

IN THE SHADOW OF NUCLEAR ARMS:
THE MIDDLE EAST AND TURKEY IN THE 1950s

İBRAHİM MURAT KASAPSARAÇOĞLU

BOĞAZIÇI UNIVERSITY

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İbrahim Murat Kasapsaraçođlu

Bođaziçi University

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This dissertation has been approved on 10 December 2013 by:

Prof.Dr.Aydın Babuna (advisor)

Prof.Dr.Şevket Pamuk

Prof.Dr.M.Asım Karaömerliođlu

Prof.Dr.Gencer Özcan

Assoc.Prof.Gün Kut

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This study examines Turkey's Middle East policy in the 1950s, which was the most problematic and conflictual decade of the Cold War. The dynamics of the great power global politics and regional politics will provide the context of this analysis. In this context, the developments in the region, i.e., the Middle East Command, the Turkish-Pakistani Pact, the Baghdad Pact, the Suez Crisis and the Arab-Israeli War, the Turkish-Syrian Crisis, the United Arab Republic, the coup d'etat in Iraq and the crises in Lebanon and Jordan, and the policies of both Turkey and the states in the region regarding these developments will be examined. The approaches of the opposition in the Turkish parliament and the press will also be discussed to reflect the positions of these domestic actors regarding Democrat Party's Middle East policy. Moreover, as political relations, Turkey's economic and military relations with the Middle East states will be analyzed.

The analysis will mainly be based on archival documents, i.e., the archives of the United Kingdom, the United States, the archives of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, and the newspapers and journals. This study attempts to make a contribution to the literature with its content and different approach. After these analyses this study concludes that Turkey's Middle East policy and the developments in the region can not be understood only from the perspective of the great powers because all the individual states in the region had their country-specific dynamics and interests that they sought to maximize. In addition to providing security, to provide economic development and social support were the main inseparable motives of the states in the region. Thus, throughout the 1950s, the states in the region, including Turkey, tried to harmonize their foreign and domestic policies.

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Başlık: Nükleer Silahların Gölgesinde: 1950'li Yıllarda Ortadoğu ve Türkiye

Bu çalışma Türkiye'nin Soğuk Savaş'ın en sorunlu ve çatışmalı on yılı olan 1950'lerdeki Ortadoğu politikasını analiz etmektedir. Büyük güçlerin küresel ve bölgesel politika dinamikleri bu çalışmanın çerçevesini oluşturmaktadır. Bu çerçevede; Ortadoğu Komutanlığı, Türkiye-Pakistan Anlaşması, Bağdat Paketi, Süveyş Krizi ve Arap-İsrail Savaşı, Türkiye-Suriye Krizi, Birleşik Arap Cumhuriyeti, Irak Darbesi, Lübnan ve Ürdün Krizleri gibi gelişmelere ve Türkiye'nin ve bölge ülkelerinin bu gelişmelere dair politikalarına odaklanılacaktır. Türkiye'deki parlamento muhalefeti ve basın gibi aktörlerin yaklaşımları da Demokrat Parti'nin Ortadoğu politikalarına karşı pozisyonlarını yansıtmak amacıyla tartışılacaktır. Buna ek olarak, siyasal ilişkilerin yanısıra Türkiye'nin bölge ülkeleriyle olan ekonomik ve askeri ilişkileri de analiz edilecektir.

Bu çalışma, esas olarak İngiliz ve Amerikan Arşiv belgeleri, Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi Tutanakları, gazete ve dergilerden elde edilen verilere dayanmaktadır. Bu çalışma içeriği ve bakış açısıyla literatüre katkı sağlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu analizlerden sonra bu çalışmanın temel çıkarımı; bölgedeki tüm devletlerin bu dönemde kendilerine özgü dinamiklerinin ve çıkarlarının olduğu ve Türkiye'nin Ortadoğu politikasının ve bölgesel gelişmelerin, sadece büyük güçlerin perspektifinden anlaşılamayacağıdır. Güvenliğin yanısıra, ekonomik gelişmeyi ve toplumsal desteği sağlamak bölgedeki devletlerin birbirinden ayrılmaz saikleri olmuştur. Bu sebeple, 1950ler boyunca Türkiye ve diğer bölge ülkeleri, iç ve dış politikalarını birbiriyle uyumlu hale getirme çabasında olmuşlardır.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Name of the Author: İbrahim Murat Kasapsaraçođlu

Place of Birth: Denizli

Date of Birth: 4 June 1984

Education:

Ph.D : Bođaziçi University Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History 2009-2013

M.A : Bođaziçi University Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History 2007-2009

B.A : Bođaziçi University Political Science and International Relations 2002-2007

Lycee: Denizli Anadolu Lisesi 1995-2002

Areas of Special Interest and Study:

Diplomatic History, History of the Cold War, History of the Middle East, Turkish Foreign Policy

Professional Experience:

Instructor, Bođaziçi University Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History 2010-2012

Research Assistant, Bođaziçi University Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History 2008-2009

Awards/Honors:

Honors Student, Bođaziçi University Political Science and International Relations 2007

Grants/Scholarships:

Ph.D. Scholarship from The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) 2009-2013

Publications:

Actors and Dynamics: The Turkish Foreign Policy Decision Making Process during the Cold War, 1945-1991 (Germany: LAP, Lambert Academic Publishing, 2010)

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CONTENTS

PREFACE.....	x
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 2: THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS AND THE MIDDLE EAST IN THE 1950s.....	9
The Cold War and the Great Powers.....	9
The Reflections of the Great Power Politics in the Middle East in the 1950s.....	16
The Dynamics of the Middle East Politics in the 1950s.....	28
The Intrastate Dynamics of the Regional Actors.....	39
Concluding Remarks.....	62
CHAPTER 3: THE MIDDLE EAST AND TURKEY 1950-1953.....	64
The Middle East Command (1951-1952).....	74
The Alternative Approach(es) to the Regional Alliance.....	119
Concluding Remarks.....	124
CHAPTER 4: THE MIDDLE EAST AND TURKEY 1954-1960.....	125
The Turkish-Pakistani Pact (1954).....	126
The Baghdad Pact (1955).....	151
Concluding Remarks.....	261
CHAPTER 5: THE CRISES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND TURKEY 1950-1960..	264
The Suez Canal Crisis, Arab-Israeli War and Turkey (1956).....	265
The Turkish-Syrian Crisis (1957).....	290

The United Arab Republic and Turkey (1958).....	340
The Iraqi Coup d'état and Turkey (1958).....	349
The Lebanon and Jordan Crises and Turkey (1958).....	360
Concluding Remarks.....	380
CHAPTER 6: THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF TURKEY'S MIDDLE EAST POLICY 1950-1960.....	382
The Turkish Economy in the 1950s.....	383
Turkey's Economic Relations with the Middle East States in the 1950s...	395
The Middle East Oil and Turkey.....	395
Commercial Agreements with the Middle East States.....	418
Turkey's Military Relations with the Middle East States.....	428
Concluding Remarks.....	433
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION.....	435
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	446

TABLES

1. Imports and Exports with the Capitalist States
2. Imports and Exports with the Socialist States
3. Imports and Exports with the Middle East States

PREFACE

When I completed my M.A. thesis, one of the major conclusions was that the “bipolar” system of the Cold War and the literature on this assumption had to be re-examined because there were deviations in the relations between the states in either “blocs”. In other words, the two blocs were not homogenous and monolithic, so that states in either bloc had political, economic and cultural relations with the states in the opposite bloc, including the leader states. Turkey was not an exception and Turkey’s foreign policy during the Cold War had to be re-studied, especially the “hottest phase”, from the end of the Second World War to the mid-1960s. The Democrat Party period was the most important era because of the perception of the Democrat Party’s foreign policy as being in ardent support of the policies of the United States, especially in the Middle East, without giving the Democrat Party any room to formulate policies that deviated from the interests of the United States which was the leader of the capitalist bloc.

