]

In Armenia Britain emphasized the general principle of self-determination, believing it desirable to establish an independent state that would secure equal justice for all religions and nationalities.

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[13] Foreign Office, "Memorandum respecting the Settlement of Turkey and the Arabian Peninsula", November 21, 1918. Lloyd George Papers, F/209/4.

[14] Ibid.

Eventually this state was to become self-governing, but initially it was to be reconstructed for a term of years by a third Power. This Power had to be friendly to Great Britain, and to be capable of building up Armenia into an effective barrier against pan-Turanianism, and also against the aggression of foreign Powers in the direction of the Arab mandates. Though the choice of a specific mandatory for Armenia was left open, it was understood that the United States had the inside track. With regard to Kurdistan British policy emphasized its geographical proximity to Mesopotamia, thus Great Britain desired an exclusive position in Kurdistan as opposed to any other outside Power. The country itself should form an independent confederation of tribes and towns.[15]

British policy at the outset of the Paris Peace Conference was further complicated by the personal prejudices and philosophies of those Cabinet members most concerned with the problem of peace in Turkey. Each one appeared to stress his belief in the principle of national self-determination but, in western Turkey particularly, i.e. in the area of the Straits and the Aegean, various historical and strategical factors played a significant role in producing many conflicting points of view. These included the questions of the Turks in Europe, the Greeks in Asia, and the influence of the wartime partition Agreements. The opportunity to rid Europe once and for all of the Turk and thereby to lessen considerably Turkish influence at

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[15] Ibid.

the Straits had finally presented itself. But Constantinople was the historical home of the Sultan and the danger of arousing Moslem wrath throughout the British Empire was very real indeed. The question of Greek political control in Asia based itself on the principle of national self-determination and on deep historical roots going back over 2,000 years. What effect would a Greek presence in western Asia Minor have on the security of the Straits? Still, the fact had to be faced that Smyrna and the Vilayet of Aidin had been for centuries the economic entrepôt of the Turk. Britain also had to reconcile these problems with that of the wartime Allied pacts, which promised the nineteenth-century solution of partition.

A.J. Balfour and Lord Curzon represented the general view of the Foreign Office. In a memorandum of January 2, 1918 Curzon declared that Turkey had outlived its usefulness in Europe and demanded that it be deprived of all its European possessions including a strip of territory on the Asiatic side of the Straits. Constantinople and the Straits should be internationalized under the League of Nations and supervised by a commission preferably under American chairmanship.[16] In a second memorandum of March 25, 1919 Curzon argued that the Allies must immediately take advantage of their occupation of Constantinople to deprive the city forever of the Turk. He cautioned against Allied complacency: "The Old Turk who still hopes to establish the former

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[16] Curzon Memorandum, January 2, 1918. The Rt. Hon. the Earl of Ronaldshay, The Life of Lord Curzon, vol. III, London, 1928, pp. 263-4.

regime, and the Young Turk who means to cheat us, if he can, of the spoils of victory, look out from the crumbling watchtowers of Stambul."[17] Balfour agreed entirely that the region of Constantinople and the Straits be separated from Turkey and placed under a mandatory who would have the double duty "(a) of the local administration and keeping peace between the different elements in the population, and (b) of guarding a great international interest - in this case, the passage of the Straits."[18] On the question of Thrace Balfour was sympathetic to the aspirations of Greek nationalism; since "the population of Eastern Thrace is almost entirely Greek," the only possible claimant was Greece. However, in return for obtaining this new territory, the Greeks should be induced to renounce their claims to the Vilayet of Aidin and its chief city of Smyrna.[19] Thus the Foreign Office was prepared to support Greek nationalism only up to a certain point. Curzon concurred and elaborated on the dangers involved in the partitioning of Asia Minor. Could Greece, "who could not keep order five miles outside the gates of Salonika," be trusted to establish peace and security throughout the Vilayet of Aidin? He concluded with a further warning:

> That the Turks should be deprived of Constantinople is .... inevitable and desirable as the crowning

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[17] Curzon Memorandum, March 25, 1919. Ibid., pp. 264-5.

[18] Foreign Office Memorandum, January 2, 1919. David Lloyd George, The Truth about the Peace Treaties, vol. II, London, 1938, p. 1233.

[19] Foreign Office Memorandum, January 2, 1919. Ibid., p. 1234.

> evidence of their defeat in the war .... But when it is realised that the fugitives are to be kicked from pillar to post and that there is to be practically no Caliphate at all, ... we shall be giving a most dangerous and most unnecessary stimulus to Moslem passions throughout the Eastern world and that sullen resentment may easily burst into savage frenzy.[20]

Thus "there must obviously continue to be a home for the Turkish race."[21] The Foreign Office believed that British policy should concentrate its efforts entirely on securing a Straits regime conducive to British interests. It was not worth the trouble of arousing the wrath of the East over issues of less than primary importance. This policy was basically sound for Britain never possessed the means, militarily speaking, of adequately containing such resentment. However, the Foreign Office was soon to fall under the influence of Lloyd George and to find itself acquiescing in the Prime Minister's opposition to Turkish nationalism and in his policy of virtually kicking the Turk from "pillar to post".

Winston Churchill, representing the War Office, agreed with Balfour and Curzon that Constantinople and the Straits be subjected to an international administration under the chairmanship of the United States. He advocated, however, that the residence of the Sultan not be removed from Constantinople, arguing that it would be much easier to control him there than somewhere in the Anatolian interior.[22] A War Office memorandum of January 16, 1919 was some-

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[20] Curzon Memorandum, April 18, 1919. Ronaldshay, op.cit., pp. 265-6.

[21] Curzon, February 20, 1919. 33 H.L. Deb. 5s. (February 4- March 27, 1919), col. 262.

[22] Harold Nicolson, Curzon: The Last Phase: A Study in Post-War Diplomacy, London, 1934, p. 107.

what vague and inconclusive on the question of Thrace, but generally leaned towards the position of the Foreign Office. On the question of Greek claims in Anatolia, however, the War Office was totally opposed to the views of Balfour and Curzon. It was a strong supporter of Greek administration in Smyrna and the Vilayet of Aidin. Claiming support for the principle of national self-determination, it no longer considered the St. Jean de Maurienne Agreement as binding: "The handing over of nearly a million Greeks in western Asia Minor to Italian rule would be a gross violation of the principles of nationality and self-determination." It is interesting, though, that no mention is made of Turkish nationalism. Apparently national self-determination was not to apply to the equally large number of Turks in western Anatolia. In the struggle for territory in Asia Minor the War Office argued that the Greeks could count on the sympathy of the British people.[23] Greece could not, however, look for the assistance of British troops. The War Office, continually facing the combined pressure of conscripts and tax-payers, was often forced into progressive troop withdrawals and periodic demobilization. Since its decisions and policies were generally based on the availability of military power, the War Office's anti-Turkish stand tended to lose its vigour with both the declining fortunes of the Greeks and the constant reduction in the number of British troops in Turkey. However, once the more important British interests at Constantinople and the Straits were being directly

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[23] War Office Memorandum, January 16, 1919. Lloyd George, Peace Treaties, vol. II, p. 1235.

threatened by the Turks, the War Office stood wholeheartedly beside the uncompromising figure of Lloyd George.

India Office policy, under the leadership of Edwin Montagu, was strongly opposed to any determinedly anti-Turkish stance. Being concerned primarily with Indian Moslem reaction on the subcontinent, Montagu continually pressed for a lenient settlement with Turkey. He hoped this would satisfy the agitators in India and enable his reform programme there to be introduced in a peaceful atmosphere. He had a particularly hard time in opposing Curzon's desire to expel the Turks from Constantinople and Lloyd George's pro-Greek and rabidly anti-Turkish views. Montagu's obsession with this question cost him his health and eventually his political career. His conviction that all efforts to maintain law and order in India were being defeated by a wholly mistaken policy in regard to Turkey manifested itself in constant communication between the Indian Secretary and the Prime Minister. For the sake of India, Montagu always stressed the need to be sympathetic towards Turkey:

> Representing the interests of India I have a special and direct responsibility for the peace which is contemplated with Turkey. I feel that a peace such as is proposed will be hateful to Indian Mohammedans and cannot fail to augment the forces already strong which make for disaffection in India.[24]

Unfortunately for Montagu, the majority of the British Cabinet had about as much respect for the Indian as they had for the Turk.

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[24] Montagu to Lloyd George, April 15, 1919. S.D. Waley, Edwin Montagu: A Memoir and an Account of his Visits to India, Bombay, 1964, pp. 240-1.

From the outset not only Montagu's plans but those of the Foreign Office as well were rendered difficult of application owing to the fact that the British Government had to contend with past agreements leading along the road to partition. Furthermore, Prime Minister Lloyd George adopted the idea of using what still remained of the Ottoman Empire as a pool from which to compensate his Allies for sacrifices demanded of them in more significant areas. He certainly had no qualms about kicking the Turk from "pillar to post" as his Foreign Secretary had feared. His lack of concern for the Turks was to prove the validity of Curzon's sober prophecy. To say that the British Prime Minister held little respect for the Turk is, indeed, an understatement. Almost immediately after the outbreak of war with the Turks in 1914 he was calling them "a human cancer, a creeping agony in the flesh of the lands which they misgovern, rotting every fibre of life. ... I am glad that the Turk is to be called to a final account for his long record of infamy against humanity."[25] Just over two years later Lloyd George, still suffering from the British defeat at the Dardanelles, preached the complete destruction of the Turkish Empire: "The Turks have been ruling, or rather misruling, the most fertile and the most favoured lands in the world. ... It will be a great achievement to restore these famous territories to the splendour they enjoyed in the past, and to enable them once more to make their

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[25] Lloyd George, November 10, 1914. H.W.V. Temperley, A History of the Peace Conference of Paris, vol. VI, London, 1924, p. 24.

contribution to the happiness and prosperity of the world."[26] He seemed content upon throwing caution to the winds in dealing with the Turks. He could never forgive them for turning against Great Britain, their historical protector. This action confirmed his opinion that the Turk was "a blight and a curse wherever he pitches his tent ... he ought in the interest of humanity to be treated as such."[27]

Lloyd George's Turkophobia continually pervaded the atmosphere of the Paris, and subsequent, Peace Conferences. And British policy was very strongly affected by the Prime Minister's philosophy, in spite of initial appeals and arguments of fellow Cabinet members. Britain assumed the lead in preventing the Turks from negotiating in Paris and in demanding from them extensive territorial concessions. However, this would prove to be a very costly policy of irritation, for at this time Britain lacked the necessary troops to enforce what was leading to an extremely harsh peace. Foreign opposition to British hegemony in the Near East, as well as a public opinion concerned only with domestic policy and demobilization, would eventually scuttle any attempts to alleviate the situation. Not only was this to be a very costly policy for Great Britain, but an unnecessary one as well. At the time of the Paris Peace Conference and throughout the following four years Britain was assuredly strong enough at Constantinople to

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[26] Lloyd George, Peace Treaties, vol. I, p. 62.

[27] Ibid., vol. II, p. 1356.

secure its major aims in that vital area. In further demanding from the Turks extensive territorial and financial concessions in Turkey proper, where British military power was virtually non-existent, British policy was only inviting trouble, as if opening Pandora's Box. But the Prime Minister still functioned under the impression that Great Britain had performed a great service for all mankind in forcing Turkey to surrender. He emphasized strongly that Britain alone was responsible for "the emancipation of a vast country ... from the blighting influence of the Turk," and that Britain alone had accomplished it "after civilisation had failed for hundreds of years."[28] Not only was Lloyd George referring to the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire but to the predominantly Turkish-speaking areas as well. He was prepared to see the entire Empire relieved of its Turkish bureaucracy in Constantinople and partitioned among the major European Powers. But his constant allusion to the fact that it was Britain alone which was all-conquering both tempted Lloyd George into the relatively unknown reaches of the Anatolian interior and certainly did not augur well for Allied co-operation in the distribution of the "spoils." The proceedings of the Armistice of Mudros, detailed above, provided the first example of Allied disagreement along these lines. The long process of achieving a final peace with Turkey would continue this "tradition".

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[28] Lloyd George, October 30, 1919. 120 H.C. Deb. 5s. (October 22 - November 7, 1919), col. 977.

The problem of Turkey came before the Peace Conference of Paris on January 20, 1919. It appeared that the representatives of all the Powers (Russia being absent) agreed that the Ottoman Empire was to be broken into its component elements. And it was no surprise ten days later when the delegates concluded their labours by adopting the following significant resolution:

> The Allied and Associated Powers are agreed that Armenia, Syria, Mesopotamia and Kurdistan, Palestine and Arabia must be completely severed from the Turkish Empire.[29]

The internationalization of Constantinople and the Straits was generally favoured. The question of the military occupation also came up early in the discussion. On a motion of Lloyd George the Powers decided to ask the military representatives to report "as to the most equitable and economic distribution among these Powers of the burden of supplying military forces for the purpose of maintaining order in the Turkish Empire and Transcaucasia pending the decisions of the peace conference concerning the government of Turkish territory."[30] However, the fact that the Powers of the Entente had spheres of influence in the various parts of Turkey led to a clash of interests and widely differing views as to the ultimate disposition of both troops and territory.

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[29] Supreme Council Resolution, Paris Peace Conference, January 30, 1919. David Hunter Miller, My Diary at the Conference of Paris, with Documents, vol. XIV, New York, 1925, pp. 130-1.

[30] Lloyd George, Paris Peace Conference, January 30, 1919. David Hunter Miller, The Drafting of the Covenant, vol. II, New York, 1928, p. 227.

The first major problem was presented by the claims of Italy. Vittorio Orlando, the Italian Prime Minister, declared on January 20 that "Italy had only one simple and perfectly just desire, namely, that a proper proportion between the Allies should be maintained in respect of the occupation of those territories." He asked further that "Italy obtain its share of mandates or territories to be militarily occupied."[31] Orlando and Italy were now demanding a place in the Turkish partition. Italian claims in Asia Minor rested on two documents: the Treaty of London and the St. Jean de Maurienne Agreement. The claim to the region of Adalia was embodied in the Treaty of London and would stand so long as the Treaty was still acknowledged by the Allies. By the Agreement of St. Jean de Maurienne Italy was promised large additions of territory to the northwest of that province, including Smyrna itself. However, the Allies never did consider this Agreement as binding since the general approval of Russia, a stipulated condition, was never fulfilled.

By April 1919 Italy was becoming particularly nervous, both about the Fiume question and Asia Minor. On April 24, because of Wilson's opposition to Italian claims in the Adriatic, the Italian Delegation withdrew from the Paris Peace Conference. On April 30 it announced that Italian warships had dropped anchor in the port of Smyrna. Italian troops proceeded to occupy Adalia and a number of other nearby coastal towns before their Delegation returned to Paris on May 5.

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[31] Orlando, Paris Peace Conference, January 20, 1919. Ibid., p. 201.

A week later the problem of Asia Minor again came to the forefront. Lloyd George took up in earnest the idea of solving the Italian problem on the basis of compensations in Asia Minor. On May 13 Orlando and Baron Sonnino, his Foreign Secretary, came to see Lloyd George, who indicated to them on a map what he proposed to offer. The Italians seemed inclined to accept the British Prime Minister's idea of an Italian mandate over the Adalia region but wanted also the port of Scala Nova and the mines at Eregli. The reminder of Lord Milner, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, of the article of the covenant which provided for "the consent and wishes of the people concerned" apparently evoked considerable mirth.[32]

The same afternoon the Supreme Council met and Lloyd George, bent on forwarding his scheme, assumed the role of advocate for Italy. He stressed Italian resentment at not being treated as a first class Power and argued for an Italian mandate in Asia Minor. But Lloyd George's plan was far from having the united support of his own Delegation. Balfour especially was opposed to such a heavy mandate for Italy and proposed instead "a zone of commercial and immigration interest for Italy in the region of Adalia."[33] Apparently this was designed "to do two things: to maintain something resembling an

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[32]Harold Nicolson, Peacemaking 1919, London, 1933, pp. 333-4.

[33]Balfour Memorandum, May 13, 1919. Ibid., p. 334.

independent Turkish Government, ruling over a homogeneous Turkish population; the other is to find a position for the Italians within the Turkish State which will make a sufficient appeal to the ambitions of the Italian Government." He admitted that "from every other point of view, the plan ... is a bad one,"[34] but under the circumstances, especially as a result of the Greek occupation of Smyrna on May 15, he believed something had to be done for Italy. "They realised I think that the arrangement of St. Jean de Maurienne would have to be revised, but did not anticipate the revision would take the form of a Greek occupation."[35] Lloyd George handed out Balfour's memorandum at the Supreme Council meeting of May 17. Immediately it prompted Italian protests, but these were disregarded. Indeed, little action was taken at all, except an agreement to make a joint remonstrance to Italy for its military action in Asia Minor.

The Italian problem proved well nigh insoluble at the Paris Peace Conference as Great Britain, France, and the United States became increasingly more frustrated with Italian policy. On May 19 Lloyd George declared he would not discuss matters further unless Italy withdrew its troops from Asia Minor. The Italians claimed that to do so would be much too humiliating. The Peace Conference then reminded the Italian Government of its adhesion to the following earlier declaration:

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[34]Balfour Memorandum, "The Problem of Italy and Turkey in Anatolia", May 16, 1919. Ray Stannard Baker, Woodrow Wilson and the World Settlement, vol. III, New York, 1922, pp. 303-7.

[35]Rennell Rodd to Balfour, May 26, 1919. Balfour Papers, 49745 (vol. LXIII)/#34.

> No state will be rewarded for prolonging the horrors of war by any increase of territory, nor will the Allied and Associated Powers be induced to alter decisions made in the interests of peace and justice by the unscrupulous use of military methods.[36]

Still, Italy refused to budge from its foothold in southwestern Anatolia. Finally, on June 25, Clemenceau asked what was to be done about the Italians. Lloyd George replied that

> the district in question either belonged to the Turks or it did not. If it did, the Turk would say: "What are the Italians doing here?" And the Allies could only reply that the Italian occupation had been made without their knowledge or consent.[37]

Balfour was equally upset. To him Italian policy was "perfectly insane."[38] But despite being so harshly reprimanded, Italy could still not be taken too lightly, and would ultimately demonstrate to its Allies, especially to Great Britain, what an annoying thorn in the side it could be.

To counteract this Italian presence in Asia Minor Great Britain, France, and the United States sanctioned their Greek cohorts to occupy the city and district of Smyrna, Lloyd George using the

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[36] Supreme Council to Czechoslovak, Hungarian, and Romanian Governments, June 13, 1919. U.S. Department of State, Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, vol. VI, Washington, 1944, p. 411 (hereafter cited as F.R.U.S.).

[37] Lloyd George, Paris Peace Conference, June 25, 1919. Miller, Diary, vol. XVI, p. 461.

[38] Balfour to Rennell Rodd, March 14, 1919. Balfour Papers, 49745 (vol. LXIII)/#15.

pretext that the Italians had defaulted on their obligation to take "an adequate part in the war against Turkey."[39] This move was also undertaken to placate Greek nationalism, which had strong demographic claims in western Anatolia. The War Office, as expected, supported this move. The Foreign Office, hitherto so strongly opposed to any Greek presence in Asia Minor, swallowed its principles and acquiesced in the Prime Minister's policy. Greek interests always clashed heavily with those of the Italians, who continued to maintain that their general claims were secure under the secret treaties of 1915 and 1917 which had promised them territorial acquisitions in the Smyrna and Adalia regions. Baron Sonnino in particular regarded Greece as a troublesome rival in the eastern Mediterranean and treated it as such. But in March 1919 Eleutherios Venizelos, the Prime Minister of Greece, countered with a memorandum to the Supreme Council. In it he strongly opposed the anti-Greek aspects of Italian policy:

> In reality Italian policy has remained hostile to Greece and has systematically taken advantage of every occasion to injure her interests. ... At Smyrna the Italians encourage the Turk to prepare to oppose Greek occupation by force of arms. For this purpose bands have been formed with the participation of Italian agents and the Italian Representative is working in close collaboration with the Vali General Nouri.[40]

Later that same day Venizelos claimed the Turks were threatening to proceed to massacres "at the first opportunity" and that Italian agents were taking part in this movement by inciting the Turks to rise in

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[39] Lloyd George, Paris Peace Conference, May 6, 1919. F.R.U.S., vol. V, pp. 484-5.

[40] Lloyd George, Peace Treaties, vol. II, pp. 1246-7.

opposition to the Greek annexation of the Vilayet of Aidin and its chief city of Smyrna. The Greek Prime Minister argued further that the Italians were also "subsidising the Turkish press."[41] Italian statesmen, however, did not like the idea of having any rival to Italian naval power in the eastern Mediterranean. A larger Greece, with ports on the coast of Asia Minor, and with an overwhelmingly maritime population, would always be a constant menace to Italian influence, particularly when allied to a more formidable naval Power, such as Great Britain. By withdrawing its support of Italian territorial ambitions in western Asia Minor in favour of Greek aspirations, Britain was unnecessarily exacerbating an already deteriorating situation in Turkey. Here Britain took the first step, over a question of peripheral significance, in alienating one of its wartime Allies. As a result, the subsequent Italian hostility gradually developed into active moral and material encouragement to Mustafa Kemal's resistance to Anglo-Greek partition plans.

As early as October 15, 1918 Venizelos had gone to see Balfour to beg that the Greeks be allowed to take their share in any occupation in the event of an armistice with Turkey. The Greek Prime Minister was thinking particularly of the Turkish territories of Eastern Thrace and Western Anatolia, including the town of Smyrna,

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[41] Ibid., pp. 1247-8.

where he had a strong ethnographical basis for his claims.[42] After the Armistice Venizelos commenced an assiduous campaign with the support of the leading statesmen of the Entente, including Lloyd George. While refraining from making embarrassing demands for Cyprus or Constantinople, he urged Lloyd George that in view of the fact that there had been two and a half million unredeemed Greeks under Turkish misrule before the war, the Allies should consent to offset the post-war aggrandizement of Romania and Serbia by a comparable accretion of territory to Greece.[43] Lloyd George (according to Greek sources) replied that Great Britain would support Greece in all its legitimate aspirations in the hope that it would become a powerful, liberalizing factor in the eastern Mediterranean.[44] In the following...

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[42] Both Greeks and Turks were masters at fixing statistical figures. Greek records of 1912 claimed 553,500 Greeks in Smyrna as opposed to 310,000 Turks; 395,515 Greeks in Eastern Thrace against 344,011 Turks; and 44,000 Greeks in Western Thrace compared to 124,000 Turks. Naturally the Turks accepted the Greek figures for Western Thrace and even admitted a slight Greek plurality in Eastern Thrace: 304,537 to 265,359 according to official statistics of 1894-7. In Smyrna, however, Turkish records of 1912 listed 540,000 Moslems against 300,000 Greeks. In 1914 an independent study by Dr. Magie of the United States declared 509,000 Greeks in Smyrna as opposed to 470,000 Turks. Temperley, op.cit., vol. VI, p. 39. However, the Third London Conference estimated 473,984 Turks and 468,909 Greeks in the Smyrna Vilayet in 1920. Third London Conference, February 24, 1921. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XV, pp. 182-4.

[43] Venizelos to Lloyd George, November 2, 1918. Lloyd George Papers, F/55/1/11.

[44] Dimitri Kitsikis, Propaganda et pressions en politique internationale: La Grèce et ses révendications à la Conférence de la Paix, 1919-1920, Paris, 1963, p. 372.

four years this promise would prove to be a costly diplomatic venture.

On February 3, 1919 Venizelos appeared before the Paris Peace Conference to present the claims of his Government. He claimed all the Aegean islands, including those "which for strategic reasons owing to their situation at the entrance of the Straits had not been attributed to Greece by the conference of London after the Balkan war." He made no demand for Cyprus because he felt that since Britain had offered Greece the island during the war the British would now be "sufficiently magnanimous to surrender Cyprus to Greece." The whole of Thrace was also formally claimed by the Greek Prime Minister. Bulgaria was to cede Western Thrace, depriving itself of an outlet to the Aegean, and to receive access to the Mediterranean through the Straits, which were to be internationalized. Moreover, Greece would allow Bulgaria a commercial outlet at Kavalla or Salonica. Venizelos made no request for Constantinople, however, though "in reality," he claimed, "Constantinople was a Greek town."[45] The next day he claimed all of Asia Minor, except the Straits area, west of a line drawn between Castellorizo and the Sea of Marmora. Ironically, he based this demand on Wilson's twelfth point, emphasizing the geographical

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[45] Venizelos, Paris Peace Conference, February 3, 1919. Miller, Diary, vol. XIV, p. 190. It is impossible to define the true ethnical make-up of Constantinople in 1919. No reliable set of figures is available. Though much statistical data from a variety of sources exists for the pre-war period, the immediate effects of the war on the distribution of the population both in Constantinople and throughout the countryside is impossible to judge accurately. In light of the many rival claims and conflicting statistics one may assume that Constantinople had neither a clear-cut Greek nor Turkish majority. Both Venizelos and the Turks were notorious for fixing figures.

and historical unity of the country and the Greek majority in population. Excluding Constantinople, he claimed that 1,132,000 Greeks dwelt in Asia Minor, mostly merchant classes living along the Mediterranean littoral. At the conclusion of Venizelos' statements Lloyd George moved that these Greek requests be examined by an expert committee comprising representatives from Great Britain, the United States, France, and Italy.[46]

It was not until March 6, and then only after several meetings, that the Greek Territorial Commission was ready with its recommendations. All accepted the Greek claims in Thrace, with certain modifications, except Italy. The Italians requested that the Western Thracian port of Dedeagach be left to Bulgaria, and the whole of Eastern Thrace be administered by the proposed separate state of Constantinople, whose boundaries had not yet been determined.[47] On the question of western Asia Minor the Italians were particularly hostile, and practically withdrew from the Commission. The subsequent Italian defection from the whole Conference on April 24 left Venizelos with a golden opportunity to exploit the sympathies of the three other major Powers. The Greek Prime Minister thus set about convincing Lloyd George, Wilson and Clemenceau that "Greece can only find her real future from the moment when she is astride the Aegean."[48]

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[46]Venizelos, Paris Peace Conference, February 4, 1919. Ibid., pp. 199-209.

[47]Committee on Greek Territorial Claims, March 6, 1919. Ibid., vol. X, pp. 286-92.

[48]Venizelos to Nicolson, May 17, 1919. Nicolson, Peacemaking, p. 341.

To a considerable extent Venizelos succeeded. After serious negotiations in the absence of Italy, the Supreme Council agreed on May 6 to the dispatch of Greek forces to Smyrna. The American members of the Greek Territorial Commission had originally opposed the establishment of any Greek sovereignty in Asia Minor, while the British and French members had supported the claim of Venizelos for Greek annexation of Smyrna,[49] a clear example of Foreign Office peacebly succumbing to the prevailing viewpoing of Lloyd George. For his part Wilson overrode his experts and gave his full support to the annexation by Greece of the Smyrna district.[50] The Supreme Council adopted a resolution on May 14 providing for the cession of the district of Smyrna and the Dodecanese Islands to Greece in full sovereignty. Wilson seems to have supported the Greek case solely because of the Greek population of the Smyrna region. Lloyd George, on the other hand, took the lead in championing the Greek claims in Asia Minor, primarily in the hope that Greek military domination of Turkey, backed by British sea power, would guarantee British ascendancy over the Straits.[51] Lloyd George's proposed support of the Greeks, however, was not really necessary in effecting a successful British policy in Turkey. British predominance at Constantinople and the Straits had been quite definitely effected by the Armistice of Mudros and the subsequent overwhelming British occupation. At this critical time in history Britain faced no real threats and needed no guarantees of

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[49] William Linn Westermann, "The Armenian Problem and the Disruption of Turkey", What Really Happened at Paris (Edward Mandell House and Charles Seymour, eds.), New York, 1921, pp. 193-4.

[50] Wilson, Paris Peace Conference, May 13, 1919. F.R.U.S., vol. V, pp.584-6.

[51] Paris Peace Conference, May 14, 1919. Ibid., pp. 614-6, 622-3.

ascendancy at the Straits.

On May 14, 1919 Admiral Calthorpe led an Allied convoy of British, American, French, and Greek warships into Smyrna harbour. British marines disembarked and immediately occupied all the major public buildings. Twenty-four hours later an entire Greek division marched down the gangplanks to supplant the British in the occupation of Smyrna and its hinterland. Turkish resistance was sporadic but immediate, and rioting quickly broke out on a massive scale. The Greek population was particularly aggressive in revenging itself against the Turks. On May 17 Walter Long, the First Lord of the Admiralty, informed his French counterpart that there was a wholesale arrest of Turks by Greeks taking place at Smyrna. Long reported that the Turks were being badly treated by the Greek mobs and feared possible reprisals by the Turks in the interior "whence no force has yet been sent (italics mine)."[52] Acceding to the Greek occupation of Smyrna was tantamount to stirring up a hornet's nest in the interior of Anatolia. Unfortunately, neither Britain alone nor the Allied Powers as a whole possessed the military capacity to defend this "conquest."

The Greek landing at Smyrna had been declared by the Allies to be in accordance with Article VII of the Armistice agreement which gave the Allies the "right to occupy any strategic points" in the event of any situation arising which "threatens the security of the

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[52]Long to French Admiralty, May 17, 1919. Lloyd George Papers, F/206/4/43.

Allies." But it was doubtful whether the Allies' "security" was really in danger at this particular time, either by the Turks or the Italians. As it turned out, the position of the Allies in Turkey became much less secure after, rather than before, the occupation of Smyrna. To the Turks Smyrna was of greater importance than Constantinople to the economic life of the Turkish homeland. The fact that a corner of Asia Minor, and the most significant one at that, should be placed under the occupation of foreign troops, something which had never even happened throughout the course of World War I, strongly aroused Turkish fears and resentment. Moreover, the encroachment of Greece upon Anatolia was felt far more keenly than that of any other Power. Not only were the vital interests of the Turkish people now being menaced but their pride was also being deeply wounded. The Turks did not regard the Greeks as superiors or even as equals; the Turks still looked upon them as of second class rayah status.

As a result, the Turkish nation was seething with anger. But there was still little in the way of military power to keep it in check. In fact, increasing demobilization was contributing to a decrease in the number of available Allied troops. Churchill was later to declare that the Greek landing at Smyrna "opened so many new perils when our resources were shrivelling."[53] Still, the British Government wanted a strong and friendly Power in possession of the

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[53]Churchill, op. cit., p. 388.

Aegean littoral. This was all a part of grasping from the mistrusted Turkish nation what Britain considered to be "spoils of war".

Perhaps the most difficult problem of all to be encountered at the Paris Peace Conference was the question of Constantinople and the Straits. Here the British were most vitally concerned. From the beginning they argued in favour of the freedom of the Straits, i.e. that the Dardanelles and Bosphorus be open, at all times, to both merchant ships and war vessels. Never again, as during the past war, did they want to see the Straits closed and fortified against them by an unfriendly power. Their wartime defeat at the Dardanelles was not easily forgotten.

The fate of Constantinople and the Straits came up for consideration early in the Conference. General agreement, though vague and ill-defined, favoured an international settlement under a mandate granted by the League of Nations. As early as December 2, 1918 this solution had been suggested to David Hunter Miller, a member of the American Delegation, by Lord Eustace Percy of the Foreign Office. Percy believed the United States might accept such a trust.[54] Later, on January 11, 1919, Miller reported meeting with Lord Robert Cecil, Colonel T.E. Lawrence, Lionel Curtis, and others, wherein unanimous

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[54]Percy to Miller, December 2, 1918. Miller, Diary, vol. I, pp. 27-8.

sentiment was reached among the British present that "the United States should take Constantinople." It was also agreed that it should accept a mandate for Armenia.[55] The idea that the American Government take over Constantinople seemed to be general. The British did not want the French there, the French did not want the British in occupation, and neither desired an Italian mandate in that vital region. Hence the desire for an American mandate. Lloyd George regarded the United States as the only Great Power which could be entrusted with a mandate because of its immunity from European rivalries.[56] For Britain, Constantinople and the Straits would lie in the hands of the United States as a bulwark of the British Empire.

President Wilson, however, feared that the American people might be reluctant to undertake such a task and would be disinclined to send the necessary troops into Turkey. The President declared that "even if it was suggested that American troops should occupy Constantinople ... it was evident that they could not do so as they were not at war with Turkey." He thought it very unwise "to accept any form of mandate until they knew how it was intended to work."[57] Wilson's statement filled Lloyd George "with despair." The British Prime Minister, however, refused to let the question die. He was very much concerned with enforcing a successful peace and was anxious to get British armies back home and demobilized.[58]

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[55] Ibid., p. 74.

[56] Lloyd George, Peace Treaties, vol. II, pp. 1259-60.

[57] Wilson, Paris Peace Conference, January 20, 1919. Miller, Covenant, vol. II, pp. 194-200.

[58] Lloyd George, Paris Peace Conference, January 20, 1919. Ibid., pp. 200-1.

Thus from January to June the question of an American mandate was discussed intermittently. On May 14 Lloyd George submitted a draft resolution to the Supreme Council calling for an American mandate over the Straits territories. This resolution proposed American acceptance of

> A mandate over the City of Constantinople, the Straits of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmora and a small contiguous territory, the frontiers of which shall be determined by agreement between the United States, British, French and Italian Delegations whose recommendations, if unanimous, shall be accepted without further reference to the Council.[59]

It was resolved that Turkish sovereignty should cease over Constantinople and the Straits, Turkey-in-Europe, and the Sea of Marmora. Wilson agreed to accept this offer of a mandate subject to the approval of the Senate, which he said he could not guarantee. On June 27 he reiterated that he personally favoured acceptance of the mandates for Constantinople and Armenia, but that it was for the American people to decide.[60]

In the last meeting of the Supreme Council President Wilson believed that Constantinople and the Straits should be left as a neutral strip for the present, since it was already in Allied occupation. He desired to see the Sultan and his Government move out of Constantinople. Thus the problem of the Turks themselves

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[59] Lloyd George Memorandum, May 14, 1919. Lloyd George, Peace Treaties, vol. II, p. 1263.

[60] Wilson to the Press, June 27, 1919. Charles T. Thompson, The Peace Conference Day by Day, New York, 1920, p. 406.

and the future of their capital was brought to light. Wilson declared that he had studied the question of the Turks in Europe for a long time, and that every year had confirmed his opinion that "they ought to be cleared out."[61] This question, however, was of special significance to the British Government. The India Office in particular was always very sensitive to the reaction of Moslem opinion in India to the Turkish settlement. And the problem of Constantinople took precedence over all.

In January Edwin Montagu, the Secretary of State for India, remarked that he would not object to the Turks being turned out if the Americans took over Constantinople.[62] A few months later, however, Harold Nicolson, a member of the British Delegation, declared that the India Office was now becoming "over-nervous" about the future status of the Sultan and the Caliphate.[63] In May the Viceroy of India, Lord Chelmsford, informed the British Government that "Moslem feeling is already deeply stirred. Educated opinion is probably prepared for extensive territorial losses, but not for the loss of Constantinople."[64] On June 22 Montagu declared emphatically to Lloyd George:

> Any solution of the Turkish question which turns the Sultan out of Constantinople is one which no member of the Indian Delegation could accept. ... Would it be possible for you to relieve India from representation on the Peace Conference so that I and my colleagues need accept no responsibility for the Turkish Peace?[65]

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[61] Wilson, Paris Peace Conference, June 25, 1919. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. IV, p. 644.

[62] Montagu to Nicolson, January 13, 1919. Nicolson, Peacemaking, p. 233.

[63] Ibid., p. 346.

[64] Chelmsford to Montagu, May 14, 1919; Quoted by Lloyd Goerge, House of Commons, February 26, 1920. 125 H.C.Deb. 5s. (February 10-27,1920), col. 1962.

[65] Montagu to Lloyd George, June 22, 1919. Lloyd George Papers, F/40/2/55.

Lloyd George, however, was not impressed. He was too intent on avenging what he considered to be the bloody tyranny of the Turks. This meant removing, "bag and baggage," all memories of the Turkish Empire from Constantinople and Europe. But the establishment of a Straits regime in which the interests of Great Britain would be secured did not necessarily imply the expulsion of the Turk from Europe. Freedom of the Straits could be supervised as easily by a Turkish as by an American or international regime. Unfortunately for the British Government, its acceptance of a generally anti-Turk policy allowed it to wade unnecessarily in troubled and unknown waters. To Lloyd George, in particular, the Turk was forever decidedly foreign to Western civilization and hence unfit to stand guard at the Straits.

The fate of Armenia was closely linked to that of Constantinople, owing to the fact that British policy favoured an American mandate for both regions. President Wilson was personally in favour of some form of American assistance and protection being given to Armenia. On November 16, 1918 he declared to his State Secretary, Robert Lansing, that "My interest in the Armenians is profound and my sympathy for them really poignant."[66] Two months later the State Department drew up a memorandum outlining American sympathies with Armenia:

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[66] Wilson to Lansing, November 16, 1918. F.R.U.S., vol. II, p. 272.

> It is held that the principle of majorities should not apply in this case, because of the conditions under which the Armenian people have lived in the past. They have suffered from every handicap of nature and man; they have been manoeuvred and deported by hundreds of thousands; they have been the subject of international political intrigue .... It would be a departure from the principle of fair dealing if at this time their every claim were not heard with patience, and their new state [not] established under conditions that would in some manner right historic wrongs.[67]

On February 26, 1919 the Armenian Delegation, represented by Avetis Aharonian and Boghos Nubar Pasha, presented its demands to the Paris Peace Conference. The substance of the Armenian claims included Cilicia; the six Vilayets of Erzerum, Bitlis, Van, Diarbekir, Kharput, and Sivas; and a part of Trebizond, thereby giving access to the Black Sea. This territory was to be combined with that of the former Russian Armenia, which had declared its independence since the fall of Tsarist Russia, to create the new Armenian state under a temporary mandatory of the League of Nations.[68]

However, as in the case of Constantinople, the question of an American mandate was not easily determined. President Wilson, apparently unwilling to raise a new controversial issue at a time when he already faced great difficulties both in Paris and at home, rejected as "premature and unwise" proposals that he launch a campaign to

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[67] State Department Memorandum, January 21, 1919. Miller, Diary, vol. IV, p. 259.

[68] Armenian Delegation, Paris Peace Conference, February 26, 1919. Ibid., vol. XV, pp. 86-92.

"educate" the American people for acceptance of an Armenian mandate.[69] Still, he would agree to accept a mandate subject to the approval of the Senate, which again he said he could not guarantee. Lloyd George's draft resolution of May 14, though concerned primarily with the problem of Constantinople, dealt as well with a proposal to the United States to accept

> A mandate over the Province of Armenia as constituted within frontiers to be agreed upon between the United States, British, French and Italian Delegations, whose recommendations, if unanimous, shall be accepted without further reference to the Council.[70]

The British Government would have especially desired to see an American mandate for, and hence American troops in, Armenia. It would have meant a great deal for the future stabilization of Transcaucasia as a whole. This burden had since the end of the war rested upon the weary shoulders of Great Britain. On November 17, 1918 a detachment of the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force had reoccupied Baku,[71] and a detachment of the Salonica Army landed at Batum on December 27. The whole line of the Transcaucasian Railway between Baku and Batum was occupied directly by British forces. In accordance with Article XI of the Armistice of Mudros all Turkish troops were forced to withdraw from Transcaucasia to the line of the pre-war frontier between Russia and the Ottoman Empire. Transcaucasia,

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[69] Wilson to Polk, March 12, 1919. Seth P. Tillman, Anglo-American Relations at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, Princeton, 1961, p. 368.

[70] Lloyd George Memorandum, May 14, 1919. Lloyd George, Peace Treaties, vol. II, p. 1263.

[71] There had been an earlier, abortive occupation of Baku from August 4 to September 15, 1918.

however, was so remote from the main field of interest of the surviving Allied and Associated Powers that they grudged every expenditure of money and energy in this area. Nothing but the military vacuum created by the collapse of Russia had drawn the British into it. Thus they were anxious to shake off all commitments there at the earliest possible date. Even Italy, "who was straining to pick up scraps from rich men's tables in Tropical Africa," refrained at the last moment from undertaking a mandate over the mineral wealth of Transcaucasia which she had been offered by the Supreme Council. As a measure of compromise Britain placed its hopes in the United States accepting a mandate for at least the Armenian section of Transcaucasia. Still, without waiting for any compromise measures to be implemented, the British troops, under the combined pressure of conscripts and tax-payers, began to return home. They were progressively withdrawn so that by August 28, 1919 the whole of Transcaucasia except Batum was cleared of British troops.[72]

The question of Kurdistan was really an appendage to that of Mesopotamia and hence will not be discussed here at any great length. On February 6, 1919 General Sherif Pasha, a delegate from the congress of Liberal Turks of Geneva, presented before the Paris Peace Conference a "memorandum on the claims of the Kurds." This proposed an independent Kurdistan, formed from the Vilayets of Diarbekir, Kharput, Bitlis, Mosul, and the Sanjak of Urfa. Since the Arabs and the Armenians were to be given their independence, it could not be denied to the Kurds.[73]

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[72]Arnold J. Toynbee, Survey of International Affairs 1920-1923, London, 1927, pp. 363-4.

[73]Sherif Pasha, "Mémoire sur les révendications des Kurdes", February 6, 1919. Miller, Diary, vol. V, pp. 137-40.

These particular demands, however, obviously conflicted with those of the Armenians. Furthermore, Lloyd George was not prepared to see British Mesopotamia concede Mosul, and was more interested in securing Kurdistan as a buffer between that city and district and the Turkish-speaking homeland.[74] Unfortunately, this problem, like most of the others concerning the Turkish Question, was never seriously considered by the Paris Peace Conference, and it virtually remained to resolve itself.

For central Anatolia also, little in a positive direction was achieved at the Peace Conference. It was generally accepted that this central "rump" should be left to the Turks themselves as an independent Turkish national state - the Allies sole consession to Turkish nationalism. But it was understood that even this area would originally need some form of foreign control. The French especially pushed for some sort of financial control. It should be noted that the problem of investment in Turkey had a significant bearing upon the divergence between British and French policies. French investors held over 60% of the Ottoman Public Debt; the British held less than 15%. Because of the Bolshevik repudiation of the loans made by France to Tsarist Russia and to the pre-Soviet, revolutionary Russian Government, the French bondholders were fearful lest they should also lose their investments in Turkey.[75] The British, however, tended to subordinate financial to political interests.

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[74] Lloyd George, Paris Peace Conference, January 30, 1919. Miller, Covenant, vol. II, pp. 220-1.

[75] Maurice Pernot, La question turque, Paris 1923, p. 240.

Furthermore, such British economic interests as there were in Turkey, when the Arabs had seceded, lay in transit into the Black Sea through the Straits rather than in the economy of Anatolian Turkey itself. Hence, the overwhelming importance of Constantinople and the Straits in British policy. Britain's relatively low interest in central Anatolia made it less difficult to acquiesce in French demands for financial control in that region. It also made it easier to treat the Turk with a good deal of severity, though both unnecessary and time-consuming. Lloyd George believed that Britain's large economic interests in the transit route through the Straits would not be injured by any harshness towards the Turks. In the spring of 1919 the British Government could not foresee having to make a determined military stand at Chanak to prevent the Turk from driving British influence out of that vital region.

On May 30 the Supreme Council agreed to grant a request from the Turkish Government to be permitted to send a delegation to the Peace Conference. The Turkish Delegation was headed by Grand Vizier Damad Ferid Pasha and laid its claims before the Council on June 17, 1919. The Grand Vizier did not condone the crimes of Turkey during the war, but insisted on a peace with Turkey in accordance with Wilsonian principles, based on the status quo ante bellum. Obviously he had greatly misinterpreted the American President's declarations. It is impossible to reconcile Wilson's twelfth point, and its argument on behalf of national self-determination in the Ottoman Empire, with

Damad Ferid's call for the status quo ante bellum. Nevertheless, in Thrace the Grand Vizier asked for a line northwest of Constantinople, a frontier for the defence of both Constantinople and Adrianople. In Asia Minor he claimed the territory bounded on the north by the Black Sea and on the east by the Tigris River and the Turko-Persian frontier as before the war. Turkey would also include the Vilayets of Mosul and Diarbekir, as well as a part of Aleppo to the Mediterranean Sea. Likewise the islands near the coast would remain Turkish to protect the mainland. The Grand Vizier was prepared to discuss Armenian frontiers but he declared that the Ottoman people would never accept "the dismemberment of the empire or its division under separate mandates."[76]

The Grand Vizier neglected to mention the nature of the Straits regime or anything concerning the question of the freedom of the Straits. It is quite likely, however, that at this critical time for the Turks, the Sublime Porte would have readily made this concession to the British. If Mustafa Kemal, bolstered by a Bolshevik alliance and a resounding victory over the Greeks, could concede the freedom and demilitarization of the Straits to both commercial vessels and ships of war, then Damad Ferid, in his virtually impossible position in June 1919, could hardly have thought otherwise. By concentrating its energy solely upon its primary goal the British Government could

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[76]Damad Ferid Pasha, Paris Peace Conference, June 17, 1919. Lloyd George, Peace Treaties, vol. II, pp. 1004-8.

have accepted the Turkish demands. For France and Italy, however, they were impossible to accept. Thus Britain, on the surface, dismissed the Turkish plea with contempt for the sake of Allied unity. In reality, however, the British Government deeply mistrusted the idea of any large Turkish national state and chose to combat this by supporting Greek and Armenian national rights in western and eastern Anatolia respectively. Hence, Britain sacrificed a golden opportunity to effect a separate peace with the Turkish Government.

On June 23 the Supreme Council rejected the Turkish argument and gave approval to Balfour's slashing attack on the tyranny and cruelty of the Ottoman Government. Balfour had little faith in the Turks' ability to rule over alien races, arguing that "Neither among the Christians of Europe nor among the Moslems of Syria, Arabia and Africa has the Ottoman Turk done other than destroy what he has conquered; never has he shown himself able to develop in peace what he has won by war." As far as the moral and religious plea of the Turks was concerned, the British Foreign Secretary inquired:

> What religious issue can be raised by a war in which Protestant Germany, Roman Catholic Austria, Orthodox Bulgaria and Moslem Turkey, banded themselves together to plunder their neighbours? ... To thinking Moslems throughout the world the modern history of the Government enthroned at Constantinople can be no source of pleasure or pride.[77]

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[77]Balfour, Paris Peace Conference, June 23, 1919. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. IV, pp. 645-7.

President Wilson subscribed to this reply "with great satisfaction,"[78] On June 26 he suggested that the Turkish Delegation be sent home. "They had exhibited complete absence and a total misunderstanding of the West."[79] Lloyd George agreed that "this was Turkish diplomacy."[80]

To the Turks this reply was the crowning insult to a variety of post-war grievances suffered at the hands of the Allies. This list was indeed quite long: the extreme harshness of the Armistice of Mudros; the landing of Greek and Italian troops in western Anatolia; the threatened loss of Constantinople and Thrace; the prospects of dwelling under a virtually colonial status; and now this final rebuff at the Paris Peace Conference. It is little wonder that the Turk felt betrayed, the same Turk who regarded himself as having stood so gallantly in defence of his capital and national homeland. From the British and Allied point of view, Turkey proper, like the rest of the Ottoman Empire, was looked upon as easy pickings, despite the inadequacy of military forces in most of that region. Yet for Britain, Constantinople was still the most important spoke in the wheel. In this connection the British Delegation urged on June 27 that further consideration of the Turkish Treaty be deferred until it was known whether the United States would accept mandates for

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[78] Wilson, Paris Peace Conference, June 23, 1919. F.R.U.S., vol. VI, p. 576.

[79] Wilson, Paris Peace Conference, June 26, 1919. Ibid., p. 711.

[80] Lloyd George, Paris Peace Conference, June 26, 1919. Ibid.

Constantinople and Armenia.[81] British policy thus rested on this American decision. But it was not absolutely essential that it do so. A satisfactory regime for the area surrounding Constantinople and the Straits could quite conceivably have been entrusted to the Turkish Government. Waiting for this American decision may be justified, but waiting while this period - the last half of 1919 - produced such a significant growth in Turkish nationalism proved to be a major blunder of British diplomacy.

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[81] Lloyd George, Paris Peace Conference, June 27, 1919. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. IV, p. 652.

CHAPTER II

ALLIED DELAY: THE RISE OF TURKISH NATIONALISM

The prospects of a successful peace with Turkey dimmed even further in the last half of 1919. Not only did Britain face increasing opposition from the Turks, owing to the fantastic growth of Turkish nationalism in this period, but many of the British proposals and objectives at the Peace Conference of Paris tended to become seriously undermined. From the beginning the American problem and the question of mandates for Constantinople and Armenia became a thorn in the side of the British Government. Britain was increasingly anxious to rid itself of its great financial and military burdens in these areas by handing them over to the safe-keeping of a friendly Power like the United States. This would effectively prevent any Franco-Italian attempts at dominance in the Near East which were indeed very real. While France pressed for a French military command at Constantinople, Italy gradually adopted a policy of conciliation with the Turkish nationalists. This action on the part of its Allies represented a strong rebuff to Britain's pro-Greek policy in Turkey,

a policy roundly condemned by the Smyrna Commission report of October 1919. Still the British Government attempted to press for peace upon its own terms. The growing Turkish resistance of this period, however, was an increasingly serious menace to the Paris proposals and the fact that the sobering reports from the British High Commission in Constantinople were generally ignored by the Foreign Office in London did not augur well for a successful peace with Turkey.

The first problem was still the question of the American mandates for Constantinople and Armenia. British hopes of American acceptance, however, began to fade almost immediately. In July President Wilson was struck down by illness and was confined for a good deal of time to the White House. From then onwards he tended to exercise less and less influence on American or world affairs. American opinion, disillusioned by the war, desired only a return to "normalcy" and to be rid of all external entanglements. On July 18 Henry White, now the chief American representative on the Supreme Council, reported that President Wilson had informed him that there would be a "very considerable" delay in the decision of the United States as to the mandates.[1] Balfour, now heading the British Delegation, could do little but agree to postpone the decision of the Council.

Britain waited until August 15 when Lord Curzon queried

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[1] White, Supreme Council, Paris, July 18, 1919. Ibid., First Series, vol. I, pp. 131-2.

Lindsay, the British Chargé d'Affaires in Washington, as to the prospects of American acceptance of the mandates.[2] Lindsay replied that "acceptance is most unlikely," since Wilson was leaving the matter entirely in the hands of Congress. He pointed out that public opinion had not yet been formed on the subject "but I confidentially anticipate it will be hostile."[3] Curzon was disgruntled and believed the President was making no effort to obtain the assent of the Senate and Congress because "he wants his treaty [of Versailles] first."[4] On August 18, 1919 Lloyd George explained to Parliament that

> The Peace with Turkey has not been signed, not because of any delay on our part, but because we are waiting for the decision of America. We want to know whether America is prepared to take her share of guaranteeing protection for peoples who, if not protected, will be subject to torture, mis-government, and massacre. We have not yet had our answer, and until the answer comes, you cannot formulate your peace with Turkey.[5]

So the British Prime Minister, subscribing to the belief that the Turk was still incapable of treating minorities in a civilized manner, was prepared to wait for an American reply to the question of mandates for Constantinople and Armenia, despite the fact that it would probably be a reply in the negative. The attitude of the British Government

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[2] Curzon to Lindsay, August 15, 1919. Ibid., First Series, vol. IV, p. 729.

[3] Lindsay to Curzon, August 16, 1919. Ibid., p. 730.

[4] Curzon Minute, August 19, 1919, Balfour to Curzon, August 18, 1919. Ibid., p. 734.

[5] Lloyd George, August 18, 1919. 119 H.C. Deb. 5s. (August 4-19, 1919), col. 2016.

prevented it from seeking a solution through direct negotiations with the Turks at a time when the Turkish nation was still in an extremely weak bargaining position. It waited for a likely discouraging response from the Americans while the Turkish nationalists quickly built up and consolidated their strength in the virtually unguarded Anatolian interior. Furthermore, while the British Government took no constructive steps towards peace, it faced increasing domestic opposition, especially demands for immediate demobilization of British troops in the Near East. After the British withdrawal from Transcaucasia on August 28, only a small body of troops remained at Batum. This force, however, remained primarily as an object of British prestige and was powerless against any major concentration of foreign troops. For all intents and purposes British policy was sacrificing Armenia and all of Transcaucasia -- a clear example of the British Government's lack of sincerity and determination in a region of less than primary importance. The perimeter around Constantinople and the Straits was being slowly reduced.

The American delay in regard to the mandates continued to hold up the Turkish Treaty in the autumn of 1919. Lloyd George told the Supreme Council on September 15 that the Treaty could not be drawn up until the American reply on the mandates was received. Frank L. Polk, the American economic adviser, stated that the position of the United States might be clear by the end of October. Lloyd George thought this view "rather sanguine"[6] but reiterated his stand two

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[6] Lloyd George, Supreme Council, Paris, September 15, 1919. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. I, pp. 688-9.

days later at Sheffield by declaring that the British Government could not settle the Turkish problem until it knew what course of action the United States was prepared to take.[7] Wilson, according to Lloyd George, put the Allies in an "impossible situation" as to the Turkish Treaty. "We were in despair," he wrote in his memoirs, "as to what action we could take without risking a breach with America."[8] It is very interesting that Lloyd George should be so concerned with maintaining harmonious relations with the United States while the American Government was content to hold up the whole diplomatic peacemaking machine in Turkey and thereby to make a successful British policy at the Straits much more difficult to achieve. Hoping to absolve itself of responsibility for a large chunk of post-war Turkey proper, Britain, a veteran of Near Eastern affairs, found its policy geared to the whims of a somewhat disinterested neophyte.

The situation deteriorated even further when the American president was struck down by a paralytic stroke on September 25. Temperamentally an autocrat, Wilson had trained no disciple to carry on the fight. On the basis of reports that the President's stroke was a temporary nervous breakdown from which there might be a recovery in a few weeks, Lloyd George continued to place his hopes in an American mandate, rejecting Curzon's repeated appeals for an immediate peace with Turkey. On October 10 Lord Grey, who had now been appointed

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[7] Lloyd George, Sheffield, September 17, 1919. Temperley, op.cit., p. 28.

[8] Lloyd George, Peace Treaties, vol. II, p. 1267.

a special British emissary in Washington, had reported that American acceptance of the mandates, since the President's illness, seemed "altogether out of the question."[9] Curzon cabled Grey on October 18 that the American delay was already producing "lamentable consequences" and might "gravely imperil [the] chances of [the] Peace Treaty with Turkey."[10] Grey, however, had failed entirely in his efforts to interview Wilson and repeated his contention that "there is no chance whatever of Congress authorizing acceptance of Mandates for Constantinople, &c."[11]

This delay caused increasing apprehension among the members of the Foreign Office, the leadership of which was taken over by Lord Curzon on October 24, 1919. On November 4 he informed Admiral Sir John de Robeck, the British High Commissioner in Constantinople, that the "delay of [the] United States in deciding as to mandates coupled with [the] illness of [the] President has made it very unlikely that any definite terms of peace can be announced for some time to come."[12] However, soon afterwards Admiral de Robeck reported to the British Government that the delay in making peace was having disastrous effects. The Turks were no longer cowed and Mustafa Kemal's nationalists were growing rapidly in strength.[13] On November 17

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[9] Grey to Curzon, October 10, 1919. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. IV, p. 798.

[10] Curzon to Grey, October 18, 1919. Ibid., p. 827.

[11] Grey to Curzon, October 22, 1919. Ibid., p. 843.

[12] Curzon to de Robeck, November 4, 1919. Ibid., p. 852.

[13] De Robeck to Curzon, November 18, 1919. Ibid., pp. 875-6.

Balfour, now having replaced Curzon as Lord President of the Council, outlined the British attitude:

> It must be a common policy and until the common policy is settled it would be an action unfair to our Allies and our friends if we were to map out the Turkish Empire in precisely the form in which we should like to see that great area of the Near East ultimately arranged.[14]

Again British interests were being subordinated to an old, ramshackle alliance. Grey reported on November 23, however, that an American decision had still not been reached and recommended that negotiations on the Turkish Treaty be begun.[15]

This was not the only favourable suggestion to Curzon. As early as November 12 Pichon, the French Foreign Secretary, had argued to his British counterpart that the United States had disappeared as a factor in the settlement of the Near East. Thus it was only France and Great Britain whose interests were to be seriously considered. Pichon was prepared for confidential discussions. He wanted some form of Anglo-French understanding before the question was taken up by a peace conference.[16] These plans would eventually come to fruition in the following month, the same month which saw the American Government withdraw from active participation in the work of the Supreme Council. However, hopes for an American contribution to the Turkish settlement continued to linger in the Prime Minister's Office until finally

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[14] Balfour, November 17, 1919. 121 H.C. Deb. 5s. (November 10-28, 1919), col. 768.

[15] Grey to Curzon, November 23, 1919. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. IV, p. 901.

[16] Curzon-Pichon Conversations, London, November 12, 1919. Ibid., p. 879.

eclipsed on March 19 of the following year, when the Treaty of Versailles failed to command the constitutional majority in the Senate. The United States thereupon formally withdrew from the Supreme Council. All that remained were sad strictures from Wilson's sick bed on the Allied proposals for the Turkish settlement. In his letter of March 24 he ruled out the prospect of American commitments either in Constantinople or Armenia. He was willing and able to act only as arbitrator in the settlement of the frontiers of the new Armenian state.[17]

This problem of dealing with the United States of America brought out strongly the differences in attitude and outlook of the British Prime Minister and his new Foreign Secretary. Lloyd George was little concerned with the Turks, much more with the fear of antagonizing the Americans, fear that

> we should create suspicion in the United States of America that we were quite willing to take United States help, but that whenever there was any question of dividing the mandates over these undeveloped territories we instantly took advantage of some little political difficulty in America in order to divide the whole thing among ourselves. That would have been a great political blunder which might have resulted in very unpleasant consequences.[18]

The Prime Minister believed that Britain would be placed in an extremely difficult position should the United States refuse to accept any responsibility for the protection of the Straits and Armenia.

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[17] Wilson to Lloyd George, March 24, 1920. Lloyd George, Peace Treaties, vol. II, pp. 1296-1300. Lloyd George still complained that this did not stop Americans from sending "endless telegrams from the United States asking why nothing was done to help Armenia." Lloyd George, First London Conference, March 5, 1920. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. VII, p. 428.

[18] Lloyd George, March 25, 1920. 127 H.C.Deb. 5s. (March 22 - April 16, 1920), col. 657.

The unhappy state of British finances was demanding constant demobilization and reduced commitments in Turkey, thereby necessitating the British Government to look elsewhere, i.e. to the United States as a friendly and disinterested Power, for the protection of its vital interests. Lloyd George thus argued that by antagonizing the Americans and causing them to refuse any contribution to the Turkish settlement, Britain would be unable to reduce its very costly overseas obligations in Turkey in favour of resolving the immediate domestic problems at home. To the British Prime Minister the United States was the one and only Power capable of safeguarding British interests at the Straits.

Lord Curzon, on the other hand, was much more concerned with the deteriorating situation in Turkey and the increasing problems being faced by the Turkish Government in Constantinople. On November 12, 1919 he recorded his thoughts in a conversation with Pichon:

> I earnestly deplored any such postponement. By next spring ... there might very likely be no Turkish Government to deal with at all. It was more than possible that there would be no one to accept the sort of treaty which the Allies would desire to impose. It was even conceivable that the defeated Turk, who would then be one of the few parties on the scene with a serious force available, would declare war upon the Allies, and dare them to enforce their terms. If this were the case, I did not see how we were to conquer Asia Minor, or who was to do it; and the ignominious result might be that the weakest and most abject of our foes would end by achieving the greatest triumph.[19]

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[19] Curzon-Pichon Conversations, London, November 12, 1919. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. IV, p. 880.

Here Curzon clearly outlined the whole British predicament. Britain was facing large difficulties functioning under the assumption that it had conquered Turkey proper when it had forced the Ottoman Empire to surrender. And what a prophet Curzon would prove to be! Nevertheless, at the London Conference in March 1920, the British Government, including Lord Curzon and the Foreign Office, continued to support Lloyd George and to operate under the above, ill-conceived assumption.

Again, what disturbed Britain most about the American refusal to undertake any mandates or military responsibilities in Turkey was that it made it much more difficult for the British Government to reduce its own commitments there. The British could not afford to maintain the necessary number of troops in both Constantinople and Transcaucasia. Since the maintenance of an acceptable regime in the area of Constantinople and the Straits was the indispensable bulwark of British policy in post-war Turkey, it was resolved, especially after the United States declined to foot the bill, that the British troops in Transcaucasia be withdrawn. Cecil Harmsworth, a member of the Foreign Office, explained that "if it[the maintenance of British forces in Transcaucasia] were to be continued until settled government has been established in those regions, it would be impossible to place a limit to its duration."[20] After the withdrawal of British troops on August 28 there was growing concern within British governmental

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[20]Harmsworth, August 14, 1919. 119 H.C. Deb. 5s. (August 4-19, 1919) col. 1678.

circles about the possibility of future Armenian massacres at the hands of the Turks. Balfour remarked to Curzon that "all the British can do is to protest that neither the state of their army nor the state of their Treasury permit them to retain a single battalion in the Caucasus though every Armenian throat should be cut in consequence of their leaving."[21] A couple of months later Lloyd George declared in the House of Commons that "We left Armenia because we wanted to economise. We cannot really police the world, and we honestly thought there were other Powers which might take their share."[22]

In fact, another Power, France, did offer to deal with the situation by sending a force through Cilicia to Armenia. But Britain was only prepared to accept the French proposal if the force was sent by way of the Black Sea through Trebizond or Batum. The British complained that a French expedition to Alexandretta could have no effect whatever upon the situation at Kars or Erivan, where the danger lay; that the force would never reach Erzerum, a distance of nearly 500 miles over a country without roads or resources; and that coming from the direction of Cilicia "it is much more likely to provoke hostility of Turks than it is to save existence of Armenians." From Britain's point of view, if the object was to rescue Armenians, the Black Sea route appeared to be the only feasible way by which French troops could attempt to aid Armenia; "the French plan seems not only

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[21] Balfour to Curzon, August 31, 1919. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. IV, p. 745.

[22] Lloyd George, October 30, 1919. 120 H.C. Deb. 5s. (October 22 - November 7, 1919), col. 978.

certain to fail, but likely to produce political consequences of a very serious nature."[23] These "political consequences" could have manifested themselves in a French military transgression upon Kurdistan, which the British regarded as their private sphere of influence. Thus, when the French refused to accept the British amendment to their offer, the whole idea of helping out the Armenians collapsed. Petty Allied rivalry was beginning to take its toll. This fear of French ambition was another reason why Lloyd George waited so long for American participation.

The French, however, were by no means the sole ally with whom the British were becoming increasingly annoyed. The Italians, for their part, had never forgiven Britain for championing Greek rights in Asia Minor in areas which Italy regarded as its own sphere of influence. In Italy Lloyd George was bitterly denounced as having selected Greece to be the vessel and instrument of British policy in the Levant - a policy regarded in Rome as solely designed to put an object in the path of Italian expansion. At the same time Venizelos was execrated for offering himself as a political mercenary and tool of British hegemony.[24] Italy reacted throughout the latter part of 1919 and early 1920 by very gradually moving in the direction of conciliation with the Turks, especially Mustafa Kemal's Turkish

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[23] Curzon to Balfour, September 2, 1919. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. IV, p. 747.

[24] M.H. Macartney and P. Cremone, Italy's Foreign and Colonial Policy, 1914-1937, London, 1938, p. 173.

nationalists. On November 10 de Robeck reported that "the attitude of the Italian Government is ambiguous and lends itself to certain suspicion."[25] Two months later Constantinople was revealing that "at present their whole aim is to curry favour with the Turk and with this object in view are helping the National Movement."[26] And during the London Conference de Robeck complained that there were "too many evidences that official Italian policy here is strongly pro-Turkish."[27] Though Count Sforza, at the time Italian Foreign Secretary, denied all accusations of Italian collaboration with the Turkish nationalists,[28] the British Government found itself hopelessly faced with even stronger Italo-Turkish collaboration the following year. But it was this period between the Treaty of Versailles and the London Conference which served sufficiently to undermine Anglo-Italian relations beyond all hope of repair.

At the same time Anglo-Greek relations fared little better, but did manage eventually to weather the storm. After the Greeks landed at Smyrna on May 15, they lost no time in expanding from the bridgehead they had established. At first Venizelos had little difficulty in obtaining the Allies' approval for further advances,

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[25] De Robeck to Curzon, November 10, 1919. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. IV, p. 871.

[26] High Commission Memorandum, Constantinople, January 10, 1920, Webb to Curzon, January 22, 1920. Ibid., p. 1080.

[27] De Robeck to Curzon, March 2, 1920. Ibid., First Series, vol. VII, p. 422.

[28] Buchanan to Curzon, November 6, 1920. Ibid., First Series, vol. XIII, p. 169.

upon the pretext of ensuring the safety of his troops, but within a short time it became known that the Greek forces had marred their arrival in Asia Minor by the murder of Turkish prisoners and by atrocities against the local Moslem population.[29] Admiral Calthorpe, who was British High Commissioner for a short time after the Armistice, declared from Constantinople that the Greek troop movements were actuated by political motives and "will cause much further bloodshed and transfer the present unrest still further [sic] eastward into the country."[30] Lord Hardinge, then Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, wrote in his memoirs that in the autumn of 1919 "absolute chaos" prevailed in Smyrna, "for which Lloyd George, who was under the thumb of Venizelos, was more responsible than anybody."[31] Nevertheless, Hardinge was still among those prepared to acquiesce in the British Government's policy of supporting Greek against Turkish nationalism. In any case the Supreme Council, though it refrained from ordering the Greeks to withdraw, established a commission of enquiry to investigate these allegations and appointed General Milne to exercise overall command in the area and to demarcate boundaries both between the Greeks and the Italians and between the Greeks and the Turks.

The Inter-Allied Commission concerning the Greek occupation of Smyrna and its hinterland consisted of representatives from Great

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[29] Granville to Curzon, May 24, 1919. F.O. 371/4218/79356.

[30] Calthorpe to Balfour, July 16, 1919. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. IV, p. 685.

[31] Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, Old Diplomacy, London, 1947, p. 245.

Britain, France, Italy, and the United States. Its report, dispatched from Constantinople on October 12, 1919, declared that "since the armistice the general condition of the Christians of the vilayet of Aidin has been satisfactory, and their security has not been threatened. ... It is obvious, therefore, that this occupation was not at all justifiable, and violated the terms of the armistice concluded between the Powers and Turkey."[32] The Commission also drew the conclusion that Greece would prove unable to maintain its position in Asia Minor. It thus seemed possible that the Allies would revoke their mandate. But towards the end of 1919 Venizelos did much to strengthen the Greek position. He increased his troops to 75,000 men and established a perimeter against both Italian and Turkish encroachment. Moreover, he persuaded Italy to drop its opposition to his claims and even to promise to cede to Greece the Dodecanese Islands. He therefore begged Lloyd George not to expel Greece from Smyrna adding that his personal position in Greece was at stake. To this Lloyd George replied that the Greeks should certainly stay in Smyrna and that, as far as he was concerned, Britain's policy was to support Greece, and especially Venizelos, as a close and friendly ally.[33]

So despite the highly critical findings of the Smyrna Commission, Lloyd George was still prepared to support the Greeks in their claims in western Anatolia. The Prime Minister was thus

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[32] Smyrna Commission, October 12, 1919. Gaston Gaillard, The Turks and Europe, London, 1921, pp. 50-1.

[33] Lloyd George - Venizelos Conversations, October 31, 1919. Lloyd George Papers, F/92/12/5.

satisfying himself and his deep-seated hatred of the Turk by favouring a highly-criticized foreign occupation in Turkey. This policy was neither just nor necessary for Great Britain, yet the majority of the British Cabinet complied. Lloyd George's action certainly enabled Venizelos to assume a much bolder tone. On November 20 he declared to Sir Eyre Crowe, the Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that "when Greece was asked to proceed to this occupation, not only was there no mention made to me of its being temporary, but on the contrary ... that this occupation was the first step towards giving Greece part of Western Asia Minor."[34] That same day he reported to the press: "It was our understanding that we should occupy a country which has been Greek for 3,000 years pending final settlement of the question which would give us title to the district."[35] In January 1920 the Greek Prime Minister used the uncertainty over the future of Constantinople to his own advantage: "if it should be declared that the Sultan is to remain in Constantinople, I am of the opinion that there is no reason whatever for any additional satisfaction to be given to him by the application of half measures in regard to Western Asia Minor."[36] Thus Lloyd George's alliance with Venizelos considerably limited the possibilities in Britain's diplomatic field of action. By placing himself "under the thumb of Venizelos," i.e. by attaching British policy to the always unpredictable course of

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[34] Venizelos to Crowe, November 20, 1919. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. IV, p. 905.

[35] Venizelos to the Press, November 20, 1919. "The Problem of Turkey", The New York Times Current History, vol. 11, pt. 2 (January - March 1920), p. 273.

[36] Venizelos Memorandum, January 12, 1920. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. IV, p. 1047.

Greek politics, Lloyd George was, to a certain extent, forfeiting Britain's independent action in Turkey and running a high risk of failure and foreign condemnation. As little as this Lloyd George-Venizelos alliance really aided British influence in, and contributed to, the security of the Aegean and the Straits, it tended to exasperate further British relations with the French and to rekindle the discontent of the Italians. While the French were always wary of any British attempt at hegemony in the Near East, the Italians, who were now developing their relations with the Turkish nationalists and their resources in southwestern Turkey, feared that Venizelos, operating with Lloyd George's seal of approval, had an excellent opportunity to encroach further upon their particular sphere of influence. This unhappy situation existed at the critical time when the Kemalists were quickly building up their resources in the interior of Anatolia, far from any British or Allied pressures. It was little wonder that Lloyd George, in reviewing the details of the Smyrna Commission, reported to Parliament that the Allied Governments had not thought it expedient to publish its results.[37] Publication risked raising the furor of world public opinion. Non-publication was only agreed upon by France and Italy as a symbolic act to demonstrate the futility of any Turkish show of resistance.

Anglo-French rivalry had first made itself felt throughout the Armistice proceedings of October 1918. Here the questions of

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[37]Lloyd George, March 15, 1920. 126 H.C.Deb.5s. (March 1-19, 1920), col. 1807.

naval and military command were most prominent. Despite the fact that the French finally adhered to a solely Anglo-Turkish Armistice, they were always loathe to accept first the temporary command of Lieutenant-General Maitland-Wilson, then the permanent command of General Milne, over all the Allied forces in Turkey. By the latter half of 1919 they began to put pressure on the British to redress this imbalance. De Fleuriau, the French Chargé d'Affaires in London, told Curzon that he wanted Milne replaced by General Franchet d'Espérey in Constantinople, leaving Milne solely to command in Asia Minor.[38] For some time, however, the British were not moved and only very grudgingly came around to accepting a French general as Supreme Commander of all the Allied forces in Constantinople. Admiral de Robeck, who had succeeded Calthorpe on September 13, argued that these French designs "can only result in grave difficulties in keeping up even a semblance of harmony." He concluded by stating that he would prefer to see General d'Espérey gone forever: "the necessity for a Generalissimo has now disappeared."[39] On September 29 Curzon informed Lord Derby, the British Ambassador in Paris, to let the French know that the British Government had no intention of recalling General Milne.[40] In fact, Milne, who had left the capital for Asia Minor, returned the command in Constantinople to Maitland-Wilson. The French Government, needless to say, was highly upset that effective control there had not

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[38] Curzon to Balfour, August 14, 1919. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. IV, p. 728.

[39] De Robeck to Balfour, September 16, 1919. Ibid., pp. 766-7.

[40] Curzon to Derby, September 29, 1919. Ibid., p. 781.

been transferred to d'Espérey.[41]

Thus, when General Milne ordered an Allied occupation of the Meander Valley to quell disturbances between the Greeks and the Turks, the French refused to comply. Crowe believed the French refusal to be "one more move in their game of not recognizing General Milne's authority over allied troops."[42] Shortly thereafter the British Government conceded to the idea of recognizing General Franchet d'Espérey as Supreme Commander in the Turkish capital. This concession was really no more than another attempt to paint the picture of a strongly united Allied front, supposedly to discourage the Turk from exploiting inter-Allied differences. For the sake of Allied unity France had previously agreed to the non-publication of the Smyrna Commission report; now, in a sense, Britain was returning the compliment. The British High Commission in Constantinople, however, objected vigourously. De Robeck soon complained that the whole situation there was being constantly and seriously menaced by the attitude of General d'Espérey, "who is consumed with vanity and a sense of his own importance, and who never loses an opportunity to presume upon his position as Commandant en Chef for interfering in every kind of matter." Revealing his frustration the British High Commissioner declared: "It is of course a standing enigma to the world at large here, but especially to the Turks, why the Supreme Command in Turkey is not in the hands of that country which alone overthrew the Turkish Empire."[43] This Anglo-French verbal war never

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[41] Hardinge-Cambon Conversations, London, October 20, 1919. Ibid., p. 835.

[42] Crowe to Curzon, November 5, 1919. Ibid., p. 856.

[43] De Robeck to Curzon, November 10, 1919. Ibid., pp. 871-2.

did die down. It was to result in the defection of another ally to the Turkish camp.

The Anglo-French rivalry over the military command in Constantinople quickly led to conflict and suspicion in other areas as well. As early as July 1919 Lord Curzon suspected the French of attempting to achieve a dominant position in Turkey at Britain's expense. He declared to Derby that "every mail now brought me evidence of an active French propaganda, designed to convince the Turks that France, and France alone, was their friend, and that Turkey should put her interests in French hands."[44] The fear of a growing French influence in Turkey pervaded British thinking throughout the latter half of the year. Among other things, Curzon was concerned that France would try to convert the whole of Turkey, including the Straits area, into a colony for French international finance.[45] He would grudgingly concede French economic paramountcy in central Anatolia; British dominance at Constantinople and the Straits, on the other hand , was regarded as virtually sacred and untouchable. De Robeck, meanwhile ,called for more British personnel in Turkey. He was very much concerned with a French threat to the British-controlled Anatolian Railway.[46] Finally he warned from Constantinople of a possible new orientation of French policy in Turkey "on lines of establishing understanding with Mustafa."[47] By 1920 both France and

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[44]Curzon to Derby, July 4, 1919. Ibid., pp. 661-2.

[45]Curzon Minute, October 25, 1919, Crowe to Curzon, October 17, 1919. Ibid., p. 819.

[46]De Robeck to Curzon, November 13, 1919. Ibid., p. 882.

[47]De Robeck to Curzon, June 23, 1920. Ibid., First Series, vol. XIII, p. 93.

Italy were threatening Britain with a possible separate peace with the Turkish nationalists, an exercise in opportunism which never ceased to annoy the British Government.

Turkish nationalism had never really been a driving force until the arrival on the scene of Mustafa Kemal Pasha. From the beginning Kemal was the soul and leader of the Turkish nationalist movement. During the war he had served with distinction as an officer in the Ottoman army on several fronts, notably in the defence of Gallipoli in 1915. His wartime experience had taught him to resent the German influence over Turkey, and to oppose the domination of any foreign Power. At the time of the Armistice of Mudros Kemal was opposed to the surrender to foreign occupation of the territory he regarded as geographically and ethnographically Turkish. He had by this time developed a Western-style national consciousness of a sort not uncommon among educated Turks, many of them of the officer class. Not yet forty years old, he had already exhibited undoubted military and organizational ability. Since Kemal had also avoided close association with the defeated Ottoman Government, and had quarreled with its military leader, Enver Pasha, he was almost ideally suited for the leadership of the new nationalist movement. His outlook in May 1919, the month in which he left Constantinople for the Anatolian interior, was as follows:

> Those who had driven the people and the country into the general conflict had fled and now cared for nothing but their own safety. Wahideddin, the degenerate occupant of the throne and the Caliphate, was seeking for some despicable way to save his person and his throne, the only objects of his anxiety. The Cabinet, of which Damad Ferid Pasha was the head, was weak and lacked dignity and courage. It was subservient to the will of the Sultan alone and agreed to every proposal that could protect its members and their sovereign.[48]

To succeed in reversing the defeat and avoiding partition, Kemal had in the first place to organize military resistance and wage war against foreign occupation. But along with the fighting went a diplomatic campaign which utilized every possible advantage presented by the post-war situation. As best he could, Kemal exploited the divergence of policy between Britain, France, and Italy, and the greater chasm that separated the Western Powers from Soviet Russia. Kemal would negotiate alternatively with Russia or the West, or simultaneously with both; whatever advantages he won on one side increased his bargaining power on the other. At times it looked as if Kemal were the most apt pupil of the nineteenth-century Ottoman diplomatists who tried to find salvation by playing off one Power against another.

In June Kemal launched his campaign by dispatching a circular telegram to a number of civil and military authorities in the country, setting forth his views. The opening phrases set the keynote of the nationalist programme during the next four years:

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[48] Mustafa Kemal Pasha, A Speech delivered by Ghazi Mustapha Kemal, President of the Turkish Republic, October 1927, Leipzig, 1929, p. 9.

1. The integrity of the country, the independence of the nation are in danger.
2. The central government is unable to discharge the duties for which it is responsible. As a result the nation is regarded as non-existent.
3. Only the will and resolution of the nation can save the independence of the nation.

The telegram then went on to demand the convening of a congress, free from any influence or interference, to assert the rights of the nation before the world. Kemal called upon each district to send delegates, in secret, to Sivas, "which is the safest place in Anatolia for that purpose."[49] In Sivas plans were laid for a July meeting of eastern delegates in Erzerum.

On July 23, 1919 a congress of delegates from the eastern provinces, convened by the Association for the Defence of the Rights of Eastern Anatolia, which had been founded on March 3, assembled in Erzerum. Mustafa Kemal was elected Chairman on the first day. The most significant achievement of the Congress of Erzerum, which continued until August 17, was the drafting of the first version of the declaration which later came to be known as the National Pact.[50] On September 4 a second and more important congress opened at Sivas, attended by delegates from all over Turkey. Once again Kemal was

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[49] Ibid., p. 31.

[50] Ibid., pp. 57-60. The National Pact, in that it became the Koran of the whole nationalist movement, is a vital document. It consisted of a preamble and six articles. The preamble stated that "complete respect" for the articles was the only means of assuring "the independence of the State and the future of the nation." The articles provided for self-determination of the Arabs; of Batum, Kars, and Ardahan; and of Western Thrace. Constantinople was to be "protected from every danger," although the nationlists would apparently accept some regime securing the freedom of the Straits. Turkish minorities would be protected by treaties similar to those entered into by other European Powers. Turkey would, however, accept no financial or economic servitudes. Eliot Grinnell Mears, Modern Turkey: A Politico- Economic Interpretation, 1908-1923, New York, 1924, pp. 629-31.

elected Chairman, and directed the discussions of the meeting. The main business of the Congress of Sivas was to extend to the whole country the decisions taken at Erzerum, and to modify the organization established there accordingly. The Association for the Defence of the Rights of Eastern Anatolia now became the Association for the Defence of the Rights of Anatolia and Rumelia, with a permanent Representative Committee headed by Mustafa Kemal. This new organization became the instrument of the political struggle ahead. The Congress reaffirmed the principles of the Erzerum manifesto, demanding the preservation of territorial integrity and national independence. It envisaged armed action against the occupying powers if necessary.[51]

The Congress of Sivas laid most of the blame for Turkey's present plight on the Grand Vizier and his Cabinet. Kemal accused Adil Bey, the Minister of the Interior in the Constantinople Government, of engaging "in treasonable conspiracies with the enemy against the nation."[52] The nationalists threatened to "break off all relations between your illegal cabinet and the whole country."[53] The immediate cause of these outbursts was an attempt by the Constantinople Government, with some British help, to stir up the Kurdish tribes in the east against Kemal. These efforts had little effect, and aided in precipitating a rupture between the Kemalists and Constantinople.

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[51] Kemal Pasha, op.cit., p. 76.

[52] Kemal to Adil Bey, September 10, 1919. Ibid., p. 114.

[53] Ibid., p. 121.

However, in December 1919, as a result of nationalist persuasion and pressure, new elections were held for the Ottoman Parliament, which assembled in Constantinople on January 12, 1920. The Kemalists and their sympathizers won a convincing majority, and among the new members were some from the nationalist camp in Anatolia. On January 28 Parliament voted the National Pact, based on the declarations of Erzerum and Sivas, and formulating the basic demands for Turkish territorial integrity and national independence. Mustafa Kemal and his Representative Committee, now established in Angora, were in a strong position with a sympathetic Parliament in Constantinople and some measure of recognition from the Turkish Government.

These crucial domestic events in Turkey certainly did not go unnoticed by the members of the British High Commission in Constantinople. Fearing that too many things were now getting out of hand, they stressed the necessity of an early peace with Turkey. On June 28, 1919 Admiral Richard Webb, acting in the absence of Calthorpe, wrote to Sir Ronald Graham of the Foreign Office, emphasizing the "indefiniteness" of the whole situation, and arguing that there was

> an essential need for giving Turkey a very early peace. I hope and believe that the peace terms will be severe and drastic, but let us have them quickly. Every day makes the situation more difficult and dangerous, and every day adds to the degree of hate, now extremely intense, which exists in this country between Moslems and Christians.[54]

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[54] Webb to Graham, June 28, 1919. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. IV, pp. 655-6.

The following day Admiral Calthorpe reported that the British were becoming caught in the middle between the Greeks on the one side and the Turks on the other. He saw immediate peace as the only solution.[55]

Calthorpe also reported that the Italian occupation was causing the Turks serious misgivings. He believed that the Supreme Council had now created the impression among most Turks that it was prepared to give the Greeks and the Italians a free hand in Asia Minor. He warned that the Kemalist Movement already threatened to defy openly both the Allies and the Constantinople Government. He argued that the latter was weaker than ever and that the "country is now confronted with [the] possibility of rapid disintegration of all authority and all security over wide areas."[56] Calthorpe displayed the typical British fear that the Turkish nationalists, if successful, would create an "intensely fanatical and anti-European Government" in Turkey.[57] In any case, a British naval commission, which had been sent to the coastal provinces on the Black Sea on July 3, confirmed that "the gradual extinction of the authority of the Central Government is undeniable."[58]

Despite its lack of impression on the Government in London, the British High Commission continued to argue in favour of some definite action in Turkey. As a solution to the nationalist problem, Admiral Webb proposed completely withdrawing Greek and Italian troops

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[55] Calthorpe to Curzon, June 29, 1919. Ibid., p. 656.

[56] Calthorpe to Balfour, July 8, 1919. Ibid., pp. 666-7.

[57] Calthorpe to Curzon, July 27, 1919. Ibid., p. 704.

[58] British Naval Commission Report, July 24, 1919. Calthorpe to Curzon, July 30, 1919. Ibid., p. 706.

from Asia Minor. This would strengthen the prestige and authority of the Turkish Government and correspondingly would weaken the nationalist movement by depriving it of its main raison d'être.[59] And this was really the only way to get at the nationalists. The High Commission had realized that the employment of military force against them was impossible. Even when the Grand Vizier proposed to send the Sultan's troops against the nationalists de Robeck argued that this would only end in civil war and did not want to risk the possibility of these troops defecting to Mustafa Kemal.[60]

Admiral Webb, in severely criticizing the Greek and Italian occupations as responsible for stirring up the Turks, argued that this foreign presence on Turkish soil served only "to increase racial animosity and lawlessness in other districts than Aidin, and to give into the hands of the Committee of Union and Progress and National Defence leaders a weapon of which they are making full use to work up Turkish opinion against the Allies."[61] Furthermore, Lieutenant-Colonel Ian Smith, a military attaché in Constantinople, submitted a memorandum demanding that the British Government take some positive steps. He declared that "It was high time that England recognized that the time had come for the war with Turkey to be considered as over," and that

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[59] Webb to Crowe, August 17, 1919. Ibid., p. 733. Webb further described Greco-Turkish hostility as "an animosity which has to be seen to be believed, which is as unreasoning as it is rabid, and which is gradually becoming pretty nearly unquenchable."

[60] De Robeck to Curzon, September 13, 1919. Ibid., pp. 760-1.

[61] Webb to Curzon, August 17, 1919. Ibid., p. 731.

> if we wanted in the future to have to deal with a well-disposed Turkish nation , and not a hostile one, we should show what our attitude was. The more we abstained and gave the impression of wishing to subdue the Nationalist movement, the more power we gave to the old C.U.P. [Committee of Union and Progress] and the more grounds we gave for an anti-English feeling to be developed amongst the general run of Turks.

He concluded that the Armistice could not last forever and emphasized that the British Government now had the chance to effect a peace which would leave the future of Turkey looking to Great Britain for future help and direction, rather than as the Power which had done all it could to suppress the Turkish nation.[62] It is very interesting that both Webb and Smith should associate Mustafa Kemal's national movement with the wartime C.U.P. It serves to illustrate the British Government's misunderstanding and mistrust of Turkish nationalism. Kemalism did not encompass the Moslem fanaticism of the Young Turks who had declared a jihad against the Western powers in 1914. Britain, however, in light of its unfavourable experiences with the Turks during the decade from 1908 to 1918, could not envisage a Western-style national movement, such as that led by Mustafa Kemal, arising from the "backward" interior of Anatolia. As a result, the Kemalist Movement was discredited in the eyes of the British from the beginning, with its leader regarded as little more than a common bandit. The British Government was still misled enough to believe that it was not sitting on a political powder keg. It refused to take the Turkish nationalist

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[62] Smith Memorandum, September 30, 1919, de Robeck to Curzon, October 6, 1919. Ibid., pp. 792-4.

movement seriously. In the autumn of 1919 the General British attitude was that the present Turkish Government as constituted in Constantinople conformed most with the desires of the Supreme Council, and that it was hopeless to negotiate with Mustafa Kemal as long as the allies themselves were ignorant of the decisions to be taken at the proposed London Conference.

With the December election in Turkey the British Government hoped the result would prove that Kemal's movement was merely a temporary enthusiasm. When this failed to materialize, and a large nationalist majority was returned, Churchill quipped from the War Office: "The Allies were loyal to the principle of representative government; accordingly the Turks had voted. Unhappily, they had almost all of them voted the wrong way."[63] The British High Commission in Constantinople, knowing the dangers that now lay ahead should the final terms of peace be very severe, dispatched a few last warnings to the Government in London. On November 18 Admiral de Robeck argued that "if the peace terms with Turkey are to include the dismemberment of the regions predominantly Ottoman in population ... the possibility of warfare, regular or guerilla, must be envisaged."[64] Then, at the outset of the London Conference, de Robeck cabled to Curzon to emphasize the benefits of a lenient peace with Turkey: "If [the] peace terms are indeed to be merciless, i.e. if they involve the separation from Turkey of Constantinople and Smyrna and creation of

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[63] Churchill, op.cit., p. 397.

[64] De Robeck to Curzon, November 18, 1919. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. IV, p. 896.

even a relatively great Armenia, [the] Allies must be definitely prepared to impose them by force."[65] Finally, during the Conference itself, the British High Commissioner made first mention of a possible Turko-Bolshevik combination against the Allies.[66] By the beginning of 1920 it was obvious to the High Commission in Constantinople, though not to the Cabinet in London, that Allied control of Turkey went just as far and no farther than the naval guns could fire and the soldiers could march. This lesson was being painfully learned week by week, almost day by day, by the British representatives in Constantinople and by the handful of British soldiers in the rest of Turkey. But it did not seem to be absorbed by the political masters at home.

Towards the end of December an Anglo-French meeting was scheduled to take place in London. This was the end product of the Curzon-Pichon conversations of the previous month. This meeting was to serve as a preliminary round of talks to discuss some of the more outstanding issues pertaining to the final peace settlement with Turkey. The main subject of controversy at these conversations in London was to be the question of Constantinople. Prime Minister Venizelos had already argued for the removal of the Turk from his capital, both as a symbol of his defeat and because his continued presence in Constantinople would be a challenge and a danger in years to come. He wanted to see an international administration in the Straits area, headed by a high commissioner appointed by the League of Nations. Curzon, however, cautioned

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[65] De Robeck to Curzon, February 6, 1920. Ibid., p. 1086.

[66] De Robeck to Curzon, March 10, 1920. Ibid., First Series, vol. VII, p. 500.

Venizelos that India would regard the expulsion of the Turks from Constantinople as an intolerable insult to Islam, and would argue that this would be followed by disturbances and rebellions in all parts of the Eastern world. Curzon, as a former Viceroy of India, believed that such views could not be ignored altogether.[67] But ignoring the Indian viewpoint was precisely what the British Foreign Secretary would do throughout the course of the Anglo-French conversations!

This was, indeed, a most auspicious time for India to launch another offensive with regard to the Turkish settlement as a whole and Constantinople in particular. Not only Curzon but the Prime Minister as well received numerous telegraphic appeals from Moslems in all parts of India on behalf of the Turks.[68] Edwin Montagu again acted as spokesman for their cause. For him, the danger of the Turks being deprived of Constantinople was very real. Previously, the British Government had not worried about the Indian Moslem danger in originally giving Constantinople to the Russians. Montagu declared that if the taking of Constantinople from the Turks was to be the result of the war, Great Britain ought never to have asked the Indians to have taken part in the struggle against Turkey. He added further in a statement to the press that "from one end of India to another, all those who have expressed an opinion on this subject, of whatever

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[67] Curzon to Granville, October 21, 1919. Ibid., First Series, vol. IV, pp. 835-6.

[68] Curzon to Crowe, October 30, 1919. Ibid., p. 847.

race or creed, believe that non-interference with the seat of the Caliphate is indispensable to the internal and external peace of India."[69] To Montagu, Lord Curzon offered the same diplomatic statement he had given Venizelos - that the Foreign Office must necessarily consider other points of view as well. A rather amusing anecdote taken from the London meeting, which serves to illustrate the vast complexities of the whole problem, was vividly described by Churchill in his memoirs:

> On the question of the reconsecration of St. Sophia, Mr. Montagu urged that it had been a Mohammedan mosque of great sanctity for upwards of 469 years. We were all much swayed by this, until Lord Curzon rejoined that it had been previously a Christian Church for 915 years. Then the argument seemed very nicely balanced; a substantial modern title as against twice as lengthy an original prescription! This was one of those questions the rights and wrongs of which might well be debated by the university students of almost any country.[70]

Unfortunately, the vital question was not whether to permit the retention of Constantinople but how to establish a favourable political regime there and at the Straits.

On December 11 Clemenceau crossed to London to discuss with Lloyd George the question of the future status of Constantinople and the Straits. The French Prime Minister felt that the Straits must be kept in the hands of an Allied force and "taken altogether out of the hands of Turkey." However, he also believed it would be a mistake

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[69] "The Turks to Stay in Europe", The New York Times Current History, vol. 12 (April - September 1920), p. 103.

[70] Churchill, op. cit., p. 395.

if the Turks were forced out of Constantinople. He thus considered Constantinople as separate from the Straits. Clemenceau argued that it was in both British and French interest to leave a certain amount of prestige to the head of state in central Anatolia. If the Sultan were to govern in the interest of the Allies, the more responsibility the Allies could give him the better. It would be easier to govern through the Sultan as an intermediary, and for this reason it would be better to leave him in Constantinople.[71]

Lloyd George agreed that the Straits must be placed under some form of international control. He recalled that "owing to the Straits being in the hands of hostile powers, the war had probably been prolonged for a period of two years beyond what would have been the case if the Straits had remained open." But the Prime Minister emphasized that the British Government felt objections to leaving Constantinople in the hands of the Turks. He argued that "complete control of the Straits would not be assured unless Constantinople also was in the hands of some international force." He believed the Turks in Constantinople could too easily close the Bosphorus, even though the Dardanelles would remain open. Thus troops would be required to police the Straits and Lloyd George felt that no Allied Power would be willing to carry this burden: "The Straits ought to be made self-supporting, but this could not be done without Constantinople."[72]

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[71] Clemenceau, Anglo-French Meeting, London, December 11, 1919. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. II, p. 728.

[72] Lloyd George, Anglo-French Meeting, London, December 11, 1919. Ibid.

Lord Curzon strongly reinforced the Prime Minister's argument. The British Foreign Secretary pointed out the difficulties of an international administration of the Dardanelles which did not extend to the Bosphorus. He wanted to see complete Allied control of the Straits and felt that giving in to the Turks would not raise, but more likely lower, British prestige in the Moslem parts of their Empire: "The Mahometan world would say that the Turk had never been beaten at all, and to prove it they would point to the fact that he was still in possession of Constantinople and Adrianople, from which places he continued to exercise his full powers as Khalif."[73] This argument was in direct contrast to that of the Indian Secretary. Edwin Montagu believed that the Moslem world would never be content without Constantinople and hoped that Great Britain would be sufficiently magnanimous to return to Islam the control of this city of such religious significance. Such was the stubborn intra-governmental conflict which carried on for another two years - solely for the sake of British prestige - while the spectre of Turkish nationalism grew increasingly more threatening.

The Prime Minister and the Foreign Office were both adamant in their desire to see the Turk driven off the European continent.

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[73] Curzon, Anglo-French Meeting, London, December 11, 1919. Ibid., p. 730. Lord Hardinge very much agreed: "Curzon and I, who after all know as much about Indian Mohammedan feeling as most people [Hardinge was also a former Viceroy of India], are strongly of the opinion that it is very desirable ... to inflict a severe blow on the prestige of the Sultan which may in the long run lose him the Caliphate and will be a severe blow to Pan-Islamism." Hardinge to Hohler, December 15, 1919. C.J. Lowe and M.L. Dockrill, The Mirage of Power, vol. II, British Foreign Policy 1914-22, London, 1972, p. 408.

After Clemenceau returned to France, both launched a campaign in Parliament against the more moderate French views. Speaking on December 18 Lloyd George reminded the House of Commons of the Turks' role in the past war by asking: "Can we leave those gates which were slammed in our face under the same gatekeeper?"[74] Lord Robert Cecil, speaking on behalf of the Foreign Office, believed "it would be a disaster" if Turkish dominion were allowed to remain in Constantinople.[75]

After this short break the British and French resumed their meeting on December 22. Lord Curzon, representing the views of both Lloyd George and Balfour, favoured the policy of expelling the Turk from Europe and establishing an international regime in Constantinople and the Straits area. The British proposed to demilitarize the coastline and to demolish all fortifications on the south shore of the Sea of Marmora. But despite a good deal of bargaining between Curzon and Berthelot, the Director-General of the Quai d'Orsay who was now heading the French contingent, this issue remained unsettled. However, there were four primary axioms for the Turkish settlement upon which agreement was reached. These were, firstly, that Ottoman militarism should be suppressed once and for all; secondly, that the Straits should be permanently neutralized; thirdly, that the Armenian desire for an independent state should be gratified; and fourthly, that all connections should be severed between Turkey, on the one hand, and Syria and the other Arab states, on the other.[76]

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[74] Lloyd George, December 18, 1919. 123 H.C.Deb.5s. (December 15-23, 1919), cols. 767-8.

[75] Cecil, December 18, 1919. Ibid., col. 730.

[76] Anglo-French Meeting, London, December 22, 1919. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. IV, pp. 957-62.