This assumption formulated the following question that instigated my mind and shaped my research question as follows:

Was Turkey’s Middle East policy during the Democrat Party period, specifically between the years 1954 and 1960, only a derivative of the international conjuncture of the era or were there some divergences that were determined by Turkey’s country-specific or internal dynamics such as political actors or the economy that were not directly linked to the interests of the United States in the region?

This problematic forced me to question and analyze the Turkish foreign policy in the 1950s and also the history of the Cold War which squeezed the states – like Turkey- within the borders and limits of the superpower politics that based on

power relations which were determined by the nuclear threat and the possibility of a nuclear war.

However, the statements of the political actors in Turkey showed that security and the threat from the Soviet Union were not the only determinants of Turkish foreign policy in the 1950s. The statements of the main actors of the Democrat Party, i.e., Celal Bayar and Adnan Menderes, show that the Democrat Party's main policy objectives were the maintenance of the security/territorial integrity of Turkey as well as providing the economic development in the country.

The former can be regarded as the leitmotiv of the foreign policy and, the latter, of the domestic one. However, the maintenance of security and economic development cannot be separated from each other if Turkey is regarded as a medium-size power of the international arena during the Democrat Party period. Therefore, the vitality of security concerns made economic development as a determinant of foreign policy for providing economic assistance not to be vulnerable to so-called the communist threat through strengthening the economy and modernization of the army. In addition, economic assistance was also urgent for the investments which were determinant of the Democrat Party's "populist" economic policies. As a result, the economy became one of the main determinants of Turkish foreign policy.

Considering the economic policies and crises happened in Turkey in the second half of the 1950s, decision makers had to formulate more pliant policies to provide economic assistance, which eradicated ideological commitments because of the reluctance of capitalist countries to provide needed economic support. In that, Turkey tried to have closer relations even with the Soviet Union and the countries in Eastern Europe under the Soviet influence or the countries which seemed to be closer to the Soviet Union in the Middle East, such as Egypt and Syria, to create

alternatives to overcoming this impediment. Consequently, Turkish foreign policy during the Democrat Party period was harmonious with that of the United States as long as Turkey's interests were in line with those of the United States. Nevertheless, when the Democrat Party's objectives were not satisfied by the United States, the Democrat Party tried to implement more flexible policies not only with the states in the Eastern bloc, but also with the states in the Middle East, even under the influence of the Soviet Union, regardless of ideological differences.

In addition, to analyze the economic and social dynamics of the Democrat Party's foreign policy, I will mainly focus on the Middle East because, firstly, the Middle East policy of the 1950s was regarded only the derivative of American interests in the region without considering Turkey's role as an actor in the region. On the other hand, the Democrat Party's policy was regarded as indifferent to the states in the region except during the periods in which Turkey was supposed to defend American interests. Thus, there are many black holes in the understanding of Turkey's relations with the states in the region. I will put Turkey and its Middle East neighbors to the centre of my analysis without ignoring the interests of the great powers in the region.

With these questions and hypotheses in mind, I conducted my research primarily in the archives. The archives of the United Kingdom were my leading source. After research in the United Kingdom National Archives, the documents about Turkey and the Middle East were ready to be studied. Secondly, the archives of the United States (FRUS) were analyzed comprehensively. The archives in Turkey were not rich because the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were not, and are still not, open to study. However, the newspapers and journals of the era were

studied. After the study in the archives, the secondary sources, i.e., books, articles, and theses were also considered.

With these hypotheses and sources, I began to write my dissertation. Methodologically it is a study of diplomatic history which analyzes the developments in the region with the facts, not a theoretical foreign policy analysis. With this methodological background, the chapters of my dissertation took shape.

Chapter 2 makes an analysis of the international dynamics in the 1950s and the relations between the great powers particularly on the Middle East politics. More importantly, the dynamics that were specific to the region and the relations between the states in the region are analyzed. Such analysis provides the context of the study because without taking the dynamics of the great powers regarding the Middle East and the reactions and policies of the states in the region into consideration, Turkey's role in the region and the developments in which Turkey was involved cannot be understood. After the analysis of the international dynamics and the Middle East, the developments in which Turkey was a part are studied in the following chapters.

Chapter 3 focuses on the developments in the early 1950s regarding the Middle East. The role of the Middle East in the formulation of the great power politics is analyzed. After this analysis, the efforts to establish a military alliance in the region, first the Middle East Command (MEC) and later the Middle East Defense Organization (MEDO), are analyzed. Besides the interests and policies of the great powers, the policies and the reactions of the states in the region towards these projects in which Turkey was the main actor, are analyzed. Moreover, the reasons for the failure of these projects and the change of the policies of the great powers especially in the second half of the 1950s are studied.

In Chapter 4, the military alliances and the pacts in which Turkey signed with the states in the region, the Turkish-Pakistani Pact and the Baghdad Pact are studied. The processes of the negotiations, signing and the reactions are analyzed from the perspectives and the policies of different actors. As the great powers, the states in the region are included in the analysis to show how different actors perceived the developments differently and how the country-specific interests and the conflicts in the region played roles in the formulation and implementation of the policies of the individual states.

After the analyses of these alliance projects, the crises in the region in the 1950s in which Turkey was directly or indirectly a part, are studied in Chapter 5. The Suez Canal Crisis and the Arab-Israeli War in 1956; the Turkish-Syrian Crisis in 1957; the establishment of the United Arab Republic in 1958, which was perceived as a crisis by the West; and the Iraqi Coup d'état, Lebanon and Jordan Crises in 1958 are the units of analysis. In this chapter, the major developments and Turkey's role in these developments are analyzed.

In Chapter 6, the economic and military relations between Turkey and the states in the region are studied, especially in the second half of the 1950s when Turkey witnessed a series of economic crises. Turkey's trade relations with the Middle East states, the economic and military agreements with the states in the region, and Turkey's role in oil politics are the issues that are analyzed in this chapter.

In Chapter 7, all these analyses are evaluated to flesh out the aim and the results of this dissertation.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The polarization and the problems among the Allies of the Second World War, i.e., the United States and the Soviet Union particularly, which became explicit during the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences during the War, turned into rivalry in the following period. Moreover, the nuclear weapons, i.e., the atomic bomb, invented by the United States in 1945, and the Soviet Union in 1949, and the hydrogen bomb, invented by the two superpowers in the mid-1950s, determined the fate of the struggle between the two in the following four decades until the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. The Cold War erupted in Europe, but after the invention of the nuclear weapons by the two sides, the superpowers avoided direct confrontation, and the struggle and rivalry spread to the other parts of the world, particularly the Third World. More importantly, the Middle East became the battleground of the superpower rivalry in the 1950s. The global and regional developments during the Cold War have been studied and discussed since the earlier periods of the Cold War, and are a matter of debate in the literature.