The discussion then moved to the subject of an arrangement for protecting French financial interests in return for French agreement to a form of internationalization for the Straits. These financial interests were to be regulated by an international council with Britain and France alternately providing the chairman. In Asiatic Turkey there was to be a scheme of direct financial control exercised by the Allies over the economy of the country as a whole.[77] After exhausting the financial question, a variety of marginal issues were discussed at this London meeting. It was contemplated that Italy receive economic concessions in southern Anatolia; that Greece receive substantial territory in Eastern Thrace and the Vilayet of Aidin; and that Kurdistan and Armenia be assured of separate development, in spite of the fact that both Britain and France agreed that no mandate was possible for Kurdistan as a whole (the only possibility being one for the more settled areas in the south - Mosul) and that it was clear that neither the United States, France, Italy, nor Great Britain was prepared to accept a mandate in Armenia. Still, Curzon believed that the above conditions could be accomplished successfully if the Allies remained united and determined.[78] Unfortunately, they did not.

Before leaving London the French were persuaded by the Foreign Office to abandon their position on Constantinople. Berthelot, according to a memorandum drawn up by Montagu on January 1, 1920, accepted the

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[77] Anglo-French Meeting, London, December 22, 1919. Ibid., p. 963.

[78] Anglo-French Meeting, London, December 22-3, 1919. Ibid., pp. 965-8.

British argument of complete Turkish withdrawal in deference "aux vues du gouvernement britannique."[79] Curzon, however, was incensed at this last remark and claimed in a counter-memorandum of January 4 that it was "a characteristic French endeavour to thrust upon us the responsibility for a decision which will be unpopular with the more Chauvinistic section of their own people, and which they hope will cause us difficulties in the East." Still, Curzon seemed to revel in this little victory of his. Like Lloyd George, he threw caution to the winds, desiring to place the Turk "under so much foreign financial and administrative control as to ensure that he should not repeat there [Asiatic Turkey] the outrageous mis-government of which he has for centuries been guilty in Europe." The British Foreign Secretary was prepared to let the Sultan exit graciously to the capital of his choice. Believing himself to be the Allied expert on Eastern affairs, this was the most he could do for the Turk:

> If there is anyone who by political upbringing and tradition would be inclined to favour consideration for the Turk, I suppose it would be myself. If there was anyone who would ex hypothesi desire to conciliate Moslem opinion through the Eastern world it would be one who had been for many years head of the Government of India and who had spent many years of his life in travelling amongst and studying Mohammedan peoples. And yet I remain profoundly of the opinion not only that the present opportunity ought to be taken for terminating the connection of the Turk with Europe, but that if it be not taken we shall be laying up for ourselves a heritage of future trouble, intrigue, and wars in Eastern Europe which we shall regret for generations.

He concluded his statements by borrowing from Lloyd George's well-worn argument: "we should not sacrifice the opportunity presented to us

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[79] Montagu Memorandum, January 1, 1920. Ibid., p. 993.

by the defeat of an enemy whose entrance into the war prolonged it for at least two years and cost us millions of treasure and tens of thousands of lives, to settle once and for all a question which more than any single cause has corrupted the political life of Europe for nearly 500 years."[80]

Had the decisions of the Foreign Office meetings been adhered to there would have been, as Curzon described it, two parts of Turkey: "the one was to be an area taken from the Turks and governed by an international body. The other was to be an area left under the sovereignty of the Turks but subject in certain respects, that is, finance and gendarmerie, to international supervision."[81] This latter area, possessing only limited sovereignty, represented Curzon's and the British Goverentment's concession to "a home for the Turkish race." Opposition, however, at once sprang up in the Cabinet against any plan for expelling the Turks from Europe, the War Office and the India Office providing the strongest pressure for a Turkish Constantinople. At the eleventh hour a majority within the British Cabinet was won over to this point of view. Though strongly supported by Curzon and Balfour, the Anglo-French scheme for Constantinople was rejected by the Cabinet on January 6, 1920. Lord Curzon was so greatly upset at the outcome that be drafted an official letter of protest from the Foreign Office:

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[80] Curzon Memorandum, January 4, 1920. Ibid., pp. 993-1000.

[81] Curzon, Anglo-French Meeting, London, December 22, 1919. Ibid., p. 957.

> I believe this to be a short-sighted and, in the long run, a most unfortunate decision. In order to avoid trouble in India ... we are losing an opportunity for which Europe has waited nearly five centuries, and which may not recur.[82]

Curzon blamed India for softening the Cabinet's stand against the Turk. This, however, was far from the real reason. Though the War Office and a majority of Cabinet members had supported Montagu on the question of the Turkish presence in Constantinople, they were led primarily by military considerations and thus had acted in the Turk's favour for entirely different reasons. The War Office argument was in no way a demonstration of either an understanding of the Indian problem or sympathy for the Turk. The military advisers felt that control of the Sultan and his ministers would be easier if they remained in the old capital, whereas in Anatolia they would be accessible to the influence of the nationalists. This was a powerful argument swaying Lloyd George from Curzon's side, although he was later to claim that this change of position was in deference to French and Italian views,[83] in spite of the fact that France had given way to Britain at the Foreign Office meeting of December 22, 1919. Indeed, in a debate in the House of Commons on February 26, 1920 he explained the new position:

> I ask my noble friend [Lord Robert Cecil] if he were an Armenian would he feel more secure if he knew that the sultan and his ministers were overlooked by a British garrison and that out in the Bosphorus the British ships were within reach of them than if he were at Konia, hundreds

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[82] Curzon Memorandum, January 6, 1920. Nicolson, Curzon, p. 113.

[83] Lloyd George, Peace Treaties, vol. II, pp. 1070-2.

> of miles across the Taurus mountains from the nearest Allied garrison and the sea with its great British ships and its guns out of sight and out of mind.[84]

This statement of Lloyd George was a real concession to the fact that Britain possessed no control at all of the Anatolian interior and that its only real sphere of influence was located at Constantinople and the Straits. A further objection to the project for driving the Turks from Europe was that it was impossible to decide, in that event, what the future status of Constantinople and the Straits would be. It was easy enough to paste the slogan "internationalisation" over inter-Allied suspicions, jealousies, and fears, but when the problems of devising a form of international administration, which had never worked elsewhere, were faced, there was an immediate recoil. Andrew Bonar Law, the Lord Privy Seal, explained the difficulties in the House of Commons on February 26, 1920:

> I can tell the House that when we tried to put it in black and white it was the contemplation of what such an international state would mean that made us decide that at least was impossible. It was not really commonsense. It has been tried in many cases. Can anyone point to a single instance where this kind of joint dominion had succeeded? And can one find a case less difficult that that of Egypt, in which this joint control nearly brought us to war?[85]

To these questions no answer came.

The paper which resulted from the Cabinet discussion on January 6 was prepared jointly by the India Office and the military

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[84] Lloyd George, February 26, 1920. 125 H.C.Deb.5s. (February 10-27, 1920), col. 1969.

[85] Bonar Law, February 26, 1920. Ibid., col. 2054.

section of the British Delegation to the approaching London Conference. It opened by accepting the four principles already agreed upon at the Foreign Office meeting with the French in December. Five more were added. Armenia was to be definitely constituted as an independent state, the question of its boundaries being reserved for the time being. The national aspirations of the Arabs were to be given satisfaction. Article 292 of the Treaty of Versailles, which in effect provided for all pre-war German concessions in the old Ottoman Empire to fall into the hands of the Entente Powers, was to apply to Turkey. No reparations were to be claimed from Turkey in view of its bankrupt condition. Turkey was to be left with a foothold in Europe, but the status of Adrianople was left undecided. The Montagu draft then went on to propose a permanent Allied force to safeguard the neutrality of the Straits and an inter-Allied commission for the control of Turkish finance. Smyrna was to become a free port, though whether under Turkish or Greek sovereignty was left open. Finally, Italy, as in the conclusions of the Foreign Office meeting the previous December, was to be compensated with economic rights in southern Anatolia for the withdrawal of Italian forces, which was insisted upon. The Dodecanese, however, were to be given to Greece.[86]

Despite the concession of Constantinople, British intentions toward the Turks were still harsh. They were still a far cry from what the Turkish nationalists were prepared to accept. And it was

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[86] Montagu Draft, January 12, 1920. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. IV, pp. 1037-42.

these same nationalists who now dominated the Ottoman Parliament and who were quickly becoming a formidable military force in the Anatolian interior, far from the reach of any British soldier. The Kemalists were quick to note that Allied (mostly British) military power in Turkey was dwindling, and that such of it as remained was diminished by Anglo-French discord on such issues as that of the nationality of the Supreme Allied Commander and the site of the final Peace Conference.[87] The British had already retired from the Caucasus and their withdrawal from Syria and Cilicia had been agreed in September and was completed by November 1, 1919. Late that same month the War Office, in order to speed up the process of withdrawal, proposed to abandon the Anatolian Railway entirely.[88] Apparently the maintenance of forces in Turkey was costing Britain some 24,000 pounds per day. To many it seemed better to use this capital to build houses or to initiate other reconstruction schemes which would provide increased employment and alleviate distress.[89]

But the unemployment question did not really become serious until after March 1920. Previous to this date a flood of peacetime

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[87]The choice of London as the site of the peace conference was another Anglo-French point of contention. Alexandre Millerand, who had succeeded Clemenceau as Prime Minister of France in January 1920, was completely averse to going to London, arguing that all the previous peace treaties resulting from the war had been worked out in the Paris area. Curzon, however, was not prepared to see the French monopolize all the glory and claimed that the present "industrial position" in Britain prevented British ministers from leaving the country for any lengthy period. Derby to Curzon, January 31, 1920; Curzon to Derby, February 2, 1920. Ibid., pp. 1082-3.

[88]Curzon to de Robeck, November 26, 1919. Ibid., p. 906.

[89]Lunn, November 27, 1919. 121 H.C.Deb.5s. (November 10-28, 1919), col. 1876.

orders created a short-lived economic boom. The real problem facing Britain at this time was one of finance. The settlement of inter-Allied war debts in particular was very difficult, for neither France nor Italy was able or willing to settle with its creditors until money was forthcoming from an economically-distressed Germany. Following Pitt's practice, Britain had once again become the paymaster of Europe. There was also a heavy internal debt. The strong reliance on borrowing, with high interest rates for the wealthier classes, was inflationary and created an almost unbearable National Debt, whose service took half the national revenue. Thus the high costs involved in the maintenance of British peacetime troops on foreign soil was being increasingly attacked in Parliament. Demobilization was the password of the day.

From Constantinople, however, came the warning that Allied military strength was now so reduced that it should be considered when discussing the final peace terms. De Robeck reminded the British Government that "all real power is still in the hands of the Nationalists" and warned of a possible Turkish resurgence as a result of harsh peace terms.[90] On February 3, 1920, however, circumstances forced the War Office to propose the withdrawal of the British garrison from Batum. Apparently the evacuation had been decided on purely military grounds, to replenish the garrison at Constantinople, which had been depleted by the orders of General d'Espérey.[91] However, Oliver Wardrop,

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[90] De Robeck to Curzon, December 23, 1919. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. IV, p. 971.

[91] Curzon to Wardrop, February 17, 1920. Ibid., First Series, vol. XII, p. 567.

the British High Commissioner in Transcaucasia, reacted in a fashion similar to that of de Robeck in Constantinople and requested that these evacuation orders be revoked immediately. He warned that this move would result in a lowering of British prestige throughout the East.[92] Curzon agreed. In a Cabinet memorandum of February 9 he declared that the evacuation of Batum would be an "act of betrayal" against the friendly, fledgling Governments in Transcaucasia. He warned that it would be regarded by others as a "fresh sign of failing strength."[93] Thus on February 20 the Cabinet agreed to postpone the British evacuation of Batum. But this postponement lasted only five months. In July financial and popular pressure made it impossible to carry on there any longer. As the road became rougher the British Government again clearly demonstrated the lack of any sincere or determined policy in a question so far removed from Constantinople and the Straits.

In his memoirs Churchill reflected that "It was very strange to watch the vast shrinkage of our military power, while at the same time the increase of danger and hostility in almost every quarter could be so plainly discerned."[94] In Britain there were no soldiers, no money, and no favourable public opinion. For British policy in Turkey the tide was definitely ebbing. Diplomatically, all hope of Anglo-American hegemony in post-war Turkey had been dashed by the

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[92] Wardrop to Curzon, February 6, 1920. Ibid., p. 559.

[93] Curzon Memorandum, February 9, 1920. Ibid.

[94] Churchill, op.cit., pp. 392-3.

United States' refusal to accept mandates for Constantinople and Armenia. As Britain was in no position, either financially or militarily, to assume this task alone, it was forced to make concessions. The British Government accepted the French argument of permitting the Turks to retain political control of Constantinople; Arménia was left to its own resources. The Straits, however, were another matter, for they were still the real linch pin in Britain's post-war policy in Turkey. Britain continued to preach the "freedom of the Straits" for both commercial and war vessels of all nations, to be safeguarded by an international commission affiliated with the League of Nations. It was still very much aware and fearful of French and Italian opportunism in the Straits area now that the United States had withdrawn from the Turkish Question. Lloyd George thus attempted to replace the Americans with the Greeks as a major force in British policy. As far as he was concerned, a strong Greek presence in Asia Minor would not only ensure a satisfactory settlement of the Straits question but also act as a strong deterrent against the ever-increasing pressure of the Turkish nationalist movement. Though this Anglo-Greek coalition would soon outrage Franco-Italian susceptibilities, it was immensely convenient for a financially-troubled Great Britain under the influence of Lloyd-Georgian foreign policy.

CHAPTER III

LONDON AND SAN REMO: ATTEMPTING A PEACE

The Montagu draft represented the main position of the British Government in the so-called First London Conference of the Supreme Council which opened on February 12, 1920, the object of the Conference being to prepare the final terms of settlement with Turkey. There was general agreement at the outset that no purpose would be served by waiting further for news of the American attitude on the question of a mandate in the Near East. The principle of the retention of Constantinople by the Turks was then approved, Lloyd George affecting to believe that it was pressure from the Allies which had induced him to accept that principle, whereas it had been settled on other grounds in the Cabinet on January 6.[1] The discussion then passed to the problem of the control of the Straits. It was agreed that the waterway should be neutralized and managed by an international body, the members

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[1] Lloyd George, Peace Treaties, vol. II, pp. 1271-2.

of which would be appointed by Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan and, if American opinion was agreeable, the United States.[2]

The most heated argument, however, sprang from the proposed French scheme for the creation of an inter-Allied commission to take over the entire control of the financial life of Turkey. Lloyd George argued that any such scheme was impracticable; he believed it would amount to governing the country from the outside, involving the Allies in wholly indefinite commitments. The British Prime Minister demanded to know why, after the liberation of Arabs, Armenians, and Greeks, the Powers should not then allow the remaining Turkish "rump" to administer itself in its own way. Paul Cambon, the French Ambassador in London, argued that somebody must administer the Turkish debt. A great opportunity now presented itself of governing Turkey on the right lines, which would prevent the Turks from merely relaxing into their old, corrupt ways.[3]

What upset Lloyd George most was the French demand for special financial and economic concessions in Cilicia, where since November 1, 1919 British troops had been replaced by a French military occupation. Berthelot argued that a system of control, both financial and administrative, would obviously have to be applied to the whole of Turkey, and the same control would thereby apply to Cilicia. The

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[2]First London Conference, February 14, 1920. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. VII, pp. 45-7.

[3]First London Conference, February 14, 1920. Ibid., pp. 57-8.

only difference would be that advisers and councillors serving in Cilicia would be French. Lloyd George, however, maintained that such a form of control undoubtedly constituted a French mandate. He feared this would lead to a partitioning of Turkey, which the Council had decided not to do. He would go no further than associate himself with Allied claims for priority of economic development, i.e. spheres of economic influence in Turkey, such as had been contemplated for Italy in southwestern Anatolia. The British Prime Minister claimed that France was deliberately throwing over the mandatory principles of the Covenant of the League of Nations by establishing a regime whereby all the advantages of a mandate were obtained without any of its responsibilities.[4]

Lord Curzon, attempting a compromise, believed that if the Treaty appeared to partition Turkey into outright political spheres, it would never be acceptable to the Turks, the United States would also reject it, and the sentiment of the civilized world would be offended. If, however, Turkey should ask for Allied assistance in either judicial, economic, or political administration, the Powers could then arrange among themselves the establishment of particular spheres of influence, to be created along the lines of the British principle of the "self-denying ordinance." This provided that though each power would have its own area of special interest in Turkey, this area would not be exclusive to any one Power. One Power would

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[4]Lloyd George, First London Conference, February 17, 1920. Ibid., pp. 100-1.

always be at liberty to receive concessions within another Power's special sphere. The major point in Curzon's argument was that the Turks should first "ask" for Allied assistance; when this was forthcoming no one Power should have exclusive rights in one particular area. However, after much debate Curzon's attempted compromise was watered down so considerably that the original French viewpoint virtually prevailed. His proposal was accepted but only with the qualification that this particular kind of "sphere of influence would be set up regardless of whether the Turks asked for Allied assistance.[5] Then on March 3 the following Allied agreement completed a French victory:

> Any one of the Great Powers who enjoys special economic interests in any part of the Turkish Empire shall accept therewith the responsibility for supervising the provisions of the treaty ... in that area.[6]

The British Government again backed off when the going got tough.

Years later, while referring to the London Conference in his memoirs, Lloyd George wrote: "The grab for a sphere of foreign soil here and there came ... to an end, and for it was substituted a search for spheres for commercial exploitation and for securing opportunities to develop raw material."[7] One could possibly accept this argument in the case of France, but Italy, on the other hand, was still searching for something, seemingly anything, to soothe its ambition. Francesco Nitti, Orlando's successor as

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[5] Curzon, First London Conference, February 17, 1920. Ibid., pp. 100-1.
[6] Allied Agreement, First London Conference, March 3, 1920. Ibid., p. 381.
[7] Lloyd George, Peace Treaties, vol. II, p. 1282.

Prime Minister of Italy, felt he was occupying an increasingly "ridiculous position." He claimed that every day he was being made to give up something, and as a result his personal position in Italy was daily becoming more difficult. Each of the Allied countries had obtained something from the war. Italy had merely obtained a few barren, unproductive hills from Austria, "which only represented a dead loss." The value of Trieste would soon disappear because "Austria had died." As for colonies, Italy, which possessed the largest number of emigrants and the smallest area of colonial control, found its situation at the end of the war in no way improved. Finally, in Asia Minor, Nitti argued that Italy had been guaranteed equitable treatment under the Treaty of London, but the net result would appear to be that it would receive nothing. Under these circumstances the question arose "whether it would not be better to refuse to sign the treaty, and whether it would not be better to enter into direct relations with Turkey."[8] Lloyd George's only reply was that the Italian Prime Minister took an unduly dismal view of the situation.

The British Prime Minister also claimed in his memoirs that "the policy of mineral, industrial and financial concessions was gradually disintegrating the War ideal of racial emancipation."[9] Here undoubtedly, Lloyd George was referring to the Greek and Armenian problems in Turkey. He definitely believed that Smyrna ought to go to Greece. He claimed that the population was Greek,

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[8] Nitti, First London Conference, February 20, 1920. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. VII, p. 161.

[9] Lloyd George, Peace Treaties, vol. II, p. 1284.

and that Greek interests predominated in trade, in intellectual life, and in "practically everything." He did not want to throw over Venizelos. In fact, convinced that Venizelos would fall from power if Greece relinquished Smyrna, Lloyd George determined to save his friend from this humiliation, and thus exploited his position as Chairman to overcome all opposition. When Millerand argued that Greece must leave Asia Minor to secure a lasting peace, Lloyd George retorted that Smyrna constituted the bridgehead of the Entente.[10] He refused to betray the Allied promises to Venizelos merely in order to placate the Turks, and on February 16, 1920, ignoring Millerand's previous objections, he appointed a commission to hear the Greek claims. Its brief was to make recommendations concerning the geographical boundaries of the district of Smyrna upon the assumption that this district would be subject to Greek administration, though not necessarily Greek sovereignty. Venizelos, for his part, did not like the idea of Turkish nominal sovereignty over Smyrna. He stated that during the past eight months Greek forces had withstood all attacks by the Turkish irregulars, and he felt confident that with the signature of peace the likelihood of any such attacks would soon disappear.[11]

The Commission, after due deliberation, unanimously recommended a Greek administration for a limited zone around Smyrna, in which (it was said) there was a substantial majority of Greeks.[12] This proposal offered to Greece a greater measure of control than

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[10] Lloyd George, First London Conference, February 14, 1920. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. VII, pp. 56-60.

[11] Venizelos, First London Conference, February 16, 1920. Ibid., pp. 65-7.

[12] The Commission based its findings on American figures: Moslems - 325,000, Greeks - 375,000. Lloyd George Papers, F/206/3/18.

either the Foreign Office or the Quai d'Orsay had envisaged. Nevertheless, Lloyd George succeeded in securing its acceptance. Not only this, but he also won for Greece both Eastern and Western Thrace in full sovereignty. By astute bargaining, he persuaded the French to agree that the Chatalja Lines should constitute the Greco-Turkish frontier in Europe in return for a token concession to the Turks - the retention of nominal sovereignty over the Smyrna zone.[13]

In the drafting of these terms Curzon had somewhat feebly acquiesced. Nevertheless, he had grave misgivings, especially after receiving de Robeck's expression of great apprehension over the proposals to cede to Greece all Thrace up to the Chatalja Lines and to maintain Greek administration in Smyrna. De Robeck warned that "we are placing territories overwhelmingly Turkish in population under the rule of the Turks' secular enemies, under whose rule previous experience in Thessaly, Crete and Macedonia has shown that it is almost impossible for Musulmans to exist." The British High Commissioner warned, somewhat tongue-in-cheek, that'

> The terms are such that no Turk, Committee of Union and Progress or pro-Entente can very well accept. The Supreme Council, thus, are prepared for a resumption of warfare; they are prepared to do violence to their own declared and cherished principles; they are prepared to perpetuate bloodshed indefinitely in the Near East.[14]

De Robeck's argument as to Thrace made no impression upon Curzon who had always fought against any Turkish claims in Europe. For Smyrna, on the other hand, the High Commissioner was more successful.

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[13] First London Conference, February 18, 1920. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. VII, p. 122.

[14] De Robeck to Curzon, March 9, 1920. Ibid., First Series, vol. XIII, pp. 17-8.

De Robeck, hitherto not taken very seriously at the Foreign Office, was able to exploit the Foreign Secretary's special concern for the problem of the Greek presence in Asia Minor and to persuade him to attempt to secure some modification of the terms. Thus Curzon wrote personally to Lloyd George:

> We must be on very sure and strong ground if we are to override all this. I am the last man to wish to do a good turn to the Turks ... but I do want to get something like peace in Asia Minor, and with the Greeks in Smyrna, and Greek divisions carrying out Venizelos's orders and marching about Asia Minor, I know this to be impossible.[15]

Lloyd George, however, was not prepared to change his views. In his papers are two documents which strongly endorse the Greek case. The first was drawn up by his private secretary, Philip Kerr. It set out the Greek case and argued that it would be absurd to abandon the principles of self-determination when the Allies enjoyed all the advantages, including a huge Greek army with more Greek soldiers in reserve.[16] The second was forwarded to Montagu. It asserted that after careful consideration of all the available figures there was no doubt that the areas assigned to Greece had contained predominantly Greek populations before the war. It concluded by strongly attacking the pro-Turkish case:

> If Mr. Montagu's argument means that the peace terms should be determined not by considerations of justice, but by ease of enforcement, it is a plea that the Allies impose a peace which they think unjust to the Greeks, Armenians and other

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[15] Curzon to Lloyd George, April 9, 1920. Lloyd George Papers, F/12/3/24.

[16] Kerr to Lloyd George, April 7, 1920. Ibid., F/90/1/44.

> peoples, and biassed in favour of the Turks because they have not the resolution or the courage to insist on what they believe to be right ... the truth would seem to be that it is difficult to realise that the war has shattered once and for all the ancient but tyrannical and oppressive Empire of the Turks over their neighbours.[17]

Lloyd George apparently never replied to Curzon's letter. Curzon, however, did not make a big issue of this difference of opinion. He quietly acquiesced in the Prime Minister's assumption of leadership over British foreign policy. He quite readily submitted to the policy of supporting Greek and Armenian nationalism over that of the Turks.

The policy of further reducing the power of the Turk by setting up an Armenian national home in eastern Anatolia possessed both a political and a geographical aspect . The political aspect included the creation of an independent Armenian state. All the Allies had previously pledged themselves to the achievement of that end. Thus, the geographical aspect, i.e. the consideration of the character and boundaries of the new Armenia, was regarded by the Conference as requiring the most attention. In this connection, however, two distinct parties existed. Those in favour of the establishment of a larger Armenia wanted to include the eastern portion of the Vilayet of Erzerum, including the fortress-city of Erzerum, and Trebizond on the Black Sea. The British military authorities, however, representing those favouring a smaller and more manageable state, opposed the inclusion of the fortress of

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[17] Lloyd George to Montagu, April 25, 1920. Ibid., F/40/3/5.

Erzerum, since it was deeply coveted by the Turks and would constitute a standing menace to the new Armenia. Their memorandum of February 12 claimed that the pre-war population of Erzerum, even according to Armenian figures, contained a large Moslem majority, and that "the Armenians have not the necessary majority to enforce their will without direct assistance." It envisaged the Armenians having to deploy their whole future Army, estimated at some 40,000, on their western frontier, thereby leaving their eastern frontier at the mercy of not only their Transcaucasian neighbours but the growing threat of Bolshevism as well. Since the American return to isolation and the apparent inability of the European Allies to send forth any military help, the British military authorities urged that Armenian territory be confined to an area which the Army could defend; they recommended the exclusion of Erzerum. The report warned that "to occupy this hostile area and to maintain herself therein is likely to prove a military commitment beyond the present resources of Armenia, and it seems probable therefore that the responsibility of enforcing the decision would rest ultimately with the Allies." But, to complicate matters further, if this district were to be included for political reasons, then "military considerations require that the frontier be drawn to include Trebizond and Erzinjan, which dominate the approaches converging on the open Western side of Erzerum from the Black Sea coast and Anatolia."[18]

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[18] War Office Memorandum, February 12, 1920 based its findings on Armenian figures: Turks - 240,000, Kurds - 75,000, other Moslems - 30,000, Armenians - 215,000, Greeks, 12,000. Ibid., F/206/4/14.

Both France and Italy agreed that the Armenian state should not be too large; it should be in a position to defend itself. The British Government, however, despite the War Office, did not deny that it supported the argument that Erzerum should form part of Armenia. Finally Lloyd George suggested, as in the Greek case, that the whole question be referred to a commission.[19] The Armenian Commission deliberated for less than a fortnight and was ready with its proposals on February 27. Along with any access to the Mediterranean, it argued that both Trebizond and Erzinjan should not be included within the boundaries of Armenia. However, the entire Vilayet of Erzerum was recommended by the Commission as an indispensable bulwark against Turkish encroachment and thus should be included in the new Armenian state, in spite of the fact that it was already solidly under the control of Turkish nationalist forces and the prospects of Allied aid in taking the area were very slight indeed. The Commission, however, went no further than these mere recommendations.[20] Thus the Supreme Council, after little debate, agreed to another delay to digest the results of the Commission and to discuss them further at a future peace conference.

An appendage to the Armenian problem concerned the questions of Batum and Lazistan. Lord Curzon, looking for an Armenian outlet on the Black Sea, argued that the Powers should create a free port

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[19] First London Conference, February 16, 1920. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. VII, pp. 81-6.

[20] Armenia Commission, First London Conference, February 27, 1920. Ibid., pp. 280-5.

at Batum with a small surrounding zone of territory to be placed under the custody of the League of Nations. He also desired to see Lazistan, adjacent to Batum in northeastern Turkey, handed over to Armenia. Nitti agreed but Berthelot warned that the de facto Government of Georgia had virtually submitted an ultimatum to the Allied Powers, to the effect that it would be unable to take steps to oppose the advance of Bolshevism unless it were given Lazistan and the port of Batum. He agreed that Batum ought not to be given to Georgia, but he thought the question of Lazistan required further consideration.[21] The report of the Armenian Commission on February 27 officialized the decision to establish Batum as a small, free state, similar to Danzig in Northern Europe. The Commission also proposed the creation of an autonomous State of Lazistan under the nominal suzerainty of Armenia.[22] The Georgian Delegation, as expected, was quite upset at these proposals and the following day Tcheidse, their chief representative, wrote to Lloyd George, outlining the Georgian case for both Batum and Lazistan. He declared emphatically that "La province de Batoum est considerée par le peuple géorgien comme son patrimonie légitime et incontestable" and that "La délégation géorgienne croit devoir ajouter aux raisons historiques, thenographiques et autres présentées à la commission, et militant pour l'attribution du Lazistan à la Géorgie."[23] The Georgians had always been quite disappointed since the British had not permitted them to occupy Batum after the Turks had evacuated it at the end

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[21] First London Conference, February 16, 1920. Ibid., pp. 32-4.

[22] Armenia Commission, First London Conference, February 27, 1920. Ibid., pp. 281-2.

[23] Tcheidse to Lloyd George, February 28, 1920. Ibid., p. 522.

of the war. Gegechkori, the Georgian Foreign Secretary, complained to Oliver Wardrop that Batum, despite the British military occupation, was in reality still governed by Russian bureaucrats whose rule provoked increasing lawlessness and disorder. Sabakhtarashvili, the Assistant Foreign Secretary, proposed to convert the port into a permanent military base and coaling station for the British if they would only agree to its annexation by Georgia.[24] Wardrop sympathized with the Georgians, but the Armenians did not want Batum to go to Georgia. Having no outlets on the sea, they preferred to see the port internationalized. And for their sake, the Supreme Council in London complied.

Every day the growing Turkish nationalist strength was forcing the prospective peace terms into the realm of the impossible. During the First Conference of London an event occurred which showed how unreal were these various plans. This was the serious defeat inflicted on the French Army at Marash, the largest city in Cilicia, by a force of some 30,000 regular Turkish troops, who were believed to be acting at the instigation, if not under the direct orders, of Mustafa Kemal. In London Lord Curzon was greatly alarmed over the reports of Turkish nationalists massacring Armenians in Cilicia in the wake of the French defeat. He claimed to have received word from the Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet at Constantinople to the effect that "During and after the fighting many Armenians were

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[24] Firuz Kazemzadeh, The Struggle for Transcaucasia (1917-1921), Oxford, 1951, pp. 201-2.

massacred, possibly between 15,000 and 20,000. The French troops in Cilicia were not more than 12,000; the enemy forces 25,000 to 30,000." Reports such as this served only to bolster the British belief in the uncivilized nature of Turkish nationalism. In British eyes the despised C.U.P. had been reborn with the emergence of Kemal's nationalist Representative Committee.

Curzon proposed two plans of action. He first wanted to see political action taken at Constantinople. He argued that the Turkish Government must be held responsible for the massacres, now realizing that Mustafa Kemal undoubtedly maintained close relations with the Government at Constantinople, and acted with their approval and support. Consequently, the strongest action should be taken in the capital. But Curzon was also looking for some way in which local action could be undertaken. He favoured more native French troops in Cilicia and thought it desirable to send some British warships to Mersina.[25] Cambon, however , doubted whether any threats made at Constantinople would stop the massacres. He believed that these massacres were due to local disturbances, raised by Mustafa Kemal, and that the Sultan had no control over the nationalists, despite direct relations between Kemal and Constantinople. Cambon argued that a nationalist army had been created and had acted independently of Constantinople.[26]

Still, at the next session of the Conference, it was agreed that it would be impossible for the Allies to tolerate this insulting defiance of them by the Turks. Lloyd George felt that

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[25] Curzon, First London Conference, February 28, 1920. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. VII, pp. 291-4.

[26] Cambon, First London Conference, February 28, 1920. Ibid., p. 296.

it was now no longer enough just to warn the Turks; "it was time for strong action and something dramatic." But Churchill, like Cambon, doubted whether any action taken by the Allies at Constantinople would have any very considerable effect. He pointed out that all of Turkey was disorganized, with no strong central control. Lloyd George replied that Allied action now would test the extent of the control of the present Turkish Government.[27]

On February 29 de Robeck reported from Constantinople that the influences making for resistance to the decisions of the Peace Conference were more than ever in the ascendancy. Apparently the Allied High Commissioners were being flouted by the nationalist organization which the Government could not control: "it is useless for the High Commissioners to continue to address demands to the Porte, which are invariably rejected or evaded."[28] In London Lloyd George was determined to prove to all the Turks that the Allies, or at least Great Britain, meant business. He was prepared to see the British Government make a contribution to decisive action and, though he preferred inter-Allied action to show a united front, he was also quite prepared to do the work required alone if necessary.[29] Churchill, however, was still pessimistic and warned of one of the fundamental weaknesses in the British policy: the refusal to distinguish between Constantinople and the rest of Turkey proper. He warned that in the interior of Asia Minor Britain possessed no power or forces sufficient

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[27] First London Conference, February 28, 1920. Ibid., pp. 300-5. Sir Henry Wilson, the C.I.G.S., thought keeping the Turkish Government at Constantinople "under our guns" would be a "powerful deterrent from evil doing." Lowe and Dockrill, op. cit., vol. II, p. 408.

[28] De Robeck to Curzon, February 29, 1920. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. VII, p. 378.

[29] Lloyd George, First London Conference, March 3, 1920. Ibid., p. 363.

to exercise any satisfactory control; that military operations of the first importance must be contemplated if the Conference desired to enforce its decisions; and that it must be fully realized that the Turkish Armies in Asia Minor could not be controlled by any decision extorted from the Turkish Government in Constantinople. Consequently, "whatever action might be taken at Constantinople, the same would never result in compliance by Turkey as a whole, and, furthermore, the Allies did not possess sufficient forces to take the necessary action outside Constantinople."[30]

Nevertheless, the three Allied Powers felt that something had to be done in the wake of the Turkish action in Cilicia. Thus it was decided to step up the occupation of Constantinople by an Allied seizure of a number of the more important Government offices. On March 11 Curzon, speaking in the House of Lords, referred to a spirit of arrogance and defiance "growing in Constantinople" which bodes ill for the future.[31] He declared that the Allies "cannot any longer acquiesce in a state of affairs in which they are flouted at Constantinople while persecution and massacres occur elsewhere."[32] On March 16, 1920 the occupation took place. The Turkish Ministries of Defence, Marine and Posts and Telegraphs were seized; all communications and traffic in the Bosphorus were placed under Allied control; martial law was proclaimed; landing parties from the Allied ships were sent on shore; both sides of the Straits were commanded by the fleets;

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[30]Churchill, First London Conference, March 3, 1920. Ibid., p. 364.

[31]Curzon, March 11, 1920. 39 H.L.Deb.5s. (February 10 - April 28, 1920) col. 419.

[32]Curzon, March 11, 1920. Ibid., col. 423.

and Allied vessels were stationed in various ports in northern Turkey. General Maitland-Wilson, acting in the absence of General d'Espérey, ordered the arrest and deportation of all Young Turks and other suspected nationalist sympathizers. Some 150 were arrested in all, including a number of Turkish politicians, who were deported to Malta. Immediately after the occupation, the Allies dispatched a joint communiqué to the Turkish Government declaring:

> 1. The occupation is provisional.
> 2. The Entente Powers have no intention of destroying the authority of the Sultanate. They desire on the contrary to reinforce it in all places which shall remain in submission to the Ottoman administration.
> 3. The Entente Powers continue in their intention not to deprive the Turks of Constantinople, but if - which God forbid - any general troubles or massacres occur, this decision will probably be modified.[33]

The results of the occupation would now test the extent of control of the Sublime Porte beyond Constantinople.

As it turned out the Allied occupation of the old capital further antagonized the increasingly critical situation in Turkey. It did prove to the Allies, however, the definite lack of both the Sultan's and their own control over the vast majority of Turkey proper. Turkish reaction was almost instantaneous. Colonel Jar Tayar organized a resistance movement in Thrace, proposing to establish an independent government in the Vilayet of Adrianople. He refused to accept orders from Constantinople, all telegraphic

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[33] Allied Comminiqué, March 16, 1920. Mears, op.cit., p. 631.

communications being cut. The terms of the Armistice were no longer regarded as being in operation and their Allies were warned that they would be opposed by force if their troops attempted to enter the Vilayet. Tayar declared further that he would only recognize peace terms accepted by a representative Turkish Government.[34] In Asia Minor Mustafa Kemal also responded immediately. He began by arresting all the Allied control officers upon whom he could lay his hands. He then proceeded to drive the small Italian detachment out of Konia and the equally small British detachment out of Eskishehr.[35] In Constantinople itself, the Ottoman Parliament, after unanimously voting a resolution of protest against the arrest of some of its members, prorogued itself indefinitely on March 18. The following day Kemal called for elections to a new emergency assembly to meet in Angora, where his Representative Committee had been established since December 27, 1919. There the new Turkish Grand National Assembly was established on April 23, 1920.[36] From this moment there was no longer any doubt that the seat of power in Turkey had shifted to the interior.

"It may be asked," Lloyd George later wrote in his memoirs of the Peace Conferences, "why, in the face of this formidable Nationalist movement, the Allies did not pause in their schemes for

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[34] De Robeck to Curzon, March 17, 1920. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XIII, pp. 40-1. Tayar's revolt, however, collapsed on April 21, 1920. Webb to Curzon, April 22, 1920. Ibid., p. 64.

[35] Nicolson, Curzon, p. 249.

[36] Bernard Lewis, The Emergence of Modern Turkey, London, 1968, p. 261.

the partition of Turkey?"[37] It may indeed. It may indeed be asked why the British Government should voluntarily become so involved in the boiling cauldron of central Anatolia, a problem of lesser significance to Great Britain, in which a successful solution would benefit not so much the British but primarily the French and Italians, Greeks and Armenians. Lloyd George, however, gave no clear answer why Britain and the Allies did not reconsider their complicated plans of partition, apart from stating the opinion that, had Venizelos received the proper Allied backing and support from his own people, he would have been fully capable of holding Smyrna and its hinterland against the Kemalists. However that may be, the Allies continued their deliberations at San Remo in April 1920.[38] Here the Supreme Council received a somewhat sobering slap in the face by the military report presented by Marshall Foch of the French General Staff. This memorandum declared that the Allies would need at least twenty-seven divisions to enforce the prospective Treaty. If these troops were not available, the Treaty would be at the mercy of the Turkish nationalists. If Turkey were to be disarmed, and if the protection

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[37] Lloyd George, Peace Treaties, vol. II, p. 1292.

[38] The choice of San Remo once again resulted in petty Anglo-French friction. Lord Curzon pointed out it had been agreed that, as a compliment to Prime Minister Nitti, the next plenary session of the Supreme Council should take place in Italy. Cambon admitted it was true that a meeting had been fixed provisionally at San Remo at the end of April, but "it had always been understood that negotiations in respect of the Turkish Treaty should be conducted in Paris." Curzon, however, disputed this, maintaining that "no agreement had been reached which ruled out the discussion of any point of the Treaty either in London or at San Remo." The Marquis Imperiali, the Italian ambassador in London, not surprisingly supported Lord Curzon, swaying the balance in favour of an April meeting in Italy. First London Conference, March 25, 1920. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. VII, pp. 630-5.

of minorities were to be guaranteed, the existing forces were not sufficient and would have to be vastly strengthened.[39]

Foch's report affected the Armenian question most directly. It did not believe that the Armenians could take Erzerum unaided. It is interesting that this report compiled largely by the French General Staff should compare so favourably with the memorandum presented by the British military authorities to the London Conference on February 12. It certainly appeared as if the generals were taking a much more realistic view of the situation than the politicians, who were greatly overreaching themselves. Despite the weakness of the Armenians, neither Lloyd George nor Millerand nor Nitti were prepared to send any troops. In light of Foch's report, however, the British Prime Minister was prepared to reconsider the London decision to recommend the cession of Erzerum to Armenia. He now argued that if the Turks were to be deprived to Erzerum, they would probably answer by massacring Armenians, just when the Allied Powers were in no position to assist them. He warned that as the Armenians could not conquer Erzerum themselves, "its cession to Armenia would be a purely provocative measure."[40] The French, however, argued in favour of retaining Erzerum for Armenia as an indispensable means of defence, the fortress of Erzerum being among the strongest in the Near East. Curzon, much to the displeasure of Lloyd George, supported this French argument against his own Prime Minister.[41] Eventually, at

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[39] Foch Memorandum, San Remo Conference, April 20. Ibid., First Series, vol. VIII, pp. 55-7.

[40] Lloyd George, San Remo Conference, April 22, 1920. Ibid., pp.108-12.

[41] San Remo Conference, April 22, 1920. Ibid., pp. 109-10.

the instigation of Lloyd George, a compromise was reached with the decision to make a final appeal to the United States to accept mandatory responsibilities in Armenia. The British Prime Minister had long regarded the United States alone as "qualified alike by its sympathies and material resources" to undertake a mandate for Armenia on behalf of humanity. Regardless of what the American answer on the mandate would be, the Allies asked President Wilson to arbitrate the western boundary problem between Armenia and Turkey, and regardless of whether it accepted both mandate and arbitration, the United States was asked to provide volunteer forces or military assistance for the defence of Armenia and, even more urgently, an American loan to set Armenia on its feet.[42]

Though President Wilson readily agreed to arbitrate the Turko-Armenian boundary, the United States, in the following months, liquidated its last connections with the Turkish settlement. On May 24 the President appealed to Congress to accept the mandate: "In response to the invitation of the Council at San Remo, I urgently advise and request that the Congress grant the Executive power to accept for the United States a mandate for Armenia."[43] At this critical time, however, Wilson carried virtually no real weight in American political life. Not only was he a lame-duck President but a Democrat attempting to impress his idealistic concepts upon

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[42]Lloyd George, San Remo Conference, April 27, 1920. Lloyd George, Peace Treaties, vol. II, pp. 1325-33.

[43]Wilson to Congress, May 24, 1920. Tillman, op. cit., pp. 374-5.

a Senate and Congress containing a Republican majority. This legislature had already demonstrated its independence in rejecting both the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations. Public opinion, moreover, was now beyond the President's grasp, the average American desiring no more than a return to the isolation of the pre-war years. Thus on November 30 it was no surprise that Wilson reported to the Supreme Council that the Senate had rejected the Allies' invitation. As to the request for military assistance and credits the President replied:

> I am without authorization to offer or employ military forces of the United States in any project for the relief of Armenia, and any material contributions would require the authoritization of the Congress which is not now in session and whose action I could not forecast.[44]

The initiative in resolving the Armenian question had thus been forfeited to the Turks.

Likewise in the case of Kurdistan no viable protector could be found. The British Government was little attracted to the idea of support for Kurdish nationalism. The major British problem in that area was solved after oil-rich southern Kurdistan, consisting of most of the Vilayet of Mosul, was jealously attached to British Mesopotamia. The territory north of Mosul was really quite unknown and of little practical use to Great Britain. Besides, it was found impossible to find any representative Kurd in such a "backward" area. Curzon complained that "no Kurd appeared to represent anything more than

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[44] Wilson to Supreme Council, November 30, 1920. Ibid., p. 375.

his particular clan." But it was still felt that the Kurds needed some protector. Outside of Mosul, Britain was not prepared to undertake the task. Thus it was decided to leave northern Kurdistan at least as an autonomous state under the protection of the Turk. Quipped Lord Curzon: "The country was used to Turkish rule."[45] In Batum, however, the Allies appeared to fare a trifle better. The Conference feared an eventual confrontation with the Russians as the Bolshevik forces continued to move southwards. Curzon claimed that the port was still legally Turkish by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, thus the Bolsheviks must be kept out. Finally, on Lloyd George's insistence, both Millerand and Nitti offered to send a battalion of troops each to support the weak British forces there.[46]

With the situation in eastern Anatolia - Armenia, Kurdistan, and Batum - deteriorating so drastically, the British Government placed its hopes on enforcing the prospective Turkish Treaty squarely on the shoulders of Greece. Circumstances had forced Britain to all but give up its support of a strong Armenia in eastern Anatolia. In the west, however, the Greek position was still strong. Thus Britain was able to continue its policy of defending the acquisitions of Greece in Asia Minor. The official explanation of Britain's pro-Greek policy was outlined in a memorandum of December 20, 1920 by Harold Nicolson, one of the strongest advocates of the Greek case:

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[45] Curzon, San Remo Conference, April 19, 1920. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. VIII, pp. 42-3.

[46] San Remo Conference, April 21, 1920. Ibid., pp.100-1.

> The idea which prompted our support of Greece was no emotional impulse, but the natural expression of our historical policy - the protection of India and the Suez Canal. ... Geographically the position of Greece was strong enough to save us expense in peace, and weak enough to be completely subservient in war.[47]

In reality, however, British policy was basically negative. A pro-Greek policy was hardly designed to alleviate the situation in India while the Aegean littoral was located at a considerable distance from the Suez Canal in Egypt, where local sympathy was generally pro-Turk. Britain defended the Greek presence in Smyrna and the Vilayet of Aidin primarily to deprive this territory from the mistrusted clutches of Turkish nationalism.

Lloyd George had no doubt that the Greeks, with six divisions in Smyrna and three in Macedonia, could enforce the sections of the Treaty relating to themselves. Nor would he countenance Nitti's suggestion that Greece should not control Gallipoli and that its presence in Asia Minor would lead to war. He steadfastly refused to modify the frontiers of either Thrace or Smyrna, insisting that the Allies could not drive out Greece who was a civilized Power. The French, despite their misgivings, were anxious to avoid alienating the British whose support they needed on the Rhine, and they therefore refrained from endorsing the Italian arguments. Thus Lloyd George was able to maintain the London terms with only minor modifications.[48]

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[47] Nicolson Memorandum, December 20, 1920. Ibid., First Series, vol. XII, p. 551.

[48] San Remo Conference, April 21, 1920. Ibid.,pp. 90-2.

Through Lloyd George's support, Venizelos had achieved the substance of his demands, and this he acknowledged in a letter of April 26.[49] But he was under no illusion that he could rely upon the unequivocal co-operation of the British Government. On March 19, at a meeting at the War Office with Churchill and the Commander of the Imperial General Staff, Sir Henry Wilson, he had discovered that they foresaw for Greece a long and exhausting struggle in Asia Minor. Furthermore, Churchill explained that although Greece might obtain sympathy, and perhaps arms and ammunition, from Great Britain, it could expect neither financial aid nor troops. Nevertheless, Venizelos remained confident that he was undertaking nothing which was beyond the power of Greece.[50]

The terms of the Peace Treaty with Turkey were presented to a delegation representing the Government in Constantinople on May 11, 1920. Territorially speaking, in Europe, Turkey was to retain the city of Constantinople and a small hinterland westwards to the Chatalja Lines. In Asia the Turks retained Asia Minor eastwards as far as the yet-to-be-determined frontier of the new State of Armenia, southwards to a line excluding the Gulf of Alexandretta, and thence running due east to the banks of the Tigris. A neutralized zone was set up surrounding the Straits - the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmora, and the Bosphorus - covering the waters themselves, a

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[49] Venizelos to Lloyd George, April 26, 1920. Lloyd George Papers, F/55/1/8.

[50] War Office-Venizelos Conversations, London, March 19, 1920. Ibid., F/199/9/2.

strip of land on both sides, and those islands in the Aegean Sea near the mouth of the Dardanelles. This zone was placed under an international commission, charged to secure the free navigation for ships of all nations in peace or war, save as decreed otherwise by the Supreme Council of the League of Nations. Article 37 of the Treaty illustrated clearly the British concept of the freedom of the Straits: "The navigation of the Straits, including the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmora and the Bosphorus, shall in future be open, both in peace and war, to every vessel of commerce or of war and to military and commercial aircraft, without distinction of flag."

Those territories severed from Turkey included the islands of Imbros and Tenedos, which were given to Greece. The Greeks also received those parts of Turkey-in-Europe outside the Constantinople hinterland; this included the Gallipoli Peninsula. Armenia was established as an independent state, with its western frontiers to be settled by the arbitration of President Wilson of the United States. This decision would also determine the fate of Lazistan. Batum was set up as a Free State along the lines of those previously determined for Danzig. Kurdistan, east of the Euphrates and north of the Vilayet of Mosul, was granted local autonomy under Turkish sovereignty. However, according to Article 64: "If within one year from the coming into force of the present Treaty the Kurdish peoples shall address themselves to the Council of the League of

Nations in such a manner as to show that a majority of the population of these areas desires independence from Turkey, and if the Council then considers that these peoples are capable of such independence and recommends that it should be granted to them, Turkey hereby agrees to execute such a recommendation and to renounce all rights and title over these areas." Syria, Palestine, and Mesopotamia were made independent states, subject to supervision by a mandatory power appointed by the League of Nations. The Hejaz was made an independent state in its own right. The Turks were forced to renounce all rights of suzerainty over their former territories in North Africa. They officially recognized British administration in Egypt and the Sudan, that of Italy in Libya, and that of France in Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. The British annexation of Cyprus was accepted, and the Dodecanese Islands were formally ceded to Italy (with the understanding that the Italians would hand them over directly to the Greeks).[51] The Smyrna area in western Anatolia was to remain nominally under Turkish sovereignty but to be administered by Greece, through a local representative assembly, for the next five years. At the conclusion of these five years it could become officially Greek territory if this assembly, or the population of the area by plebiscite, so wished.

Apart from these losses of territory, actual or potential, Turkey was to suffer still further restrictions. The Turkish Army was to be limited to 50,000 men with compulsory military service abolished and a limit placed on the total number of armaments.

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[51] The Italians, by a treaty of May 14, 1920, had promised to cede certain of the Dodecanese Islands to Greece. On October 8, 1922, after the Greek defeat, they repudiated this treaty and retained all islands of the Dodecanese in their own hands.

The Army was to be subjected further to the advice of the Allied or neutral states. The Navy could also not exceed certain fixed maximums. Allied commissions of control were authorized to supervise the execution of these clauses.

Financially speaking the Treaty provided that Turkey's finances be placed under the control of a financial commission representing Great Britain, France, and Italy. Its function was to supervise Turkey's budget, control its expenditures, secure the meeting of its external debt, and appropriate any surplus towards meeting the costs of the Allied Army of Occupation and war indemnity which Turkey was liable to pay. In short, virtually all the aspects of Turkish economic life would be under a powerful foreign influence. To undermine Turkish sovereignty even further, the Capitulations, whereby certain states had before the war secured extra-territorial status for their nationals in Turkish territory, were re-established and extended to all the Allied Powers.[52] A Tripartite Agreement, drawn up simultaneously with the Turkish Treaty, had already established regional spheres of influence for the three major Allied Powers. Italy was given the right "to help Turkey to develop her resources" in southern Anatolia and Adalia, France the same privileges in Cilicia and western Kurdistan.[53] Britain claimed no special region

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[52] Treaty of Sèvres, August 10, 1920. Command 964, "Treaty of Peace with Turkey, signed at Sèvres 10th August 1920", Accounts and Papers, vol. LI (February 10 - December 23, 1920), pp. 609 ff.

[53] Tripartite Agreement, August 10, 1920. Command 963, "Tri-Partite Agreement between the British Empire, France and Italy respecting Anatolia, signed at Sèvres 10th August 1920", Ibid., pp. 43-8.

of interest in Turkey proper.

As if Turkey had been in a vacuum for the last seventeen months, this Treaty was produced to be accepted and ratified by the Turks and enforced if necessary by the Allies. It seemed as if the Treaty which emerged from the labours of the Allied Powers was drawn up as though Mustafa Kemal and the passions he aroused among his countrymen had never existed. Even the Sultan's delegation was so upset over the terms that it continually asked for postponements in the signing of the Treaty. Though France and Italy readily agreed to this procrastination, the British believed the Turks to be stalling for time and for nationalist successes. On June 23 Lloyd George declared in the House of Commons that this Treaty was intended as

> a policy of releasing all non-Turkish populations from Turkish sway ..... If we allowed Mustapha Kemal, or any man of his type, to break down that policy Europe would have failed dismally in its duty.[54]

Lloyd George had considerably more success in convincing the House of Commons of the soundness of the Turkish Treaty than did Millerand the Chamber of Deputies. The French Chamber, in light of the recent events in Cilicia, was now inclined to pay more attention to Mustafa Kemal and was very much concerned about France overextending its limited resources in this early post-war period. The Rhine frontier

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[54]Lloyd George, June 23, 1920. 130 H.C.Deb.5s. (June 7-25, 1920), col. 2260.

was still uppermost in the Frenchman's mind. By the middle of June 1920 the Foreign Office was informed of the unlikelihood of the French Parliament ratifying the proposed Treaty as it stood.[55]

In spite of this, however, Lloyd George persuaded both the French and Italian diplomatic plenipotentiaries, as another concession to Allied unity, to regard the Turkish Treaty not as one primarily designed to stifle the national aspirations of the Turks but as one to emancipate oppressed minorities from Turkish misrule. In this connection the Allies dispatched the following ultimatum to the Turkish Government on July 10: "The Allies can make no modification in the clauses of the Treaty which detach Thrace and Smyrna from Turkish rule, for in both areas the Turks are in a minority."[56] However, in light of the recent rumblings from both French and Italian parliamentarians as to the soundness of the proposed Treaty, and in light of the fact that the cession of both Thrace and Smyrna to Greece would result in the creation of an Anglo-Greek stranglehold in this very significant quarter of the Near East, the sincerity of the French and Italian signatures on this document left very much to be desired. Ultimately the Treaty was signed by the representatives of the Turkish Government, at Sèvres, six miles southwest of Paris, on August 10, 1920. It was agreed to, however, only under protest, and was followed by an officially declared day of mourning throughout Turkey.

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[55] Grahame to Curzon, June 15, 1920. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XIII, p. 86.

[56] Draft Reply to Turkey, July 10, 1920. Ibid., First Series, vol. VIII, p. 554.

Though the Treaty of Sèvres was signed, it was never ratified by the Turkish Government. The Foreign Office placed as much pressure as possible upon the Turks to ratify it, but to no avail. On October 1 Curzon warned that "Should the present Grand Vizier refuse to do so, it would then be time to consider the question of finding a successor who would be more amenable."[57] The Sublime Porte, however, insisted upon dispatching a mission to Angora to confer with the Kemalists before any final ratification of the Treaty.[58] Still, even after the Allies had permitted this mission to be sent to Anatolia in December the Turkish Foreign Office declared that ratification at this particular time was highly inopportune and would throw the nationalists completely into the arms of the Bolsheviks.[59] The Constantinople Government stood strongly behind this decision, thereby providing further evidence of the Allies' weakening control over Turkey. Constantinople was now defying the Entente Powers in a manner similar to that of the nationalists.

As for the nationalists, Sir Horace Rumbold, who had succeeded Admiral de Robeck as British High Commissioner in Constantinople on November 20, 1920, reported that their position was so strong that "they could count upon revision even after [the] Central Government had ratified."[60] The Porte, however, defiantly refused to do so. The Constantinople Government had by now lost all

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[57] Curzon to Derby, October 1, 1920. Ibid., First Series, vol. XIII, p. 153.

[58] De Robeck to Curzon, November 10, 1920. Ibid., p. 172.

[59] Rumbold to Curzon, December 21, 1920. Ibid., p. 206.

[60] Rumbold to Curzon, November 27, 1920. Ibid., p. 193.

patience with British policy in Turkey. After the British-imposed Armistice of Mudros, the British Foreign Secretary's slashing attack against the Grand Vizier and the Ottoman Government, and the largely British occupation of Constantinople, this very severe Treaty of Sèvres destroyed the last vestiges of the Turkish Government's sympathy for Britain which had once been so high. The Porte, moreover , had by now been strongly affected by the nationalist ideals of the Kemalist Movement. It is interesting that both France and Italy also were upset with the resulting Anglo-Greek dominance in the Near East and believed that Mustafa Kemal should be given greater consideration. For these reasons the French and the Italians refused to ratify the Treaty of Sèvres and thus took their first major step in the direction of compromise with the Turks, away from the Anglo-Greek coalition. Finally, after the fall of Venizelos in December, both insisted that these new circumstances demanded a modification of the Treaty.[61] By the end of the year it was useless for the British Government to make any further representations to the Turks in favour of immediate ratification.

Not only did Britain face the technical question of Turkish ratification but the more practical question also arose of who could or would in such circumstances force the Turks to accept the actual terms of the Treaty. The initiative in Turkish political life had now passed to Angora in the interior. Even the Sublime Porte looked

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[61] Hardinge to Curzon, December 12, 1920. Ibid., p. 202.

to Mustafa Kemal as the one major hope for a new and independent Turkey. After the signing of the Treaty of Sèvres, British relations with Constantinople steadily deteriorated. Britain's relations with its two Allies, France and Italy, had also reached a major turning point by mid-1920. Not only were the French and the Italians not prepared to force the Turks to accept the Peace Treaty but they even refused to ratify it themselves. They now realized that Mustafa Kemal was the real power in Turkey and were prepared to take the opportunity to open conversations with him. British policy, on the other hand, spurred on by the Prime Minister's Turkophobia and the Foreign Secretary's strong belief in the sanctity of a signed document, desired to force the Treaty in its entirety. Unfortunately, however, the British now held little or no weight at all in Turkish affairs, either militarily or diplomatically. Thus from the very beginning the Turkish Peace Treaty was in dire jeopardy, if not actually still-born. In the words of Raymond Poincaré, the future Prime Minister of France, the Treaty of Sèvres was as "fragile as the porcelain vases" for which that quiet Parisian suburb was famous.[62] Having little faith in the Greeks' ability to enforce the Turkish Treaty on behalf of the Great Britain, Sir Henry Wilson, the C.I.G.S., confided to his diary: "The Frocks ... are completely out of touch with realities. They seem to think that their writ runs in Turkey in Asia."[63] Winston Churchill exclaimed sarcastically:

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[62] Thomas Jones, Lloyd George, Cambridge, Mass., 1951, p. 198.

[63] Major-General Sir C.E. Callwell, Field-Marshall Sir Henry Wilson: His Life and Diaries, vol. II, London, 1927, p. 229.

"At last peace with Turkey: and to ratify it, War with Turkey!"[64]

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[64] Churchill, op.cit., p. 399.

CHAPTER IV

MILITARY INADEQUACY: FIGHTING BY PROXY

By June 1920 the Turkish nationalist movement, which had grown steadily since its inception in 1919, had established firm control over the centre of Anatolia, with its capital in Angora. From here it was exerting military pressure against what it regarded as foreign encroachments upon Turkish soil, notably the Greeks who had forces in the Smyrna area, and the British troops who were garrisoning the Ismid Peninsula which defended the approaches to Constantinople. On the night of June 14-15, 1920 Turkish nationalist forces attacked these British troops in the region of Ismid. By June 16 the fighting assumed such a formidable aspect that the War Office resorted to emergency measures and mobilized immediately 2,000 British and Indian troops from Malta. Though this move had the effect of quelling all disturbances for the time being, the British military was loathe to face any future pressure from the Turkish nationalists. The Cabinet, however, concluded "that having regard to the very strong and even dramatic line of policy taken

by the British plenipotentiaries in regard to the Treaty of Peace with Turkey, to retire from Constantinople before a bandit like Mustapha Kemal would deal a shattering blow to our prestige in the East."[1] When it became apparent that neither the French nor the Italians were prepared to send out the reinforcements which General Milne deemed necessary, the British military, despite its disdain for the Greeks, sought their help to relieve the situation.

On June 18 Venizelos informed the British Cabinet that he was prepared to increase his forces at Smyrna and to conduct a major operation against the nationalists provided that it was understood that he would advance no farther into Anatolia. Moreover, he offered to relieve the British position at Ismid at once, by placing a Greek division under General Milne's command. This offer the Cabinet decided to accept, and resolved to consult the Allies concerning Venizelos' proposal for a Greek offensive against the nationalists.[2]

This whole question was brought up at the Second Conference of Hythe on June 20. Here the Greek Prime Minister, then in the high noon of his influence, offered the Allies some 90,000 Greek troops to repel the Kemalists. Millerand, on behalf of France, was anxious to relieve the pressure on his forces in Cilicia and agreed not only to the initiation of a Greek operation in Asia but also to the immediate Greek occupation of Thrace, hitherto garrisoned on

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[1] Cabinet Resolution, June 17, 1920. A.E. Montgomery, "Lloyd George and the Greek Question", Lloyd George: Twelve Essays (A.J.P. Taylor, ed.), London, 1971, p. 265.

[2] Cabinet Meeting, June 18, 1920. Ibid.

behalf of the Allies by a predominantly French force. For his part, Lloyd George welcomed the opportunity to strengthen the Greek position in Asia Minor and to make the Thracian part of the Treaty a fait accompli.[3] He took the view, as he explained to Lord Riddell a few days later, that Britain must decide whom it was going to back:

> The Turks nearly brought about our defeat in the war. It was a near thing. You cannot trust them and they are a decadent race. The Greeks, on the other hand, are our friends, and are a rising people .... We must secure Constantinople and the Dardanelles. You cannot do that effectively without crushing Turkish power.[4]

Three years later, however, the Straits settlement at Lausanne was to prove the Prime Minister wrong on this point. British policy stubbornly waited until 1923 before finally accepting that the security of Constantinople and the freedom of the Straits could be maintained under the Turk.

Commencing on June 22 the Greeks acted rapidly and efficiently. With British naval support, they occupied Thrace within five days, and proceeded to drive the nationalists from Brusa and Panderma, completing their planned operation by the end of July. For Lloyd George it was a moment of triumph: "I believe," he stated in the House of Commons on June 23, "that we shall be able to establish authority in these areas."[5] A month later the British Prime Minister, confident that the Greek successes had vindicated his

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[3] Second Hythe Conference, June 20, 1920. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. VIII, pp. 307-8.

[4] Lloyd George to Riddell, June 23, 1920. Lord Riddell, Intimate Diary of the Peace Conference and After 1918-1923, London, 1933, p. 208.

[5] Lloyd George, June 23, 1920. 130 H.C.Deb.5s. (June 7-25, 1920), col. 2260.

policy, declared to Parliament: "Turkey is no more."[6] His confidence in Venizelos was now unlimited; he was confirmed in his opinion that the military experts were wrong. From that moment onwards Lloyd George was convinced that the Greek soldiers could always, if requested, quell a nationalist rising in Asia Minor.

But although the Greek successes had revealed the comparative weakness of the Turkish forces, the limited character of the Greek operations had enabled the Turks to withdraw beyond the Greek zone and thus escape annihilation. Venizelos realized that Kemal would constitute a standing menace to this Greek territory unless his forces were completely destroyed. He therefore offered to launch a further operation to accomplish this object, provided that the British Government undertook responsibility for initiating the offensive, participated in the operations, and supplied Greece with the necessary financial and military aid. For his services Venizelos demanded a substantial political price: the creation of a Pontine Greek state; the expulsion of the Turks from Constantinople; and the formation of an independent state comprising Constantinople and the Straits. On October 10 the British Cabinet gave these proposals serious consideration.[7] There was no longer any doubt that the Greek Army was a first class weapon. Indeed, the C.I.G.S., hitherto sceptical of the quality of the Greek troops, now believed that they might be able to

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[6] Lloyd George, July 21, 1920. 132 H.C.Deb.5s. (July 19 - August 6, 1920), col. 479.

[7] Cabinet Meeting, October 10, 1920. Montgomery, op.cit. , p. 266.

reach as far as Angora. The Cabinet, however, understood that the adoption of Venizelos' plan implied the destruction of the Peace Treaty which the Sultan had signed at Sèvres on August 10. Moreover, the Government, conscious of a growing domestic opposition to its Eastern policy, had given an explicit insurance to the House of Commons that it was under no obligation to the Greek Army.[8] For these reasons, and because it appeared improbable that either France or Italy would give its consent, the Cabinet decided to shelve Veniselos' proposals. The Greek forces,however, remained upon a war footing in Asia Minor.

So it appeared as if the British were prepared to fight the Turks by proxy. Their own military weakness as opposed to the forces of the Turkish nationalists was now quite clear. Even before the Greek Army was invested with its new responsibilities, a British General Staff memorandum strongly recommended a reconsideration of the Turkish peace terms. Otherwise, the British Government, if it still intended to uphold the Treaty of Sèvres as it stood, must be prepared to face another war. This, of course, would necessitate the very unpopular measure of conscription, for the General Staff claimed "there are now no reinforcements available, and indeed our military resources are strained to a dangerous extent in meeting our existing commitments."[9]

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[8] Lloyd George, June 23, 1920. 130 H.C.Deb.5s. (June 7-25, 1920), col. 2260.

[9] General Staff Memorandum, April 1, 1920. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XIII, p. 55

These commitments included the demoralizing civil war in Ireland, where twenty-eight infantry battalions were stationed, an irreducible minimum. By the end of 1920 the approximate number of Allied troops in Turkey proper included 18,000 British and Indians, 8,000 French, and 2,000 Italians. However, the 8,000 Indian troops were soon to return home, and the British and French garrisons were to be drastically reduced. The Greek and Turkish nationalist armies both numbered around 100,000 men.[10]

Thus it was because of the Greeks that the British and Allied position remained tolerable. In Thrace their control was unchallenged, and although in Asia Minor they remained upon a war footing, they had received a mandate from the Allies to occupy a much wider area than that laid down in the Treaty and were the appointed guardians of the Allied position at the Straits. Then the situation was unexpectedly transformed by domestic events in Greece. On October 25, 1920 the young Greek King, Alexander, died from the effects of septic poisoning after having been bitten by a pet monkey three weeks earlier. Prime Minister Venizelos procured the appointment of Admiral Conduriotis as Regent, pending the arrival of the late King's younger brother, Prince Paul, who was favoured by the Government. However, Paul declared he would accept the crown only if the Greek people decided that they did not desire to see the return of his father, ex-King Constantine.

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[10] David Walder, The Chanak Affair, London, 1969, pp. 105-6.

Constantine, as a strong opponent of the Venizelist regime and as the brother-in-law of Kaiser William II of Germany, was a man for whom the Allied Powers held no sympathy whatever. As a result, the complexion of the impending Greek elections was altered considerably, now becoming a test of confidence in the Government of Venizelos. On November 14 the Greek Prime Minister and his supporters were overwhelmingly defeated and at once resigned amid what looked like the ruins of their Eastern policy. In their place was elected a Government, headed by Rhallys as Prime Minister, pledged to recall to the throne ex-King Constantine, whom the Allies had expelled from Greece as a Germanophil in 1917.[11]

Venizelos now understood the lesson already learned by Woodrow Wilson, that statesman-like prestige abroad does not guarantee political success at home. Lloyd George was understandably dismayed at the results of the Greek elections and the subsequent resignation of Venizelos: "I was deeply shocked and distressed to see the results of the Greek Elections. It almost makes one despair of Democracy."[12] He noted that since the Peace Conference of Paris Wilson had been struck down by illness, Clemenceau had retired, and Orlando had been defeated. Now, with Venizelos gone also, the British Prime Minister lamented: "I am the only one left."[13] Still he praised Venizelos

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[11] King Constantine, when he left the country over three years earlier, made no formal renunciation of the throne.

[12] Lloyd George to Venizelos, November 17, 1920. Lloyd George Papers, F/55/1/41.

[13] Churchill, op.cit., p. 411.

as "the greatest statesman Greece had thrown up since the days of Pericles."[14]

This turn of fate seemed to the French and the Italians a convenient pretext for the Allies to reverse their policy and seek a reconciliation with the Turks. But this Lloyd George was not prepared to do. Defending his policy in the House of Commons on December 22, he declared that it was impossible to alter it merely because of a Greek election:

> Because there is a general election in Greece, the result of which we abhor, do not let us change the whole of our policy in the East. The Mediterranean is vital to Britain. We want the friendship of the Greek people - of the Greek people, a people whose friendship is vital to us in that part of the world, whatever we do.

Stressing the importance to Great Britain of Greek friendship in the Mediterranean, he begged the British public not to "rush into tearing up treaties which took a great deal of reflection, which were based upon principles of policy which are vital to the British Empire," and thus not to "restore conditions which very nearly proved fatal to us in the great War from which we have emerged."[15] Within the Cabinet he resisted pressure from his colleagues to modify the Treaty, and he secured their agreement to uphold the Sèvres policy until such time as a change of circumstances should warrant its revision. British

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[14] Jones, op.cit., p. 411.

[15] Lloyd George, December 22, 1920. 136 H.C. Deb.5s. (December 13-23, 1920), cols. 1899-901.

policy thus continued to support Greek nationalism as a weapon against any serious Turkish resurgence.

In maintaining this course Lloyd George had the support of Curzon, who despite his former opposition to the Greek presence in Smyrna considered that Great Britain, having signed the Treaty of Sèvres, was bound by its promise to the Greeks, and that modification of the terms would constitute a humiliating concession to the Turks. Thus when Cambon, the French Ambassador, suggested that in the event of Constantine's recall the Allies should make a joint declaration refusing to recognize him, Curzon emphasized that he regarded such action as impracticable and unwise. He believed the Allies' main duty was to save the Treaty if they possibly could, for no one could tell what might happen if they themselves proceeded to destroy it or allowed it to founder without making an effort to save it.[16]

From November 26 to December 4, 1920, the Allies met in London to discuss the new situation. Lloyd George had kept in touch with Venizelos who, though hopeful that a concerted Allied threat might prevent Constantine's return, took the view that the essential task was to preserve the Treaty and had advised the British Government to recognize the ex-King if necessary in return for a firm promise to execute the peace terms. In accordance with this advice Lloyd George, anxious to prevent a premature condemnation of Greece, proposed that the Allies should invite the royalist regime to explain whether or not it was still prepared to execute the Treaty.[17] But Georges Leygues, who had succeeded Millerand as the French Prime

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[16] Curzon to Derby, November 22, 1920. Lloyd George Papers, F/13/1/34.

[17] Lloyd George, Second London Conference, November 26, 1920. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. VIII, p. 810.

Minister in September 1920, opposed the proposal and refused to co-operate with any political regime endorsing King Constantine. The French demanded drastic action - the Allies should refuse to recognize Constantine, break off diplomatic relations with Greece, terminate financial aid, and give notification that they could not entrust important strategic positions to an unfriendly Government.[18] It is true that public opinion in France was strongly against the ex-King, largely because of his wartime role. However, the return of Constantine to the Greek throne also offered a very convenient opportunity or pretext for the French to cut all ties with the British Government's pro-Greek policy and to move further toward establishing direct contact with the Turkish nationalists. Against Leygues' proposal, Curzon reasoned that the Allies should trust Greece until it should prove either unable or unwilling to co-operate. He denied that its presence at the Straits could, as the French had suggested, constitute a threat to the Allies, and he declared that it was a practical impossibility to expel the Greek forces from Smyrna. He proposed that if Constantine returned he should be asked to accept a set of stringent conditions which would give the Allies effective control over Greek policy.[19] The French, however, insisted upon immediate counter-measures against Greece. These Lloyd George rejected stating that the Allies had no power to modify the provisions of the Treaty and he categorically refused to place Smyrna under

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[18] Leygues, Second London Conference, November 26, 1920. Ibid., p. 816.

[19] Curzon Memorandum, Second London Conference, November 27, 1920. Ibid., pp. 837-40.

the "Turkish heel." Nevertheless, he expressed his personal hostility to Constantine and agreed that the Allies should issue a formal warning to the Greek Government that they held themselves free to take what action they thought fit if the ex-King were recalled.[20]

On December 3 the French again pressed for a revision of the Treaty, suggesting that the return of Smyrna might reconcile Mustafa Kemal to a peaceful settlement. But Lloyd George refused to reconsider the terms until the policy of the royalists became clear. It was quite possible, he thought, that the Greeks would reject Constantine; if the king returned, however, the Allies had given fair warning that they would wash their hands of their responsibilities toward Greece.[21] The following day the Allies hit the Greeks at their weakest point - finance. Greece was now more than ever in debt, especially to Great Britain. In February 1918 the British had offered the Greeks credit of over 10,000,000 pounds. Venizelos had so far drawn 6,500,000 pounds. On December 4, 1920 the Allied powers informed the new Greek Government that "in the event of the return of Constantine to the Throne of Greece no further financial assistance will be granted to that country ...."[22]

Thus, despite his desire to maintain the Treaty, Lloyd George, partly because of his personal antipathy to Constantine,

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[20] Lloyd George, Second London Conference, December 2, 1920. Ibid., pp. 832-3.

[21] Lloyd Goerge, Second London Conference, December 3, 1920. Ibid., pp. 843-4.

[22] Allied Resolution, Second London Conference, December 4, 1920. Ibid., p. 864.

had allowed the French to manoeuvre him into an equivocal position. He had committed Great Britain to punishing Greece if Constantine returned, despite the fact that his policy depended upon Greek co-operation. On December 5 a plebiscite was held in Greece to determine whether the Greek people desired to see the return to the throne of ex-King Constantine. The result was overwhelmingly in favour of Constantine's return. Thus the Allies' piece of polite blackmail had not deterred the Greek voters in any way. Now the British Government had no choice but to collaborate with the French in accordance with the declaration of December 4. They imposed a financial embargo upon Greece and suspended the dispatch of war material. These drastic measures notwithstanding, the British Government still hoped that Constantine might yet complete the task assigned to Greece under the Treaty of Sèvres. In spite of the French and the Italians, and in spite of unfavourable public opinion in Great Britain, Lloyd George's Turkish policy still depended upon Greek co-operation.

Indeed, the Greek King's policy added a large measure of irony to the whole problem. Venizelos had earlier claimed to Lloyd George that all of this political turmoil was evidence of the war-weariness of the Greek people.[23] Constantine, however, had no interest whatever in ending the war with Turkey; instead he decided to pursue

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[23]Venizelos to Lloyd George, November 27, 1920. Lloyd George, Peace Treaties, vol. II, p. 1346.

the campaign in the following spring with even greater vigour. Thus, Constantine, who was willing to continue and even to accelerate Venizelos' policies of doing battle with the Turks in the name of the Allies, returned to a heavily debt-ridden state whose prospects for financial aid (and hence military victory) had now been destroyed by those very Allies whom the Greek King was willing to serve. The whole crisis was clear evidence of the Allies' pride being hurt. The Kaiser was now peacefully sawing logs in exile at Doorn; that his brother-in-law should return triumphantly to his Kingdom was thought to be intolerable. The majority Allied opinion was summed up by Churchill: "For the sake of Venizelos much had to be endured, but for Constantine less than nothing."[24]

Despite the pronouncements of the British Government, it was clear that support for Greece in Asia Minor would be hard to defend with British opinion so long as Greece was ruled by a brother-in-law of the ex-Kaiser. "In England," Churchill wrote, "the feeling was not resentment, but a total extinction of sympathy or even interest."[25] In France and Italy the feelings were even stronger and were intensified by the discovery that the British Prime Minister, reluctantly but firmly, continued his support of the Greek Government. These Allies now saw the folly of putting off and complicating further their relations with Kemal merely to give satisfaction to Constantine and his Anatolian escapades. Henceforward, despite continued British

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[24] Churchill, op.cit., p. 412.

[25] Ibid., p. 411-2.

sympathy, Greece was to face its perils alone.

But Greece was not the only one left isolated. Armenia, for its part, had been left to fend for itself since the American refusal to accept a mandate. At the time of the First Conference of London the only Allied troops in the area were those meagre British forces stationed in Batum, under the command of Brigadier-General W.J. Cooke-Collis. At this time, too, the Bolshevik threat from Ciscaucasia was becoming very real. On March 15, 1920 Oliver Wardrop wrote to Lord Curzon expressing his fear of a possible junction between Bolsheviks and Turkish nationalists. He thus urged that Batum be reinforced with sufficient British or Allied troops to stiffen the resistance of the local governments.[26] On April 4 General Milne warned the War Office of those same possibilities.[27] But no positive replies were forthcoming. Throughout April Wardrop attempted to convince the Foreign Office that Batum was the key to all of Transcaucasia and that the failure to hold this port city, populated mostly by Lazes and Ajars (Moslem Georgians), would be "a disaster of enormous magnitude."[28] Milne estimated the Bolshevik forces threatening Transcaucasia at some 50,000 men. He advised holding only a small area around Batum. If this were impossible, they must withdraw completely or become a useless sacrifice.[29]

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[26]Wardrop to Curzon, March 15, 1920. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XII, p. 574.

[27]Milne to Churchill, April 4, 1920. Ibid., p. 585.

[28]Wardrop to Curzon, April 25, 1920. Ibid., p. 597.

[29]De Robeck to Curzon, April 27, 1920. Ibid., pp. 597-8.

On April 27 the Foreign Office bluntly informed the High Commission in Transcaucasia that the British Government would in no way give active military support to either Georgia or Azerbaijan in the event of an attack on them by Soviet forces, and "you should be careful not to put any such interpretation on Mr. Bonar Law's statement of February 24th."[30] Two days later Commander Harry S. Luke, acting in the absence of Wardrop, reported the resignation of the Azerbaijani Government and its fall to the Soviets. He then warned that a joint Turko-Bolshevik attack on Armenia seemed "probable."[31] Curzon responded by contacting Sir George Buchanan, the British Ambassador in Rome, and Lord Derby in Paris, to persuade the Italian and French Governments to fulfill the agreement made at San Remo by sending a battalion each to Batum.[32] After due consideration France refused to dispatch any native French troops, contenting itself with the preparation of an Algerian battalion.[33] Italy decided to suspend the dispatch of any troops altogether.[34] Needless to say, the Foreign Office was very much perturbed: "It is exceedingly difficult to pursue any consistent policy when we are subject to these extraordinary oscillations on the part of our Allies."[35] In frustration Britain turned once again to the United

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[30] On February 24, 1920 Bonar Law had stated in the House of Commons that the British Government would give the frontier states of Soviet Russia "every possible support"; Curzon to Wardrop, April 27, 1920, Ibid., p. 599

[31] Luke to Curzon, April 29, 1920. Ibid., p. 603.

[32] Curzon to Derby/Buchanan, May 6, 1920. Ibid., p. 603.

[33] Derby to Curzon, May 11, 1920. Ibid., p. 607.

[34] Buchanan to Curzon, May 17, 1920. Ibid., p. 612.

[35] Curzon to Derby, May 10 , 1920. Ibid., p. 606.

States with another appeal for military aid, this time specifically for Batum.[36] But even before the expected negative reply could be received, the necessity of reinforcing the military needs of Constantinople effected the complete evacuation of all British troops from Batum. Batum was turned over to Georgia without any proviso about the establishment of a British naval base in that port. The only conditions were that Georgia grant both Armenia and Azerbaijan free access to the port across its territory. On July 7, 1920 General Cooke-Collis handed Batum over to General Kvinitadze, the commander of the Georgian troops.[37] There were now no British or Allied forces left in Transcaucasia.

At the end of September the Turkish nationalists, in conjunction with the Bolsheviks, suddenly and without a declaration of war attacked Armenia. The Turks captured first Kars and Ardahan, then Alexandropol in a wholly one-sided contest. Britain attempted to help the Armenians in a material way, Curzon informing Colonel Stokes, who had officially taken over from Luke on July 14, that "everything possible is being done to arrange [the] dispatch of military supplies."[38] But ultimately on November 7 the Armenian Government in Erivan, now completely cut off from contact with every

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[36] Hardinge to Geddes, July 7, 1920. Ibid., p. 631.

[37] Kazemzadeh, op.cit., p. 202.

[38] Curzon to Stokes, October 29, 1920. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XII, p. 643.

one of its friends, was compelled to sign an armistice with the Turkish Government in Angora. At the same time Soviet Russia dispatched to the harassed Republic an ultimatum demanding free passage for Soviet and Kemalist troops through Armenian territory; Armenia's renunciation of the Treaty of Sèvres; and its cessation of all relations with the Allied Powers.[39] The Armenian Government refused to comply with these demands and called upon the Allies for help. But circumstances made it impossible for any effective assistance to be given. By this time France and Italy were obviously not prepared to commit any troops against the Kemalists. The British, on the other hand, were sympathetic but could not afford to send any military assistance. Britain already had its hands full in defending the Straits while domestic affairs continued to demand ever-greater attention from the Government.

It was almost pathetic that at this critical time President Wilson should present his decision as to the final boundaries of the new Armenian state. It was to receive much more Turkish territory than the European Allies had really expected. This territory included the four Vilayets of Erzerum, Bitlis, Van, and Trebizond, thereby giving Armenia direct access to the Black Sea.[40] But this was all for nought, for on December 2, 1920 the Turks and the Russians signed

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[39] Sir Harry Luke, Cities and Men: An Autobiography, vol. II (1914-1924), London, 1953, p. 199.

[40] Westermann, op.cit., p. 203.

the Treaty of Alexandropol. This was the first international agreement to be contracted by the Angora Government; it restored to Turkey its traditional eastern frontier along the banks of the Aras and the Arpa Chai, including the fortresses of Kars and Ardahan, Alexandropol reverting to Russian control.[41] With the fall of Armenia the fate of Georgia was inevitably sealed. Tiflis fell to the Bolsheviks on February 24, 1921. There was a race for Batum between Moscow and Angora which ended for a time in a joint Russo-Turkish Condominium. Eventually the port fell solely under Bolshevik control, much to the chagrin of the Kemalists who still based their claims to Batum on the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.

These upsetting events in eastern Anatolia opened the eyes of many in British governmental circles. Thereafter, any problem concerning the Turkish nationalists could not be lightly pushed aside. Rumbold soberly remarked from Constantinople that "it is useless to regard Mustapha Kemal any longer as a brigand chief."[42] Lord Curzon, in a letter to Aneurin Williams, the Chairman of the Armenian Refugees' Fund, outlined very succinctly the predicament in attempting to establish an Armenian national home:

> if Armenia is in the plight that she now is it has been in no sense due either to action or inaction on our part but exclusively to circumstances, geographical, political or

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[41] Treaty of Alexandropol, December 2, 1920. Kazemzadeh, op.cit., p. 289.

[42] Rumbold to Curzon, January 20, 1921. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 21.

> strategical, for which the responsibility is not ours, which we have done our best to counteract, but which it is impossible to overcome without the use of forces which we do not possess, without a campaign which not ten men in the House of Commons would support by their votes, and without an expenditure of money which, in view of our own needs, neither the treasury nor the House of Commons would be found to sanction.

Curzon concluded with a penetrating statement which perhaps should have been emphasized back in March 1920:

> You cannot expect this country, (or indeed any other) arbitrarily to select a portion of Turkey, to eject all other races, to concentrate within a ring of British bayonets a large number of destitute refugees and so to organise an Armenian national existence at immense expense to the British taxpayer. The idea is chimerical.[43]

This very revealing letter was composed by Curzon in December 1921, a full year after the fact. The Armenian question was thus summed up from a much broader perspective. In a sense Curzon was washing his hands of Armenia, realizing that its plight was hopeless. By that time even much of the British Government's mere sympathy for Armenian national aspirations had died. The lack of both financial capital and military force had induced the Foreign Secretary to accept this fait accompli in Armenia and to recognize Mustafa Kemal as a serious military rival with whom to contend.

The Turkish situation as a whole was now particularly

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[43] Curzon to Williams, December 6, 1921. Ibid., pp. 515-6..

gloomy for Great Britain. The growing strength of the Kemalist Movement had succeeded in severely disrupting British policy. In eastern Anatolia, the Armenians' desires for a national home had been defeated and Britain's plans for Turkey now faced a joint Turko-Bolshevik threat. In western Anatolia, the Turkish nationalists also made their presence felt by seriously compromising the Greek position. By the beginning of 1921 the Greek forces had become bogged down, the Kemalists being successful in effecting a stalemate. As a result, Britain lost a most valuable means of enforcing its Turkish policy. Furthermore, Kemal was quite successful in disrupting inter-Allied relations. British policy became increasingly more isolated in the face of French and Italian demands for the revision of the Treaty of Sèvres . Moreover, since the imposition of the Treaty, the Turkish Government in Constantinople had virtually been won over to the nationalist cause in Angora. It is little wonder then that British policy ultimately agreed to make concessions to the Turks and even invited a Kemalist Delegation to an inter-Allied conference in London in March 1921. The idea to keep the Treaty of Sevres as it stood was now also as chimerical as Armenian national existence. The fall of Armenia, Lazistan, and Batum, and the return of Mustafa Kemal as a great war leader; the fall of Venizelos and the return of Constantine; the continuing Anglo-Greek solidarity and the Franco-Italian move towards the Turks; the emerging Soviet threat and the now proven weakness of British military power in the Turkish interior: these all combined to force Britain to accede to a revision of the Treaty of Sèvres.

CHAPTER V

INTER-ALLIED CONFLICT: SHIFTING SYMPATHIES

On January 20, 1921 the British Cabinet met to discuss the now critical situation in Turkey. There was general agreement that Great Britain could no longer resist some revision of the peace terms, and it was decided to approve Curzon's proposal that the Allies should invite both the Turks and the Greeks to an international conference to discuss the problem. Lloyd George emphasized, however, that if concessions were to be made, they must be at the expense of the Allies as a whole, and not merely of Greece.[1]

On January 24 Lloyd George and Curzon visited Paris to discuss the position with the new French Prime Minister, Aristide Briand. At this so-called Second Conference of Paris they had no difficulty in securing his agreement to a future international conference in London, but when Curzon suggested that the Allies should

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[1] Cabinet Meeting, January 20, 1921. Montgomery, op.cit., p. 270.

recognize Constantine upon agreed conditions,[2] Briand replied that the Greek forces (which had suffered a minor reverse at Inonu on January 10) were unreliable and that the Allies should exploit Constantine's difficult position and put pressure on Greece: "Was it really safe to base any policy which depended to a substantial extent on the Greek army as a fighting force?"[3] Count Sforza, the Italian Foreign Secretary and representative at this Paris Conference, argued that a permanent settlement of the Turkish Question could only be attained by bringing the Turkish nationalists into the arrangement.[4] To these French and Italian pronouncements Lloyd George retorted that he did not want to exchange the friendship of the Greeks, those "great and democratic people," for that of the Turks. Again reviewing the details of the past war he asked: "Of what use to the Allies was the friendship of the Turks?" He argued that the overthrow of Turkey was a matter of particular concern to the British Empire. But when France and Italy continued to express anti-Greek and pro-Turkish sentiments, the British Prime Minister exclaimed in exasperation: "What a wretched conclusion to a great story!"[5] In any event it was decided to convene a conference in London in February to discuss the settlement of the Turkish Question. Not only the Greeks but both the Sultan's government and the Kemalists were to be invited.

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[2] Curzon, Second Paris Conference, January 25, 1921. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XV, p. 32.

[3] Briand, Second Paris Conference, January 25, 1921. Ibid., p. 33.

[4] Sforza, Second Paris Conference, January 25, 1921. Ibid., p. 30.

[5] Lloyd George, Second Paris Conference, January 25, 1921. Ibid., pp. 34-5.

Meanwhile, Venizelos continued to furnish a constant stream of advice. He disliked the idea of an international conference and urged Great Britain to collaborate with Constantine rather than abandon the Greek cause.[6] He still hoped that it might be possible to get rid of his enemy thus enabling the Allies to return to their original policy. To this end he suggested that Great Britain should offer the Greek Government a financial inducement to persuade Constantine to abdicate.[7] But Lloyd George was by now convinced that the best course for the Allies was not to rely upon the Constantinist regime standing firm. He told Curzon that he doubted whether the Allies could force Greece to leave Smyrna. If Constantine put up a good fight and if the Allies offered some concessions on their part there was a good chance that the Kemalists could be bought off and persuaded to turn their ambitions eastwards.[8]

On February 17 the Foreign Office drew up a memorandum which proposed to make Smyrna an autonomous province under Turkish sovereignty. The administration of the Province of Smyrna would be carried out by a Greek High Commissioner, whose appointment would be subjected to the approval of the Sultan. The High Commissioner would be assisted by an elective council on which the Turks would be proprotionally represented. The Province would also pay tribute to Turkey in the shape of a contribution to the Ottoman Public Debt.[9]

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[6] Kerr to Venizelos, January 26, 1921. Lloyd George Papers, F/90/1/36.

[7] Kerr to Lloyd George, February 4, 1921. Ibid., F/90/1/37.

[8] Lloyd George to Curzon, February 16, 1921. Ibid., F/13/2/32.

[9] Foreign Office Memorandum, February 17, 1921. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 63.

Thus, in effect, it was an attempt to create a twentieth-century Eastern Rumelia. The following day Lloyd George met with Kalogeropolous, who had succeeded Rhallys as Prime Minister of Greece on February 7, 1921, and who was now heading the Greek Delegation in London. Kalogeropolous, questioned as to the ability of Greece to defend its new frontiers but assured of Great Britain's friendship, answered confidently that the Greek Army was in a position to scatter the Kemalist forces if the Allies gave the word. When Lloyd George explained that Curzon had proposed making Smyrna an autonomous Province under Turkish sovereignty, Kalogeropolous stressed that Greece could never agree to return the Province to the Turks. This answer pleased Lloyd George, who declared that he relied upon the spirit of the Greeks. Nevertheless, they should be prepared to compromise a little for it was important that if the impending London Conference broke down, the onus of responsibility should fall upon the Turks.[10]

Having assured himself of the Greeks' determination to maintain the Sèvres policy, Lloyd George set out to shelve the Foreign Office's autonomy proposal. At the opening of the Third Conference of London on February 21, he informed the French that the Greeks were determined to keep Smyrna and that they could not be driven out by force of arms. The Allies were really being bluffed

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[10] Lloyd George-Kalogeropolous Conversations, London, February 18, 1921. Ibid., First Series, vol. XV, pp. 125-6.

by Kemal, whose forces the Greeks could defeat with ease. He refused to listen to Briand's arguments that the Greeks were in desperate need of financial aid.[11] The French warned the Conference of the growing strength of the Turkish nationalist troops. General Gouraud, the French commander in Syria and Cilicia, believed the Turks to be better equipped in the east than in the west. Thus if the Greeks advanced farther, they would find themselves confronted by an enemy far more dangerous than the one with whom they had dealt in the Smyrna hinterland. He reminded the Conference of Marshal Foch's recommendation that twenty-seven divisions were necessary to conquer Asia Minor. General Gouraud also emphasized that, since the fall of Armenia, the Turkish nationalists were no longer short of war material, now being directly supplied overland by the Bolsheviks.[12] Kalogeropolous, however, had received instructions from his Government in Athens to take an uncompromising stand. He thus informed the Conference that Greece would not abate its claims in either Thrace or Asia Minor. Nor would he modify this position under pressure. In reply to the French argument that the Turkish opposition was formidable, he claimed that the Kemalist Army constituted "a rabble worthy of little or no consideration," and asserted that Greece was best fitted to judge the military situation, a contention which Lloyd George endorsed.[13] That same evening Lord Curzon, somewhat

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[11] Lloyd George, Third London Conference, February 21, 1921. Ibid., pp. 127-30.

[12] Gouraud, Third London Conference, February 21, 1921. Ibid., pp. 155-6.

[13] Kalogeropolous, Third London Conference, February 21, 1921. Ibid., pp. 149-53. Lloyd George argued that "surrender to Mustapha Kemal would not bring peace, but fresh trouble in the East." Lloyd George, Cabinet Meeting, February 18, 1921. Lowe and Dockrill, op.cit., vol. II, p. 409.

upset at the day's events, declared to his wife that "The Prime minister is as convinced a Venizelist and phil-Hellene as ever, and uses all the advantage of his position as chairman in that direction."[14] Yet Curzon was hardly pro-Turk himself. Though originally opposed to any Greek presence whatever in Asia Minor, the Foreign Secretary still supported an effective Greek administration in Smyrna and the Vilayet of Aidin. Whether this region be under Greek or Turkish nominal sovereignty, the issue apparently at hand, was not really such a significant question.

On February 24 the Turks were given an opportunity to put forward their arguments. The representatives of the Constantinople Government were led by Grand Vizier Ahmed Tewfik Pasha, while those of the Angora Government were headed by Foreign Secretary Bekir Sami Bey. The presidency of the combined Turkish Delegation was entrusted to the latter, who presented its demands to the Conference in the form of a single memorandum. The Turks desired the Greek evacuation of all of Eastern Thrace and its restitution to Turkey; their southern boundary in the east to be delimited along national lines; and their eastern boundary to follow the old Turko-Persian frontier line, and subsequently the line to be fixed by a treaty to come between Turkey and Soviet Armenia on the basis of the principle of nationality. The memorandum declared that "Turkey has the intention of maintaining her full and entire sovereignty over the territories thus delimited without any reservation or restrictions." Furthermore, Smyrna and

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[14] Curzon to Lady Curzon, February 21, 1921. Ronaldshay, op.cit., vol. III, pp. 277-8.

all Greek-held territories in Asia Minor were to be"evacuated and maintained under the full and complete sovereignty of Turkey." The Turks also demanded the abolition of the Capitulations and complete financial and economic independence. They did agree, however, to the protection of racial, religious, and linguistic minorities and to the limitation of their military and naval forces to assure "internal order in Turkey and the security of her coasts and frontiers." More important, they accepted not only equal freedom of navigation of the Straits for the flags of all nations, but also the demilitarization of the Straits and the institution of an international commission of supervision, provided that Turkey was represented with the deliberative vote.[15] Thus the Turks were prepared to concede Britain's basic requirements concerning the future security of Constantinople and the Straits. By this time, however, British policy had become much too involved with the Greek struggle in Asia Minor and the implementation of an unnecessarily harsh Treaty of Sèvres. This great concern with issues of lesser importance served only to make a successful solution of the Straits question much more difficult to achieve.

Both the Turks and the Greeks then proceeded to offer conflicting statistics as to the respective populations of Smyrna and Thrace. Both refused to recognize the validity of each other's figures. Thereupon the French and the Italians proposed that the Allies should attempt to resolve the deadlock by appointing a com-

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[15] Turkish Memorandum, Third London Conference, February 24, 1921. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XV, pp. 180-1.

mission of enquiry to investigate the ethnographic figures for both Smyrna and Thrace.[16] This proposal Lloyd George felt unable to reject, but he insisted that a corollary to the offer must be the Turks' unconditional acceptance of the remainder of the Peace Treaty. As a result of this debate it was proposed, in the draft submitted by Lord Curzon, to refer the question of the populations of Smyrna and Eastern Thrace to an international commission appointed by the Powers. Turkey and Greece would be compelled to accept the results of such an arbitration and to agree that "the remaining clauses of the Treaty of Sèvres shall remain unaltered, and shall be loyally accepted both by Turkey and Greece." Supplementary conditions attached to this proposal included an immediate cessation of hostilities; an exchange of prisoners on conditions to be examined and laid down; and guarantees for the security of minority populations in the interval.[17]

The Turks replied first with Bekir Sami speaking this time on behalf of the Angora Government only. The Angora Delegation agreed to accept the results of an international commission provided that an international administration be substituted for Greek administration in Smyrna and Eastern Thrace "in order to ensure the unhampered action of the commission." The nationalists, however, would not accept the remainder of the Treaty unaltered. They agreed to guarantees for minorities and to an immediate cessation of hos-

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[16]Third London Conference, February 24, 1921. Ibid., pp. 189-93.