In the literature on the Cold War history, there are three basic approaches regarding the origins and dynamics of the Cold War¹: traditionalism, revisionism, and post-revisionism. Traditionalism was widespread until the mid-1960s. Then, revisionism appeared, which was succeeded by post-revisionism in the 1970s.

Regarding the origins of the Cold War, the traditionalists, that is, Herbert Feis, William McNeill, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., argued that the basic reason for the emergence of the Cold War had been the policies of the Soviet Union, and security

¹ Geir Lundestad, *East, West, North, South: Major Developments in International Politics since 1945* (London: Sage, 2010), pp.8-9.

had been the determining factor, especially against the Soviet expansion by the United States.

According to the revisionists, such as William Appleman Williams, Gabriel Kolko, Lloyd Gardner, the policies of the United States had created this struggle. The determining factor had been the needs of capitalism and the anti-Communism of the United States.

Post-revisionists, such as John Lewis Gaddis and Melvyn Leffler, argue that both states were responsible for the emergence of the Cold War. More importantly, the dynamics of the Cold War were broader including economy and public opinion in addition to the dynamics, i.e., security, on which the two other approaches had focused. John Lewis Gaddis' *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* and *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War 1941-1947*, and Melvyn Leffler and Odd Arne Westad's *The Cambridge History of the Cold War* reflect these arguments which are consistent with the post-revisionist approach and will be referred to this study.

Recently, although these three approaches are still alive, there have been new trends in the studies on the Cold War. Lundestad argues there has been a shift to the traditionalist approach as a result of the efforts of the Russian historians, who focus on the ideological determinants of the foreign policy decisions of the Soviet Union during the Cold War. More importantly, the United Kingdom has been included in the analyses as a major power. In addition, by scholars such as Odd Arne Westad, non-European actors have been analyzed much more than before as a result of the emphasis on the "local scene".² Odd Arne Westad's *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* and his study with Melvyn

² Lundestad, p.10.

Leffler, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, are examples of the broader analyses of the Cold War including the non-European actors, particularly the Middle East, and regional and country-specific dynamics, as this study will discuss.

Post-revisionism can be regarded as the broadest approach of the three major approaches to the Cold War. Furthermore, recent trends have focused more on domestic and country-specific dynamics, what Lundestad calls, the “local scene”.

Traditionalist and revisionist approaches to Cold War history have mainly focused on the ideological struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union and their ideological orientations, Capitalism and Communism, respectively. According to these studies, the crux of the Cold War was the political and military competition between the two superpowers. The arms race was the main tool between the two sides and, thus, security was the basic concern. As a result, the domestic dynamics of the states, particularly the impact of the economy on the global and regional competition, regardless of their power, and the other tools to continue the rivalry, i.e., propaganda and espionage, more implicitly, the discussion of realities based on interests and the constructed political agenda based on propaganda, have been neglected or at least underestimated.

However, recent studies have shown that, in line with post-revisionism and the rise of studies that focus on local or regional dynamics, Cold War history should be re-examined because it is understood that the main motive of the superpowers during the Cold War was not to exterminate each other. On the contrary, the superpowers sought to co-exist, in order to continue the hegemony over their spheres of political, economic, and military influence. Therefore, domestic dynamics played important roles in the formulation and implementation of foreign policies of not only the superpowers, but also smaller states throughout the world.

Edward H. Judge and John W. Langdon's *The Cold War: A Global History with Documents*, Fred Halliday's, *The Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics and Ideology*, John Lewis Gaddis' *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History*, Yevgeni Primakov's *Rusların Gözüyle Ortadoğu* (Russia and the Arabs) and George Lenczowski's, *The Middle East in World Affairs*, although the latest was a book which was written in 1980, show that although there was an ideological rivalry on the surface, there was a rivalry for conflicting or harmonious interests in the relations both between the superpowers and between the superpowers and the smaller states. The economic and military interests of both the superpowers and the smaller states played important roles in shaping the foreign policy behavior of the states. More importantly, these studies have shown that the states acted pragmatically to maximize their interests rather than committedly.

On the other hand, the arms race and the overt conflicts were not the only tools of the struggle between the two superpowers. Frances Stonor Saunders' *The Cultural Cold War*, James R. Vaughan's *The Failure of American and British Propaganda in the Arab Middle East 1945-1957*, Douglas Little's *American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East since 1945* and H.W. Brands' *Inside the Cold War: Loy Henderson and the Rise of the American Empire 1918-1961* show that propaganda, espionage, intelligence and covert operations were the major components of the Cold War politics from the beginning to the end.

These recent studies on the Cold War inspired this study and Turkey's 1950s, which have been the most controversial years in Republican history, especially for the foreign policy of the Democrat Party which ruled Turkey until 1960, became the period of analysis. The studies on Turkey, e.g., books, articles, theses and dissertations, focus on the security priorities of Turkey in the 1950s as a result of the

Soviet demands from Turkey in the wake of the Second World War. According to these studies, Turkey had to cooperate with the West and the membership to the Western “bloc” was the reinforcement of the external dynamics and pressure. Therefore, Turkey remained committedly loyal to its engagement, particularly with the United States, and implemented what the United States demanded, especially regarding the Middle East.

Turkey’s Middle East policy in the 1950s has been studied by many scholars. The chapters in collected books, such as *Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası* (Turkish Foreign Policy with the Facts) edited by Mehmet Gönlübol, *Türk Dış Politikası* (Turkish Foreign Policy) edited by Baskın Oran, *Türk Dış Politikasının Analizi* (The Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy) edited by Faruk Sönmezoğlu; or the books that analyze the Democrat Party’s foreign policy in general, such as *Türk Dış Politikası’nda 1950’li Yıllar* (Turkish Foreign Policy in the 1950s) by Hüseyin Bağcı, and *Düşler ve Entrikalar* (Dreams and Intrigues) by Erol Mütercimler and Mim Kemal Öke put emphasis on the impact of the global dynamics, i.e., the hostility and rivalry between the two superpowers, and their impact on the formulation and the implementation of Turkey’s Middle East policy. There are also some case studies, such as Behçet Kemal Yeşilbursa’s *Baghdad Pact* and his article "*Turkish Participation in the Middle East Command and Its Admission to NATO 1950-52*"; Ayşegül Sever’s *Soğuk Savaş Kuşatmasında Türkiye, Batı ve Ortadoğu 1945-1958* (Turkey, the West and the Middle East in the Cold War Era, 1945-1958) and her article "*The Compliant Ally? Turkey and the West in the Middle East 1954-58*," in which she allocates room for the Democrat Party to maximize its economic and military interests as political ones, and Arda Baş’s "*1957 Suriye Krizi*" (1957 Syrian Crisis), that analyze these developments in detail. However, the approaches of

these studies are similar to those mentioned above. Briefly, the Middle East policy of the Democrat Party was analyzed as a reflection of Turkish-American relations in the 1950s, as discussed in Oral Sander's book, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri 1947-1964* (Turkish-American Relations 1947-1964). Therefore, the analyses are based on security and its reflections on the Democrat Party government's Middle East policy.