[17]Curzon Draft, Third London Conference, February 24, 1921. Ibid., p. 193.

tilities, as well as to an exchange of prisoners of war and political prisoners between all interested Powers. In return, Greece should not send any fresh troops into these districts, and not move in any direction the forces which were already there.[18]

It was quite obvious that the idea of a commission of enquiry would be distasteful to the Greeks. Thus on February 25 Lloyd George sent Sir Maurice Hankey, one of the British secretaries at the Conference, to advise the Greeks not to incur the odium of rejecting the Allied proposal out of hand, but to consult the Greek constituent assembly in Athens.[19] This the Greek Delegation did, but Kalogeropolous let it be known that he regarded the proposals as unjust: "The Greek Government was now asked to nullify a title-deed which bore the signatures of the Great Powers, whilst, on the other hand, the other sections of the treaty were to be duly respected."[20] He feared that the enquiry would be virtually pre-determined by the biassed attitude of the French and the Italians; he could not contemplate the loss of both territories.[21] Whereas Rumbold reported from Constantinople the "gratification" of the Turks towards the proposed commission,[22] Lord Granville, the British Ambassador in Athens, emphasized the "indignation" of the Greeks.

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[18] Angora Reply, Third London Conference, February 24, 1921. Ibid., pp. 202-3.

[19] Hankey to Lloyd George, February 26, 1921. Lloyd George Papers, F/25/1/11.

[20] Kalogeropolous, Third London Conference, February 25, 1921. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XV, p. 200.

[21] Granville to Curzon, March 1, 1921. F.O. 371/6467/3101.

[22] Rumbold to Curzon, February 27, 1921. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 66.

He argued that the appointment of a commission "seems to admit that previous decisions were taken carelessly and that [the] Powers allowed themselves to be hoodwinked by Monsieur Venizelos."[23]

On March 4 Kalogeropolous informed Lloyd George that Greece rejected the Allied proposals. He offered Great Britain political guarantees in return for credits for Greece's impending military operations, but this offer Lloyd George ignored. The British Prime Minister cautioned the Greeks that the French were adopting an increasingly pro-Turkish line, and that the Turks had agreed to accept an enquiry. In these circumstances Greece should reconsider the possibility of offering Mustafa Kemal a fair compromise. It should be prepared to accept the administrative control of a reduced Smyrna zone, under Turkish sovereignty, and should make the Turks a financial offer, in the form of a tribute payment, to induce them to accept such an arrangement.[24] Thus Lloyd George was returning to the original argument of the Foreign Office put forward on February 17. The Turks, however, would accept no compromises concerning Smyrna. Bekir Sami stressed Turkey's firm intention to regenerate itself, and that Smyrna was absolutely essential to this regeneration. Greece could exist without Smyrna; Turkey could not. Where Greece was in danger of being humiliated, Turkey

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[23]Granville to Curzon, February 28, 1919. Ibid., p. 67.

[24]Lloyd George-Kalogeropolous Conversations, London, March 4, 1921. Ibid., First Series, vol. XV, pp. 265-9.

stood on the brink of destruction.[25]

Although he had counselled the Greeks to compromise, Lloyd George was convinced that feeling was now so high on both sides that the issue would probably be settled by force of arms.[26] He therefore determined to ensure that in the event of the Conference failing the Greeks should be at no disadvantage. On March 4, when Briand and Sforza proposed that the Allies should place upon Greece the onus for rejecting the enquiry, Lloyd George retorted that the Turks, who had refused to accept the rest of the Treaty unconditionally, were equally intransigent. The Greeks might yet be forced to yield on the Smyrna issue. In any event, if the Conference broke down, the Allies should observe strict neutrality. Moreover, if the Greeks found their positions threatened, they should be in no doubt as to their right to retaliate. The Allied Powers should therefore inform the Greeks that they were at liberty to take whatever action they deemed necessary lest they should subsequently blame a disaster upon the Allies.[27] To this Briand agreed, and after this meeting, Lloyd George sent Hankey to inform Kalogeropolous, who thereupon notified Athens that the British Prime Minister had no objection to the Greeks undertaking operations against Kemal in the event that

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[25] Lloyd George-Bekir Sami Conversations, London, March 4, 1921. Ibid., pp. 269-78.

[26] Lloyd George to Churchill, March 16, 1921. Lloyd George Papers, F/9/3.

[27] Lloyd George, Third London Conference, March 4, 1921. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XV, pp. 280-3.

their advisers considered it necessary for the security of their army.[28]

Nevertheless, Lloyd George now took the lead in initiating a fresh attempt to reach a peaceful settlement. The Allies should offer to Greece some modification of Curzon's original "autonomy proposal", and to the Turks further revision of the main clauses of the Treaty. On March 10, together with Curzon, he offered this proposal to Prime Minister Kalogeropolous and to War Minister Gounaris, the so-called "strong man" of the Greek Government. There would be no question of Greece having to leave the whole of the Smyrna zone; it would retain full control wherever a Greek majority existed. Gounaris, however, insisted that Greece must complete its mission of implementing the Treaty of Sèvres by military force. Kalogeropolous then asked Lloyd George to confirm Hankey's message. This he did, emphasizing that, if the Greeks considered an attack vital, the Conference could no longer take the responsibility for restraining them.[29] Though his sympathies lay with the Greeks the British Prime Minister was most concerned with absolving the Allies, especially Britain, of any responsibility. He now realized that Britain was in no position, politically or militarily, to challenge or influence effectively either the Turks or the Greeks. Lloyd George and Curzon, however, did

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[28] A.P. Frangulis, La Grèce et la crise mondiale, vol. II, Paris, 1926, p. 207.

[29] Third London Conference, March 10, 1921. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XV, pp. 366-70.

have their opportunity to establish at the Straits a regime most favourable to British interests. Unfortunately, this was again sacrificed for the sake of issues of secondary significance.

The weakness of the Allies was further illustrated in the discussions concerning Armenia and Kurdistan. These talks were short and to the point, and reflected the dominant position which Turkey now held in these two areas. Bekir Sami announced that the Angora Government was quite prepared to recognize an independent Armenia capable of existing. However, all territorial claims would have to be based on the doctrine of nationality, and in this connection he would concede only Alexandropol, which now lay under Soviet control, as having an Armenian majority. He flatly refused to give up Erzerum, Kars, and Ardahan. As for Kurdistan, Bekir Sami claimed that the Kurds desired to live together with the Turks like brothers, as they had previously lived for centuries; " there was no greater difference between the Kurds and the Turks than between an Englishman and a Scotchman." Barely a whimper was heard from Lord Curzon, who was chairing this particular meeting.[30] British policy had already given up on the rocky road in eastern Anatolia.

The only significant achievements of the meetings at St. James's Palace were the Franco-Turkish and Italo-Turkish Agreements providing for French and Italian evacuation of Cilicia

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[30]Bekir Sami, Third London Conference, February 26, 1921. Ibid., pp. 213-6.

and Adalia respectively. As early as November 22, 1920 Rumbold had reported from Constantinople that the "whole Italian atmosphere has been pro-Kemalist and there is no doubt that Italian agents have had dealings with [the] Nationalists." He cited the visit to Angora in June of Lieutenant-Colonel Fago who commenced discussions on aspects relating to the supply of war material to the Turkish nationalists; the export of grain and raw materials from Anatolia to Italy; and those economic concessions desired by Italian commercial interests. The "whole attitude of [the] Nationalists towards Italy makes it morally certain that they regard her as being on a special footing and pursuing [a] policy of good relationship as opposed to that adopted by [the] other Allies." Adalia was the only occupied area without a corresponding nationalist "Battle spite." Rumbold outlined further that Italian ships in Black Sea ports enjoyed immunity from interference by the nationalists, whereas "ours are boycotted and refused entry." On the Italian side, he cited the long continued presence in Rome of two Kemalist envoys: Ghalib Kemali Bey and Lieutenant-Colonel Edib Bey.[31] On February 5, 1921 de Martino, the new Italian Ambassador in London, reported to Sir Eyre Crowe that Count Sforza proposed to send another Italian officer to Mustafa Kemal at Angora, there to act as an unofficial agent and mouthpiece of the Italian Government.[32]

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[31] Rumbold to Curzon, November 22, 1920. Ibid., First Series, vol. XIII, p. 182.

[32] Crowe-de Martino Conversations, London, February 5, 1921. Ibid., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 43.

At the same time the French also got into the act. As early as December 12, 1920 Lord Hardinge, who had succeeded Derby as British Ambassador in Paris, warned the Foreign Office that France's overextended commitments in Syria and Cilicia were making an agreement with Mustafa Kemal essential to French foreign policy.[33] A month later Crowe, who had replaced Hardinge as Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, reported receiving information from the French Chargé d'Affaires in London, de Fleuriau, that France could no longer afford to maintain a foothold in Cilicia.[34] This was revealed to the London Conference on March 10, 1921 when Briand declared that it would be "impossible" for French troops to remain in Cilicia.[35]

Shortly thereafter, on March 12 and 13, Bekir Sami concluded in London, on behalf of the Angora Government, separate formal Agreements with Briand and Sforza respectively. Essentially these provided for the withdrawal of French and Italian troops from Cilicia and Adalia. Moreover, Italy promised to support Turkey's demands for the restoration of Thrace and Smyrna, and France agreed to a Turko-Syrian frontier south of that provided by the Treaty of Sèvres. In return the French and the Italians were granted

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[33] Hardinge to Curzon, December 12, 1920. Ibid., First Series, vol. XIII, p. 202.

[34] Crowe-de Fleuriau Conversations, London, January 7, 1921. Ibid., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 6.

[35] Briand, Third London Conference, March 10, 1921. Ibid., First Series, vol. XV, p. 389.

economic concessions in southeastern and southwestern Turkey respectively.[36] These in effect paralleled the zones of the Tripartite Agreement; France and Italy had thus deserted the British-backed Greeks for the Turks.

As expected the Foreign Office was infuriated by these separate pacts. It was particularly upset over their violation of some of the clauses of the Treaty of Sèvres. On the Italo-Turkish Agreement Curzon lamented: "it is to me a matter of sincere regret that ... one of the allies should pursue independent negotiations without giving their full confidence to their partners in the alliance."[37] He believed this Italian action to be "an indefensible breach of faith with an ally."[38] As for the Franco-Turkish Agreement Curzon, after receiving no satisfactory explanation from the French Government, declared that "the answer of the Quai d'Orsay leaves me no choice but to protest against the conclusion of a secret pact by one of the allies with one of their common enemies."[39]

Unfortunately for Bekir Sami, however, th[illegible]s looked different to him than to Kemal and many other Turkish nationalists. On his return to Angora he was attacked by Kemal and the Grand National Assembly for having given up too much to the two Western Powers. His attitude towards Russia was also questioned; it was important for the Turks not to alienate this source of help. A strong group

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[36] Franco-Turkish Agreement, March 12, 1921; Italo-Turkish Agreement, March 13, 1921. Harry J. Psomiades, The Eastern Question: The Last Phase; A Study in Greek-Turkish Diplomacy, Salonica, 1968, p. 34.

[37] Curzon to Buchanan, March 29, 1921. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVII, pp.96-7.

[38] Curzon to Buchanan, April 15, 1921. Ibid., p. 126.

[39] Curzon to Hardinge, March 29, 1921. Ibid., pp. 97-8.

in the Assembly professed themselves "Easterners," placing more hope in a Russian orientation than in negotiation with the West. Kemal insisted that Bekir Sami resign as Foreign Secretary, saying that he had exceeded his instructions. The Assembly then rejected the French Agreement and did not even consider the one with Italy.[40] Despite his forced resignation, however, Bekir Sami's work was not lost. In June the Italian Government, primarily for economic reasons, began to evacuate its forces from Asia Minor without compensation of any kind. Being weaker in natural resources and industrial development, Italy had felt the burden of the war more acutely than Britain or France. Its domestic position was now extremely difficult. In 1921 the country witnessed much economic distress amid periodic scares of revolution from both the Left and the Right. The French, meanwhile, exhibited eagerness for new conversations with the Turks. They viewed with mistrust Anglo-Greek intentions in the Near East and, in light of their costly defeat in Cilicia, were resigned to the fact that Mustafa Kemal was now the real power in Turkey.

Any semblance of unity among the Allied Powers had by this time been completely shattered. Anglo-French and Anglo-Italian relations hereafter deteriorated drastically. As a result, minor disagreements were easily blown up into major sources of conflict and

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[40] Roderic H. Davison, "Turkish Diplomacy from Mudros to Lausanne", The Diplomats 1919-1939 (Gordon A. Craig and Felix Gilbert, eds.), Princeton, 1953, p. 189.

friction. The question of the military command at Constantinople was a prime example. Anglo-French mistrust over this problem peaked in the spring of 1921, but the seeds of discontent had been sown a year earlier when both Admiral de Robeck and General Milne had cause to complain of the high-handed actions and attitude of General Franchet d'Espérey, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Armies in Constantinople. Even Paul Cambon, the French Ambassador in London, confessed to Lord Curzon that General d'Espérey "had shown a complete lack of tact and judgment."[41] Curzon then addressed a letter to the French Ambassador proposing that d'Espérey retain control of the Allied forces in Turkey-in-Europe exclusive of Constantinople, in accordance with his original role. He maintained the view that "General Milne must henceforward be regarded as solely responsible for the execution of the military measures in Constantinople necessary to give effect to the Allied policy."[42] Soon the French gave in and General d'Espérey was granted long and indefinite leave. "The French Government realised that it would be agreeable news to His Majesty's Government," remarked Sir George Graham, a British Embassy official in Paris, when he confided the decision to London.[43]

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[41] Curzon to Derby, March 17, 1920. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XIII, p. 41.

[42] Curzon to Cambon, March 18, 1920. Ibid., p. 58.

[43] Graham to Curzon, April 5, 1920. Ibid., p. 60.

The removal of one tempestuous general, "desperete Frankie" as he was known to the British, did not, however, solve the basic problem of co-operation. After the departure of d'Espérey, General Milne took over effective command of the Allied forces in Constantinople until he himself was replaced on November 8, 1920 by Lieutenant-General Sir Charles Harington. With the arrival of Harington the British Government hoped he would be officially accepted by the French as Supreme Commander in Constantinople. But this was no easy task . The French disliked the idea of such an extended period of British military command. Because of the Franco-Turkish Agreement and the corresponding deterioration of Anglo-French relations in the spring of 1921, this question quickly developed into a highly complex and irritating affair. By April Curzon was still plugging for Harington while the French kept alluding to the fact that all the major commissions in Turkey as established by the Treaty of Sèvres were headed by Britons. But Curzon felt that this question was not as urgent at this particular time since the Treaty had not yet been ratified. The question of military command, however, was important now in view of the Greco-Turkish hostilities.[44] On April 22 Hardinge informed the British Government that Briand was "willing to agree that [the] military command be assumed by General Harington without delay." Britain, however, must reply favourably regarding the French request to redress the existing imbalance in the leadership of the major Turkish com-

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[44]Curzon to Hardinge, April 16, 1921. Ibid., First Series, vol. XVII, pp. 130-1.

missions.[45] To this Curzon declared, that the British Government entertained "the strongest objections."[46]

Eventually the French gave in, but only grudgingly. General Harington was finally accepted as Supreme Allied Commander by the Quai d'Orsay, but it took a long while before the French in Constantinople would recognize him as such. On July 2 Frank Rattigan, acting in the absence of Rumbold, reported that "Neither the French nor the Italian High Commissioner have [sic] acknowledged General Harington's notification of his having assumed united command and I had to press [the] former hard before he would acknowledge that he had been informed by his Government of [this] decision."[47] Even General Charpy, the present commander of the French troops in Constantinople, had not received any instructions from the French War Office as to the official unity of command under General Harington.[48] Although Harington's status was finally settled in principle, the question of his actual powers was still a matter for disagreement. The French and Italian High Commissioners claimed he was directly responsible to the three Allied High Commissions in Constantinople. Harington, however, argued that he was directly responsible only to the Allied Governments.[49] The British Government supported this latter contention and the argument continued throughout the summer.

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[45] Hardinge to Curzon, April 22, 1921. Ibid., p. 156.
[46] Curzon to Hardinge, April 28, 1921. Ibid., p. 157.
[47] Rattigan to Curzon, July 2, 1921. Ibid., p. 295.
[48] Rattigan to Curzon, July 14, 1921. Ibid., p. 317.
[49] Rattigan to Curzon, July 4, 1921. Ibid., p. 295.

It was never actually resolved. But Harington continued to act as he saw fit and there was little that the French or the Italians could do about it.

At the same time Anglo-Italian relations, severely strained after the Third Conference of London, suffered heavily as a result of the Palitana Incident - a somewhat paltry event that was magnetized out of all proportion. In May 1921 a British commercial vessel, the S.S. Palitana, was at dockside in the port of Adalia, technically within the Italian sphere of influence, where it was boarded forcibly by some Turkish military police agents who were looking for thirteen Turkish prisoners. The British Government was particularly upset since it believed that the Italian Carabinieri, who were responsible for the maintenance of law and order in the area, should have intervened to prevent such an incident from occurring. The Foreign Office was so incensed that it was willing to resort to gunboat diplomacy. On May 24 Lord Curzon instructed Sir George Buchanan to inform the Italian Government that a British man-of-war was being prepared to be sent to Adalia.[50] Four days later Curzon launched a verbal attack on what he regarded to be Italian irresponsibility:

> The ground on which [the] Italian Government originally proceeded to the occupation of Adalia and on which we presume they justify its continuance is the maintenance of order. While glad to know that the Italian Government

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[50] Curzon to Buchanan, May 24, 1921. Ibid., p. 219.

> have asked for explanation and satisfaction from Angora, His Majesty's Government cannot absolve the Italian Government of all responsibility and feel that the local Italian authorities ought to have been in a position to avert this very unpleasant incident.[51]

As a result a formal protest was lodged.

Count Sforza, however, argued that the Italian Government could not be held responsible for the Palitana Incident any more than the British Government could be held responsible for the death of Italians killed in the recent troubles in Egypt.[52] To this argument Edmonds of the Foreign Office declared:

> We cannot admit the least analogy with the disturbances in Egypt. In Egypt the British and Egyptian authorities dealt efficiently with a big popular riot. At Adalia the Italian authorities made no effort whatever to restrain the Turkish authorities from acts of violence.[53]

But in his own argument Edmonds was not taking into account Buchanan's declaration of May 22 that "Italian authorities were not ... in a position to prevent the unexpected incident as they did not hear of it until after it had occurred."[54] Thus both the British and the Italians were only too willing to blow up this whole thing beyond the bounds of reason, thereby reflecting the now irreparable damage in Anglo-Italian relations. Eventually cooler heads prevailed and

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[51] Curzon to Buchanan, May 28, 1921. Ibid., p. 200.

[52] Buchanan to Curzon, May 30, 1921. Ibid., p. 206.

[53] Edmonds Minute, June 1, 1921, Buchanan to Curzon, May 30, 1921. Ibid.

[54] Buchanan to Curzon, May 22, 1921. Ibid., p. 188.

the British withdrew their threat to send a man-of-war to Adalia. But the fact that a minor act on the part of the Turkish nationalists could precipitate such a major crisis in inter-Allied relations clearly illustrated that Allied unity was now a hoax. As a result, the Turks were free to indulge in their time-honoured game of playing off one Power against the other.

The resumption of hostilities by Greece on March 23, 1921 was widely attributed in both France and Italy to direct British encouragement. But the British Government immediately took steps to establish its neutrality. It relinquished control over the Greek divisions at Ismid and informed Rizo-Rangabé, the Greek Chargé d'Affaires in London, that in agreement with the Allies an attitude of strict neutrality would be adopted.[55] Furthermore, Curzon, on the advice of his legal advisers, imposed an embargo upon arms exports including private sales. This, Lloyd George complained to Curzon, was contrary to the normal rules of neutrality and he argued that Greece should be entitled to normal belligerent rights to purchase in the open market. Curzon, however, was adamant and replied:

> I have always thought it very important not to take sides - we have on the whole successfully preserved neutrality. If we help Greece we will take their side and will lessen the chance of coming to terms with the Turks.[56]

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[55] Crowe-Rizo-Rangabé Conversations, London, April 22, 1921. F.O. 371/6510/4746.

[56] Curzon to Lloyd George, April 20, 1921. Lloyd George Papers, F/13/2/15.

This point appeared to have been well taken for on the following day Lloyd George declared in the House of Commons that "this country is in no way finally committed to either side ... we are not in the least helping the Greeks."[57] And throughout the summer he continued to maintain that "we shall be absolutely neutral ... there will be no distinction drawn between the belligerents."[58] But his personal sympathy for the Greeks was very strong and this was understood by both sides in the conflict. Despite the fact that Britain no longer supplied any arms, money, or assistance to Greece, and had no control over the decisions of the Greek King, his politicians, or his generals, the British profession of neutrality in the Greco-Turkish War carried no conviction whatever in Angora. The Turks were convinced that all Greek actions were somehow inspired by the machinations of Lloyd George.[59] Moreover, in their turn, the Greeks from the King downwards, were equally convinced that in an emergency the British, or at least their leader, would come to their aid. The Greeks, in the words of Churchill, still believed that "the great man is with us, and in his own way and in his own time and by his own wizardry he will bring us the vital aid we need."[60] The Greeks, of course, were deluded, but in fairness to them it must be said

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[57] Lloyd George, April 21, 1921. 140 H.C.Deb.5s. (April 4 - 22, 1921), col. 2057.

[58] Lloyd Goerge, August 15, 1921. 146 H.C.Deb.5s. (August 8 - 19, 1921), col. 938.

[59] Rattigan to Curzon, May 29, 1921. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 204.

[60] Churchill, op.cit., p. 417.

that Lloyd Goerge never could bring himself to disillusion them. This was to prove very frustrating for British policy in Turkey. It was also a dangerous situation for the Greeks, and was to prove equally dangerous for Lloyd George.

The Allied profession of neutrality helped set the stage for the future crisis at Chanak. In May 1921 neutral zones surrounding the Straits and the Sea of Marmora were publicly proclaimed by Great Britain, France, and Italy. As a result of the pre-occupation of the Greeks with their eastward offensive, the defence of Constantinople and the Straits against the likelihood of an attack by the Kemalists was left entirely up to the Allied forces themselves, still represented by a predominance of British troops. On June 30 Curzon declared that "if the Turks enter the neutral zone they will be guilty of a hostile act against the Allies who will be compelled to resist by every means in their power."[61] This, however, would be no easy task. The Turkish nationalist forces were much stronger and better organized in the summer of 1921 than they were a year earlier at Ismid. They now availed themselves of much closer connections with the Bolsheviks. The tendency towards co-operation between Moscow and Angora was becoming increasingly marked, the joint attack on the Armenians being only the most striking example. Ideologically the two movements had little in common, for the in-

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61 Curzon to Rattigan, June 30, 1921. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 286.

fluence of Marxism on the illiterate and devoutly Moslem peasantry of Anatolia was negligible. Hence, the communist propaganda that came along with the Russian aid was rejected. Kemal even formed his own "official" Communist party to deflate the small one that had germinated on Turkish soil. Nevertheless, the Turks and the Bolsheviks were united, for the time being, by a common fear of the Western Powers, and above all Great Britain, and by a common hostility of the Treaty of Sèvres. The Bolsheviks were deeply alarmed by its provision for free access to the Black Sea for warships of all nations, since this seemed to expose their southern coastline to naval attack. To offset this danger,semi-official diplomatic relations had been opened between Moscow and Angora in May 1920 and a Bolshevik representative was formally received at Angora in November. Finally, official diplomatic relations were established by the Treaty of Moscow of March 16, 1921. This provided for the drawing up by all those states with a Black Sea coastline of an international statute to regulate the régime of the Straits. This clause, if it could be put into practice, would exclude from the Straits and the Black Sea the Western influence which both signatories so much disliked.[62] This was a clear example of how British procrastination on the question of the Straits in favour of involvement in less important matters in the Turkish interior permitted and even encouraged strong opposition

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[62] Treaty of Moscow, March 16, 1921. S.D.F.P., vol. I (1917-1924), pp. 237-42.

to the attainment of the complete freedom and demilitarization of the Straits - the fundamental goal of British policy in post-war Turkey proper.

The Allies' task of defending Constantinople and the Straits would also prove extremely difficult because of the obvious hostility, which had grown considerably since the terms of the Treaty of Sèvres were made public, in the Turkish capital itself. The Allies were now up against an increasingly formidable "fifth column " as represented by the Sultan's Government in Constantinople. Sir Horace Rumbold reported its undoubted sympathy with the Kemalist Movement: "On the question of war with Greece they are in sentiment wholly at one with Angora."[63] Still, the British and Allied declarations of neutrality and conscious limitation of their authoritative control to Constantinople and the Straits was very revealing evidence of their declining strength. This confession of impotence was utterly incompatible with the assumption of omnipotence that prevaded the text of the Treaty of Sèvres.

The spring offensive of the Greeks met with stiff Turkish opposition. The reorganized Turkish regular forces proved much superior to the irregular units of 1920, while the Greek Army itself had deteriorated following a winter in Anatolia and political purges in the ranks of the officers after the royalist victory at the polls. The Northern Army failed to reach the strategic railway junction of Eskishehr and by April 4, 1921 Greek forces had withdrawn to their

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[63] Rumbold to Curzon, May 4, 1921. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 166.

positions before March 23. This was a severe setback for the Greek Government, which immediately wrote to Lloyd George expressing the hope that this "temporary and local reverse" would not shake his confidence or deprive Greece of his support.[64]

But Lloyd George's confidence was indeed shaken and when the British military told the Cabinet on May 31 that the situation was serious, he was prepared to listen. General Harington feared a Greek collapse with dire consequences to the Allied cause, and the Cabinet decided to appoint a special committee to consider the best course of action. This committee decided, in the light of advice tendered by Venizelos, to revive the London proposals with a view to imposing them impartially upon whichever belligerent refused to accept them.[65] It was agreed that France should be asked to co-operate, and Curzon took pains to ensure that Lloyd George's draft proposals should make clear to the French that there was no intention of giving unilateral assistance to Greece. It would receive aid only if it placed itself in the hands of the Powers, while the Turks for their part rejected the Allied proposals.[66] On June 19 Curzon was in Paris to offer these proposals to Briand, who though willing enough to support a fresh peace initiative refused to contemplate any proposal to coerce the Turks.[67] Thus the scheme was

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[64] Granville to Curzon, April 24, 1921. F.O. 371/511/5142.

[65] Cabinet Meeting, May 31, 1921. Montgomery, op.cit., p. 275.

[66] Curzon to Lloyd George, June 11, 1921. Lloyd George Papers, F/13/2/29.

[67] Briand, First Paris Conversations, June 19, 1921. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XV, pp. 594-6.

emasculated from the start, and Gounaris, now Prime Minister of Greece, had no incentive to accept the Allied terms which differed little from those offered to him in March.

On July 2 Greece opened a fresh offensive. Its forces had been reconditioned and were now more efficient than ever before. Deficiencies had been made good and the changes of leadership had on the whole proved beneficial. On July 20 the Greeks reoccupied Eskishehr and paused to regroup their forces. In Greece this success was acclaimed as a decisive victory. All Lloyd George's hopes in the Greeks revived and he complained bitterly to Sir Laming Worthington-Evans, who had replaced Churchill as Secretary of State for War in February 1921, of the War Office's ignorance of the impending hostilities and its failure to assess the quality of the Greek Army accurately.[68] Anxious that nothing should impede the Greeks' chances of success, Lloyd George raised the question of the arms embargo at the Third Conference of Paris on August 10. He complained that the restriction exceeded the legitimate rules of neutrality and discriminated unfairly against the Greeks since the Turks suffered from no such impediment in their acquisition of arms from the Bolsheviks. In the transformed situation the Greeks might well become the arbiters of peace, and the Allies should therefore do nothing to estrange them.[69] This

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[68] Lloyd George to Worthington-Evans, July 21, 1921. Lloyd George Papers, F/16/3/27.

[69] Lloyd George, Third Paris Conference, August 10, 1921. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XV, pp. 653-4.

argument was a striking example of the British attitude varying with the ebb and flow of the Greco-Turkish front. To the British Prime Minister's demands Briand retorted that the Greeks had had no difficulty in getting round the restrictions and obtaining supplies from France. Nevertheless, under pressure from Lloyd George, he agreed to a joint declaration which reaffirmed the principle of neutrality, but added a qualification that this would not prevent the purchase of arms through normal commercial transactions.[70]

In a speech to the House of Commons on August 16 Lloyd George defended the Greek presence in Smyrna, and made it clear that he considered "fighting it out" to be the best solution. Though he spoke of the Greeks learning their limits, he castigated the arrogance of the Turks, and he hinted that a Greek victory would lead to a revision of the Treaty of Sèvres in their favour.[71] But later that same month a resumed Greek offensive was checked by the Kemalist forces on the Sakharia River. A two-day struggle ensued during which the Greeks took the first line of the Turkish defences and approached to within thirty miles of Angora. But, despite high morale, they failed to turn the flank of the Turkish positions and in September, abandoning their campaign, they retraced their steps to Eskishehr. Their losses had been heavy and there was now every indication that the relative quality of the Turkish nationalist

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[70] Briand, Third Paris Conference, August 10, 1921. Ibid., pp. 654-5.

[71] Lloyd George, August 16, 1921. 146 H.C.Deb.5s. (August 8-19, 1921), col. 1234.

Army would improve. For the present, however, the military position was a stalemate.

But there was certainly no stalemate on the diplomatic front. Neither the French nor the Turks had let the failure of the Franco-Turkish Agreement of March 1921 deter them from actively seeking renewed conversations. The French, unlike the British, were not encumbered by philhellenism. They realized that if Kemal were to be crushed, it could not be with French forces, and hence that Britain and Greece would be the beneficiaries. So on June 9 Henri Franklin-Bouillon, a former Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the French Chamber of Deputies, arrived in Angora on an "unofficial" mission. Briand told Curzon that Franklin-Bouillon had gone there merely as a French journalist to report on the situation.[72] But Frank Rattigan warned from the British High Commission in Constantinople that there was a good chance of France making a separate peace with the Kemalists. He argued further that the French as well as the Italians had so far been instrumental in supplying the Kemalists with arms, equipment, and ammunition.[73] But throughout the summer the French repeatedly assured the British Government as to the insignificance of the Franklin-Bouillon mission. Briand claimed that Franklin-Bouillon was authorized "to negotiate

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[72]Briand, First Paris Conversations, June 19, 1921. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XV, p. 596.

[73]Rattigan to Curzon, July 14, 1921. Ibid., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 317.

on behalf of the French Government as to French prisoners, protection of minorities in Cilicia and other points involved in the evacuation of Cilicia by French troops."[74] Still, Britain continued to receive alarming reports from Constantinople. On September 20 Sir Horace Rumbold declared: "There is little doubt in my mind that M. Franklin-Bouillon's negotiations cover a wider ground than the exchange of prisoners."[75] The British feared that Franklin-Bouillon's status was sufficiently ambiguous to allow his Government to recognize any achievement and to disavow any failure.

These fears soon proved to be well-founded as a result of the Franco-Turkish Treaty of Angora concluded between Franklin-Bouillon and Yussuf Kemal Bey, the new Foreign Secretary in the Kemalist administration, on October 20, 1921. The agreement bore every sign of being a separate peace, and was therefore contrary to the still unratified Treaty of Sèvres. Franco-Turkish hostilities were to cease immediately while France agreed to evacuate Cilicia and to retrocede to Turkey a tract of territory in northern Syria amounting to 10,000 square miles, which had been entrusted to the French by the Conference of San Remo as part of the Syrian mandate. In a note annexed to the Treaty Yussuf Kemal indicated that France was to receive in return concession for the exploitation of iron, silver, chrome, and other minerals in the new Turkey and permission for French capitalists to acquire an interest in Turkish banks,

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[74] Cheetham to Curzon, October 5, 1921. Ibid., p. 418.

[75] Rumbold to Curzon, September 20, 1921. Ibid., p. 396.

ports, waterways, and railways. The French also agreed, though the British did not secure confirmation of this until January 1922, to leave behind large supplies of military equipment and arms, including airplanes, on their withdrawal from Cilicia.[76] Many thousands of Turkish troops were now free to move against the Greeks. Franco-Turkish relations were henceforth close, and Franklin-Bouillon continued to shuttle back and forth until the final Armistice of Mudania.

This agreement, which clearly aligned the French alongside the Turkish nationalists, Curzon regarded as blatantly disloyal. He was upset over what he regarded as official French recognition of the Angora Government as the legal Government of Turkey. He lamented that the French were leaving the Christian minorities in Cilicia unprotected and that the Tripartite Agreement had now been virtually destroyed since the French and the Turks were both conceding rights pertaining to all of Turkey, not merely to Cilicia. What really disturbed Curzon was the fact that Cilicia and the ceded territory in northern Syria had originally been taken from Turkey as a result of a post-Armistice occupation not by French troops, or even by Allied troops, but by British troops alone. Furthermore, this territory contained most of the Baghdad Railway, thus providing the Turks with virtually unhindered transportation eastwards to British Mesopotamia. "Supposing that we had made an arrangement of this sort, involving a serious possible risk to the French area

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[76] Treaty of Angora, October 20, 1921. Temperley, op.cit., vol. VI, pp. 606-8.

in Syria, would not the French Ambassador have come down in a great hurry to Downing Street, and would he not be addressing me in language of even greater surprise than that which I was now employing to him?" Lord Curzon was utterly amazed at this product of French diplomacy: "that a local arrangement of a relatively minor character for the evacuation of French troops, or the release of French prisoners, should have been expanded in this elastic fashion to include this vast motley of interests and concessions seemed to me one of the most unusual diplomatic achievements of which I had ever heard."[77]

On November 5, 1921 Lord Curzon complained to the new French Ambassador in London, Count Saint-Aulaire, that "it would also appear that the agreement involves formal recognition by France of the Grand National Assembly of Angora as the sovereign authority in Turkey, in which case a peace concluded with Angora would be contrary to the Franco-British Treaty of the 4th September , 1914, and to the London Pact of November 1915."[78] Four days later Curzon, still fuming, informed Hardinge in Paris that

> A French Mandate for the organisation and control of [the] Ottoman gendarmerie throughout Turkey would involve [the] repudiation of all the above-mentioned agreements between the Allied Govts. Any claim to such [a] mandate would constitute a flagrant breach of faith and H.M.G. could not admit either its award by the Angora Govt. or its acceptance by the French Govt.[79]

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[77] Curzon to Hardinge, November 3, 1921. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVII, pp. 462-5.

[78] These treaties had stipulated that no one ally should sign a separate peace with any one of the enemy countries; Curzon to Saint-Aulaire, November 5, 1921. Command 1570, "Correspondence between His Majesty's Government and the French Government respecting the Angora Agreement of 20th October 1921", Accounts and Papers, vol. XXIII (February 7 - August 4, 1922), p. 64.

[79] Curzon to Hardinge, November 9, 1921. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 472.

Before receiving any replies from the French, the Foreign Office was informed by the High Commission in Constantinople as to its views concerning the effects of the Treaty of Angora. Sir Horace Rumbold reported that "it has undermined the whole position of the Allies vis-à-vis the Nationalists," and in regard to the real necessity of presenting a united front towards the Turkish nationalists "I can only characterize French independent action in this matter as dishonourable, and having greatly increased our difficulties."[80] This viewpoint was very similar to that taken up by the majority of the British press. The unanimity of its condemnation of the Treaty of Angora appeared to be broken only by the Daily Herald, which branded British policy in the Near East since the Armistice of Mudros as "a monstrous folly," thereby compelling the French to conclude a separate peace with Turkey. Yet the Quai d'Orsay looked in vain for further approbation in the columns of British newspapers. The Morning Post, which could always be counted on to align itself energetically against Lloyd George's Near Eastern policy, regretted that the French had come out openly in support of the Kemalists. Little or no difference of attitude was revealed in the conservative or radical newspapers. The Daily Telegraph and the Pall Mall Gazette were as violent in their disapproval as The Manchester Guardian and the

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[80] Rumbold to Curzon, November 10, 1921. Ibid., p. 473.

Daily News, all of which carried bitter cricitisms of the Quai d'Orsay.[81] On November 7 The Times deplored the fact that the British and French Governments had not been able to come to an understanding over the problem of Cilicia and to work out a problem together, "designed to establish a general peace with Turkey."[82]

On November 17 de Montille, the new French Chargé d'Affaires in London, presented France's view of the situation in light of the British arguments. His reply was very diplomatic but evasive, lacking any real substance. De Montille claimed that the French Government had never contemplated that any engagement could be entered into on the subject of peace with Turkey, except in close agreement with its Allies "and particularly with the British Government." However, he argued that cirucmstances had now forced France to accept one of two alternatives:

> Either to maintain her effectives [sic] and to continue the war in Cilicia, or
> To negotiate with the de facto authority which was in command of the Turkish troops in this region.

It was claimed that French public opinion forced the Government to decide in favour of the latter. De Montille continually attempted to downgrade the significance of the Treaty stating that it was strictly an arrangement of local importance and did not really constitute a treaty of peace. He claimed the whole thing had been grossly misinterpreted by Lord Curzon.[83]

[81] Henry H. Cumming, Franco-British Rivalry in the Post-War Near East, London, 1938, pp. 155-6.

[82] The Times, November 7, 1921, p. 9.

[83] De Montille to Curzon, November 17, 1921. Command 1570, op.cit., pp.76-9.

Curzon, however, was still dissatisfied and argued that, since the French had forfeited to the Turkish nationalists the protection of minorities in Cilicia while receiving no guarantees for these people beyond a general declaration of the Kemalist Government, the Treaty of Angora violated the Tripartite Agreement. Curzon also emphasized his dislike of the return of a substantial section of the Baghdad Railway to Turkish control, seeing this as a potentially serious threat to British Mesopotamia.[84] Despite the presence of special French representatives in Cilicia to supervise the evacuation of French troops and the protection of minorities, de Montille did concede that "the protection of minorities in Cilicia will doubtless largely depend upon the fidelity with which the Kemalist Government keeps to its engagements." On the question of a possible Turkish threat to Mesopotamia the French Chargé d'Affaires assured the British Government that "the French Government is determined to forbid at all times, on the Syrian section of the Baghdad railway, any movement of troops capable of being directed against British mandated territory."[85]

There was really little that the British Government could do. France had presented Britain with a fait accompli that was a very heavy blow to British policy in Turkey. As a result, British policy continued to reduce the size of its perimeter, withdrawing

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[84] Curzon to de Montille, November 25, 1921. Ibid., pp. 85-6.

[85] De Montille to Curzon, December 6, 1921. Ibid., pp. 91-3.

from all sides in the direction of Constantinople and the Straits. From this time onwards Britain began to concentrate its attention on the safety and defence of this vital region, the real keynote of British policy in post-war Turkey proper. In this increasingly deteriorating situation Whitehall looked to the Quai d'Orsay for assurances against the Turkish nationalist forces in the event of the latter advancing on Constantinople: "His Majesty's Government presume that the conclusion of a local agreement regarding Syria and Cilicia in no way affects the French contingent of the inter-allied forces of occupation at Constantinople, but they would be grateful to receive a definite assurance on this point."[86] But throughout the critical year of 1922 no definite assurance was forthcoming. Frustrated with the "very loose ideas of honesty [of] those foreign statesmen"Lord Hardinge lamented: "I wish very much that we could chuck both the French and Italians and made our own terms with the Turks."[87] The British Ambassador in Paris should have included the Greeks as well. Going it alone would have been the best course for British policy as early as 1919.

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[86] Foreign Office Memorandum to Briand, December 20, 1921. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 531.

[87] Hardinge to Curzon, May 10, 1922. Lowe and Dockrill, op.cit., vol. II, p. 369.

CHAPTER VI

TURKISH INTRACTABILITY: BRITAIN LOSING CONTROL

By the end of 1921 the Turkish nationalists were once more in an intractable frame of mind. The results of the recent Greek fighting had given them renewed confidence. The conclusion of the French agreement had shown to them how little real union there was amongst the Allies. Sir Horace Rumbold reported from Constantinople that circumstances were now such that there was no chance whatever of the nationalists accepting a procedure which would entail their placing themselves in Allied hands with the object of securing a peace treaty. The utmost that could be expected from them was that they might agree to attend a conference at which the main lines of a treaty in substitution for the Treaty of Sèvres would be laid down. "I fear no course of action is very likely to bring about definite settlements with [the] Nationalists on terms acceptable to us so long as they remain in [their] present frame of mind."[1]

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[1] Rumbold to Curzon, November 25, 1921. Ibid., p. 494. General Harington reported that "if we now hold out a hand to Mustapha he would reject it with scorn." The War Office asked bluntly "Can we not usefully withdraw now and by so doing counteract the advantage gained by the French in their recent policy?" Harington to Worthington-Evans, May 25, 1921; War Office Memorandum, November 9, 1921. Lowe and Dockrill, op.cit., vol. II, pp. 408-9.

Through the winter months of 1921-2 Mustafa Kemal refused to budge an inch. It was becoming ever so clear that there was not the slightest hope that Angora would accept anything short of the National Pact. On January 15, 1922 Rumbold informed the Foreign Office that the Kemalists were out "not merely for recovering Smyrna and Thrace in complete sovereignty but they are against real safeguards for minorities, capitulations, and any form of control, financial or otherwise."[2] Later that same month he declared that the "Turks could not contemplate the Greeks having sovereignty over any portion of the shores of the Dardanelles or sea of Marmora." At the same time, however, the British High Commissioner reported that "They were ready to give Great Britain any guarantees for which she asked that [the] Straits should remain absolutely free and unfortified."[3] Unfortunately, Turkish pronouncements such as this latter statement continued to hold little or no weight with the Government in London which was always extremely cautious concerning the question of the Straits. The present high state of Turko-Bolshevik relations did not sit well with Lloyd George, whose mistrust of the Turks was increased considerably. From December 1921 onwards the British Government held one or two battalions in readiness to proceed at short notice as reinforcements for the region of Constantinople and the Straits.[4]

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[2] Rumbold to Curzon, January 15, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 574.

[3] Rumbold to Curzon, January 26, 1922. Ibid., p. 583.

[4] Plumer to Worthington-Evans, December 12, 1921. Lloyd George Papers, F/207/1.

As the Turkish nationalists became increasingly more intractable the Greeks were becoming much more amenable. The Turko-Greek stalemate on the battlefield at the end of 1921 was in reality a defeat for the Greeks. In the words of Winston Churchill, now Secretary of State for the Colonies, "the Greeks had involved themselves in a politico-strategic situation where anything short of decisive victory was defeat: and the Turks were in a position where anything short of overwhelming defeat was victory."[5] Henceforth, although there was still a large Greek Army in Anatolia, it was to be an Army on the defensive. Lord Granville reported from Athens that Greek public opinion was slowly coming around to believing that a Greek relinquishment of Asia Minor would be the only solution.[6] Thus Curzon was optimistic that the opportunity was ripe for the Allies to make a fresh attempt to mediate between the two sides. Gounaris was anxious to go to London to discuss the situation and it appeared likely that he would accept some face-saving formula. Curzon therefore determined to press the Greeks to accept the proposals of the Paris Conversations of June 1921 and to abate their claims to Smyrna. If he succeeded, he planned to summon an Allied conference to reach agreement on the precise terms.[7]

On October 27 he met Gounaris, whom he reminded that the British attitude towards Greece had been friendly and sympathetic

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[5] Churchill, op.cit., p. 424.

[6] Granville to Curzon, October 21, 1921. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 443.

[7] Curzon Memorandum, October 7, 1921. Montgomery, op.cit., p. 277.

throughout. In his opinion the Turkish demand for Greece to withdraw from Smyrna was unreasonable, but in the circumstances he saw no choice for Greece but to agree. Moreover, in view of the hostile attitude of France, Greece would probably have to accept also some modification of the frontier in Thrace. He advised the country to place itself in the hands of the Powers. There was no guarantee that either the French, the Italians, or the Turks would accept the solutions he had outlined, but it would immensely strengthen the Greek position to accept mediation. In response to these urgings, the Greeks formally accepted Curzon's proposals on November 2.[8]

Before serious negotiations on the Turkish Question could be resumed it was essential for Great Britain to restore a working relationship with France. In December Lloyd George attempted an all-round settlement of Anglo-French differences by offering the French a pact assuring them of British military aid in the event of German aggression against the soil of France. This was the so-called "Treaty of Guarantee" which the French had been pressing upon Britain for so long. In spite of all the problems involved in obtaining a satisfactory peace settlement in Turkey, the German Question was still uppermost in both the British and French mind. France, in particular, was most concerned with the security of its Rhine frontier and wanted an assurance of armed intervention in the event of future

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[8] Curzon-Gounaris Conversations, London, October 27, 1921. Ibid., pp. 277-8.

German aggression. Britain, however, had always been reluctant to attach itself to such a binding commitment. As a result, Anglo-French diplomatic relations had become seriously strained in the early post-war period. And this estrangement often carried over into the Turkish Question. Turkey often served as the receptacle for the effects of the greater Anglo-French struggle concerning the implementation of the Versailles Treaty in Europe. Thus Lloyd George felt it necessary to seek a general solution of Anglo-French differences in order to establish a viable working relationship with the French over the question of the Turkish peace settlement.

In return for this pact the French were asked to stand at Britain's side in presenting a revised Treaty of Sèvres to the Turks.[9] For a time it seemed that, despite French dissatisfaction with the terms of the British offer, a deal would be possible, and at the Conference of Cannes in January 1922, Lloyd George told Gounaris that the guarantee pact offered the chief hope of reaching a settlement. Even so Greece must be prepared for substantial sacrifices - a complete withdrawal from Smyrna and the modification of its frontier in Thrace. The only course for Greece was to place itself in Curzon's hands. This Gounaris agreed to do, conceding that Greece could no longer force an issue, militarily, in Asia Minor.[10] Britain had thus achieved a diplomatic victory here in receiving such a concession from the Greek Prime Minister, a man whom Lloyd George

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[9] Lloyd George-Briand Conversations, Paris, December 5, 1921. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XV, p. 786-7.

[10] Anglo-Greek Meeting, Cannes, January 12, 1922. Ibid., First Series, vol. XVII, pp. 572-3.

described a year earlier as "a dastardly traitor who would betray the Allies at the first opportunity."[11]

Almost immediately, however, the whole carefully-constructed diplomatic pyramid came crashing down. The accumulated dislike in France towards the British Prime Minister for the opposition the French had endured at his hands since October 1918 was suddenly discharged in their reaction to a press photograph of a game of golf at Cannes, in which Lloyd George was seen acting the teacher and Briand the fool. This was the catalyst which forced Briand's Government from power. His successor, the unbending former President, Raymond Poincaré, when visited by Curzon in Paris on January 16, was in no hurry to see the Turkish imbroglio settled. He laid down unacceptable conditions for the "Treaty of Guarantee" and told Curzon that he was not prepared to attend a conference on the Near East until the British came closer to meeting the French view. He said he would reply to Curzon's proposals, but only later and in writing.[12] It was not until March 22 that an Allied meeting could be collected together in Paris.

Before these conversations could get under way, however, that one major thorn in the side of British policy, the Indian Question, which had been smouldering throughout the period of the Turkish peace settlement, finally boiled over and exploded. In

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[11] W.N. Medlicott, British Foreign Policy since Versailles 1919-1963, London, 1968, p. 39.

[12] Curzon-Poincaré Conversations, Paris, January 16, 1922, F.O. 371/7853/692.