However, it can be argued that Turkey was engaged to the West, in order to provide also economic and military support as a developing country. Therefore, analyses solely based on security and committed pro-Westernism should be reconsidered. In short, the analyses on Turkey's foreign policy in general and Middle East policy in particular should take not only the global dynamics, but also the regional dynamics into consideration.

In this study, a comprehensive analyses of the major developments in the Middle East in the 1950s will be made. The details of the developments which have been studied in the literature on the Cold War and the Middle East both in Turkey and in the world will be given to better understand the politics in the Middle East in the 1950s. The great power politics will be the context of these developments and the regional and country-specific dynamics will be integrated into the analyses. Moreover, without neglecting the role of the perception of security; the economic, military and social dynamics will also be analyzed. In line with the new literature on the analysis of the Cold War, the regional and country-specific dynamics are given more importance in this study. Therefore, Turkey and the other Middle East states are taken as pragmatic actors, rather than passive ones, and the regional conflicts, hostilities, rivalries and the reactions of the states to maximize their interests and increase their power in the region will be analyzed in the light not only of political

dynamics, but also of economic, military and social determinants as mentioned before.

Within the context of the great power politics and their impacts on the regional politics, more specifically, Turkey's involvement in the Middle East as a state to play the role of leadership which was supported by the United States, and the developments related to Turkey, i.e., the Middle East Command and the Middle East Defense Organization, the Turkish-Pakistani Pact, the Baghdad Pact, the Suez Crisis and the Arab Israeli War, the Turkish-Syrian Crisis, the United Arab Republic and the crises in Iraq, Lebanon, and Jordan will be analyzed from the perspectives of the regional actors as well as the global ones in order to better understand and analyze to what extent Turkey's Middle East policy reached its aim, more clearly, to play the role of leadership and to act as a bridge between the West and the regional states through the alliance systems against the Soviet expansion or the infiltration in the region especially in the second half of the 1950s. Moreover, in this study all these developments will be analyzed in detail and the positions and the approaches of all actors will be reflected. More importantly, the economic and military dynamics of Turkey's Middle East policy will be analyzed to complete the political analysis, too.

Methodologically, this study will not be a foreign policy analysis based on a theory, but a diplomatic history which makes an analysis of Turkey's Middle East policy through the analyses of the developments, which are mentioned above, based on the facts. The approach of this study is closer to post-revisionism, which puts emphasis on the responsibility of the two superpowers in the Cold War and the necessity of including the economic, military and even social dynamics in to the analysis of the Cold War.

This study mainly argues that Turkey's Middle East policy cannot be understood by the impact or dynamics of great power politics alone. Rather, regional dynamics, which will be discussed in Chapter 2 in detail, should be taken into consideration. Moreover, the analysis of the developments should not be limited to the hostility-friendship dichotomy, but the regional conflicts, rivalries, and country-specific interests, mainly economic and military, including Turkey should be taken into consideration in understanding the Democrat Party's Middle East policy and the reasons why the leadership of Turkey in the region and its efforts to be a bridge between the West and the regional states, mainly Arab ones, through forming an alliance, which was supposed to include all the states against the Soviet expansion or infiltration, did not reach its goals. More clearly, the clash or harmony of interests that can be regarded as the basis of Middle East politics in the 1950s and an analysis based on this assumption will help to better understand the developments and impacts on Turkey's Middle East policy in the hottest years of the Cold War.

Before the analyses of the developments related to Turkey, the global dynamics of the Cold War, the reflections of the great power politics on the Middle East and the country-specific dynamics of the regional states will be analyzed to provide a basis to the analysis of regional developments in the 1950s.

CHAPTER 2

THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS AND THE MIDDLE EAST IN THE 1950s

The Cold War and the Great Powers

After the defeat of fascism at the end of the Second World War, many people expected that this would bring peace to the world. However, the Allies of the World War became rivals and the history of the twentieth century entered a new phase: the Cold War. LaFeber argues that the rivalry and the developments of the Cold War stemmed from the relations between the United States and the Soviet Union which had dated back to the late nineteenth century when these two states confronted on the plains of “north China and Manchuria” during their expansion. Therefore, the two states were in conflict not because one was capitalist and the other communist. Rather, their struggle to expand their systems and their interests throughout the world was the actual reason of their rivalry.³

The term “Cold War” was first used in 1945 by George Orwell to define the “worldview, beliefs and social structure” of the two superpowers and the undeclared struggle between the two states. Orwell argued that:

The atomic bomb, may be “robbing the exploited classes and peoples of all power to revolt and at the same time putting the possessors of the bomb on a basis of equality. Unable to conquer one another they are likely to continue ruling the world between them.

³ Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia and the Cold War* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1993), p.1. For the details of the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union before the Cold War see *ibid.*, pp.2-28 and Robert C. Grogan, *Natural Enemies: The United States and the Soviet Union in the Cold War 1917-1991* (New York: Lexington Books, 2001), pp.1-126; Bruce R. Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey and Greece* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp.209-431.

Therefore, according to Orwell, the new world system would be “dualistic, technology based in which nuclear terror could be used against those who dared rebel.”⁴

In addition, a speech titled “Sinews of Peace Address”⁵ by Winston Churchill in 1946 and the “X Article”⁶ of George Kennan in 1947 reflected the opinions of the great powers and admitted the existence of rivalry and struggle among the Allies of the Second World War as early as the late 1940s. In short, the competition for the control of the world that lasted until 1991, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, began to be shaped in the aftermath of the Second World War. Geoffrey Roberts makes a comprehensive and consistent definition of the Cold War as follows:

The Cold War is a term that refers to the state of tension, hostility, competition and conflict which characterized Soviet-Western and more particularly Soviet- American relations for much of the post-war period. The most overt face of the Cold War was the east-west division of Germany, a Europe divided by the so called Iron Curtain into competing liberal-democratic and communist camps and the emergence of two antagonistic military-political alliances, NATO and the Warsaw Pact... To those who fought the cold war there was far more at stake than geopolitical position or economic interests. The other side was viewed threatening not just vital interests, but one’s core values and identity as well... But, sharp and intense as the conflict was, both sides had an interest in constraining the Cold War, in limiting and controlling the rivalry and competition, in achieving a degree of stability, order and predictability in world politics. Not the least compelling reason for containing the conflict was the existence of nuclear weapons. There were also various economic, political and ideological incentives to relax the tension, to foster what became known in the 1960s as *détente*. Peace was good for trade, good propaganda value and good for domestic and international political prestige.⁷

Throughout the Cold War, the rivalry and struggle remained “cold” because of the threat of nuclear weapons and the irreversible character of such an armed

⁴ Odd Arne Westad, “The Cold War and the International History of the Twentieth Century” in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler, Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p.3.

⁵ http://www.nato.int/docu/speech/1946/s460305a_e.htm

⁶ <http://www.historyguide.org/europe/kennan.html>

⁷ Geoffrey Roberts, *Coexistence, Revolution and Cold War 1945-1991* (London: Routledge, 1999), pp.2-3.

struggle. The United States produced the atomic bomb as early as 1945 and the Soviet Union, in 1949. Both superpowers produced their hydrogen bombs as early as mid-1950s.