India Mahatma Gandhi was increasing his activities and his following and was beginning to be worshipped almost as a saint. His "non-co-operation" movement was taking hold, and the business of keeping law and order was becoming increasingly difficult. This situation was one which the Viceroy and the Secretary of State were perpetually urging the Government in London to remedy. Politicians, such as Lloyd George, with no experience of India, forgot the basic facts of the Indian Empire. This "brightest jewel" in the imperial crown was a conquered state. Since the Great Mutiny of 1857 its British administrators had always hidden away in the inner recesses of their minds the fear that it could happen again. India was an armed camp. The princes , from the Nizam of Hyderabad, reputedly the richest man in the world, who ruled an area as large as a Balkan state, down to the petty nawabs who had only a few villages, all maintained their own state forces. In Hyderabad, Gwalior, and Kashmir these were each equivalent to a division; in the smallest states the army diminished to a platoon. Thus there was always the prospect of trouble from the armed forces of the princes. To deal with it in British India, i.e. those territories not ruled by the princes, an Indian Army offidered by the British was maintained at something like 200,000 men. In addition there was a vast garrison of the British Army which controlled all the artillery save a few light mountain guns.

Now in this Indian Army the larger part of the recruits came from the so-called "martial races" of the Punjab and were Moslems. There were also, of course, Sikhs, Rajputs, and Dogras, as well as the mercenary Gurkhas, who were all differing castes of Hindu. But since the mutiny the British had tended to rely more and more upon Moslems from the north as soldiers and as policemen. The Moslems too, as a minority fearful of being engulfed in an independent Hindu-dominated India, tended to support the British Raj. They were, in a sense, more "loyal."

Therefore when Moslem leaders and communities showed signs of dissaffection, the administration, from district officer to viceroy, became concerned. Although Gandhi's following was largely Hindu, large sections of the Moslem population were becoming anti-British because of the British attitude to Turkey; the principle of "divide and rule," never voiced but often practised, was in danger of collapse. Consequently, Lord Reading, the Viceroy of India since 1921, and Edwin Montagu constantly tried to impress upon Lloyd George the harm that was being done in India by Britain's continued occupation of Constantinople and its apparent intention to hand over a large part of Turkey to the Greeks.

It is easy to see why their arguments fell on deaf ears. The counter-arguments were simple. The alleged strength of Moslem religious feeling was not difficult to decry. During World War I,

Arabs led by the Sherif of Mecca had fought against the Sultan and Caliph. Moslem soldiers of the Indian Army had cheerfully fought the Turks. As late as 1921 there were still eight Indian battalions serving in the Allied occupation of Constantinople and the Straights area. The British Government thus tended to view the Moslem religion as no more than a vehicle for propaganda, useful as a rallying cry, and as a stalking horse in foreign politics.

On October 11, 1921 Lord Reading argued that "H.M.G. should now without delay make some announcement of Policy with regard to the restoration of Thrace and Smyrna and generally to the Turkish position." He also cited the common belief now held in India that both the French and the Italians were prepared to placate the Turks, but that the British were solely and effectively blocking any such united Allied action.[13] But Montagu's influence in the Cabinet was no longer as strong in 1921-2 as it was earlier in 1919. The majority of the Cabinet generally believed that it had so far made honest concessions to the Turks and that a fair compromise must reflect the ultimate outcome. Curzon, unimpressed by Montagu's concern for India, argued in the House of Lords that both sides of this question must be considered: "we are also a great Christian Power and we must see that justice is done to Greece."[14] Curzon thus demonstrated his subservience to the spirit of the Treaty of Sèvres. Earlier in 1919 he had been strongly opposed to any Greek presence whatever in Asia Minor, demanding simply

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[13] Reading to Montagu, October 11, 1921. Lloyd George Papers, F/41/1/27.

[14] Curzon, February 7, 1922. 49 H.L.Deb.5s. (February 7 - April 4, 1922), col. 29.

the removal of the Turk from European soil. Now the Foreign Secretary acquiesced quite enthusiastically in the Government's policy of supporting Greek nationalism against any possible Turkish resurgence.

Frustrated, the Viceroy of India offered on February 9 to send a telegram formally placing on record the views of the ministers, the legislature, and the people of India as to the necessity of altering the Treaty of Sèvres. This would amount to the ultimate step which the Viceroy could take to enforce his policy, short of resigning his office.[15] Montagu immediately welcomed this suggestion. Thus encouraged, Reading dispatched a telegram on March 1, 1922 stressing once more the intensity of feeling in India regarding the necessity for a revision of the Treaty of Sèvres.

> We are conscious that it may be impossible to satisfy India's expectations in their entirety. But we urge upon His Majesty's Government three points which, due provision having been made for the neutrality of the Straits and the security of the non-Turkish population, we ourselves regard as essential:
>
> First, the evacuation of Constantinople.
>
> Second, the Sultan's suzerainty over the Holy Places.
>
> Third, restoration of the Ottoman Thrace, including the sacred Moslem city of Adrianople, and the unreserved restoration of Smyrna.

The telegram ended with the fatal words: "So important is it for the Government of India to range itself openly on the side of Moslem India, that we press for permission to publish the foregoing ...

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[15] Reading to Montagu, February 9, 1922. Waley, op.cit., p. 271.

forthwith."[16] Montagu, after a short time, authorized publication without consulting his colleagues, both because he thought this unnecessary (the views of the Government of India had been known for many months), and because he did not expect an early Cabinet meeting.

Curzon, when told by Montagu what he had done, was speechless, but did manage to write a letter of protest. It contained some good Curzon broadsides:

> That I should be asked to go into Conference at Paris while a subordinate branch of the British government 6,000 miles away dictates to the British government what line it thinks I ought to pursue in Thrace seems to me quite intolerable. ... if the Government of India, because it rules over a large body of Moslems, is entitled to express and publish its views about what we do in Smyrna or Thrace, why not equally in Egypt, the Soudan, Palestine, Arabia, the Malay Peninsular, or any other part of the Moslem world? Is Indian opinion always to be a final Court of Moslem appeal? I hope this may be the last of these unfortunate pronouncements.[17]

It was. On March 9 Lloyd George summoned Montagu and fired him. "The dismissal of Montagu will make an undoubted impression both in Paris and Angora."[18]

That same day of Montagu's dismissal Lord Curzon, still fuming, wrote to Austen Chamberlain, the former Chancellor of the Excequer who had in March 1921 succeeded Bonar Law as Lord Privy Seal upon the latter's retirement, concerning the present Indian

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[16] Reading to Montagu, March 1, 1922. India Office (Political and Secret Department), Turkey: Peace Treaty (of Sevres, 10th August 1920): Revision &c., file 4995/1919, pt. 4 (1922-23), pap. 916.

[17] Curzon to Montagu, March 6, 1922. Waley, op. cit., p. 274.

[18] Lloyd George to Curzon, March 9, 1922. Lloyd George Papers, F/13/3/11.

fiasco:

> Look at the position in which it has placed me. I am about, by the desire of the Government, to enter into negotiations of the utmost difficulty in Paris in which the dice are already loaded heavily against me and in which my chances of success are small. Just at this moment, on the eve of the Conference, my pitch is queered, my hand is shattered, by a declaration from a branch of the British Government, claiming far more for the Turks than even in their wildest moments they have dared to ask for themselves, or than it is possible for a British statesman to concede. When I argue to Mustapha Kemal or to Poincaré about Adrianople or the Straits they have merely to brandish against me this fatal declaration. I have now no desire to go to Paris at all. I conceive that my mission is doomed by the act of one of my colleagues to certain and inevitable failure. ...

The British Foreign Secretary concluded this harangue in typical Curzonian fashion. "If the policy of H.M.G. is the policy of the Viceroy and Montagu, then let Montagu go to Paris in my place, and fight to obtain Adrianople and Thrace for his beloved Turks. He will then have the failure which his own action will have rendered inevitable instead of thrusting it upon me."[19]

British policy had already suffered heavily as a result of previous diplomatic failures both at Cannes and at Paris. Now, undermined considerably by the scandalous Indian publication, it was prepared to accept an immediate Greek evacuation of Anatolia

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[19] Curzon to Chamberlain, March 9, 1922. Ronaldshay, op.cit., vol. III, pp. 285-6. To Hardinge Curzon added that Montagu's dismissal was "a fortunate riddance for he has pretty well ruined India." Curzon to Hardinge, March 9, 1922. Lowe and Dockrill, op.cit., vol. II, p. 409.

by arrangement with Angora.[20] This decision was bolstered by information received from Britain's representatives abroad. F.O. Lindley, the new British Ambassador in Athens, had previously warned that unless the Greeks received some sort of financial support "it would be rash to count upon their being able to remain in Asia Minor pending a settlement."[21] Later, Rumbold reported from Constantinople that the morale of the Greek troops was poor and that they appeared disheartened. He feared that "if [the] Nationalists are ever in a position to press an attack home they [the Greeks] will crumple."[22] Curzon now personally favoured a Greco-Turkish armistice as a "first condition of successful mediation."[23]

Despite his discouraging lamentations to Chamberlain, Lord Curzon crossed to Paris on March 22, 1922 to meet with Poincaré and Schanzer, the new Italian Foreign Secretary. From the beginning Curzon found himself defending the Greek position against Poincaré whose aggressive hostility towards the Greeks complicated negotiations. Eventually, unable to match the obstinacy and sharp tactics of his opponent, who skillfully exploited the recent diplomatic controversies to his own advantage, Curzon was forced to go much further to meet the Turks than he had originally anticipated.[24] The basis of the new Allied proposals was the conclusion of an immediate armistice which would be followed by a conference at which the Allies would ask the belligerents to accept a package settlement. This included the total

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[20]Curzon to Lindley, March 6, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 645.

[21]Lindley to Curzon, March 1, 1922. Ibid., p. 642.

[22]Rumbold to Curzon, March 13, 1922. Ibid., p. 652.

[23]Curzon to Hardinge/Graham, March 18, 1922. Ibid., p. 660.

[24]Second Paris Conversations, March 22-6, 1922. Ibid., pp. 668-763.

withdrawal, under Allied military supervision, of Greek troops from Smyrna and the rest of Anatolia, and the drawing up of a new code for the protection of minorities in Turkey, its execution being entrusted to the League of Nations. The League was to be asked to co-operate in finding a solution to the Armenian question consistent with Armenian aspirations for a national home. The shores of the Straits were to be demilitarized and the Galliopoli Peninsula, as far as Rodosto on the Sea of Marmora, occupied by Allied forces. An international commission was to be created to supervise the Straits. Constantinople would remain Turkish but encircled by a demilitarized zone of considerable depth while Eastern Thrace was to be Greek, though with a substantial modification of its frontier in favour of the Turks. Military service in Turkey was to be on a voluntary basis and strictly limited. The Capitulations were to remain in a revised form.[25]

The Greeks accepted the proposed armistice but reserved their reply to the other proposals since these went much further than Curzon had let Gounaris to expect. Moreover, Greek public opinion was becoming highly incensed. Lindley reported from Athens that it seemed to be hardening against the Allied proposals and that "most papers have published very violent articles against them."[26] The guarantee for the protection of Christians in Asia Minor were generally regarded as insufficient. Lindley warned that no Greek

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[25]Command 1641, "Pronouncement by Three Allied Ministers for Foreign Affairs respecting the Near Eastern Situation, 27th March 1922", Accounts and Papers, vol. XXIII (February 7 - August 4, 1922), pp. 637-42.

[26]Lindley to Curzon, March 30, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 768.

Government would be able to begin evacuation before it could persuade the Greek people that the Greek population of Asia Minor could remain secure in its home after the Greek forces had withdrawn.[27]

This question, however, was never put to test since the proposal for a truce on this basis was rejected by Angora on the grounds that, before any armistice came into effect, the Greek evacuation of Asia Minor should be completed, the nationalists suggesting four months for this operation.[28] The British found it difficult to accept such a request. They believed it would be impossible to complete such an operation in so short a time. The War Office stated that even if the evacuation were to commence at once, it was highly unlikely that it could be completed successfully in four months.[29] The British Prime Minister, supported by the House of Commons, agreed with the Greeks that to accept such terms meant giving up the Greek population of western Anatolia to massacre if Greek troops dwindled week by week before the cease-fire was actually effective. "The Greeks," Lloyd George said, "could not retire and leave 500,000 of their nationals to the mercy of the Turks without guarantees against a recurrence of the Pontus massacres."[30] The British Prime Minister

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[27]Lindley to Curzon, April 1, 1922, Ibid.

[28]Rumbold to Curzon, April 5, 1922. Ibid., p. 773.

[29]War Office Minute, April 7, 1922, Rumbold to Curzon, April 5, 1922. Ibid., p. 774.

[30]Lloyd George, August 4, 1922. 157 H.C.Deb.5s. (July 24 - August 4, 1922), cols. 2001-2.

had still not altered his views on the nature of Turkish nationalism.

The situation had again reached a deadlock. The French categorically refused to consider imposing the Allied terms upon the belligerents and wished to accept the recent Turkish proposal for a preliminary conference. Poincaré maintained that the opening of "pourparlers préparatoires" afforded the best chance of an eventual settlement. He urged the Allies to consider meeting at Ismid, a site which would probably ensure the presence of Mustafa Kemal himself. He believed the prolongation of negotiations would make the renewal of Turko-Greek hostilities more difficult.[31] But this the Foreign Office refused to consider, regarding it as a deliberate attempt to modify the March decisions in the Turks' favour. On April 25 Rumbold stated that Angora's reply was simply a "tactical manoeuvre in [an] attempt to drive us into a position where [the] responsibility for [a] breakdown of negotiations can be thrown upon the Allies."[32] Curzon wanted no further delays. He believed that both the Turkish nationalists and the French wished "to involve us in protracted negotiations with a view to whittling-down the Paris proposals."[33] Hence he rejected Poincaré's acceptance of these "pourparlers préparatoires", arguing further that "the conference he [Poincaré] proposes is quite inconsistent with the Paris plan seeing that it

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[31] Hardinge to Curzon, May 1, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 803.

[32] Rumbold to Curzon, April 25, 1922. Ibid., p. 794.

[33] Curzon to Rumbold, April 29, 1922. Ibid., p. 800.

abandons both the important stipulation that [the] opening of negotiations must be preceded by [the] acceptance of [an] armistice, and that evacuation is dependent upon [a] general acceptance of [the] Paris conditions."[34]

When Sir Horace Rumbold proposed to accept the Franco-Turkish conditions only as a last resort "in order to avoid rupture,"[35] Lord Curzon countered with a strongly-worded minute on May 25:

> My view of the case is that we should decline to be shuffled or squeezed or shouldered out of the Paris agreement letter by the tactics of Angora or the disloyalty of M. Poincaré. ... when we know, as we do, that M. Poincaré is secretely promising the Turk his assistance and telling them that the Paris terms will never be enforced, and when we collate this knowledge with the proposal to hold the meeting on a French ship with a French Chairman, - we can have little doubt in our own minds ... that what M. Poincaré is really after is a rupture, the responsibility for which can be laid upon us.[36]

On June 7 the Foreign Office offered two alternatives to the French proposals: (a) a further communication to the three Governments of Athens, Constantinople and Angora on the lines definitely agreed upon at Paris, reiterating the Allied offer and demanding a definite acceptance or refusal of it within a given period; or (b) the liquidation of the Paris plan and the subsequent publication of the entire correspondence that had passed between the Allied and the three belligerent Governments, on the one hand, and between the Allied

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[34] Curzon to Rumbold, April 29, 1922. Ibid., p. 826.

[35] Rumbold to Curzon, May 23, 1922. Ibid., pp. 833-4.

[36] Curzon Minute, May 25, 1922, Rumbold to Curzon, May 23, 1922, Ibid., pp. 834-5.

Governments themselves, on the other.[37] Poincaré, however, refused to discuss the question until July.[38] This prompted Sir Eyre Crowe to declare that "the immediate object of the French govt. is to delay a settlement, and meanwhile to supply Angora with a constant supply of arms & ammunition so that after a certain time, no armistice having been concluded, the Turks will have sufficiently strengthened their position to be able to undertake another forward movement against the Greeks."[39]

In the meantime the Foreign Office continued to count upon the Greeks' ability to maintain their position in Asia Minor. As the French stalled the Greek Government became desperate, especially after Poincaré refused to accept the British alternative suggestions. The Foreign Office itself, however, was also becoming somewhat nervous over the delay and announced to the French Government that it would be prepared to accept the French proposals on four conditions: firstly, that the Allies exchange formal assurances in advance that their representatives, throughout the preliminary conference, loyally abide by the Paris resolutions and present a united front on this basis; secondly, that the invitation to the conference specify Beicos or some other convenient site on land and near Constantinople as the place of meeting instead of Ismid; thirdly, that the Greeks be permitted the right to visit and search all private vessels carrying contraband of war to the Turks; and fourthly, that the Allies agree not to exclude the possibility of strengthening the Paris resolution

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[37] Foreign Office Memorandum, June 7, 1922, Balfour to Hardinge, June 7, 1922. Ibid., p. 845.

[38] Hardinge-Poincaré Conversations, Paris, June 19, 1922. F.O.371/7866/6283.

[39] Crowe Minute, June 21, 1922, Hardinge to Balfour, June 17, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 857.

regarding the provision of safeguards for the protection of minorities in the final treaty of peace.[40] From Constantinople Nevile Henderson, acting in the absence of Rumbold, dampened many British hopes by reporting that it was highly unlikely that Mustafa Kemal would agree to Beicos as a meeting place for the preliminary conference.[41] To this Curzon lamented dejectedly from his sick-bed: "the Near East is well nigh insoluble if Mustafa Kemal will not come to Beicos."[42] From Paris not even a discouraging reply to the above British conditions was heard.

The over-nervous Greeks were now growing increasingly impatient. On July 23 Lindley reported that the Greek Government intended shortly to inform the Powers that "Greece must reassume the liberty of action which she had renounced when she placed her case in their hands last autumn."[43] Four days later King Constantine determined to play for the highest stakes; he withdrew two of his divisions from the Smyrna region and disembarked them at Rodosto on the European shore of the Sea of Marmora with the object of seizing Constantinople from under the noses of the Allies. In utter amazement Balfour, now acting in the place of Curzon, declared: "I can scarcely believe that [the] Greek government can do anything so insane as to attack territory in Allied occupation."[44] Immediately

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[40] Foreign Office Memorandum, July 5, 1922, Balfour to Cheetham, July 5, 1922. Ibid., pp. 877-8.

[41] Henderson to Balfour, July 23, 1922. Ibid., p. 890.

[42] Curzon to Balfour, July 27, 1922. Balfour Papers, 49734 (vol. LII)/#239.

[43] Lindley to Balfour, July 23, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 891.

[44] Balfour to Bentinck, July 28, 1922. Ibid., p. 899. Balfour was in temporary charge of the Foreign Office while Curzon was away sick - "the effect of his rough treatment at the hands of Lloyd George," according to A.J.P. Taylor, English History 1914-1945, New York, 1970, p. 190.

the Allied Military Command in Constantinople began taking measures to resist by force any encroachment on the neutral zone. On July 29 Cavendish Bentinck, the British Chargé d'Affaires in Athens, was invited to the Greek Foreign Office, there to receive an official note from Baltazzis, the Foreign Secretary. The note stated that only the Greek occupation of Constantinople would bring about the conclusion of peace.[45] Naturally enough King Constantine and his advisers were attracted by the idea of taking the ancient capital of the Byzantine Empire, with all the consequent prestige they would thereby gain. A triumphant entry into Constantinople would easily outweigh the reverse at the Sakharia River. However, Baltazzis did promise that Greek forces would on no account enter the neutral zone without Allied consent.[46]

In any event the Allies, especially Britain, took no chances. General Harington believed the Greeks seriously intended to attempt to take Constantinople, or at least march up to its walls. The very same day that Bentinck received word of the Greek intentions Harington issued a proclamation stating that any attack on Constantinople from whatever direction, i.e. from either the Greeks or the Turks, would be opposed unhesitatingly by the Allied forces. The French and Italian High Commissioners in Constantinople, General Pellé and Marquis Garroni, both approved. Harington then suggested that

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[45] Bentinck to Balfour, July 29, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 900.

[46] Bentinck to Balfour, July 29, 1922. Ibid., p. 902.

all Greek warships in the Constantinople area be ordered to remain at anchorage; that all further movement of Greek troops between Mudania and Rodosto be stopped; and that Allied warships make demonstrations on the flanks of the Thracian frontier.[47] As a result, the Chatalja Lines were reinforced with British and French troops under the command of General Charpy. The newly-appointed Mediterranean Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Sir Osmond Brock, put to sea from Constantinople taking with him five other capital ships, a seaplane carrier, and nine destroyers. This Third Light Cruiser Squadron took on fuel and ammunition at Malta and steamed full speed eastwards across the Mediterranean. Greece now understood that the British Government was prepared to support the aspirations of Greek nationalism only up to a certain point. While the British supported Greek nationalism as a useful weapon against Turkish resurgence, they opposed it whenever it directly threatened important British interests.

Faced with this powerful British fleet in the Sea of Marmora and a strong Anglo-French force holding the Chatalja Lines, the Greek Government thought better of the challenge and refrained from further action, complaining bitterly that Britain had gravely complicated the issue. But the British were only defending what they valued most. They were prepared to tolerate setbacks in the interior of Asia Minor and throughout practically all of Turkey proper, where British interests were not paramount. But the area of Constantinople and the Straits

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[47] Harington to Worthington-Evans, July 30, 1922. Lloyd George Papers, F/207/1.

was still a different matter. Britain's whole war effort against the Turks had been undertaken largely to reopen and protect forever this historic waterway. Greek control of Constantinople would almost certainly necessitate a remilitarization of the Straits area against an expected Turkish backlash. This, of course, ran counter to the British policy of an open, demilitarized zone. Thus Britain remained determined to preserve order in this vital area, and to safeguard the now sacred British principle of the freedom of the Straits. Such was the unenviable position in which continued support for Greek aspirations had placed British policy. Since 1919 Britain had backed Greek policy in Turkey proper primarily as a reaction against the accelerating growth of Turkish nationalism. The Greek presence in Eastern Thrace and western Asia Minor was apparently supposed to be looked upon as a positive factor in maintaining the security and freedom of the Straits. But by 1922 this Greek ambition, carefully fostered by the British, was threatening the very region it was supposedly helping to safeguard - Constantinople and the Straits, the most important goal of the British policy in post-war Turkey.

Interestingly enough, the Greek threat to Constantinople may not have been all for nought. Shortly thereafter the French Government, after a lengthy silence, finally agreed to accept Britain's latest set of conditions concerning the preliminary peace conference.[48] When the Turkish nationalists still objected to the proposed site of

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[48]Curzon to Rumbold, August 10, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 921.

Beicos, the British Government agreed on August 18 to accept Venice as a suitable location. But ten days later, in the midst of renewed Turkish successes on the battlefield, the French recanted and demanded a further modification of the original Paris proposals to the extent that, in the words of Lord Curzon, it would be "a direct invitation to [the] Angora delegates to refuse [the] Paris proposals and put forward counter demands."[49] This time, however, there was to be no return to a stalemate.

The whole situation exasperated Lloyd George who had followed the Constantinople affair closely. On August 4, 1922,he left no doubt as to his sympathies in a notorious speech to the House of Commons. He reminded the Commons that the Turks, Great Britain's wartime enemies, were untrustworthy and had rejected all the peace overtures of the Allies. Their atrocities necessitated the provision of suitable guarantees for the minorities of Asia Minor. The Turks had enjoyed the inestimable advantage of having their capital defended for them against the Greeks by the Allies. Continuing briskly Lloyd George stated:

> There are even suggestions, not altogether without foundation, that the Kemalist forces are being re-equipped from Europe. The Greeks, under other conditions, would have been entitled to blockade the coast of Asia Minor. Had it been any other belligerent, they would have been entitled to search ships, and to prevent arms going to the Kemalists. They are not allowed to do that ... on the contrary, one of the unfair-

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[49] Curzon to Rumbold, August 28, 1922. Ibid., p. 934.

> nesses of the situation is that they are driven, by the position we occupy there, into not giving a fair field and no favour to fight the issue out. Peace the Kemalists will not have, because they say we will not give them satisfactory armistice terms; but we are not allowing the Greeks to wage the war with their full strength. We cannot allow that sort of thing to go on indefinitely.[50]

This speech, Lloyd George's last effective intervention on behalf of the Greeks, was perhaps his most disastrous. Temporarily, it buoyed up the hopes of the Greek Government, which, anticipating real aid from Great Britain, included extracts from the speech in its Military Orders of the Day and requested the British Government to facilitate a loan.[51] Greece was suddenly prepared for great things, as Bentinck reported on August 29:

> the Greeks are now expecting deeds to follow words and already a certain amount of restiveness is evident in the press that no act of any kind has followed the fair words of the Prime Minister which had raised so much enthusiasm in the country. The army is now being led to hope that assistance of some kind is within sight; that the British Prime Minister shares their disappointment that the dream of Hellenism has not yet been realised; and will it not even be encouraged by the recent circular to the army containing extracts of Lloyd George's speech to believe that somehow or another the prophesies may even yet come true and that King Constantine and Queen Sophie may shortly be crowned Emperor and Empress of Byzantium at St. Sophia - thanks to the British lion![52]

But for the time being Lloyd George's words were simply just that -

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[50] Lloyd George, August 4, 1922. 157 H.C.Deb.5s. (July 24 - August 4, 1922), cols. 2004-5.

[51] Bentinck to Balfour, August 5, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 917.

[52] Bentinck to Curzon, August 29, 1922. Ibid., p. 939.

"words" - and served primarily to convince Mustafa Kemal that he must strike before the British could terminate their policy of neutrality and lend their aid to Greece.

In the first half of 1922 British influence in the Turkish Question reached its lowest point. Franco-Italian acquiescence in the Turks' stubborn resistance to all Allied proposals further isolated the British into the now disintegrating corner of the Greeks. But there was really little, short of armed intervention, that the British Government could do on behalf of Greece. Diplomatic failures at both Cannes and Paris combined with the scandalous Indian publication seriously undermined British foreign policy in general and clearly illustrated Britain losing control in the Turkish Question. Britain was being forced to compromise further with the Turks, much to the detriment of Greek aspirations. Eventually even the Greeks revolted against British policy and threatened to attack Constantinople. The picture of Britain standing alone at Chanak was beginning to come into focus.

CHAPTER VII

CHANAK: DEFENDING THE STRAITS

Lloyd George's parliamentary speech of August 4, 1922 has been variously interpreted as due to the Prime Minister's "evil genius"[1] or to his sense of fair play as between Greeks and Turks.[2] It certainly served to publicize the rift in Allied attitudes through which the diplomatic pressure of the Kemalists poured. The French were unprepared to back the Greek venture. So were the Italians. Although the Opposition at Westminster applauded the Prime Minister's declaration, the seizure of Constantinople by the Greeks, at which Lloyd George seemed to be conniving, could only be tolerated if the Allies had agreed to abandon entirely their responsibility for peace with Turkey. The Prime Minister acknowledged this fact in another passage of the same speech. "They were our troops," he said, "who overthrew the Turks,and therefore the responsibility for the establishment of peace in Turkey must be our responsibility. We cannot abrogate the predominance which has been made by the sacrifice of our own people."[3]

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[1] Ronaldshay, op.cit., vol. III, p. 298.

[2] Nicolson, Curzon, p. 270.

[3] Lloyd George, August 4, 1922. 157 H.C.Deb.5s. (July 24 - August 4, 1922), col. 2002.

On August 18, however, Mustafa Kemal launched his final offensive. This action soon split the Greek forces, which had previously been weakened by the loss of troops to the Thracian Front and by the increasing inability, through the loss of financial aid, to maintain an adequate bridgehead in Asia Minor, and sent them reeling back toward Smyrna and the Aegean. The Greeks pleaded with Great Britain for a loan, stating emphatically that they could not maintain their armies in Asia Minor without one. But Curzon, well aware of the critical situation, thought otherwise, declaring with resignation that "No loan can save them now."[4] As the British Government had previously given up on Armenia, Kurdistan, and Batum when the pressure became too great, so now was it prepared to sacrifice its support of Greek nationalism in western Anatolia.

On September 2 Rizo-Rangabé, the Greek Chargé d'Affaires in London, admitted that "the Greek Army is no longer capable of coping with the enemy offensive."[5] That same day Bentinck reported that the Greek Government had made a definite request of the British Government "to arrange an armistice for them on [the] basis of [the] evacuation which Kemal had demanded since last March but to which up till now [the] Greeks had not been prepared to agree."[6] But the Turks delayed their answers to any armistice proposals and continued to wage a spectacularly victorious campaign in the field. On September 9, at 11:00 a.m., the Turkish cavalry marched into Smyrna. Referring

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[4]Curzon Minute, September 2, 1922, Bentinck to Curzon, August 27, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVII, p. 933.

[5]Rizo-Rangabé to Curzon, September 2, 1922. Ibid., p. 946.

[6]Bentinck to Curzon, September 2, 1922. Ibid., p. 948.

to this hard-fought Turkish comeback from the depths of 1918 Lord Vansittart remarked: "it was as if a boxer, after being counted out, had risen from the ring, stunned his opponent, knocked the referee through the ropes, and levanted with the purse."[7] This spectacular turn of events was a deep personal setback for Lloyd George, who attempted to soften the blow by stressing what little chance there had always been for a successful Greek policy against the growing strength of the Turk : "From the moment Greece threw over Venizelos & placed its destinies in the hands of Constantine I realised that a pro-Greek policy in Anatolia was doomed."[8] Contrary to the British Prime Minister's statement, however, there was a relatively close Anglo-Greek relationship even after the return to the Greek throne of King Constantine. Historical evidence has not backed up this after-the-fact statement.

Meanwhile in Constantinople Sir Horace Rumbold was setting the stage for the impending crisis at Chanak. On September 4 he announced to representatives of the Constantinople Government that even if the Turks did dispose of the Greeks "they will still have to reckon with us."[9] He pointed out to Curzon that Britain would have two alternative sources of action: "complete surrender to the Kemalists backed by the French" or "strong independent action."[10]

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[7]Lord Vansittart, The Mist Procession, London, 1958, pp. 289-90.

[8]Lloyd George to Curzon, September 15, 1922. Lloyd George Papers, F/13/3/33.

[9]Rumbold to Curzon, September 4, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVIII, p. 6.

[10]Rumbold to Curzon, September 4, 1922, Ibid.

It eventually chose the latter. At a Cabinet meeting of September 7 Lord Curzon argued that the real question now was that of the Straits. If Britain yielded to the Turks then "the whole of the fruits of the war as to the Balkan situation would be thrown away."[11] Re-emphasizing his now well-worn statements Lloyd George agreed: "In no circumstances could we allow the Gallipoli peninsula to be held by the Turks. It was the most strategic position in the world and the closing of the Straits had prolonged the war by two years."[12] Lord Lee, the First Lord of the Admiralty, who had just returned from Constantinople, contributed the reassuring news that in the Turkish capital British prestige was still far higher than that of either the French or the Italians. Thus inspired, the Cabinet decided that Curzon should continue his diplomatic efforts with the Allies; that the naval forces be increased in the area to prevent the Kemalists from gaining access to the Gallipoli Peninsula; that in the Peninsula itself, which at present was occupied by French troops, there should now be British troops as well; and that if the Turks attacked in the Ismid Peninsula General Harington should be at liberty to withdraw to Constantinople, but any Turkish attempt to cross the Bosphorus "should be resisted by the full strength of the British

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[11] Curzon blamed everything on "the consistant treachery of the French" who had supplied Angora with "arms in large quantities." Curzon, Cabinet Meeting, September 7, 1922. Walder, op.cit., pp. 178-9.

[12] Lloyd George, Cabinet Meeting, September 7, 1922. Ibid., p. 179.

forces by sea and land." Finally, despite the hopes of the Prime Minister with regard to a last stand by the Greek Army, it was agreed that British civil ships should be diverted to Smyrna to evacuate refugees.[13]

By September 11 it was probable that Mustafa Kemal would soon threaten Chanak or demand that the British troops there be withdrawn. Therefore, at the Prime Minister's country home at Churt, it was decided at a meeting which included Worthington-Evans of the War Office and Lee of the Admiralty that the British troops should be withdrawn before the demand was made. This decision was conveyed to General Harington who was told that, if the Turks threatened, the British troops in Chanak and Ismid should be transfered to Gallipoli and Constantinople respectively. The only discretion allowed to Harington was that if French or Italian troops were sent to Chanak the evacuation there might be postponed. If the Allies did not co-operate, then Britain would "act alone" in defending the Straits from the European side only.[14] But both Rumbold and Harington disagreed with this Cabinet decision. Rumbold argued that any withdrawal from Chanak or the Ismid Peninsula could have a deplorable effect on the prestige of the Allied Powers.[15] Harington warned that both the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus could be spanned by gunfire from either shore, thus no one side could be

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[13] Cabinet Resolution, September 7, 1922. Ibid., p. 180.

[14] Curzon to Rumbold, September 11, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVIII, p. 20.

[15] Rumbold to Curzon, September 13, 1922. Ibid., p. 22.

considered in isolation from the other. If the Gallipoli Peninsula were to be defended and the Dardanelles dominated, then Chanak had to be defended as well. Gallipoli was held to be more important than Constantinople since it controlled the Dardanelles and thus any access to the Bosphorus; Constantinople had already been promised to the Turks at some future date. Harington, realizing the inadequacy of his pitifully small forces, continued to stress the need for at least symbolic Allied unity: "I am as confident as ever that [the] Kemalists will not attack if [the] Allies really stand firm."[16]

Harington had already ordered Colonel D.I. Shuttleworth to take command at Chanak and put it into a position to repel an attack so as to prevent the Turks from crossing into the neutral zone and threatening the Dardanelles. With limited forces Shuttleworth concentrated on defending only the town of Chanak and Nogara Point, six miles to the north. The actual neutral zone boundary was eighty miles long and was impossible to defend. In London the Cabinet, through noticeably split in its degrees of enthusiasm, eventually acquiesced to Harington's and Rumbold's desires and agreed to support a united Allied defence of Chanak, a small Turkish town that virtually no one in Britain had ever heard of the week before. Thus from September 12, despite a hostile

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[16]Harington to Worthington-Evans, September 14, 1922. Lloyd George Papers, F/207/1.

press and at best an indifferent population in Britain, the build-up of military defences and forces proceeded at an accelerating pace. For the sake of Allied unity the French and the Italian High Commissions in Constantinople agreed to offer token support to the British at Chanak. On September 13 a small contingent of Italian troops arrived; an almost equally small French contingent arrived three days later. As expected the British provided the bulk of the military and naval forces, the majority of which were summoned from their base in Malta. General Harington remarked that Lord Plumer, the Governor of Malta, sent to Chanak "everyone he had. His staff, his battalions, his gunners, his ordnance officers and his chaplains! He literally cleared out Malta."[17]

At the Cabinet meeting of September 15 it was decided to force the Turks to accept a negotiated peace before they set foot in Europe. Lloyd George felt the time had come to do something concrete and hoped that the Greeks, the Romanians, and the Yugoslavs would be willing to help out. He believed that if some combination could be formed, then the British representatives at the future peace conference would not have to "throw themselves at the feet of M. Poincaré." The Czechoslovaks, who had strong ties and influence with the French, would be bound to stand in with Romania and Yugoslavia.[18]

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[17] General Sir Charles Harington, Plumer of Messines, London, 1935, p. 247.

[18] Lloyd George, Cabinet Meeting, September 15, 1922. Walder, op.cit., p. 213.

The idea of yet another international conference appeared attractive to the majority of the Cabinet. But it was to be a conference which would not only include the two belligerents and the major Allied Powers but as many other interested parties as could be persuaded to attend. The British at this point needed all the help they could get and soon in almost everybody's mind, save Curzon's, was the picture of a gigantic alliance of nearly all of Eastern Europe opposed to the Turks. Curzon expressed his personal misgivings in a very blunt letter to Lord Hardinge:

> The P.M. is convinced that Roumania and Serbia have merely to be approached and flattered to produce large armies. He also cherishes the familiar but fantastic notion that the F.O. has been grossly culpable in not arranging this already, that our ministers to those states are incompetent noodles, and that an anti-Turk Balkan confederation has only to be mentioned to spring into being. ... I do not share this sanguine belief.[19]

The idea of imperial help was also put forward with suggestions that both Australia and New Zealand be asked to co-operate.[20]

One look at the final decisions of this Cabinet meeting showed that the British Government was willing to try something of everything. Approaches to the Balkan nations would be made to encourage military preparation, their reward being their presence at the proposed international peace conference. The Greeks in particular would be asked what they could do to help defend the

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[19] Curzon to Hardinge, September 16, 1922. Lowe and Dockrill, op.cit., vol. II, p. 370.

[20] Cabinet Meeting, September 15, 1922. Walder, op.cit., p. 213.

Straits. Once again General Harington would be delegated to provide information on the state of the Greek Army. Lord Curzon would see Poincaré and inform him that if the French would send reinforcements to Constantinople, then so would the British. Reserves would not be called out and leave would not be stopped, but a division would be put in a state of readiness. Battalions at Malta and Gibraltar would continue to move forthwith. Two squadrons of airplanes would soon move from Egypt. Admiral Brock would be authorized "to take any action he may deem necessary to secure or destroy" any transports conveying Turkish forces to Europe. Finally, Churchill would draft a telegram for Lloyd George to be sent to the Dominion Prime Ministers, inviting their co-operation "in the despatch of military reinforcements."[21]

On September 20, 1922 the War Office outlined the British military priorities in Turkey to General Harington:

> The foundation of all our policy is the Gallipoli Peninsula and the freedom of the Straits. For this it is of the highest importance that Chanak should be held effectively. It has now become a point of immense moral significance to the prestige of the Empire, quite apart from its military importance. If it could be retained we should regard it as an invaluable achievement. A blow at Chanak is a blow at Britain alone, whereas Constantinople and Ismid are matters of international consequence affecting all the Allies. Compared to Chanak we think

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[21] Cabinet Resolutions, September 15, 1922. Ibid., p. 214.

Constantinople comes second and Ismid third.[22]

On September 24 Lloyd George publicly stated that the British Government

> have regarded it as a matter of paramount importance to the interests of European peace that the war in Asia Minor should not spread into Europe. We have ... taken steps to strengthen our position in the Dardanelles ... with a view of achieving two objects: First, that of securing the freedom of the Straits, and second, that of preventing the prairie fire, which devastated Asia, from crossing the narrow seas and lighting the dry timber in the Balkans.
>
> We do not wish to hold Gallipoli or Chanak in the interests of Britain alone. We do not claim that Britain should have the sole responsibility. On the contrary, we believe that these important shores should be held under the auspices of the League of Nations in the interest of all nations alike.[23]

Unfortunately for the British Prime Minister, it did appear to the world at large as if he really wished to hold the Dardanelles in the interests of Great Britain alone, especially after the Government's call to the Balkans and the Dominions.

On September 15 the Foreign Office had invited the co-operation of both the Romanian and the Yugoslav Governments in the defence of the freedom of the Straits. At the same time the Colonial Office asked the various British Dominions whether they wished to associate themselves with the action of the Government

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[22] Worthington-Evans to Harington, September 20, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVIII, p. 62.

[23] Lloyd George, The Times, September 25, 1922. Lloyd George Papers, F/209/5.

of the United Kingdom, and whether they desired to be represented by a contingent of troops. The prospect of a contribution from the Dominions appeared quite favourable, especially from Australia and New Zealand. Both these countries had previously engaged a large number of troops in the wartime Dardanelles campaign. Moreover, both had strong traditional interests in the security of the Straits. The Balkan nations, on the other hand, were less predictable. A Foreign Office memorandum had earlier argued that the Romanian Government would certainly wish to assist in preserving the freedom of the Straits, yet "they will hesitate to translate their wishes into practical action in view of the effervescence in Transylvania and for fear of a Bolshevik attack [on Bessarabia]." Although Yugoslavia might be willing to send troops to prevent the entry of Mustafa Kemal into Europe, "she would only do so at her own price." This price included British support against Italy over the Adriatic Question and in demanding from Greece very large concessions regarding the port of Salonica. Finally, Bulgarian co-operation with Britain, though never officially requested, could only be secured at a price far in excess of its actual value. This included the offer of Western Thrace, the release from all reparations payments, and the right to introduce compulsory service in Bulgaria on a limited scale.[24]

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[24] Foreign Office Memorandum, September 14, 1922. Ibid., F/13/3/32.

Nevertheless Churchill, who had often expressed misgivings concerning the Prime Minister's Greek policy, wished to reaffirm the Allied position at the Straits:

> I found myself in this business [he wrote afterwards] with a small group of resolute men: the Prime minister, Lord Balfour, Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Lord Birkenhead [the Lord Chancellor], Sir Laming Worthington-Evans. ... We made common cause. The Government might break up and we might be relieved of our burden. The nation might not support us: they could find others to advise them. The Press might howl, the Allies might bolt. We intended to force the Turk to a negotiated peace before he set foot in Europe.[25]

From this conclave there emerged for publication the notorious communiqué of September 16 calling upon the assistance of Romania, Yugoslavia, and the British Dominions. It was drafted in characteristic style and submitted immediately to the press by Churchill. It set out the position, enlarged on the dangers of a Turkish incursion into Europe which would have nullified the effects of the First World War, and called on the Allies for support. Neither Lord Curzon nor the Foreign Office was consulted. When the Foreign Secretary read the statement in a Sunday newspaper, he denounced it as a "flamboyant manifesto." He feared it would immediately and fatally alienate both France and Italy.[26] The fault lay not in the communiqué's tone but in its timing. It was quickly published and read in the capitals of the Dominions before the

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[25] Churchill, op.cit., pp. 423-4.

[26] Ronaldshay, op.cit., vol. III, p. 302.

British appeal to them for support had time to be deciphered. It was this, together with the unwillingness of Canada and South Africa to be involved in the Near East, which made the Chanak crisis a classic episode in the history of the independence of the Dominions from British foreign policy.

New Zealand, Australia, and Newfoundland automatically pledged their support to Great Britain at Chanak while South Africa and Canada played for time. The former two especially felt themselves affected closely by any change in the regime at the Straits. The Straits were always of special significance in imperial communications. Lord Jellicoe, the Governor-General of New Zealand, replied immediately on September 16 that the "Government of New Zealand desire to associate themselves with action being taken and will send a contingent."[27] Six days later he reported over 12,000 volunteers, when still no call for them had been issued![28] Prime Minister William Hughes of Australia announced that the Australian Government wished to associate itself with the British Government "in whatever action is deemed necessary to ensure the freedom of the Straits and the sanctity of the Gallipoli Peninsula, and would be prepared, if circumstances required, to send a contingent of Australian troops." However, he let it be known that he despised the methods of procedure of the British Government in his strongly-worded, three-part telegram

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[27]Jellicoe to Churchill, September 16, 1922. Lloyd George Papers, F/209/2.

[28]Jellicoe to Churchill, September 22,1922. Ibid.

dispatched by Governor-General Forster to Churchill at the Colonial Office.[29]

Churchill was quick to respond with apologies to the Australian Government, placing the blame upon "the rapidity with which the situation has developed."[30] But Hughes had not yet finished his argument with the British Government. In the second part of this long telegram to the Colonial Office Governor-General Forster declared that Prime Minister Hughes was very "indignant" at the publication in the British press of an appeal to the Dominions before they were even consulted on the subject. If danger really threatened Britain or the Empire, Australia would help to the "last man and last shilling" but wanted the fullest knowledge of the situation before taking any definite action.[31] The third part of the telegram, dispatched on the same day, concluded with the statement that

> The Australian people are sick of war. ... they have no sympathy with King Constantine's ambitious projects. ... the Dominions ought not to be asked whether they will associate themselves with Britain after Britain has in effect committed them.[32]

Despite this verbal onslaught the Australians were still prepared to send a sorely-needed contingent of troops to the Straits area. In doing this they were not backtracking. The Australian Government, from the beginning, was never against the actual dispatch of forces

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[29]Forster to Churchill, September 20, 1922. Ibid.

[30]Churchill to Forster, September 20, 1922. Ibid.

[31]Forster to Churchill, September 20, 1922. Ibid.

[32]Forster to Churchill, September 20, 1922. Ibid.

to Chanak; what it objected to most was the very undiplomatic way in which Britain had called for aid. This British action had been viewed as a bitter blow to Australia's growing independence in foreign affairs. Newfoundland was also willing to contribute militarily and, in the manner of New Zealand, without question. "I believe," wrote Captain Horwood, the acting Prime Minister of Newfoundland, "that as in the past Newfoundland will be ready to render all assistance available."[33]

The South African Government, on the other hand, declared that it could not commit itself until it consulted Parliament. In reality it was playing for time. South Africa had little interest in the Straits (in fact it stood to gain if the whole Mediterranean were closed) and it never did consult its Parliament. Finally on September 25 Governor-General Arthur Frederick conveyed Prime Minister Smuts' message that the "position [at Chanak] appears to have altered materially for the better and no longer to call for the active intervention of the Union ."[34] Canada likewise stalled for time and was perhaps even more disenchanted. To the Canadian House of Commons Prime Minister Mackenzie King told the story of not only hearing through the press that several Dominions had been invited to send contingents to the Near East but, even before his own notification from the British Government had been decoded, that New Zealand had volunteered a contingent. This, according to Lord Byng, the Canadian Governor-General, caused "a most em-

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[33]Horwood to Churchill, September 18, 1922. Ibid.

[34]Frederick to Churchill, September 25, 1922. Ibid.

barrassing situation."[35] Mackenzie King emphasized that the note was the first and only intimation that the situation in the Near East had reached a critical stage. In this connection Byng reported "The Government's view is that public opinion of Canada would demand authorisation on the part of Parliament as a necessary preliminary to despatching a contingent to participate in Near East operations."[36] Churchill attempted to assuage Canadian fears by revealing that "the actual need for despatching the contingent ... seems most improbable and in any case it is contemplated that it would be only of a very moderate size."[37] Still, Mackenzie King insisted upon daily Cabinet sessions and, if necessary, the calling of Parliament: "it is neither right nor proper for any individual, or for any group of individuals to take any step which might limit the rights of Parliament ... in a matter which is of such concern to all the people of our country."[38] Britain got no further with the Canadian Government.

Britain's appeal to the Dominions was at worst a fiasco and a severe jolt to the Government, at best a partial success but with a bad after-taste and the makings of an identity crisis within the British Empire. Lloyd George, through Churchill, argued that Britain was only defending the vital interests of the British Empire and not supporting the imperialist aims of King Constantine,[39]

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[35] Byng to Churchill, September 17, 1922. Ibid.

[36] Byng to Churchill, September 18, 1922. Ibid.

[37] Churchill to Byng, September 18, 1922. Ibid.

[38] Gwendolen M. Carter, The British Commonwealth and International Security: The Role of the Dominions, 1919-1939, Toronto, 1947, p. 87.

[39] Churchill to Dominions, September 21, 1922. Lloyd George Papers, F/209/2.

while Churchill claimed that all he really intended was the organization of Dominion contingents to demonstrate "the solidarity of the Empire in safeguarding the results of the War in the Eastern theatre."[40] But this proved to be impossible. The Balkan reply, emanating first from Romania, was initially encouraging. To the surprise of Lord Curzon Sir H. Dering, the British Ambassador in Bucharest, reported on September 19 that the Romanian Government would be prepared to supply a military contingent for the defence of the Straits.[41] But shortly thereafter Duca, the Romanian Foreign Secretary, consulted with the French Ambassador and on the following day the Foreign Office was informed that Romania would be unable to participate in common action at the Straits unless it received immediately munitions of war needed for the defence of its eastern frontier against Soviet Russia.[42] Yugoslavia was likewise too closely tied to French influence, and its price, as predicted by the Foreign Office, proved too high.

The communiqué of September 16, 1922 certainly did not endear the Government to British public opinion or to Britain's Allies. Lord Crewe of the Foreign Office thought that "perhaps nothing so unfortunate was done by that Government since it first

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[40] Churchill to Dominions, September 20, 1922. Ibid.

[41] Dering to Curzon, September 19, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVIII, p. 37.

[42] Dering to Curzon, September 20, 1922. Ibid.

came into office."[43] The faith of the man in the street in the politicians and their promises was considerably shaken by the disillusionment of the immediate post-war years. Lloyd George's own glamour, as a man sprung from humble origins who had led his country to victory, had faded as he appeared more and more in industrial and economic matters to be in the pockets of the bosses. The British public, traditionally indifferent to foreign affairs, had little reason to pay a great deal of attention to the war between the Greeks and the Turks. Within recent memory of every adult, at least one general war had arisen from a Balkan squabble. That another should rise again within four years seemed intolerable, especially as the causes appeared so unimportant. The British public, despite the late war, did not hate the Turks; they had no particular feelings about the Greeks, who were now defeated anyway.[44] It had been four years since the Armistice of Mudros and public thinking had by now been turned away from foreign affairs and the thoughts of old wartime enemies and allies to domestic affairs and the immediate problem of reconstruction in a period of post-war economic slump. That the Turks now wanted Turkey and Constantinople did not seem, on the surface, unreasonable. The public resented the thought of the possible sacrifice of men's

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[43] Marquess of Crewe, "The Near East and the Late Government", The Contemporary Review, vol. 122 (November 1922), p. 553.

[44] Walder, op.cit., p. 227.

lives for an object which seemed merely to be a hangover from the peace treaties.

On the home front the idea of a foreign war was highly unpopular. A foreign war at this time would be a most heavy burden upon the British people. It was a very depressing period in British commerce and industry; the unemployment figures still stood at nearly 1,500,000. The trade unions resented the imposed cuts in wages in this stagnated economy. There were labour disputes in Wales, political murders in Ireland, and continued unrest in India. The Prime Minister's stock as a European diplomatist had fallen further with the Soviet-German Treaty of Rapallo. The "Honours Scandal" in Parliament certainly did not help. In this atmosphere the looming crisis over the Straits seemed to many as merely the crowning example of incompetence or worse. These warlike measures and utterances looked suspiciously like the efforts of desperate men forced to detract public attention from the conditions at home by drumming up enthusiasm for some patriotic adventure abroad. On September 21 the Daily Mail headlined "Get out of Chanak!"[45] The Times printed a letter of Lord Grey declaring that the Government had made " a terrible mistake" in releasing the Churchill communiqué to the public before any official consultation with the French Government.[46]

On September 21 Lloyd George received a delegation of

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[45] Daily Mail, September 21, p. 1.

[46] Lord Grey, The Times, September 19, 1922, p. 7.

some thirty members of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress, including four Labour Members of Parliament. J.B. Williams, the Chairman of the T.U.C., headed them, but his only task was to introduce the members. The spokesmen were J.H. Thomas, M.P., Ben Tillett, and Margaret Bondfield. Tillett declared that both trade-union and working-class opinion were "absolutely antagonistic to the war. ... We should be opposed to war and would organise opposition against any form of war." Bondfield believed that "a new war would be the beating of the dead, because they died to prevent any more war." Thomas completely censured Lloyd George: "We believed that of all the things which have contributed towards this difficulty the chief has been your own attitude." Lloyd George countered, in somewhat Curzonian fashion, with a persuasive discourse on recent Near Eastern history. The meeting was ultimately settled on terms of a mutually agreed notice to the press.[47] In a sense it was a victory for Lloyd George. For the moment the official leaders of the T.U.C. would remain quiet, as would the Labour members in the House of Commons. Yet in the harsh terms of practical politics Lloyd George had not increased his support in the country; he had only gained acquiescence that was both temporary and conditional.

Both the French and the Italians, but particularly the French, were enraged over the contents of Churchill's communiqué.

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[47] Lloyd George-T.U.C. Conversations, London, September 21,1922. Lloyd George Papers, F/209/6.

Previously Prime Minister Poincaré was prepared to respect the Allied neutral zone around Constantinople and the Straits and to share in its defence.[48] But after the publication of the communiqué Lord Hardinge reported from Paris strong opposition in the French press to Britain's energetic policy. The press protested against being entangled in a "new war" which was represented as an attempt by Great Britain to establish a second Gibraltar at Constantinople. Hardinge concluded that "If the Press be a correct indication of French policy, there seems but small chance of inducing [the] French government to give their active support in the defence of the Dardanelles against [the] Kemalists."[49] That very same day - September 18 - Poincaré stated that France was "absolutely in accord" on the necessity of preserving the freedom of the Straits, but differed with Whitehall over "the proper means to realize it."[50] He was most upset over Britain's wooing of his Romanian ally.[51] The following day he ordered the withdrawal of all French troops not merely from Chanak but from all the other ports along the Dardanelles as well. The Italians quickly followed this example and Britain was left alone in the defence of the Straits.

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[48] Hardinge to Curzon, September 14, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVIII, p. 31.

[49] Hardinge to Curzon, September 18, 1922. Lloyd George Papers, F/208/3.

[50] Harry N. Howard, The Partition of Turkey: A Diplomatic History 1913-1923, New York, 1966, p. 269.

[51] Vansittart, op.cit., p. 290.

On September 20 Curzon crossed to France to attempt to settle with Poincaré this latest crisis in Anglo-French relations. Curzon argued that Britain had not for a moment wavered in its support of the French forces at the Chatalja Lines in discouraging the Greeks from attempting to seize Constantinople. Thus he could not understand why the French should refuse to support the British forces at Chanak in discouraging the Turks from seizing control of the Straits and moving into Europe. But in reply to Curzon's request for assistance the French Prime Minister stated that "it was both a moral and physical impossibility for France to resist the Turks if they advanced," and "French public opinion would not admit of a shot being fired against a Turk." In his opinion the Turks could not be kept back and they could cross to Europe whenever they pleased. Still Curzon continued to maintain that "the British Empire could never agree to conditions which would place Gallipoli in danger, or sacrifice the entire results of the war."[52] Later that same day the negotiations were joined by Count Sforza, now the Italian Ambassador in Paris, but they again ended in stalemate. Poincaré insisted that "French public opinion would not tolerate the death of a single French soldier at the hands of a Turk or of a single Turk at the hands of a Frenchman." To Curzon this statement meant that "the French were at liberty to tear up the

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[52]Third Paris Conversations, September 20, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVIII, pp. 38-50.

alliance as soon as a French life was imperilled."[53] These conversations resumed the next day with Curzon continually having to oppose a Franco-Italian bid for what would virtually amount to Allied acceptance of the National Pact prior to any international peace conference. The British Foreign Secretary declared it was absurd to convoke a conference for which the major questions of the security of the Straits area and the occupation of Eastern Thrace had been decided in advance and in the absence of others. He claimed that, if circumstances dictated it, Britain not only meant but was able to act alone. Finally, he assailed the French Government, arguing that France's position in Turkey was morally weak and that France had deserted its ally from "admitted motives of fear."[54]

The following day - September 22 - witnessed the lowest point in Anglo-French relations throughout the entire period of the Turkish Question. Lord Curzon persisted in dwelling upon his belief that France had acted in bad faith in blatantly and mercilessly abandoning its ally. A heated argument ensued, "of quite unprecedented description," which developed into a veritable diplomatic fiasco. Curzon submitted the following report of the incident to Lord Hardinge:

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[53] Third Paris Conversations, September 20, 1922. Ibid., pp.50-61.

[54] Curzon, Third Paris Conversations, September 21, 1922. Hardinge to Crowe, September 21, 1922. Lloyd George Papers, F/208/3.

> Poincaré lost all command of his temper and for a quarter of an hour shouted and raved at the top of his voice, putting words into my mouth which I had never uttered, refusing to permit the slightest interruption or correction, saying that he would make public the insult to France, quoting a telegram from Athens to the effect that the British Minister had asked the Greek government to furnish 60,000 men for the defence of Thrace and [the] Straits, and behaving like a demented schoolmaster screaming at a guilty schoolboy. I have never seen so deplorable or undignified a scene.[55]

Curzon apparently left the room in tears, right in the midst of Poincaré's harangue. This action prompted Sforza to remark that the British Foreing Secretary's "soul was still that of an Oxford student who weeps because he has not won a prize."[56] Nevertheless, as to his accusation of French abandonment of Britain at Chanak and the Straits, Curzon claimed that Poincaré was most upset because "the sting lay in its incontestable truth."[57]

In the end Curzon, Poincaré, and Sforza agreed to the despatch of a joint Allied Note to the Turkish nationalists on September 23. This Note invited the Turks to an international conference on Near Eastern affairs to be held upon the successful conclusion of an armistice, technically between the Greeks and the Turks but, in reality, to prevent the outbreak of war between

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[55] Curzon Report, Hardinge to Crowe, September 22, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVIII, p. 78.

[56] Count Carlo Sforza, Makers of Modern Europe: Portraits and Personal Impressions and Recollections, Indianapolis, 1930, p. 95

[57] Curzon Report, Hardinge to Crowe, September 22, 1922. Lloyd George Papers, F/208/3.

Britain and Turkey. As a basis for the armistice the note promised the Turks all of Eastern Thrace up to the Maritza River, including Adrianople. It demanded from the Turks the recognition of the freedom of the Straits under the auspices of the League of Nations and the establishment of demilitarized zones on both sides of the Straits and on both sides of the future Turko-Greek and Turko-Bulgarian frontiers.[58] Thereupon the Allies waited for the Turkish reply.

On September 19 General Harington sent the following message to Colonel Shuttleworth in Chanak:

> You should hold Chanak as long as possible with the forces I have available. I am communicating the decision to the Government. In my opinion in view of the French withdrawing from Chanak, Kemal will challenge British policy there. In all probability he will stop to reflect, if you stop him there with naval support. Your stand there may avert further trouble.[59]

The following day Harington argued to the War Office that

> If we continue to show our determination, I am of opinion that the British will be able to carry through the task without them [France and Italy], so that I do not consider you need feel concern for their action. According to my information his [Kemal's] ministers are being summoned to Smyrna tomorrow for a conference. Evidently this is to decide whether he will take England on with her Dominions. My own opinion is that they will not dare to do so.[60]

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[58] Allied Note, September 23, 1922. The Times, September 25, 1922, p. 10.

[59] Harington to Shuttleworth, September 19, 1922. Churchill, op.cit., p. 457.

[60] Harington to Worthington-Evans, September 20, 1922. Ibid.

But on the same day that the Allied Note was delivered to Angora, the Turkish cavalry in force crossed the boundary of the neutral zone in the vicinity of Chanak. Lieutenant Naylor, who met them at Saracheli, about seven miles from Chanak, reported that they were pacifically inclined, with rifles slung over their shoulders and muzzles downwards. Yet the Turks were still determined which prompted the following analysis from Colonel Shuttleworth;

> The situation was quite unanticipated. Peaceful penetration by armed men who did not wish to fight, and yet refused either to withdraw or to halt, had not been foreseen ....[61]

The Turks ultimately "holed up" in Erenkeui, just outside the boundary of the neutral zone, when they heard of the news of the projected peace conference.

The Turkish forces, however, soon re-entered the neutral zone and for some days the situation was extremely tense with nothing but barbed wire separating the two lines. On September 25 Mustafa Kemal demanded that the British evacuate the Asiatic side of the Straits. He knew of the disunity of the Allies; the public lack of enthusiasm in Britain for war; and the generally pacific intentions of Harington. But Kemal may have been underestimating his opponents in deliberately delaying his reply to the Allied Note and by calling for an immediate British evacuation. This delay worked to his disadvantage, for the British defences at Chanak and British military and naval power in Constantinople

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[61] Shuttleworth to Harington, September 24, 1922. Walder, op.cit., p. 244.

and the Straits area continued to grow unchecked. Harington hoped to force the Turkish nationalists out of the neutral zone without firing but declared that he could not let them stay there for too long unmolested.[62] In this connection Kemal was informed that Britain would stand firm, Lloyd George declaring: "If we were to retire from Chanak we should be in a very weak position and should have made a concession which would render it very difficult for the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to maintain the British position at the forthcoming Conference."[63] If necessary, Britain was prepared to force the Turks to respect the neutral zone.

This whole idea of respecting neutral zones and neutral boundaries made no impression at all upon the Turks. To Mustafa Kemal the neutral zone surrounding the Straits did not even exist. He claimed that no formal zone of neutrality had ever been established between the Allied Governments and the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. The British were unmoved as they quickly built up their forces and Harington continued to argue that Kemal would not attack seriously: "He is trying to force me into firing the first shot."[64] At this point Harington's own personal

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[62]Harington to Worthington-Evans, September 26, 1922. Lloyd George Papers, F/207/1.

[63]Lloyd George, Cabinet Meeting, September 27, 1922. D.B.R.P., First Series, vol. XVIII, p. 101.

[64]Harington to Worthington-Evans, September 27, 1922. Lloyd George Papers, F/207/2.

philosophy was determining Britain's policy in Turkey:

> I want to reach a conference with British troops standing unaided at Chanak without losing a life and with British troops in Constantinople having kept order and calmed the Christian population. ... you could then withdraw with great honour. I think it can be done.[65]

Privately to Hugh Trenchard, the Air Chief Marshal, Harington revealed with disgust the mess in which the ups and downs of British foreign policy had placed him: "This is the rummest sort of war I have ever seen. It is mixed up with diplomats of all nations, soldiers and sailors, Greeks and Turks, infidels of every kind and Bolsheviks, and the town is a seething mass of the dirtiest-looking devils you ever saw."[66]

Meanwhile in Greece events were taking place which would soon have direct bearing on the Anglo-Turkish crisis at Chanak. What had begun as a military and naval mutiny on Chios and Mitylene on September 23 erupted into a full-scale revolution in Athens. On September 27 King Constantine was forced to abdicate in favour of his son, Crown Prince George, as Greece fell before a conspiracy of colonels, led by one Colonel Plastiras. Apparently the professed aims of Plastiras were to reorganize the Greek Army and to fight for Eastern Thrace. Lindley reported from Athens that the revolutionary movement was primarily concerned with the

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[65] Harington to Worthington-Evans, September 28, 1922. Ibid.

[66] Harington to Trenchard, September 29, 1922. Walder, op.cit., p. 257.

reinforcement of the Thracian Front, adding that "no one here expects Kemal to accept [the Allied] invitation as it stands."[67] Just as Constantine on his return had been unable to reverse Venizelos' policy in Anatolia, so Plastiras, having ousted Constantine, could not advocate the acceptance of Mustafa Kemal's demands. Military dictators do not achieve power on a platform of national humility. Smyrna and the Greek colony in Asia Minor were gone forever, but there was still Eastern Thrace which could be represented as Greek. Plastiras began to prepare the Greek Army and people to combat what he regarded as a Turkish invasion of the homeland.[68]

The events in Greece likely persuaded Mustafa Kemal to delay even more. The advent of Plastiras recreated the prospect of the old dangerous, triangular situation between Greece, Turkey, and Great Britain. Britain was opposed to Turkey at Chanak; now Greece again was opposed to Turkey in Eastern Thrace. The missing link was the connection between Britain and Greece. The possibility of conjunction again between Lloyd George and Venizelos was obviously a dangerous one for Kemal. General Harington, however, did not welcome this arrangement at all and believed that his diplomatic position would become "perfectly impossible" unless this Greek re-

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[67] Lindley to Curzon, September 27, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVIII, p. 101.

[68] Psomiades, op.cit., p. 42. These events led to the trial and execution of some of the more important Constantinist ministers. At the end of 1923 the Venizelists scored an overwhelming victory at the polls, King George left the country, and Greece was proclaimed a republic in May 1924.

organization was stopped at once. He feared a Turkish reaction against his own forces.[69] Previously Harington had even demanded the removal of the Greek gendarmerie from the Gallipoli Peninsula and the Greek military and naval missions from the neutral zone since he believed that their presence in those places was now "provocative."[70] Britain had already tried and failed to use Greek nationalism successfully against a Turkish resurgence. The Greeks were not to be given a second chance.

These contentions were supported in the British Cabinet by Lord Curzon, much to the chagrin of Lloyd George and Churchill. He revealed his distaste of the situation to Austen Chamberlain:

> I was very much alarmed at the idea put forward [at a recent Cabinet meeting] that we should once again seek the precarious and as I think worthless alliance of the Greeks, and very likely find ourselves once more at war with Turkey, with Greece alone on our side. Nothing in my opinion would reconcile the Country to such a development, and it would, I think, bring about the fall of the Government. It would also destroy at one blow the Allied unity which I was sent to Paris to endeavour to rebuild.[71]

Indeed, it seemed that Curzon and Harington were the only ones prepared to seek a diplomatic solution. On September 30 the Foreign Secretary revealed to his wife his displeasure at the atmosphere of increasing bellicosity within the Cabinet:

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[69] Harington to Worthington-Evans, September 29, 1922. Lloyd George Papers, F/207/2.

[70] Harington to Worthington-Evans, September 26, 1922. Ibid.

[71] Curzon to Chamberlain, September 27, 1922. Ronaldshay, op.cit., vol. III, p. 305.

> I have had to sustain the battle single-handed against all the fire-eaters and war-mongers. ... I hope there is still a possibility of keeping peace, though if left to themselves they would wreck it twice a day.[72]

But though Lord Curzon clashed with the majority of the Cabinet on this question, he did not really disagree with the ultimate aim of Britain's Chanak policy. In seeking a diplomatic rather than a military solution, he concentrated his objections entirely upon the means of this policy's enforcement rather than upon the hoped-for end results. In any case, British prospects for both a peaceful and successful solution in Turkey now rested squarely on the shoulders of General Harington.

At Chanak Harington was prepared to wait still longer, but in London the majority of the Cabinet was losing patience and was anxious to bring matters to a head. On September 29 the worst of Curzon's fears were realized. The following telegram was dispatched to General Harington in Constantinople:

> The Kemalists are obviously continuing to move up troops and are making efforts to net you in. [The] General Staff advises that the defensive position will be seriously endangered if this is allowed to continue, and that the time has come to avert this disaster. It has therefore been decided by the Cabinet that immediate notification is to be sent to the local commander of the Turkish troops around Chanak that unless his troops are withdrawn by a time to be fixed by you, at which time our combined forces will be in their proper positions, all the forces at

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[72] Curzon to Lady Curzon, September 30, 1922. Ibid., p. 307.

> our disposal, naval, military and air will open fire on the Turks. ... The time limit given should be short. It should not be forgotten that we have been warned by intelligence reports of the 30th September as the date of possible attack.[73]

The British defence force at Chanak and Nogara Point had by now been renamed the 28th Division and contained some 3,500 men. It was opposed by some 23,000 Turkish soldiers. The British troops, however, were backed up by some very impressive and formidable naval power in the Dardanelles.[74] These soldiers at Chanak had kept their heads, but the statesmen in Downing Street, led by the Prime Minister, had pulled the trigger. For Lloyd George this predicament was a far cry from the Portmadoc Debating Society where he had once launched a scathing attack on Gladstone's defence of the Suez Canal against an Egyptian nationalist revolt.[75] Here he was forty years later determined to preserve at all costs the "freedom" of a strategically similar waterway against a similar nationalist revolt.

Upon receipt of orders to present an ultimatum to the Turks at the most favourable opportunity General Harington intimated to the Cabinet that it could rely on his earnest efforts to carry out its policy. But as if to warn the Cabinet of his real intentions, he stated further that "My actions are only governed by the desire

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[73] Worthington-Evans to Harington, September 29, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVIII, p. 118.

[74] Walder, op.cit., pp. 270, 277.

[75] Lloyd George, Portmadoc Debating Society, November 13, 1882, "The Late War in Egypt", North Wales Express, November 24, 1882. Lloyd George Papers, A/6/1/2.

to save England from war if it can be done with honour ."[76] On September 30 he dispatched a flurry of telegrams to the War Office discounting the need for any military action. He argued that General Marden, who had replaced Colonel Shuttleworth in Chanak on September 26, was becoming stronger and better organized with every day's delay and that "I see no danger in the present situation."[77] Later, he explained that he shared the Cabinet's desire to end the procrastinations of Kemal and that he noted the decision of the Cabinet but "I would earnestly beg that [the] matter be left to my judgement [sic] for [the] moment." Then somewhat perturbed he concluded: "I have been incessantly working for peace which I thought was the wish of His Majesty's Government."[78] Finally, he passed along a message from Marden which declared that the British forces were no longer in danger at Chanak and that "as every day's delay makes us stronger [I] do not favour sending ultimatum."[79] Harington did not, and was supported by Rumbold, Curzon, and the Foreign Office. Harington later wrote in his memoirs that "I did not think of the telegrams in my pocket. I only thought that our nation did not want another war so soon."[80] In adopting this attitude he was obviously playing down the danger to his own troops at Chanak, and was perhaps over-emphasizing the amiability of the Turks. Nevertheless, his stubborn resistance to London's impatience

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[76] Harington to Worthington-Evans, September 29, 1922. Ibid., F/207/2.

[77] Harington to Worthington-Evans, September 30, 1922. Ibid.,

[78] Harington to Worthington-Evans, September 30, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVIII, pp. 118-9.

[79] Marden to Harington, September 30, 1922. Lloyd George Papers, F/207/2.

[80] General Sir Charles Harington, Tim Harington Looks Back, London, 1940, p. 126.

eventually proved successful, for on October 1, 1922 he was informed that Mustafa Kemal was prepared to meet him at Mudania in conference with the other Allied generals.[81] Upon hearing this news the British Cabinet shelved its contemplated vote of censure against Harington's recent conduct and began to draft some very precise instructions for the Supreme Commander of the Allied Armies in Constantinople.[82]

According to the Foreign Office the sole object of the Conference of Mudania was to fix a line of retirement for the Greek troops in Eastern Thrace, in agreement with the Greek and Turkish military authorities. In return the Turkish nationalists were "not to send troops either before or during [the] final peace conference into [the] neutral zones and not to cross [the] Straits of Marmora."[83] On October 3 General Harington crossed to Asia and met General Ismet Pasha at Mudania. The latter, encouraged by the presence of Henri Franklin-Bouillon, demanded that Turkish

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[81] It has been stated, quite melodramatically, that the British Government "challenged the armed might and the genius of Kemal with a few battalions - and won. It was the last occasion on which Great Britain stood up to a potential aggressor before the outbreak of the second World War." Robert Boothby, I Fight to Live, London 1947, p. 28. Kemal was hardly an "aggressor." He was merely reclaiming Turkish territory and, knowing he would get this at a peace conference, had little intention of going to war with the British Empire.

[82] For his diplomatic efforts General Harington received high praise from Lord Curzon: "I have fought alone against this Ephesian band [the Cabinet]. They even wanted to fall upon poor Harington who has shown far superior judgement [sic] and discretion to theirs, and tear him to pieces." Curzon to Hardinge, October 1, 1922. Lowe and Dockrill, op.cit., vol. II, p. 409.

[83] Curzon to Rumbold, October 1, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVIII, p. 120.

forces be allowed to cross the Straits and to occupy Eastern Thrace immediately. This the French and Italian Foreign Offices were prepared to accept, but Harington had other ideas. He was prepared to "summon" the Greeks to leave Eastern Thrace at once but wanted Allied, not Turkish, troops to replace them pending the outcome of the final peace conference. To this the French and Italian military agreed, but Franklin-Bouillon's continued machinations served to produce a deadlock. Apparently this French diplomat was even willing to support a full realization of the National Pact, including the total abolition of the Capitulations. Sir Horace Rumbold reported to the Foreign Office that "Franklin Bouillon's personal influence and intervention with Mustapha Kemal have been prejudicial to British interests. In his anxiety to be set up as a peace maker he has probably offered [the] Turks more than Great Britain and perhaps even France is prepared to give."[84] On October 5 Harington gave up and returned to Constantinople.

The following day Lord Curzon once again crossed to Paris for personal discussions with Poincaré. Pending the result of these conversations Harington was not to return to Mudania. In Paris Curzon, Poincaré, and Galli, the Italian Chargé d'Affaires, carried on two days of difficult negotiations until Curzon finally persuaded his Allies to accept the British viewpoint. The three Allied Governments now agreed that the Greek troops in Eastern

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[84] Rumbold to Curzon, October 4, 1922. Ibid., p. 140.

Thrace should be invited to retire as soon as possible to the west of the Maritza River. In the territory thus evacuated the Allies were to ensure by means of a provisional inter-Allied occupation the maintenance of order and public security until the establishment there of a Turkish administration and gendarmerie. This Turkish occupation was to take place within a period not exceeding a month after the evacuation of Greek troops. Upon the expiration of this period Allied troops would continue to occupy, during the sitting of the final peace conference, only certain points on the east bank of the Maritza. Those sections of the Straits area presently under Allied military control would not be affected.[85] On paper at least the Allies were united. Accordingly General Harington could present these terms to Ismet Pasha on behalf of the Entente, requesting the withdrawal of Turkish troops from the British positions at Chanak and the Ismid Peninsula as compensation for the prospective Greek withdrawal beyond the Maritza.

Ismet's response was still not encouraging. He continued to argue in favour of immediate Turkish occupation of Eastern Thrace and backed up his demands by increasing the number of Turkish troops in the regions of Chanak and Ismid. Again the British Cabinet lost patience and demanded appropriate action. On October 9

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[85] Fourth Paris Conversations, October 6-7, 1922. Ibid., pp. 155-76.

Harington received a telegram authorizing him to begin military operations.[86] A second arrived confirming the first.[87] The flicker of Allied unity kept going by Curzon had had its effect upon Lloyd George, prompting him to resume his traditionally intolerable attitude towards the Turk. As a result, Harington had now been placed in a similar position to that which he had occupied ten days previously. This time, however, with the situation appearing so hopeless, he passed the ultimatum on to General Marden in Chanak with the necessary instructions attached. Fortunately, at the eleventh hour Ismet accepted the Allied compromise. This was just in time, for apparently Harington's order of cancellation arrived only seventy-five minutes before Marden would have given the order to open fire.[88]

On October 11 the Armistice of Mudania was signed by all but the Greek representative, General Mazarakis, who claimed no authority and who anyhow could not contact Athens by wireless. The convention was to come into force at midnight October 14. Its operation was delayed by one day when at the last moment the Greek Government finally signified its assent, without ever having the heart to sign the document. By the terms of the Armistice of Mudania the Allies were to occupy the east bank of the Maritza,

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[86] Worthington-Evans to Harington, October 9, 1922. Lloyd George Papers, F/207/2.

[87] Worthington-Evans to Harington, October 9, 1922. Ibid.

[88] Harington, Tim Harington, p. 126.

including Adrianople, until a final treaty of peace had been concluded. The evacuation of Eastern Thrace by the Greek troops was to begin as soon as the Armistice came into force. Civil authority was to be transferred from the Greeks to the Allies to the Turks within a maximum period of thirty days after the evacuation of the Greek troops had been concluded. Allied contingents were to occupy Eastern Thrace to maintain law and order and to act in support of the inter-Allied civil missions. The withdrawal of the inter-Allied missions and contingents was to take place thirty days after the completion of the evacuation of Greek forces. The Allied forces in the area of Constantinople and the Straits would be withdrawn, as in the case of those stationed on the east bank of the Maritza, only with the completion of the final peace treaty. All Turkish troops were to stop their forward movements in Asia.[89] For the moment, all sides observed the convention loyally.

There can be no doubt that the Cabinet in London would have committed all the force it could muster to repel a Kemalist attack upon the British position at the Straits. Only here, of all the places in Turkey proper, was Britain determined to make a definite stand. Yet there were those still vehemently opposed to any return whatever of the Turks to European soil . On October 17 Sir Maurice Hankey confided to his diary that Winston Churchill "quite frankly

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[89] Armistice of Mudania, October 11, 1922. Mears, op.cit., pp. 658-9.

regretted that the Turks had not attacked us at Chanak, as he felt that the surrender to them of Eastern Thrace was humiliating, and that the return of the Turks to Europe meant an infinity of trouble." Hankey then remarked that

> I don't think the Prime minister felt very differently. I was constantly with him during the crisis, lunching and dining with him; and even the night before the armistice was signed, when information came in that the Turks were violating the neutral zones, he thought, and perhaps hoped that the [Mudania] Conference would break down. He talked constantly of the possible occupation of the Chatalja lines by the Greeks ....[90]

Indeed, Lloyd George revealed in his own memoirs that

> It was not a bluff. I certainly meant to fight and I was certain we should win. Had the Turks been checked in their victorious chase of a broken and a broken-spirited army, they would have been easier to deal with [at Lausanne]. The Greek army had not been annihilated. The veterans of the Balkan War and the Great War had not been slaughtered. They could have been re-formed and re-equipped. With the British troops behind them, this resuscitated army would have swept back Kemal's tired and ill-equipped forces.[91]

What would have been the consequences of an open war between Britain and Turkey is a question which no one can really answer. In spite of Lloyd George's determination British public opinion on this matter was leaning heavily towards the peacemakers. In this connection General Harington was applauded by the nation

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[90] Stephen Roskill, Hankey: Man of Secrets, vol. 2 (1919-1931), London, 1972, p. 295.

[91] Lloyd George, Peace Treaties, vol. II, p. 1350.

for his diplomatic efforts to maintain the peace, King George V declaring: "you have earned the gratitude of your fellow-countrymen for the wisdom, tact, patience and firmness displayed by you."[92] The Armistice of Mudania was also generally hailed by the press as the "triumph of Lord Curzon," in that a peaceful, diplomatic solution had been effected. This was the first stage in the recovery of the Foreign Office from its hitherto secondary position of weakly acquiescing in the unrealistic policies of Lloyd George. Hardinge was especially delighted:

> I cannot tell you how pleased I am that the credit for this achievement should fall to you, as it must ... give you a predominant position in the Cabinet in all matters concerned with Foreign Affairs. To one like myself whose whole life has been bound up with the F.O. it is most satisfactory to see the F.O. coming into its own again and I trust that the Garden City of Downing Street will now have its wings clipped.[93]

The British Ambassador in Paris correctly appraised the situation. Despite working towards a common goal at Chanak, Lloyd George and Lord Curzon differed primarily over the means of reaching that end result. The Prime Minister attempted to vindicate his war-like policy and to place elsewhere much of the responsibility for it.[94] In his memoirs, however, he forced himself to recognize the ugly fact that "the average Briton had had enough of fighting."[95] For Lord Curzon "the peacemaker," the challenge of effecting a final treaty of Turkey lay ahead. For Lloyd George "the warmaker," the worst was still to come.

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[92] Stamfordham to Harington, October 13, 1922. Harold Nicolson, King George the Fifth: His Life and Reign, London, 1953, p. 369.

[93] Hardinge to Curzon, October 11, 1922. Lowe and Dockrill, op.cit., vol. II, p. 374.

[94] Lloyd George, Manchester, October 14, 1922. The Times, October 16, 1922, p.17.

[95] Lloyd George, Peace Treaties, vol. II, p. 1350.

CHAPTER VIII

LAUSANNE: SALVAGING THE WRECKAGE

Before a conference to negotiate the final terms of a settlement with Turkey could meet, Lloyd George's Coalition Government had fallen. At a celebrated meeting at the Carlton Club on Thursday, October 19, Bonar Law and Stanley Baldwin led a majority of Conservatives in the decision to break with the Prime Minister. The latter handed in his resignation on the same day and a wholly Conservative administration was formed with Bonar Law as Prime Minister, which was confirmed at a general election on November 15. Curzon, after the Chanak crisis had shown what little weight he really carried with Lloyd George in foreign affairs, played a somewhat ambiguous but decisive role in the comings and goings among Unionist leaders preceding the conclusive meeting on the 19th. He remained in office and carried on as Foreign Secretary in the new regime, the "Cabinet of the Second Eleven."

It was the combination of Irish and domestic questions

which ruined the Coalition, but the Near Eastern crisis played a large part. The traditional Tory respect for the Turks was one factor. More important, the Conservative rebels against Lloyd George correctly appraised the mood of weariness which had spread through the country. This was the theme dominating the Conservative manifesto at the general election, bringing relief after the wide-ranging diplomacy of Britain's wartime leader. "The crying need of the nation at the moment," it ran, "is that we should have tranquillity and stability both at home and abroad so that free scope should be given to the initiative and enterprise of our citizens, for it is in that way far more than by any action of the Government that we can hope to recover from the economic and social results of the war."[1] With respect to the Turkish Question, the Conservatives were thus renouncing the imperialistic adventures of the former Prime Minister.

The site of the final Peace Conference was to be located in a neutral country, which automatically implied Switzerland. Geneva, however, was ruled out as being the seat of the League of Nations and therefore possibly uncomfortable for the Turks and the Russians. As the next closest place, Lausanne was agreed upon by all concerned. This city also had the advantage of lying on the direct

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[1] Conservative Election Manifesto, November 4, 1922. Robert Blake, The Unknown Prime Minister: The Life and Times of Andrew Bonar Law 1858-1923, London, 1955, p. 466.

route of the Paris-Constantinople Orient Express. But this did not make it any easier in getting the delegates to Lausanne and the Conference under way. The political crisis and the resulting general election in Great Britain had already caused a considerable delay. Furthermore, Curzon was careful, before he left London, to make his Allied counterparts understand that the British Government would refuse to attend any conference unless formal and explicit understanding was reached in advance with France and Italy. The Foreign Secretary made his intentions perfectly clear to King George V:

> I do not mean to go until I have some clear idea whether Allied unity means something or absolutely nothing. Whether in fact we are going to stand out on any point, or whether I am to get on to my stomach and crawl. If this latter, I had sooner crawl in Downing St. than before the eyes of the world at Lausanne.[2]

This was certainly a much bolder tone on the part of the Foreign Office. Hitherto Lord Curzon had always stood in the shadow of Lloyd George, exercising a less than primary role in determining British foreign policy. Now, under the new Conservative administration, the power of the Foreign Office was restored. Bonar Law was inexperienced in foreign affairs and gave Curzon virtually a free hand in determining a peace with Turkey. Yet Curzon made no significant changes in the operation of Britain's Turkish policy. He did not bring British foreign policy into line with the Conservative desire for "tranquillity and stability." Despite the opportunity

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[2]Nicolson, King George, p. 373.

to break with the past, Curzon resolved to conduct Lloyd George's Chanak policy to its logical conclusion, even to the point of launching military operations.

On November 18 the British Foreign Secretary once again crossed to Paris to discuss the situation with the French Prime Minister and the Italian Ambassador. To Poincaré Curzon insisted, before any dealings with the Turks, upon constituting a united front among the three major Allied Powers. But this united front which he had hoped to integrate was for the moment dislocated by the fact that the Sultan of Turkey had escaped on the previous day from his palace and taken refuge aboard a British battleship.[3] Lord Curzon, however, was able to convince Poincaré that this gesture on the part of Mohammed VI was no pre-arranged plot by the British Government but a perfectly natural motion of escape from the encroaching Kemalists. After five hours of discussion, an agreement upon a joint basis of policy was reached. A communiqué was published to the effect that this latest round of talks in Paris had fully confirmed the complete unity of the three Allied Powers on all matters to be discussed at Lausanne.[4] The new Italian Prime Minister, Benito Mussolini, who had seized power just eleven days after the fall of Lloyd George, was brought into the fold at Territet, just outside Lausanne, on November 19.[5]

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[3]The Sultan's brother, Abdul Mejid, succeeded him as Caliph (until the abolition of the Caliphate in 1924) but not as Sultan.

[4]Fifth Paris Conversations, November 18, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVIII, pp. 292-307.

[5]Territet Conversations, November 19, 1922. Ibid., pp. 308-17.

The Conference of Lausanne formally opened on November 20, 1922. Those nations represented included Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan; Greece, Romania, and Yugoslavia; Turkey (now represented solely by the Grand National Assembly as a result of the resignation of the Constantinople government on November 5 and the flight of the Sultan on November 17); and Bulgaria and the United States (in observatory capacities only). As early as October 26 Soviet Russia had been invited to the Peace Conference, but as a participant only in discussions pertaining to the Straits regime. The Allies had acceded to this after the Soviet Foreign Office had warned that any decision on the Straits taken without Russian consent would never be final and would merely "sow the seeds of new conflicts."[6] The Soviets, however, were not moved by this token concession and demanded representation on all the Conference committees. Chicherin, the Soviet Foreign Secretary, insisted that nothing could justify the summoning of a conference on the Near East, with the participation of several Powers, including Yugoslavia, Romania, and even Japan, but excluding Russia, "which is most concerned in the settlement of these matters."[7] On November 2 Chicherin presented Lord Curzon with the following emphatic declaration:

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[6] Karakhan to Curzon, September 24, 1922. S.D.F.P., vol. I (1917-1924), p. 335.

[7] Chicherin to Curzon, October 19, 1922. Ibid., p. 339.

> the Soviet Government cannot in any circumstances agree that it should be invited to participate only in the discussion of the question of the Straits and not in the whole work of the conference . ....
>
> Their [the Allies] refusal to invite Russia to participate in the conference, apart from the discussion of the Straits question ... represents an attempt to violate the rights and the interests of the Russian Republic in the field of foreign affairs and to damage its international reputation.[8]

Curzon replied that the three Allied Powers had invited to Lausanne only those states "which are not actually in a state of definite peace with [Turkey]."[9] Obviously this did not satisfy the Soviets. Curzon's preceding statement was quite vague and open to wide interpretation but it is difficult to believe that Soviet Russia was in more of "a state of definite peace" with Turkey than were Japan, Bulgaria,and the United States. The Soviets, however, really had no choice but to acquiesce and to accept what little they had achieved.

At the Lausanne Conference there was, for the first time since the Armistice of 1918, a spectacle of a negotiated rather than a dictated peace. The atmosphere was extremely tense, all the delegates realizing that British and Turkish troops still stood virtually face to face on the edge of Asia Minor. An early stalemate in negotiations or breakdown in the Conference had a good chance of resulting in war. The British Government, represented by Lord Curzon

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[8] Chicherin to Curzon, November 2, 1922. Ibid., pp. 343-4.

[9] Curzon to Peters, November 10, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVIII, p. 248.

(Chairman of all the political and territorial discussions) and Sir Horace Rumbold, was determined on peace, but only at a certain price. Curzon was in Lausanne to salvage what he could from the mistakes of the old Coalition Government and at times his rather intractable and arrogant attitude raised the level of discussion to a fever pitch. This probably upset Prime Minister Bonar Law most of all. The last thing he wanted was war with Turkey. It was precisely the danger of such an Anglo-Turkish conflict - at the time of Chanak - which was the immediate cause of Lloyd George's downfall and the replacement of the Coalition by the present Conservative Government. War with Turkey would be a bad start for the Prime Minister's policy of "tranquillity."

The three most important points for the British at Lausanne were the questions of the Straits, the Turko-Soviet alliance, and Mosul. For Britain, a favourable solution to the first question would mean prodding a favourable response from Turkey. In turn, this would imply a corresponding solution to the second question. Since the problem of the future regulation of the Straits was stressed by the Soviet Foreign Office as the cornerstone of the Turko-Soviet alliance, and since Soviet policy as to this vital waterway was so violently opposed to that of Great Britain, any resulting Anglo-Turkish agreement in this area would severely undermine future Turko-Soviet relations. As a result,

the Straits question tended to become an Anglo-Soviet issue, with the Turks, though technically allies of Russia, trapped in the middle.

Great Britain advocated complete freedom of passage through the Straits for both commercial and military vessels of all nations. Russia, on the other hand, was prepared to see the waterway opened for commercial vessels but sought to close the Straits altogether to ships of war. The control and closure of the Straits by Turkey during the recent war had proved to be a serious handicap for the Allies in the prosecution of the war. Despite the fall of Lloyd George, the British Government still argued that "in no circumstances should Turkey obstruct the passage of the British fleet into the Black Sea." Great Britain at least - even if France and Italy did not - now regarded it an advantage to be able to hold Soviet Russia in check by keeping the Straits open to warships under international control. Britain feared that "the closing of the Straits would render her [Russia] almost invulnerable, and would leave her free to treat the Black Sea as a Russian lake, to isolate Roumania and Bulgaria, and to use the valuable communications between Odessa and Batoum for the transport of troops to the Middle East." The British were also somewhat apprehensive of the growing French influence in the Balkans. The Foreign Office, concerned with the fate of Eastern Europe, argued that

> If such countries as Bulgaria and Roumania, to say nothing of Turkey, are rendered immune either to pressure or assistance arising from command of the sea by some other Power (e.g. Great Britain), France will be able to exercise her influence with greater facility. It is hardly an exaggeration to state that if we are precluded from sending the British fleet into the Black Sea, if, that is, the mouths of the Danube flow into a permanent Russo-Turkish lake, the whole connexus of Danubian alliances and inter-dependencies which centre round the Little Entente will tend all the more to fall within the orbit either of France or Russia.[10]

If necessary, the British Delegation at Lausanne was prepared to tackle the Straits question alone.

By opening the Straits to both military and commercial vessels the British would have virtually nothing to fear. Their naval superiority gave them an advantageous position over the Black Sea Powers and particularly Russia, as Allied intervention in Russia, possible largely through the opening of the Straits, had clearly demonstrated. The Soviets, on the other hand, had found the free passage of Allied warships and troop transports into the Black Sea, and assistance thus given to the enemies of the Bolshevik Revolution, most disagreeable. In view of the utter inadequacy of their disorganized Black Sea fleet and their slender hope of building a strong naval force, their position was exceedingly vulnerable. On November 5 Leon Trotsky, the Soviet War Minister, declared to the press that "The freedom of the Straits is nothing but a military dictatorship of the Black Sea for the country possessing

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[10] Nicolson Memorandum, November 15, 1922. Ibid., p. 975.

the biggest fleet."[11] The Soviet Delegation at Lausanne therefore fought for closure of the Straits to warships of all nations at all times.

When the Straits question was taken up by the Lausanne Conference for the first time on December 4, 1920, Ismet Pasha, now Turkish Foreign Secretary, declined an invitation from Curzon to speak first, and it fell to the newly-arrived Soviet delegate to make the opening statement. Chicherin, who spoke as head of a Delegation representing "Russia, Ukraine, and Georgia" (a composite group including Vorovsky and Mdivani), gave a sound exhibition of polished diplomacy:

> There must be lasting guarantees for the maintenance of peace in the Black Sea, the safety of its shores, peace in the Near East, and the security of Constantinople; that is to say, the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus must be permanently closed both in peace and in war to warships, armed vessels, and military aircraft of all countries except Turkey.

In making an exception of Turkey Chicherin argued that the Turks should be permitted to militarize the Straits:

> The Russian Government and its allies insist further on the fact that the Turkish Government will only be in a position to defend the Straits and the Sea of Marmora effectively against all attacks if it receives express recognition of its right to fortify and arm its coasts, to possess a war fleet and to apply to the defence of the Straits and of the Sea of Marmora all the technical accessories of modern warfare.

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[11] Trotsky to the Press, November 5, 1922. S.D.F.P., vol. I (1917-1924), p. 345.

Chicherin concluded his opening remarks by re-emphasizing Trotsky's argument of the previous month: "The closing of the Straits to warships is also in accordance with the principle of equality between all states, whereas the opening of the Straits to warships would confer a preponderant position on the strongest sea Power."[12]

This formula, however, was vigourously opposed by the Romanian Delegation on behalf of the Little Entente, the members of which would have been left in the Black Sea area to face Soviet military power had the Soviet proposal been adopted. The Romanians also could not agree to "the key of the Straits being in the pocket of one Power alone."[13] With Romania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Greece all declaring for the Western view, Curzon put to the obviously embarrassed Ismet the blunt question whether he accepted the Russian case as the case of the Turkish Government. Ismet replied that, while "among the various proposals submitted to the conference those of the Russo-Ukrainian-Georgian delegation seemed to him to correspond with the point of view of the Turkish delegation," he was still "obliged to examine" any other proposals which might be made.[14] A narrow wedge had thus been skillfully inserted between the Soviet and Turkish Delegations. It was to widen dramatically as the Conference proceeded.

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[12] Chicherin, Lausanne Conference, December 4, 1922. Command 1814; "Records of Proceedings of the Lausanne Conference on Near Eastern Affairs, 1922-1923, and Draft Terms of Peace", Accounts and Papers, vol. XVI (November 13-6, 1923), p. 129.

[13] Duca, Lausanne Conference, December 4, 1922. Ibid., p. 131.

[14] Ismet, Lausanne Conference, December 4, 1922. Ibid., p. 135.

On December 6 Curzon claimed that Chicherin's formula would give to Soviet Russia a position of exceptional and indefensible advantage within the Black Sea. He contended that even though "Russian and Turkish warships have the right under international law to free passage through the Suez, Panama and Kiel canals and through all the other straits of the world, M. Chicherin proposes to deny these rights to other nations in regard to the passage between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea." In response to Chicherin's argument that the opening of the Straits to warships would be to the advantage of the strongest naval Power, Curzon declared that the Soviet Foreign Secretary had neglected to mention that the closing of the Black Sea would place the other littoral countries at the mercy of the strongest land forces, i.e. Russia itself. "In fact," said Curzon in conclusion, "the more closely we examine the Russian programme, the more closely does it emerge that it has only one object in view, viz., to convert the Black Sea into a Russian lake with Turkey as the faithful guardian at the gates."[15] Curzon's argument, however, is a good deal exaggerated. In 1922 Russia had just finished suffering through an exhausting civil war and was in no position whatsoever to adopt an aggressive foreign policy in southeastern Europe. Militarily, Russia did not dare

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[15] Curzon, Lausanne Conference, December 6, 1922. Ibid., pp. 140-1.

launch a campaign against Romania, the closest littoral Power. The Romanians, as members of the Little Entente, were politically supported by the West. Russia's Black Sea fleet, moreover, was utterly inadequate and thoroughly disorganized with little or no hope of building a strong naval force for some time to come. Curzon, though, was able to exploit the Russophobia of the majority of the representatives at Lausanne by painting the picture of a great Bolshevik peril.

When Ismet Pasha finally did make a formal statement on behalf of the Turkish Government, he concentrated his attention on the security of Constantinople and its hinterland. He argued that the non-fortification of the Straits amounted to leaving the most vulnerable and important districts of Turkey defenceless and at the mercy of a sudden attack. He pointed out that none of the Powers represented at Lausanne had been deprived of the right to defend its capital. But despite these statements Ismet did not dismiss the British proposal from consideration. What he was really after was some form of international guarantee to safeguard Constantinople, the Straits, and the Sea of Marmora against any surprise attack by land or sea.[16]

The official Allied draft proposal for a Straits convention was submitted to the Conference on December 18, 1922. In attempting to gain favour from the Turks, it was a somewhat watered down version of the original British proposal. However, it did not detract

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[16] Ismet, Lausanne Conference, December 8, 1922, Ibid., pp. 157-8.

from the underlying principle of the freedom of the Straits. The official draft proceeded as follows:

> The maximum force which any one Power may send through the Straits into the Black Sea is not to be greater than that of the most powerful of the littoral Powers of the Black Sea existing in that sea at the time of passage, but with the proviso that the Powers at all times and under all circumstances reserve to themselves the right to send a minimum force of three ships into the Black Sea, of which three ships no individual ship shall exceed 10,000 tons.