Because these weapons were much more destructive than the conventional ones, the superpowers avoided direct confrontation in an armed struggle. Westad argues that the scientific and technological developments shaped the dynamics of the Cold War. The superpowers made great amounts of investment in science and technology and these developments determined the fate of the Cold War struggle. As Westad argues, although science had not created the Cold War, it helped to format the conflict which was much more dangerous and harder to end than the ones the humanity had witnessed throughout history.⁸

Within these limits and the danger of a possible nuclear war, the superpowers adopted different policies. The Cold War did not follow a linear path and there were several ups and downs during the four decades. Some scholars argue that the Cold War history can be divided into three periods: the period between 1945 and 1962 can be regarded as the years of tension and crises; the period between 1962, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and, 1979, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan can be regarded as the years of détente; and the years between 1979 and 1991, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, can be regarded as the years of tension and the end of the Cold War.⁹ There are different periodizations of the Cold War. For example, Lundestad argues that the years of tensions and crises were between 1945 and 1962, the years of détente were between 1962 and 1975, the years between 1975 and 1984 witnessed the renewal of tension and the Cold War ended between 1984 and 1990.¹⁰

⁸ Westad, *The Cold War and the International History of the Twentieth Century*, p.11

⁹ Mike Sewell, *The Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

¹⁰ Geir Lundestad, *East, West, North, South: Major Developments in International Politics since 1945* (London: Sage, 2010).

Regardless of the differences in periodization of the Cold War, it is common that the years between 1950 and 1960, on which this study focuses, are considered to have been the “hottest” years of the Cold War, when the two superpowers confronted one another more intensely and several tensions and crises erupted in the Middle East. Sewell depicts these years of tension and crises as follows:

By 1951 the main features of the Cold War were in place. These included a globalized, militarized, ideological confrontation between alliance systems, the arms race, limited wars, covert conflict, proxy warfare and vigorous propaganda campaigns. After 1951 both sides developed thermonuclear weapons and raced to develop intercontinental delivery systems, learning to fear their vulnerability to the other’s retaliatory power. Fear of superpower war, deterrence and efforts to avoid escalation featured prominently in both Moscow’s and Washington’s priorities... The major powers, acutely aware of the costs and dangers of the Cold War, sought to manage their antagonism. The period from the early 1950s to the onset of detente in the aftermath of the Berlin Wall and Cuban Missile Crises, therefore, presents contradictory aspects... Although there were crises that threatened nuclear war, the nuclear powers were cautious not to escalate them beyond the brink. Efforts began to limit nuclear testing.¹¹

The United States and the Soviet Union were in efforts to control the world against each other. However, they were aware that they could not do so through the use of the nuclear weapons which could bring about the end of humanity. To reach their aims without causing a nuclear war, they preferred not to exterminate each other, but live in an environment of “peaceful coexistence”, especially from the mid-1950s onwards. Moreover, the Soviet Union gave up expansionism as early as 1950 and struggled to defend its spheres of influence against capitalist invasion. On the other hand, the United States preferred to “contain” socialism rather than exterminate it. Hobsbawm argues that both states implemented these policies to provide legitimacy in their spheres of influence and especially in domestic politics. Socialism defended itself through suppressive regimes within the Eastern bloc. In return for

¹¹ Sewell, pp.55-56. For a more detailed analysis, see John Lewis Gaddis, “The Long Peace” in *The Cold War and After: The Prospects for Peace*, eds. Sean M. Lynn-Jones and Steven E. Miller (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1994), pp.1-44.

this, the United States propagated the “communist threat” to legitimize its domestic policies, for example the taxation of indifferent Americans, and economic invasion throughout the world. Therefore, economic and social dynamics played significant roles throughout the Cold War.¹² Shortly, it can be argued that the Cold War was not a struggle to dissipate one another; rather, it was a struggle to divide the world and to protect the spheres of influence against the other.

Division of the world between the two superpowers and containment of the other were the basis of the Cold War politics especially in the 1950s. Judge and Langdon argue that the change of leadership in both states in 1953 played a role in the changing of the dynamics of the Cold War and paved the way of “peaceful coexistence.” In the Soviet Union, Stalin died in 1953 and after a short interval Khrushchev controlled the Soviet politics. In the United States, Eisenhower was elected president in 1953. He and his secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, changed the direction of the policies of the United States.

According to Judge and Langdon, the new leaders had to deal with new “global realities.” The collapse of the European colonial empires, i.e. the United Kingdom and France, in the wake of the Second World War and the early years of the Cold War, and the anti-Western national movements, especially in the Middle East, were some of these new realities. Moreover, the emergence of the non-aligned nations such as India, Yugoslavia and, to some extent, Egypt forced the United States to determine new policies. The Eisenhower Doctrine, which was declared in 1957 and will be discussed in detail, was one of the reflections of this policy change.

Lastly, and more importantly, the nuclear weapons which would be destructive to both sides necessitated the continuation of the struggle through

¹² Eric Hobsbawm, *Kısa 20.Yüzyıl: Aşırılıklar Çağı* (İstanbul: Sarmal Yayınevi, 1990), pp.280-291.

different policies and means rather than armed conflict. In addition, economic and social priorities forced them to re-evaluate the policies of the United States. The Eisenhower administration had to reconcile the security objectives and economic concerns at the same time. Therefore, the Eisenhower administration worked to cut the military expenditure not to jeopardize the economic dominance of the United States in the long run.¹³

Economic priorities caused the invention of new ways of counterbalancing communism without direct armed struggle. There were mainly three ways of this containment policy: “covert operations” by the CIA”, “the use of military advisors to aid anti-communist forces” and “the formation of alliances aimed to block Communist expansion in certain vulnerable areas” especially in the Third World such as the Baghdad Pact.¹⁴ Shortly, the United States used all of these tactics to face the “Communist threat” during the Cold War.

On the other hand, Khrushchev was a flexible and pragmatic leader who formulated a new policy of “peaceful coexistence” in order to prevent a war with the United States and to control and protect the territories that the Soviet Union gained after the Second World War.¹⁵ Khrushchev preferred rivalry in the Third World to direct confrontation with the United States in order not to jeopardize the Soviet Union. Thus, as the Third World states became independent, the Soviet Union sought to win their friendship and support through providing arms, advisors and financial aid to national movements and non-aligned nations.¹⁶ The Soviet support to the liberated nations and leaders did not provide “permanent friendship and support to

¹³ Edward H. Judge and John W. Langdon, *The Cold War: A Global History with Documents* (Boston: Prentice Hall, 2011), p.100. See also Robert McMahon, *Cold War: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p.60.

¹⁴ Judge and Langdon, p.102. See also Grogin, pp.179-187.

¹⁵ Judge and Langdon, p.103. See also McMahon, p.61.

¹⁶ Judge and Langdon, p.105. See also Roberts, p. 46.

the Soviet Union”, but led the formation of anti-Western stance of these nations and leaders in time.¹⁷ Therefore, as the nuclear rivalry posed a threat to both sides and they avoided direct confrontation with one another, they used similar means to continue the rivalry for the control and dominate the world. Economic and military support were the common features of the superpower policies in the Third World.

More importantly, as mentioned before, intelligence was the most vital component of superpower politics. The intelligence communities of both sides, mainly CIA and KGB, were in covert conflict. In addition to the intelligence facilities, propaganda war continued throughout the Cold War in all parts of the world. As Sewell and Gaddis argue:

The KGB and CIA spread disinformation through the world’s media, creating and perpetuating myths about each other... The Soviet intelligence community helped to promote demonstrations of anti-war sentiment alongside government-sponsored meetings and other events behind the Iron Curtain. For both sides, radio broadcasts carried propaganda far and wide.¹⁸

The CIA’s role during the Cold War was paramount. The US government spent huge amounts of resources on propaganda including cultural propaganda. Saunders argues that the cultural propaganda was handled in great secrecy. Therefore, the CIA established a cultural front especially in the Western Europe in the name of freedom of expression. Saunders states that “defining the Cold War as a “battle for men’s minds” it stockpiled a vast arsenal of cultural weapons”.¹⁹ According to Saunders, CIA’s influence was not reactionary, but “ruthlessly interventionist and frighteningly unaccountable.” The overthrow of the Iranian Prime Minister Mossadegh was one of the masterpieces of the CIA. Moreover, the CIA

¹⁷ Peter Kenez, *A History of the Soviet Union from the Beginning to the End* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p.209.

¹⁸ Sewell, p.59. See also John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the End of the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp.87-104.

¹⁹ Frances Stonor Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War* (New York: New Press, 2000), pp.1-2.

spied many Americans at home as well as it “harassed democratically elected leaders abroad, plotted assassinations and denied these activities to Congress.”²⁰

More importantly, the CIA organized covert operations in the Middle East, in Southeast Asia and throughout the Third World. Therefore, it became a favorable tool for the American policy makers throughout the Cold War because it was “efficient and cost-effective” without using nuclear weapons. The CIA organized a covert operation against the Iranian Prime Minister Mossadegh in 1953 and the anti-Western regime in Syria in 1957.²¹

Consequently, the superpowers sought alternative ways to control and contain each other and to continue rivalry as the nuclear technology became much more destructive against the humanity especially after the mid-1950s. Political actions were harmonized with economic and social policies. Intelligence services became the major tools to continue the propaganda struggle and to organize covert operations especially in the Third World more effectively and less costly to protect the spheres of influence and security against possible threats.

After a short analysis of the Cold War dynamics which shaped the superpower politics, the reflections of these politics in the Middle East will be discussed to understand the interaction between the global and regional dynamics during the Cold War especially in the 1950s.

The Reflections of the Great Power Politics in the Middle East in the 1950s

In the 1950s, the Middle East was one of the major regions that witnessed the rivalry not only between the two superpowers, but also between the Western Allies. In this decade, the Cold War rivalry shifted from the center, as the result of the

²⁰ Saunders, p.3.

²¹ McMahan, p.72.

balance between the superpowers in Europe, which stemmed mainly from the nuclear threat, to the peripheral regions of the world. These regions, i.e., the Middle East, Latin America and Africa, were developing regions and the superpowers competed to satisfy their strategic, economic and “psychological” interests through gaining resources, allies and influence over them. Therefore, developing areas became the core of the superpower rivalry in the 1950s. The competition to win allies and influence over the Third World sharpened the superpower rivalry.²²

The emergence of the new states in these areas contributed to the intensification of the rivalry. Many historians believed that the rivalry over the Third World caused the long-lasting Cold War because the Cold War in the Third World was not only a competition between the two superpowers, but it was a struggle within these newly emerging states to determine their future and a matter of choice between the two versions of modernity, socialism and capitalism.²³ However, some states, such as the non-aligned, chose the Third Way between socialism and capitalism and they became the forerunners of nationalism, such as Egypt in the Middle East.

Regarding the Middle East, the leitmotiv of the Soviet-American rivalry was to establish a security zone in the region and to prevent the other side, especially for the United States, from penetrating the region. Therefore, the United States was in favor of establishing security and defense system in the region against the Soviet infiltration. On the other hand, the Soviet Union sought to establish a security belt in its south-western periphery against the expansion of the United States. In addition to the security motive, mainly, the intercontinental location of the region and the vast resources, especially oil, resulted in the escalation of the superpower rivalry in the

²² McMahon, p.56. See also Richard Saull, *The Cold War and After* (London: Pluto Press, 2007), pp.83-84; LaFeber, p.72.

²³ Westad, *The Cold War and the International History of the Twentieth Century*, p.10.

region.²⁴ Golan describes the factors and interests of the two superpowers in the region. For the United States:

There was a strategic interest connected with the protection of the southern flank of NATO, the deployment of the Navy's Sixth Fleet and containment of Soviet forces. A political interest was generated by the competition with the Soviet Union, composed of both denial of access or expansion of the communist world and the extension of Western influence. An economic interest was linked to the supply of oil vital to Western Europe, Japan and though not vital to the United States.²⁵

In short, for the United States, the protection of the NATO's southern flank, the prevention of the Soviet expansion to the region and the protection of the oil resources, which were vital for the interests of the West, were the main factors of the United States' involvement in Middle East politics. On the other hand, there were several Soviet interests regarding the Middle East:

Soviet interests also fell into a number of categories, not all of which were directly connected with the superpower competition... An area of security was sought in protection of the border, at the least the exclusion of hostile forces close to the southern border was sought. It was also the access route to and from the warm waters of the Mediterranean, vital not only for Soviet seafarers to exit the Black Sea, but also for potential enemies to enter the Black Sea by way of the Dardanelles. There was also the ideological superpower interest in extending Soviet influence, possibly revolution, and to squeeze out first Britain then the United States... Strategic interests eventually became a central factor in the Soviet commitment to the area... The economic interest was generally secondary, although the heightened importance of this factor in Soviet foreign policy... While it generated an interest in hard-currency arms-sales, the rise of the economic factor also contributed to a shift of primary interest from the Fertile Crescent to the wealthier states of the Persian Gulf area.²⁶

Shortly, for the Soviet Union, penetration to the Middle East was important to remove the West or at least to minimize the influence of the West in the region

²⁴ Alan R. Taylor, *The Superpowers and the Middle East* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1991), p.24.

²⁵ Galia Golan, "Superpower Cooperation in the Middle East" in *The Cold War as Cooperation*, eds. Roger E. Kanet and Edward A. Kolodziej (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), pp.121-123. See also Fred Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics and Ideology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp.97-98.

²⁶ Golan, *Superpower Cooperation in the Middle East*, pp.121-123; Halliday, pp.97-98.

because of these political, strategic and ideological reasons. More importantly, it should be emphasized here that each superpower determined its strategy with taking the other's strategy and policy into consideration. Therefore, as mentioned before, the superpower rivalry in the region was to balance or to prevent the other rather than exterminate it.