Smaller demilitarized zones were to be set up around the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. All the islands in the Sea of Marmora, with the exception of Emir Ali Adan, were to be demilitarized. In the Aegean Sea the islands of Samothrace, Lemnos, Imbros, Tenedos, and the Rabbit Islands were also to be demilitarized. The Turks were to be permitted a garrison of 12,000 at Constantinople. An arsenal and a naval base could also be maintained there. The safety of the whole Straits area was to be guaranteed through the offices of the League of Nations.[17]

The Soviet draft scheme was submitted the following day. Its whole major argument appeared to be quite clearly contained in its penultimate article: "The contracting Powers are agreed to elaborate and sign within three months from the adoption of the present regulation an international Act recognising the Black Sea as a mare clausum of the littoral Powers, even in the

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[17] Allied Draft Proposals for Straits Convention, Lausanne Conference, December 18, 1922. Ibid., pp. 244-9.

event of changes being made in the regime of the Straits which modify the above stipulations."[18] The Soviets, in attempting to destroy the impression that they were seeking to dominate the Black Sea alone, launched a strong campaign espousing the rights and interests of Turkey with ostentatious emphasis. Chicherin claimed that the draft convention submitted by the Western Powers was "tantamount to depriving the Turkish people of control over transit and of effective sovereignty in the Straits" and "a flagrant violation of the sovereignty and independence of Turkey." Undeterred by its formal exclusion from negotiations on the peace treaty, the Soviet Delegation submitted a long memorandum emphasizing the injustice to Turkey of the terms proposed by the Western Allies.[19]

The Soviet argument, however, was rejected outright by all the Allied and Associated Powers. The overwhelming majority of the Conference supported the latest British proposals. And since the Turks had committed themselves by the National Pact to accept any solution for the Straits which the Conference approved, they accepted the British proposal on condition that the Straits territory received an international guarantee. To this the Allies readily agreed. The National Pact, however, was not the sole reason for Turkish acceptance of the British proposal; in fact, it was

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[19] Chicherin, Lausanne Conference, December 19, 1922. Ibid., pp. 265-78.

no sudden concession at all. It was clear that the Turkish Delegation at Lausanne was more embarrassed than flattered by Chicherin's eager championship. The Straits question was a matter of keener interest to Soviet Russia than to Turkey. Moreover, quite enough traditional anti-Russian feeling survived in Turkey to make the Turks unwilling to see themselves permanently face to face with Russia in the Black Sea, with the Western Powers, to whom they had owed so much in the past, locked out. The Turkish Delegation at Lausanne, having discovered it could purchase other advantages by throwing over the Soviet alliance, was prepared to do so without regard to the feelings or interests of the Soviet Delegation. An example of this was the Turks' decision to join the League of Nations, which was not recognized by Soviet Russia and which Chicherin had labelled "only a coalition of certain Powers."[20] Chicherin thus found himself in the latter stages of the Conference both isolated and deprived of the main argument on which he had chosen to rely. In the closing words of Ismet Pasha: "What do the Allies demand? Demilitarisation of the Straits, passage of commercial vessels and ships of war, as provided in the scheme for the freedom of the Straits? We accept these practically in toto." [21] With this dramatic Turkish decision

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[20] Chicherin, Lausanne Conference, December 19, 1922. S.D.F.P., vol. I (1917-1924), p. 357.

[21] Ismet, Lausanne Conference, December 20, 1922. Command 1814, op.cit., pp. 280-5.

Britain had just solved two major problems at once. The Straits question had been settled favourably and the Turko-Soviet alliance had received a severely damaging blow. The Straits Convention, eventually signed on February 1, 1923, was in general a victory for the Western and above all British point of view.

On December 31, 1922 Lord Curzon was forced to pay a hurried visit to Paris for the purpose of consultation with Bonar Law who, after the comparative failure of the London Reparation Conference of December 9-11, had decided, through personal conversations, to attempt to dissuade Poincaré from occupying the Ruhr. Faced as he was by the impending rupture of the Anglo-French alliance, Bonar Law desired that the Turkish situation be liquidated upon any terms. If the Turks advanced upon the Straits he would see to it that the British Government not go to war alone and that the British forces "withdraw altogether even from Gallipoli."[22] This attitude at this particular time could only hurt British policy in Turkey. The Straits Convention had not yet been formally signed and Curzon's hard-fought diplomatic victory was immediately placed in jeopardy. On January 4, 1923 the Paris Reparation Conference collapsed. One week later French troops occupied the Ruhr. The united front which Curzon had striven so industriously to foster and to maintain was severely damaged.

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[22] Bonar Law Report, Crowe to Curzon, December 27, 1922. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVIII, p. 417.

The chief French delegate at Lausanne, Barrère, pleaded ill-health and returned to the French Embassy in Rome. Nevile Henderson, acting in the absence of Rumbold, reported from Constantinople that the failure of the Allied meeting in Paris had given rise to greater optimism both at Angora and at Constantinople as to the outcome of the Lausanne Conference: "It is clear that [the] Turks now consider [the] Allied front to be broken and their task thereby facilitated."[23] Growing Turkish intractability was to be dmonstrated with the unpopular question of Mosul.

As could be expected Curzon was deeply discouraged by the attitude of Bonar Law, declaring upon his return to Lausanne that "the feet of the Prime Minister were glacial. Positively glacial."[24] In a New Year's greeting to his wife Curzon revealed with much frustration the real attitude of his Prime Minister: "I found Bonar Law longing to clear out of Mosul, the Straits, Constantinople; willing to give up everything and anything rather than have a row; astonished at the responsibility I have assumed at Lausanne and prepared for me to back down everywhere."[25] Lord Curzon, however, in spite of the French, Bonar Law, and the British public and press, was not about to give up now. The Foreign Secretary could not be controlled by Bonar Law in the manner of Lloyd George and hence was

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[23] Henderson to Crowe, January 7, 1923. Ibid., p. 432.

[24] Curzon to Staff Member, January 2, 1923. Nicolson, Curzon, p. 324.

[25] Curzon to Lady Curzon, January 1, 1923. Ronaldshay, op.cit., vol. III, p. 332.

prepared to see British policy in all matters concerning Turkey carried on to its logical conclusion and not interrupted merely to placate the pessimism of the present Prime Minister. In other words, Curzon was prepared to vindicate the Chanak policy as originated by the previous Lloyd George administration. Personally, this was not so difficult for him to do. He had never had any qualms about the ultimate aims of this policy; it was only the means of carrying it out which he had hitherto opposed.

Throughout December 1922 and January 1923 the British Foreign Secretary argued strongly in favour of the retention of the Vilayet of Mosul as an integral part of British Mesopotamia. This was the final important question for British policy at Lausanne. Curzon believed that unless Great Britain was able to impose its wishes upon Turkey in this area, its prestige would suffer, not only in Mesopotamia, but throughout the Middle East. The Mosul question was the only outstanding controversy between Turkey and Great Britain in which Britain stood completely alone. The interests of no other Power were involved; thus Britain could look for no outside support. In the words of Harold Nicolson, a member of the British Delegation at Lausanne, this Anglo-Turkish conflict was "clean-cut to the point of nudity."[26]

At the time of the Armistice of Mudros British troops had occupied most of the Vilayet of Mosul but not the town or the

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[26]Nicolson, Curzon, p. 328.

whole area which Curzon was now claiming. This area was subsequently occupied as a "point of strategical importance." Thus Britain could not, with perfect confidence, claim the whole Vilayet by right of military conquest alone. Moreover, the British had encouraged the "Assyrians" to rise against the Turks and were under a moral obligation not to replace their home pasturages within Turkish frontiers. Already some 35,000 Nestorian Christians had taken refuge in Mesopotamia. The Kurds, however, who were in the majority, presented the biggest headache. It seemed that whenever the British wanted them to feel 'race'-conscious, they refused to manifest any such desire. And this made it especially difficult for Britain since Curzon's strongest argument in preventing the Vilayet of Mosul from reverting to the Turks was based on grounds of nationality. As a result, negotiations were to drag on beyond the boundaries of the Conference of Lausanne itself.

There was also the question of oil in Mosul. On June 27, 1914 the Turkish Petroleum Company was instituted and obtained exclusive rights over the oil deposits in the Vilayets of Baghdad and Mosul. British interests held 75% of the shares while the remaining 25% were accorded to German interests. Under the Sykes-Picot Agreement the Vilayet of Mosul had been placed within the French zone, but the French Government had agreed, insofar as British interests were concerned, to recognize the above concession. In 1918 Lloyd George induced Clemenceau to agree to surrender to Great Britain the Vilayet of Mosul provided that the French obtained

a share, which would not be less than the former German share, in these oil deposits. The latter promise was subsequently embodied in the Long-Berenger Agreement of April 18, 1919 and in the Cadman-Berthelot Agreement of April 24, 1920.

The struggle over Mosul began with an agreement to recognize the differing viewpoints on the legal position, since the Turks had never accepted, and could not be persuaded to accept, either the Sykes-Picot Agreement or the revision of that Agreement, when the French agreed to recognize Mosul as part of the British mandate for Mesopotamia. All the initial arguments were carried out by means of closed correspondence between Ismet and Curzon. When Ismet argued in favour of the incorporation of Mosul into the new Turkey along 'racial' lines, Curzon countered by presenting the latest population estimates of the Vilayet which clearly indicated an overwhelming Kurdish majority. Even the Arabs vastly outnumbered the Turks: "The proportion of 'Turks' to Arabs can be shown most effectively by the statement that the 'Turks' in the whole of the Mosul Vilayet are less numerous than the Arabs in the town of Mosul alone." Moreover, Curzon claimed that the "Turks" of Mosul were not Ottoman Turks. They called themselves Turkomans, and the Turanian language they spoke resembled Azerbaijani rather than the Turkish of Constantinople. Curzon argued further that the concession of Mosul to Turkey would make the position of Mesopotamia "untenable"; that Mosul had always had strong historical

connections with Baghdad; and that the "economic relations of the Mosul Vilayet are entirely with Baghdad and with the Arab city of Aleppo, both of which cities the National Pact leaves outside the boundaries of Turkey."[27]

Ismet countered by producing statistics to show that the Arab element in Mosul was inconsequential as compared to an overwhelming Turko-Kurd majority. He claimed that the dialect spoken by the Mosul Turks was the same as that of Anatolia; "It is enough for us to state that the Anatolian Turks are Turkomans and that these two words mean one and the same thing." He lumped both the Turks and Kurds together since they were as inseparable as the English and the Welsh. He claimed further that, historically, Mosul had been in Turkish hands for over eleven centuries; geographically, it was closer to Anatolia than to Baghdad; economically, Mosul - southern Anatolia relations were far more important than economic relations with Baghdad; and strategically, the Persian frontier had been for centuries as near to Baghdad as the frontier line Turkey was now proposing.[28]

Three days later Curzon replied again, claiming that the Turkish figures were entirely inaccurate. On Ismet's theory that the Turks and the Kurds were of the same stock, Curzon argued

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[27]Mosul Population Estimate, 1921: Kurds - 454,720; Arabs - 185,763; Turkomans - 65,895; Christians - 62,225; Jews - 16,865; Curzon to Ismet, December 14, 1922. Command 1814, op.cit., pp. 364-6.

[28]Ismet to Curzon, December 23, 1922. Ibid., pp. 373-9.

there was no historical or other evidence of any weight, and it was one "which the Kurds themselves would reject with scorn." He admitted that a small Turkish minority might desire reunion with Turkey but he truly doubted that the Kurds or Arabs would, stating somewhat sarcastically that "it is open to anyone to form an independent judgment as to whether the Southern Kurds would prefer to accept an arrangement which, while connecting them with their market and supply centre, Baghdad, leaves them free to use their own language, to be governed by their own tribal leaders and officials, and to develop their native institutions, or to be placed under a Government whose representatives can find nothing to say to their national demands except that all Kurds are Turks."[29] Ismet, however, continued to claim that the "Kurds would never agree to be separated from their Turkish brethren in a land reduced to the status of autonomous territory."[30]

The Grand National Assembly felt strongly on the subject of Mosul and the Turkish Delegation at Lausanne thus exhibited a good deal of determination. The prospect of an equally determined British stand, however, appeared to encounter opposition from a far wider spectrum than simply the Turks themselves. The British House of Commons was certainly less keen. Bonar Law, committed as he was to a policy of peace, was anxious to clear out of Mesopotamia

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[29] Curzon to Ismet, December 26, 1922. Ibid., p. 384.

[30] Ismet to Curzon, December 29, 1922. Ibid., p. 391.

"bag and baggage."[31] He feared that the Turks might seize upon Mosul as grounds for which to break up the Conference. "This would be the most unfortunate thing which could happen in every way, as half of our own people and the whole of the world would say that we have refused peace for the sake of oil."[32] To Curzon he expressed two other convictions:

> The first is that we should not go to war for Mosul, and second that, if the French - as we know to be the case - will not join us, we shall not by ourselves fight to enforce what remains of the Treaty of Sèvres. I feel so strongly on both these points that, unless something quite unforeseen should change my view, I would not take responsibility for any other policy.[33]

The Prime Minister's views were echoed by the popular press. Lord Beaverbrook's Daily Express, paraphrasing Bismarck's famous statement, declared that "Mosul is not worth the bones of one single British soldier." "Mespot" was merely a wastepot, a miserable wilderness of swamp and desert; indeed, its proposed evacuation had been a paramount issue in the 1922 election.[34] Curzon, however, was determined to assert British interests in Mosul to the utmost limit short of war. He continued to exploit Bonar Law's lack of experience in foreign affairs. Thus, despite frequent outbursts, the Prime Minister held virtually no influence at all over British policy at Lausanne.

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[31] Bonar Law to Curzon, December 5, 1922. Bonar Law Papers, 111/12/38.

[32] Bonar Law to Curzon, December 28, 1922. Ibid., 111/12/54.

[33] Bonar Law to Curzon, January 8, 1923. Ibid., 111/12/57.

[34] Nicolson, Curzon, p. 331.

Curzon also had the advantage of knowing more about Mosul than Ismet who, when the problem was finally brought before the Conference in an official capacity on January 23, 1923, delivered, in support of the Turkish claim, a long, monotonous, and often inaccurate lecture of an historical and statistical kind. Curzon made havoc of his facts. With his typical supply of sarcasm he replied to Ismet: "It was reserved for the Turkish delegation to discover for the first time in history that the Kurds were Turks. Nobody has ever found it out of before." He concluded with the proposal that the entire question of the frontier be referred to the League of Nations.[35] The idea of submitting the question to the League was certainly not conducive to an early elimination of all Anglo-Turkish points of friction. It did not exactly please the Prime Minister. But Curzon was able to win over strong support at the Colonial Office, which was now responsible for the affairs of British Mesopotamia.[36]

Ismet at first refused to accept this suggestion while the Angora Government, according to the French High Commissioner in Constantinople, appealed to France to support its proposal for a plebiscite for Mosul.[37] The French though, as well as the Italian and Japanese Delegations, threw their weight behind Lord Curzon,

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[35] Curzon, Lausanne Conference, January 23, 1923. Command 1814, op.cit., pp. 356-61.

[36] Crowe to Curzon, January 12, 1923. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVIII, p. 442.

[37] Henderson to Lindsay, January 25, 1923. Ibid., p. 470.

thereby forcing the Turks to give in. In supporting Britain on this point, despite strained Anglo-French relations over the recent occupation of the Ruhr, France may have been looking for complementary British support on the economic and financial questions. In any case, the French had little to gain from being obstinate. Under a compromise reached on February 4, twelve months of Anglo-Turkish negotiations on the subject of Mosul were provided for. If these failed, the British plan for submitting the dispute to the League of Nations would come into effect. This formula, with the twelve-month period reduced to one of nine months, was accepted at the resumed Conference on June 26 and written into the text of the Treaty of Lausanne. The question was not finally resolved until 1926. The Anglo-Turkish talks were duly held; there was discussion in the Supreme Council of the League of Nations and a decision by the Permanent Court. Finally a treaty concluded by Britain and Turkey on June 5, 1926 recognized Mosul as lying within the borders of Mesopotamia. The eventual Turko-Iraqi frontier, as it stands today, is practically identical with that proposal by Lord Curzon at the Conference of Lausanne.

Despite Lord Curzon's ability to achieve successfully the major goals of of British policy at Lausanne, the Conference was doomed to break down over other issues, less important to Britain,

but, ironically, more significant to its French and Italian Allies. These issues, embodied in the Draft Treaty of January 31, concerned primarily judicial and financial questions. While the Turks demanded nothing less than the complete abolition of the Capitulations, France and Italy claimed that present Turkish law was incapable of meeting all the requirements and necessities of modern life. Financially, these two Western Allies had placed a very heavy emphasis on concessions, which prompted Ismet to declare that if "Turkey were to accept the economic clauses of the treaty as now proposed by the Allies she would be placed in a position of economic servitude."[38] Despite some very dramatic bargaining in the Beau Rivage Hotel on February 4, 1923, with Curzon's train waiting in the wings, no compromise solution was agreed upon. The Turks did offer to conclude peace by signing a treaty embodying all but the judicial and financial questions, which were to be left open for further discussion. Ironically, this was a very tempting offer of a separate peace between Great Britain and Turkey. But Curzon knew that British public opinion would judge his success or failure entirely by whether the whole Treaty had, or had not, been signed. Thus, in deference to his Allies, he declined this Turkish invitation, and the Conference of Lausanne broke down completely.

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[38] Ismet, Lausanne Conference, February 4, 1923. Command 1814, op.cit., p. 846.

But what seemed an apparent failure for Britain could equally be regarded as a signal success. Although the Treaty had not been signed and the Daily Mail had expectedly headlined the "Failure of Lord Curzon,"[39] the French press, hitherto not exactly Britain's or Curzon's best friend, hailed the British Foreign Secretary's "triomphe" in avoiding war and in enabling British prestige in the East to be largely re-established. The ironic fact had emerged that the peculiarly British desiderata had all but been accorded, whereas the financial, economic, and capitulatory clauses, in which the French and the Italians were most interested, were still subject to acute controversy. France and Italy were thus faced with the rather appalling realization that, whereas they had gone to Lausanne confident that Turkey regarded Britain as the major enemy and themselves as friends, it was the former who managed to obtain its desires and the latter who failed completely to win any consessions from the Turks.

When the Conference collapsed, British troops were once again put on a war footing in the Straits area. The British Cabinet was prepared, if necessary, to order the British forces at Constantinople and on the Ismid Peninsula to be withdrawn to support the main body of troops at Gallipoli and Chanak.[40] Despite the absence of Lloyd George, the British Government was still prepared to fight for the

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[39] Daily Mail, February 5, 1923, p. 1.

[40] Lindsay to Curzon, January 30, 1923. D.B.F.P., First Series, vol. XVIII, p. 481.

security of the Dardanelles. This time, however, the crisis took place at Smyrna. By the terms of the Armistice of Mudros the Allied Powers were permitted, by the stationing of warships in the most strategic ports, to safeguard the rights of their nationals in Turkey. At Smyrna Britain maintained only one ship, the H.M.S. Calypso. But two days after the breakdown at Lausanne the Angora Government demanded that all foreign warships of more than one thousand tons leave Smyrna harbour before midnight February 7. Nevile Henderson was prepared to maintain the British and Allied position under the Armistice of Mudros and refused to submit to any restrictions on the movements of warships. Admiral Brock reaffirmed this principle by the dispatch of the H.M.S. Curaçao from Constantinople to Smyrna. He proposed to warn the Smyrna authorities that if British warships were interfered with, the town would be bombarded.[41] For his part, Lord Curzon declared that the Turkish summons could not be accepted and that no ships would be withdrawn before the deadline. "If attacked they are to defend themselves."[42] Again Curzon was demonstrating his now absolute command of British foreign policy. Ignoring the pacific utterances of Bonar Law, he was prepared to make a strong military and naval stand against the Turk. This was a means of enforcement much more conducive to the interests of Lloyd George. It represented the military solution which the Foreign Secretary

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[41] Henderson to Curzon, February 6, 1923. Ibid., p. 509.

[42] Curzon to Henderson, February 7, 1923. Ibid., p. 515.

had hitherto consistently opposed when promulgated by the former Prime Minister. Indeed, British policy in Turkey was still very Lloyd-Georgian, though without the presence of Lloyd George.

After the first deadline was passed without incident and the H.M.S. Curaçao safely entered Smyrna harbour, the Allied High Commissions in Constantinople agreed to send a joint note of protest to Adnan Bey, the Turkish representative in the old capital.[43] The Turkish reply was at first vague, stating that the Government was prepared to "discuss" the issue.[44] Then on February 11 the Foreign Office was informed that the French High Commissioner had received a virtual ultimatum from the Turks demanding that if all Allied warships were not withdrawn from Smyrna within three days, the Mudania convention would be regarded as having been broken.[45] Curzon's immediate reaction was to draw up a draft note strongly supporting the Allied case. He argued that the Armistice of Mudros still governed relations between Turkey and the three Allied Governments. Thus "the allies regard themselves as having full liberty to send ships to Smyrna to protect their nationals, the property of their nationals, and the carrying on of peaceful commerce between the allies through this port."[46]

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[43] Henderson to Curzon, February 8, 1923. Ibid., pp. 517-8.
[44] Henderson to Curzon, February 10, 1923. Ibid., p. 532.
[45] Henderson to Curzon, February 11, 1923. Ibid., p. 533.
[46] Curzon to Henderson, February 12, 1923. Ibid., p. 538.

By February 13, i.e. the day before the second deadline expired, Henderson reported the Turkish attitude to be softening once again and endeavouring to back down without abandoning the pretentions to impose restrictions on foreign warships in Turkish ports. Angora would never abandon this claim. At the same time the Turks would not attempt to enforce it unless they regarded themselves as seriously threatened. "They are looking for [an] excuse to get out of [the] situation without losing too much face."[47] After the deadline had again been passed without incident, the Allied High Commissions again sent a joint note to Angora similar to that of Curzon's original draft.[48] Eventually the British Government decided to withdraw the Curaçao and other supporting vessels, leaving the Calypso alone in Smyrna as before. Curzon emphasized that this move was simply "a sign of conciliation and friendliness" and in no way did it indicate the abandonment of the priciple affirmed by the original dispatch of the Curaçao and maintained by the retention of the Calypso. He hoped "by thus extricating the Turks from a difficult situation to close the incident and also to strengthen the hands of Ismet Pasha and of the moderate party at Angora."[49]

Though not without difficulty, Lord Curzon's hopes were eventually fulfilled. Originally the deputies of the Grand National

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[47] Henderson to Curzon, February 13, 1923. Ibid., p. 543.
[48] Henderson to Curzon, February 15, 1923. Ibid., p. 549.
[49] Curzon to Henderson, February 24, 1923. Ibid., pp. 564-5.

Assembly, after rejecting the Draft Treaty, had criticized Ismet and, more seriously, Kemal. As a foretaste of things to come, Kemal finally dissolved the Assembly and elections were held throughout Turkey. There was in reality only one party: his own. The results, as expected, confirmed him in power, and the continuance of negotiations with the Allies was authorized. On March 8 a note to this effect was sent to the Allies by Ismet Pasha which proposed, among other things, that the economic clauses be detached from the rest of the Treaty and discussed separately.[50] Curzon at once took up the ideas contained in the Angora note and invited the Allied Powers to meet in London. A brief conference, with Bompard of France, Garroni of Italy, and Baron Hayashi of Japan present, was held at the Foreign Office from March 21-8, 1923. Once accord was reached among the Allies, yet another note was dispatched to the Turkish Government, in which the Allies declined to separate the economic clauses from the rest of the Treaty.[51] On this understanding the Conference of Lausanne resumed its sessions on April 23.

From the British point of view the second session of the Lausanne Conference was anti-climatic. Curzon did not participate, his place as head of the British Delegation being assumed by Sir Horace Rumbold. In fact, most of the other Delegations were headed

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[50] Rumbold to Curzon, March 10, 1923. Ibid., pp. 582-7.

[51] Curzon to Rumbold, March 28, 1923. Ibid., pp. 666-9.

by lesser personages. By the time resumption took place agreement had already been reached in principle on the abolition of the Capitulations, as required by the National Pact of 1920. The only question was that of the form of judicial protection for foreigners in Turkey. The Allies, as in the first session, suggested a panel of foreign counsellors to advise the Turks on their legal system and in some cases actually to sit in Turkish courts. This was rejected as inconsistent with Turkish sovereignty. The most that the Turks would agree to was the appointment of a number of foreign jurists to serve for a period of not more than five years in the Turkish Ministry of Justice, for the purpose of advising on legislation and hearing complaints from resident foreigners; they were to have no part in the administration of Turkish law. This was the sole remnant of foreign legal control which remained after the passing of the regime of the Capitulations.[52]

In much the same way, the old machinery of a foreign-dominated council for ensuring the payment of the Ottoman Public Debt was swept away by the Treaty of Lausanne signed on July 24, 1923. Henceforward Turkey was to have charge of the administration of its own revenues without external interference. The residue of the Ottoman Debt was distributed between Turkey itself and the successor states of the old Ottoman Empire. Alone of the states which surrendered in 1918 Turkey paid no reparations to its "conquerors." Turkey thus

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[52] Lausanne Conference, December 28, 1922. Command 1814, op.cit., pp. 482-92.

re-entered into the enjoyment of its sovereign financial rights. From the British and Turkish points of view the Conference of Lausanne had been a success. Angora had acceded to the British principle of the freedom of the Straits and to the British proposals concerning Mosul. In return Turkish sovereignty was officially recognized throughout Anatolia, in Thrace as far as the Maritza River (including the west bank city of Karagach), and on the Aegean islands of Imbros and Tenedos near the mouth of the Dardanelles. The Greeks, interestingly enough, as a result of the return to the diplomatic scene of Venizelos, fared quite well at Lausanne. There the former Greek Prime Minister gained for his country virtually all of Western Thrace from its pre-war possessors, Bulgaria and Turkey, as well as the vast majority of the islands in the Aegean Sea. The Treaty of Lausanne also provided for a compulsory exchange of Greek and Turkish populations presently under foreign rule so that the Greek minority in western Asia Minor should not become once more a source of conflict.[53] This exchange, however, did not apply to the Greeks of Constantinople or to the Turks of Western Thrace.

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[53]Of the approximately 1,100,000 Greeks resident in Asia Minor before the Greek defeat, only 500,000 remained. 320,000 additional Greeks had fled from Eastern Thrace. The Greek Government was therefore faced with the problem of housing and supporting close to a million refugees. On the other hand, there were some 450,000 Turks resident on Greek territory. Dr. Nansen of the League of Nations suggested these populations be exchanged. Curzon much disliked this scheme which he regarded as inhuman. "I detest," he said, "having anything to do with it." In the end the scheme, considering the difficulties, worked amazingly well. Nicolson, Curzon, p. 302.

Substantially the Treaty of Lausanne was an international recognition of the demands formulated in the National Pact.[54]

The completed Treaty evoked conflicting judgments. Churchill called it a "peace of mutual respect,"[55] Lloyd George a "rout."[56] But it was given permanence and solidity by one overriding virtue; it faced facts. It acknowledged that Ionia could never be Greek; that the Armenians were too few and too scattered to form the basis of a state; that Britain was determined to keep the Straits open and under international control. The Treaty of Lausanne was not ratified by the British Government until August 2, 1924. This delay was due not only to the vexatious problem of Mosul but to the fact that Canada, despite all its previous inferences of dissociation from the Turkish Question in September 1922, had been resentful over what it considered its inferior representation at Lausanne, and thus refused to consent to the Treaty. This problem, though, was probably the least of Britain's worries throughout the entire period. Once officially recognized, wrote an observer in 1924, the "Treaty of Lausanne with its Annexes seemed destined, in all human probability, to inaugurate a more lasting settlement, not only than the Treaty of Sèvres, but than the Treaties of Versailles, St. Germain, Trianon and Neuilly."[57] The generation which followed was to confirm this judgment.

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[54] Command 1929, "Treaty of Peace with Turkey, and other Instruments, signed at Lausanne on 24th July, 1923, with Agreements between Greece and Turkey, signed on 30th January, 1923, and Subsidiary Documents forming part of the Turkish Peace Settlement", Accounts and Papers, vol. XXV (February 13 - November 16, 1923), pp. 550-721.

[55] Churchill, op.cit., p. 437.

[56] Lloyd George, Peace Treaties, vol. II, p. 1361.

[57] Temperley, op.cit., vol. VI, p. 115.

CONCLUSION

"Injustice, arrogance, displayed in the hour of triumph will never be forgotten or forgiven." So declared Prime Minister Lloyd George at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. He argued further that "it seems to me that we ought to endeavour as if we were impartial arbiters, forgetful of the passions of war."[1] The above statements refer to Germany but, placed in the Turkish context, they throw some very interesting light on the influence of emotion in international diplomacy. As a result of his intense Turkophobia, the Prime Minister treated the peace settlement with Turkey in exactly the opposite manner from which he preached for dealing with Germany. He strongly believed that the Turk was unfit to rule and he was forever arguing that, by closing the Straits, the Turks had prolonged the agony of war for at least a further two years. Lloyd George was most definitely affected by the "passions of war;" he was at no time the "impartial arbiter". His "arrogance" in particular, "displayed in the hour of triumph," was not at all conducive to a successful settlement with the Turk, who neither forgot nor forgave.

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[1] Martin Gilbert (ed.), Lloyd George, Englewood Cliffs, 1968, pp. 62-3.

Yet Lloyd George must not bear the sole responsibility for Britain's unrealistic policy in dealing with the Turkish peace settlement. Most of the time the Prime Minister received support from the majority of the Cabinet. The Foreign Office under Balfour and Curzon, the War Office under Worthington-Evans, and the Colonial Office under Churchill all acquiesced in Lloyd George's quite blatantly anti-Turk policies. This does not mean to say that there were no differences of opinion within the British Cabinet. There were, indeed, many and varied opinions, but they must not be over-emphasized. Neither Balfour nor Curzon nor Worthington-Evans nor Churchill was really principled enough to stand up to the opposition of the Prime Minister. Not one understood when he should resign and was unable to employ at critical junctures the threat of resignation. They quite readily allowed themselves to be forced onto the bandwagon of Lloyd George. Even after the Prime Minister had fallen from power, Lord Curzon freely conducted Lloyd George's Chanak policy to its logical conclusion. Bonar Law, though not entirely disinterested in foreign affairs, was inexperienced in that field and, unlike Lloyd George, had virtually no control over Curzon or influence in the ultimate Turkish settlement. Still, the Foreign Office was as uncompromising with the Turk in 1923 as it had ever been since 1918. There is no truth to the legend that Mustafa Kemal was the "beneficiary of the Carlton Club."[2] Edwin Montagu at the India was the only Cabinet

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[2]The Right Honourable H.A.L. Fisher, A History of Europe, vol. III, The Liberal Experiment, London, 1935, p. 1182.

member principled enough to oppose consistently the anti-Turkish policy of Lloyd George. This unflinching attitude cost him his political career.

The British Government's opposition to Turkish nationalism manifested itself in the support of rival national movements, i.e. those of Greece and Armenia. The British deeply misunderstood the Turkish national movement under Mustafa Kemal. They associated Kemalism with Moslem fanaticism and the wartime Committee of Union and Progress. The Government was therefore quite distrustul of it. One Young Turk Revolution had already been enough for Great Britain. To counteract the growing strength of Turkish nationalism, Britain supported the national aspirations of both Greeks and Armenians. But it supported the latter two only so long as direct British interests were not imperilled. The primary function of the Greeks and the Armenians was to keep the Turkish position weak. In this sense, British policy in Turkey was really quite negative. Britain's lack of positive support for Greek and Armenian nationalism against that of the Turk was evidenced by the British abandonment of the former whenever the going got too rough. The Armenians in eastern Anatolia were left to be "sandwiched" unmercifully between the forces of Kemalism and Bolshevism. At Smyrna, in western Anatolia, British support also vanished, allowing the Turks to drive the Greeks right out of Asia Minor.

The British Government could afford to let this happen since Asia Minor represented interests of basically secondary importance to Great Britain. The fundamental problem for Britain within the Turkish Question was to establish at Constantinople and the Straits a regime conducive to British interests, i.e. a regime which would safeguard the opening of the Straits at all times to both commercial vessels and ships of war of all nations. At the end of 1918 Constantinople was already under an effective British military occupation while the rest of Turkey proper remained quite passive. There was no Mustafa Kemal or Turkish nationalist movement at this critical time. Britain was in an extremely good situation to obtain from the Turk a favourable solution to the question of the Straits regime. But Lloyd George's distrust of this Turk persuaded the British Government to support strongly Greek and Armenian claims in Asia Minor as well as the division of this territory into Allied spheres of influence - issues of only secondary importance to Great Britain. In effect, the British Government preached the complete destruction of the Ottoman Empire, even to the point of dismembering Turkey proper. It was deemed most advantageous for Britain to take the opportunity to continue hitting the Turks while they were apparently down and out.

Unfortunately for British policy, however, the Turks had never really been knocked out by the war. The Turk may have lost

his Empire but not his homeland. The Turkish-speaking heartland of the Ottoman Empire had never been conquered during the war, either by British or Allied troops. And Mustafa Kemal saw to it that it was not "conquered" by the Treaty of Sèvres. The Kemalist Movement was like a hornet's nest in the middle of Asia Minor, daring the British to reach into the unknown to wipe it out. The British Government, in all its arrogance, could not resist. Spurred on by the Prime Minister's intense Turkophobia and by the deception of having conquered militarily the whole of Turkey proper, Britain was sucked in and stung badly; four years of crucial diplomatic activity were needlessly wasted. Asia Minor aside from Mosul, was a question of primary importance to France and Italy, Greece and Armenia, but only of secondary interest to Great Britain. For her, there were no vital economic interests in that region. Such British economic interests as there were in Turkey, when the Arabs had seceded, lay in transit into the Black Sea through the Straits rather than in the economy of Anatolian Turkey itself.

So, by arrogantly promoting secondary issues under a false concept, British policy unnecessarily wasted four years of diplomacy before securing at Lausanne in 1923 what could have easily been accomplished at Paris in 1919. It took Britain until the end of 1922 to realize that Asia Minor was just too big a mouthful to swallow.

From both the political and military points of view Britain finally came to realize that it was as impossible to deal with Mustafa Kemal and the Anatolian interior by merely holding a position at Constantinople as it was to deal with Sinn Fein and the Irish countryside by simply sitting at Dublin.

By sweeping into the fray Britain came up against a variety of problems, both external and domestic, all of which made a favourable solution to the Straits question considerably more difficult. The British Government invited trouble and got it in the form of the wavering attitudes of France and Italy, and the unwillingness of the United States to do more than exhort from afar, the unsteady politics of Greece, and the constant plea for an Armenian national home. At the same time there were distracting domestic questions such as the Irish Treaty negotiations, the unemployment problem, and the increasing discomfort of the Conservatives with their position in the Coalition.

But despite the trauma of the Turkish Question, British diplomacy suffered little permanent damage. Anglo-French relations settled down after Lausanne, being freed from the angry collisions and confrontations of the years immediately following the Armistice of Mudros. Anglo-Italian relations were easily re-shaped after the coming of the Mussolini regime. The same was true for Anglo-Greek relations, the loss of Smyrna and Eastern Thrace leaving no deep scar.

Only the Armenian and Kurdish secessionists were left to nourish thoughts of Perfidious Albion, but their importance on the world scene was minimal.[3] In any event Kemal himself broke violently with the Ottoman tradition of mistreating minorities. Indeed, the Kemalist revolution neither petered out nor turned into an aggressive military dictatorship. Instead it transformed Turkey into a reformed but essentially stable and conservative state. There was neither revanchism nor lingering hatred of the peacemakers. The British position in Egypt, Cyprus, and the Arab mandates was not complicated by Turkish irredentism. British commercials vessels and ships of war could come and go in the Levant and through the Straits without hindrance from Angora. In view of its fundamental aims and wartime "conquests," for what more could Britain seriously have hoped?

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[3]Proposals for an Armenian national home were put forward at Lausanne but were refused by the Turks and not pressed by any of the other Powers. Even less consideration was given to the Kurds. A Kurdish revolt in 1925 was suppressed by the Turks with considerable brutality. It was followed by lesser risings in 1929 and 1930.

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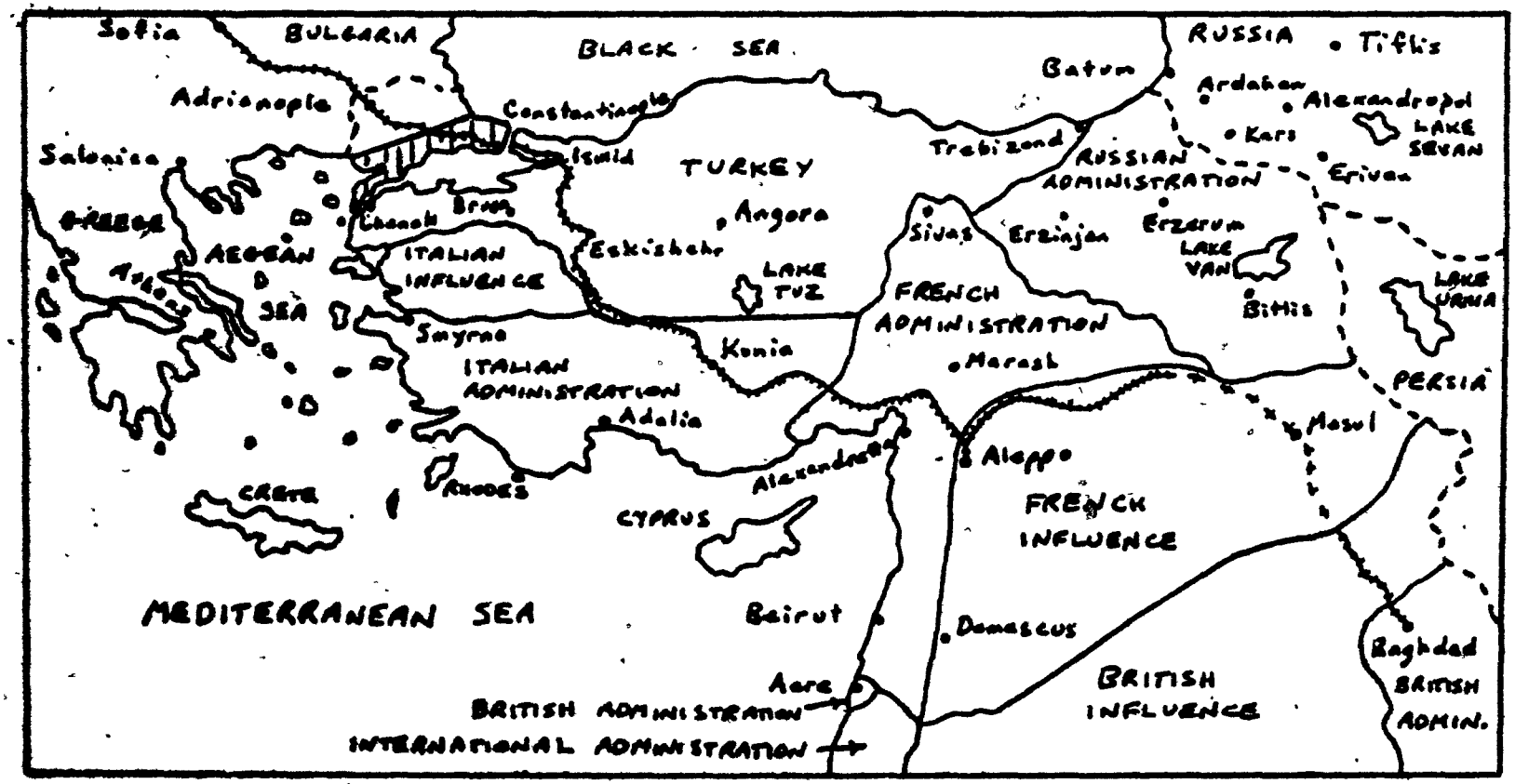
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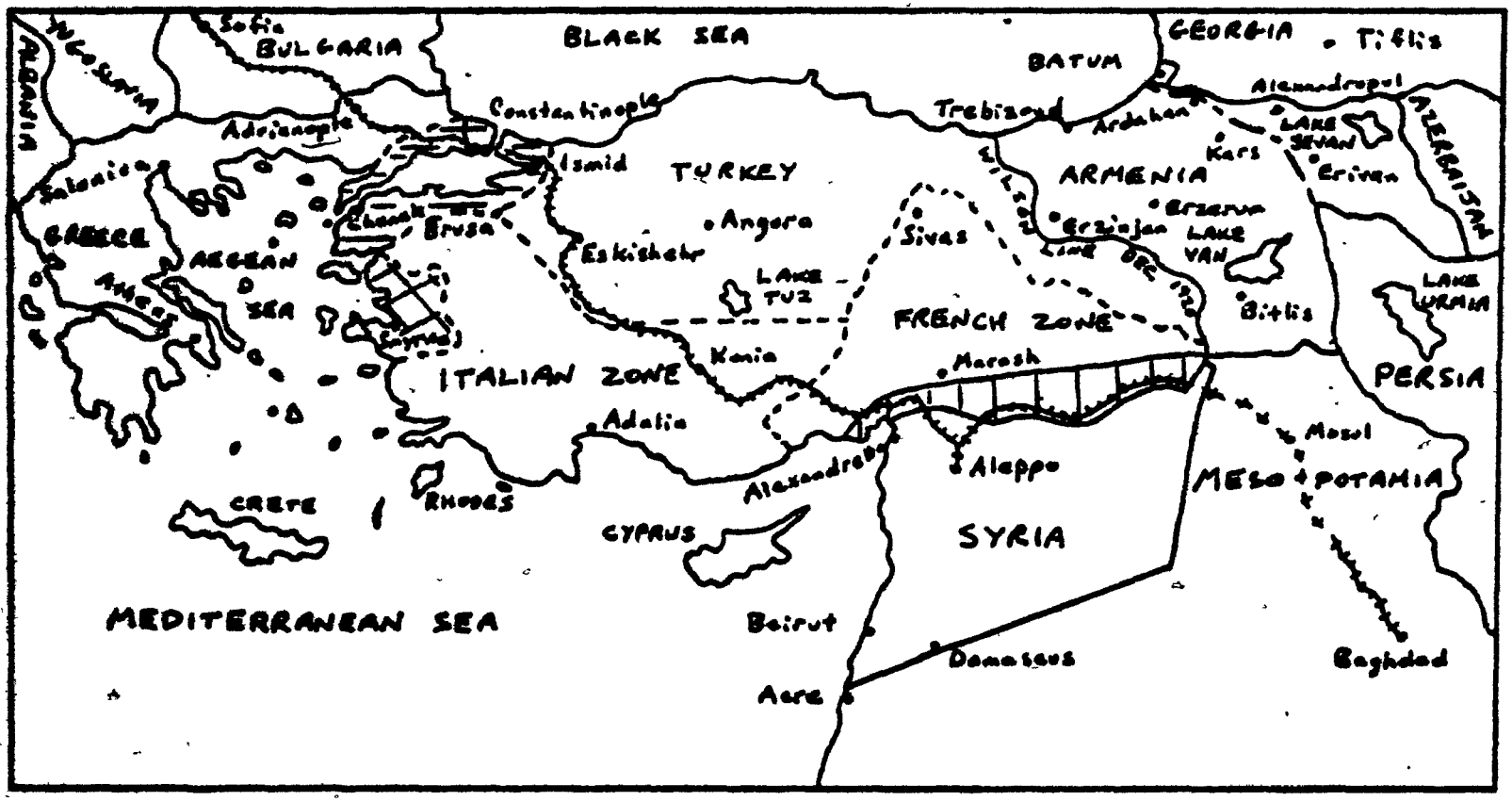


ALLIED SECRET AGREEMENTS 1915-1917

Straits Area to Russia

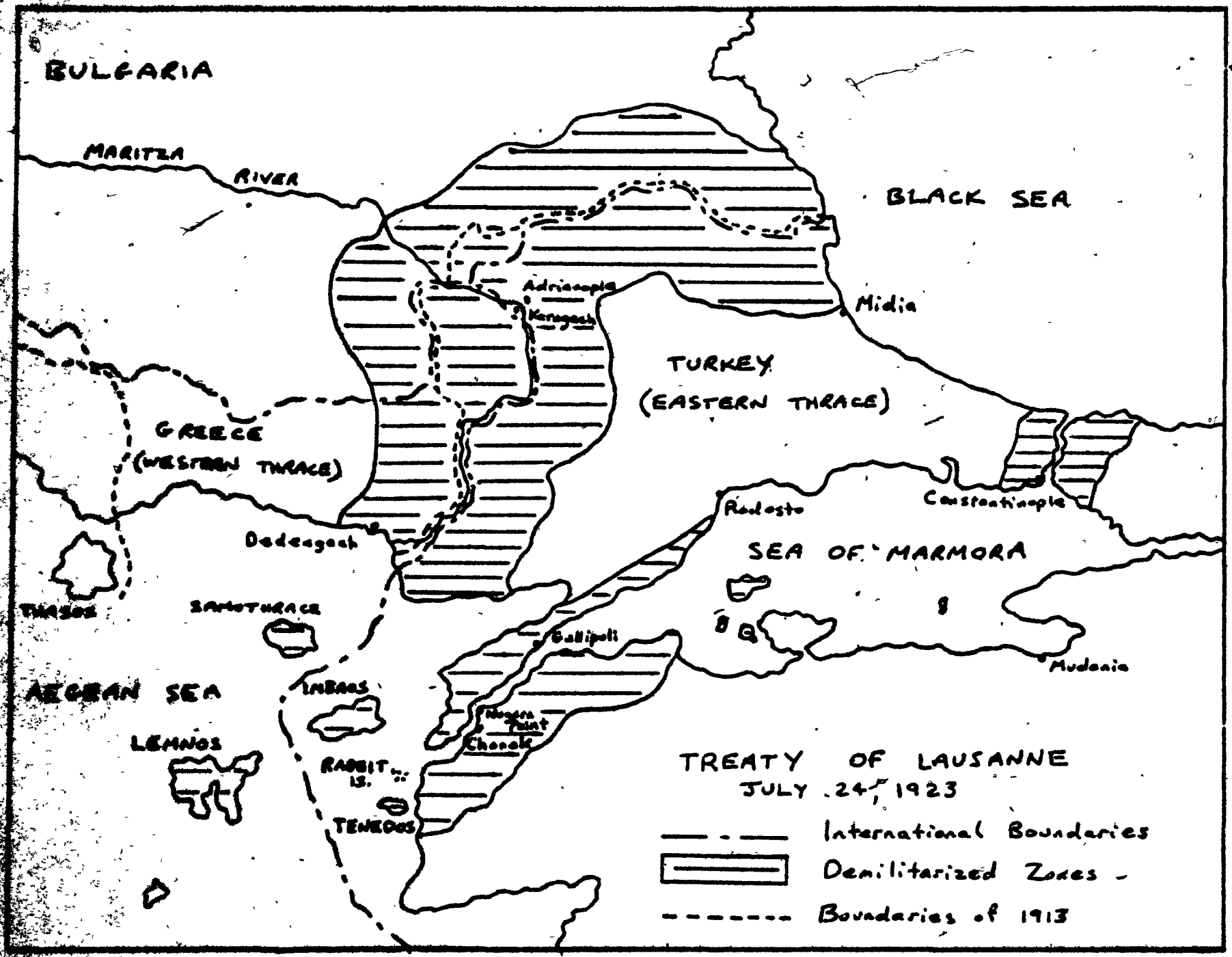
Pre-War International Frontiers

Anatolian-Baghad Railway



TREATY OF SEVRES AUGUST 10, 1920

- International Frontiers
- Internal Frontiers
- Anatolian-Baghdad Railway
- Final Turko-Soviet Frontier (Treaty of Moscow March 16, 1921)
- International Zone of the Straits
- Territory of Smyrna
- French/Cessian to Turkey (Treaty of Angora October 20, 1921)


BULGARIA
MARITZA
RIVER
BLACK SEA
Adrianople
Midia
TURKEY
(EASTERN THRACE)
GREECE
(WESTERN THRACE)
Rodosto
Constantinople
Dedeagach
SEA OF MARMORA
THASOS
SAMOTHRACE
Gallipoli
Mudania
AEGEAN SEA
IMBROS
LEMNOS
RABBIT IS.
TENEDOS
TREATY OF LAUSANNE
JULY 24, 1923
International Boundaries
Demilitarized Zones
Boundaries of 1913