The active involvement of the United States in the Middle Eastern politics after the world war stemmed from the decline of the power of the United Kingdom and its limited military capabilities. Painter argues that the Soviet military threat was not the immediate concern for the United States, but the instability and the rise of anti-Western, particularly anti-British, nationalism in the region. The possibility of the Soviet penetration to the region as a result of the instability and nationalism was the fear of the United States' policymakers. Although the Western Allies agreed to control the Middle East oil, they could not agree on how to manage the rising nationalism in the region.²⁷

On the one hand, the United States was in favor of cooperating with the nationalists through meeting their demands, that is, a greater share of oil revenues. Moreover, the United States' policymakers thought that cooperation with the Arab nationalists would ensure their support against the Soviet Union. Thus, the United States approached the Free Officers Coup in Egypt in 1952 with sympathy because, according to the United States, the nationalists were progressive forces that might

²⁷ David S. Painter, "Oil, Resources and the Cold War 1945-1962" in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler, Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp.498-499. See also, Avi Shlaim, *War and Peace in the Middle East* (New York: Penguin Books, 1995), pp.27-28; Louise Fawcett, *International Relations of the Middle East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p.48; Taylor, p.25.

have handled the necessary reforms “to curb the appeal of communism” in the region.²⁸

On the other hand, the United Kingdom distrusted of the nationalists and did not agree to meet their demands because of its dependence on Middle East oil. Therefore, the United Kingdom became an ardent supporter of the defense organizations in the region to protect its interests, while the United States stayed behind the scene through financing, but not joining the defense organizations.²⁹

Therefore, the strategies and policies of the Western Allies regarding the Middle East differed although they took pains to show the consistency and solidarity in their actions. Primakov states that the relations between United States, on the one hand, and, the United Kingdom and France, on the other, were conflictual. The ex-colonial United Kingdom and France became aware that they could not resist the United States’ expansion in the region and could not take their dominant positions in the region back. Therefore, the policies regarding the nationalists and the defense structures in the region were the basis of the disagreement between the Allies.³⁰

It can be argued that the change of administration in the United States in 1953 was one of the factors that deepened conflict between the Allies. President Eisenhower and his Secretary of State, Dulles, came to power with “anti-colonial” attitudes and this put them in a conflictual position with the United Kingdom, which

²⁸ David S. Painter, “Oil, Resources and the Cold War 1945-1962” in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, eds. Melvyn P. Leffler, Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp.498-499. See also Avi Shlaim, *War and Peace in the Middle East* (New York: Penguin Books, 1995), pp.27-28; Louise Fawcett, *International Relations of the Middle East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p.48; Taylor, p.25.

²⁹ *ibid.*

³⁰ Yevgeni Primakov, *Rusların Gözüyle Ortadoğu* (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2010), p.55. Yevgeny Primakov was a journalist on the Soviet radio and a Middle Eastern correspondent of Pravda newspaper between the years 1953 and 1970. He became the president of the Russian Federation between 1998 and 1999.

was still in efforts to protect its political and economic interests in the region.³¹ Eisenhower stated that rather than military establishments, of which the United Kingdom was predominantly in favor, economic and military aid to the regional states should have been the basic leverage to reach the goals in the region. Through economic and military aid, Eisenhower believed, the Middle East states would come to the level of self-sufficiency and they would follow the path of liberal, capitalist development. In this vein, the strategy of the United States would be “persuasion and example”, “patient negotiation, understanding and equality of treatment” rather than coercive “take it or leave it” approach. For him, collaboration with the United Kingdom was essential, but without sharing the “baggage of colonialism.” Therefore, the United States would promote the “slower and more orderly progress towards the independence of the developing world.”³² However, although the United States was in favor of the progressive nationalists and avoided getting directly involved in regional developments, it did not hesitate to get involved in the Middle East affairs when it lost the control in the region, such during the intervention in Lebanon in 1958.

As a result, although the United States was in favor of the nationalist movements, the Western prestige and popularity in the region gradually declined between the years 1945 and 1957. Vaughan argues that the decline of the Western prestige was the result of the policy of “miscalculation” of the dynamics of the Middle East.³³ The vital differences and rivalry between the regional states, i.e., Iraq and Egypt, the existence of the United States sponsored and supported the Israeli state, and the rise of nationalism around the Egyptian leader Nasser caused the

³¹ Roby C.Barrett, *The Greater Middle East and the Cold War* (New York: IB Tauris, 2007), p.10.

³² *ibid.*, p.12.

³³ James R.Vaughan, *The Failure of American and British Propaganda in the Arab Middle East 1945-1957* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p.239.

failure of the Western efforts in the region. More importantly, the role of the policies and the strategies of the Soviet Union after the death of Stalin should not be neglected in this decline.

While Stalin was in power, there was no Soviet effort to exploit the rising nationalism and resistance to colonialism in the Middle East. This policy began to change after the death of Stalin 1953, which coincided with Eisenhower's coming to power in the United States. As Gaddis argues, under Khrushchev, the Soviet policy of supporting "the small and uninfluential communist parties" in the region shifted to supporting "the popular nationalist leaders" who were in efforts to struggle for the independence of their states. Nasser was such a leader. He became a hero in the Arab world and was supported by the Soviet Union. However, as Gaddis argues, "it was not clear who was manipulating and using whom." The Soviet Union and the Arab nationalists were mutually trying to reach their own goals and manipulating the other side in this way. As time passed, these mutual relations alerted the Western Allies because, first, Europe was dependent on the Middle Eastern oil, second, colonialism had already gone in the region, and, third, the Soviet Union, in collaboration with communist China, exploited the anti-colonial movements in East and Southeast Asia. Consequently, these Soviet actions and regional developments resulted in the intensification of the containment campaign against the Soviet Union by the Western Allies. Nevertheless, the policies of the Allies such as the defense establishments and involvement in Middle East affairs did not prevent the Soviet Union from infiltrating the region, but enabled it to expand its influence as the result of the miscalculations.³⁴

³⁴ John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp.163-164. See also Peter Mansfield, *A History of the Middle East* (New York: Penguin Books, 1991), p.253; Oles M.Smolansky, *The Soviet Union and the*

More clearly, the involvement of the United States in Middle East affairs in the way of containing the Soviet Union, such as the organization of the Baghdad Pact, enabled the latter to penetrate the region which had been close to it until 1955 because of the strong anti-Soviet positions of the states particularly, such as Turkey, Iran and Pakistan, which were backed by the United States that filled the power vacuum in the region after the decline of the French and the United Kingdom's influence.³⁵

As McLaurin writes, between 1953 and 1962 the Soviet foreign policy aimed to, "ensure Soviet security through maintenance of the international status quo in Eastern Europe, prevent war with the United States, undermine the Western alliances." As a result, the alliances in the Middle East with the support and the involvement of the Western Allies became one of the targets of the Soviet Union to undermine. As the Western Allies tried hard to establish alliances against the Soviet expansion and became actively involved in the Middle East affairs, the Soviet Union had the chance to penetrate into the region and increase its influence especially in the developing countries, which were led by the nationalist leaders.³⁶ Egypt and Syria were the two states which enabled the Soviet Union to infiltrate and get involved in Middle East affairs as will be discussed in the following chapters.

On the other hand, it can be argued that the Soviet Union was not an ardent supporter of the nationalist movements; rather, the nationalist movements against the West paved the way for the Soviet Union to be an integral part of Middle East affairs. Basically, this was a tactical and strategic move for the Soviet Union to

Arab East Under Khrushchev (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1974), pp.16-17; Taylor, p.27, 136.

³⁵ Smolansky, p.25.

³⁶ R.D. McLaurin, *The Middle East in Soviet Policy* (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1975), pp.8-9. For the detailed analysis of the Soviet objectives in the Middle East see *ibid.*, pp.15-46.

support the nationalist movements in the region.³⁷ It is important to note that the Soviet Union also supported the establishment of the Israeli state. Gaddis argues that there were three reasons for the Soviet support of the Israeli state:

To exploit the American differences with the British who still held a United Nations mandate over that territory, to ensure turmoil which might have enabled the entrance of the Soviet troops in the region as a part of peace-keeping force and to provide the support of the Communist Party in Israel.³⁸

Consequently, the Soviet Union did not hesitate to support both sides, which were hostile to each other, to increase its influence and involvement in the regional politics.

To sum up, the great powers struggled over the Middle East to maximize their interests as much as possible and used all tactics and strategies to this end with the idea of the “ends justify means”. As the containment of the Soviet Union, for the United States, and, the penetration to the region, for the Soviet Union, the control of the strategic resources, oil in particular, was the main component of the superpower rivalry.

The demand for oil and importance of oil increased during the Second World War and incrementally increased during the Cold War. The Middle East had one third of oil reserves and geologically available for the additional reserves. An oil mission of the United States stated after a survey in the area in 1943 that the oil production had been shifting and presumably would continue to shift from Gulf-Caribbean region to the Middle East.³⁹ Therefore, the control of oil resources became a main component of the superpower rivalry in the Middle East. Although both the United States and the Soviet Union were rich countries with their own oil resources,

³⁷ Taylor, p.25.

³⁸ Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History*, p.166. See also Galia Golan, *Soviet Policies in the Middle East: From World War II to Gorbachev* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.37.

³⁹ Painter, p.493. See also Fawcett, p.46.

access to outside resources of oil was a cardinal principle of their foreign policy because they did not feel secure with their own reserves. Moreover, Western Europe and Japan were dependent on oil resources for reconstruction in the wake of the Second World War. European states were importing 80% of their oil from the Middle East by the early 1950s. The dependence of Europe on the Middle East oil made the Suez Canal the most vital oil link between Europe and the Middle East. Therefore, the protection of these regions as well as the oil regions and the prevention of the Soviet expansion to these regions were the vital aims of the United States. The United States was superior to its rival in terms of economic and military strength to accede and control the outside resources particularly the Middle East. On the other hand, the Soviet Union was trying to go beyond its limits by competing for influence in the Middle East.⁴⁰

The increase in energy supplies was a determinant factor in industrial and military production which both superpowers were in efforts to develop and have the upper hand in world politics. Oil, as well as nuclear power, increased the potential of military production. Therefore, control over cheap energy was the Cold War aim of the United States and, thus, the Middle East was the vital area for providing inexpensive energy supply.⁴¹ Painter argues that “there was a symbiotic relationship between oil and the United States’ global strategy of maintaining access to economically and strategically vital overseas areas, including overseas sources of

⁴⁰ Painter, p.486-489. See also Douglas Little, *American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East since 1945* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), p.44; Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History*, p.165; Arthur Goldschmidt, *A Concise History of the Middle East* (United States: Westview Press, 2002), pp.299-300; David S.Sorenson, *An Introduction to the Modern Middle East* (United States: Westview Press, 2008), pp.83-86. For the details of the Soviet interests in the region see Golan, *Soviet Policies in the Middle East: From World War II to Gorbachev*, pp.8-11.

⁴¹ Westad, *The Cold War and the International History of the Twentieth Century*, p.12.

raw materials such as oil.”⁴² Regarding the Middle East oil and superpower relations, more details, including Turkey’s role in oil politics, will be given in the following chapters.

Consequently, it can be argued that the relations between the superpowers and the states in the region were of mutual dependence. The Middle East states, especially the newly emerged ones, needed the economic and military support of the superpowers to provide security, economic development, and social support. In return, the superpowers sought to balance and contain each other, especially the United States, and to expand their influence and control over the vital resources of the region.

As a result, as Karsh argues, the dynamics of the Cold War rivalry was more complex than the global dynamics and different from the “Cold War dichotomy”. The superpower policies were “cutting across” the local ones. Karsh states that in the Middle East, the superpower rivalry was not perceived as a struggle between communism and capitalism as it was in Europe. The Middle Eastern leaders were “opportunists” who were exploiting the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union for their and their countries’ interests without ideological commitments. Therefore, the Middle East states were “active and enterprising free agents, doggedly pursuing their own national interests, often in disregard of superpower wishes” rather than passive actors who were predominantly directed by the superpowers.⁴³

The active role that the Middle East states played in regional politics created impediments and difficulties in terms of the strategies and policies of the superpowers. Bercovitch argues that the superpowers faced difficulties in controlling

⁴² Painter, p.489.

⁴³ Efraim Karsh, *Rethinking the Middle East* (London: Frank Cass, 2003), pp.72-73. See also Halliday, pp.97-98.

their clients, whom they provided economic and military support. The difficulty of controlling the regional actors caused serious problems to conflict management and war prevention in the Middle East. Therefore, the superpowers had to continue their rivalry at the regional level rather than direct confrontation to prevent regional conflicts from turning into global ones. On the other hand, they had to protect their clients (allies) to protect their interests in the region. Thus, to protect the peace in the region or to force the clients to peace, the superpowers had to bargain with them and mostly provide them political, economic and military assistance.⁴⁴ However, as Westad argues, these assistance, which meant a “rescue” package for the Middle East states, did not come without preconditions. As will be seen in the following chapters, there was intense bargaining between the superpowers and the regional states.⁴⁵

To sum up, the relations between the superpowers and the Middle East states were not patron/client or dominance/subordination relations. Each side was dependent on the other in different aspects and, as Bercovitch argues, in these bargaining relations “the superpowers, with an eye to their global interests, have less leverage than their putative and occasionally vexing clients.”⁴⁶ This nature of superpower/ regional state relations will be an important aspect of this study and the interest based relations will be analyzed in the light of the dynamics of the superpower politics and the dynamics of the superpower/regional state relations.

After the analyses of the dynamics that determined the superpower rivalry and the reflections of this rivalry to the Middle East, the regional dynamics which played roles in the developments regarding the Middle East and had impacts on

⁴⁴ Jacob Bercovitch, “Superpowers and Client States: Analysing Relations and Patterns of Influence”, in *Superpowers and Client States in the Middle East*, eds. Moshe Efrat; Jacob Bercovitch (London: Routledge, 1991), pp.27-28. See also Fawcett, p.42.

⁴⁵ Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p.96.

⁴⁶ Bercovitch, p.30.

Turkey's Middle East policy will be defined and analyzed to provide a basis for the developments in the Middle East in the 1950s.

The Dynamics of the Middle East Politics in the 1950s

The term "Middle East" was first used during the Second World War by the United Kingdom, which called its troops in Egypt the Middle East Command. Before then, the region had been called the "Near East." The Middle East cannot be regarded as homogenous because the geographical structures, regimes, economies, social structures, and the levels of modernization of the regional states differ in many ways. Conservative and modernizing monarchies exist with democratic and authoritarian republics. More importantly, during the Cold War, some states in the region were engaged with the West, while some of them were engaged with the East, and some non-aligned. In addition, there were some states that were rich in oil while some of them were not. Ethnically and religiously, dominance of Islam and the Arabs was felt.⁴⁷ In brief, the Middle East was a heterogeneous region and this heterogeneity resulted in the conflicts and deviations in regional politics and the relations of the regional states with the great powers.

After the Second World War, some Middle East states gained their independence from their colonizers as the power of colonial powers collapsed. Syria, Lebanon and Jordan became independent states in the mid-1940s, and the state of Israel was established in 1948. As the new states joined the Middle East, the conflicts and hostilities sharpened. Moreover, the rivalry between the bigger states of the region, such as Iraq, Egypt, and Turkey, and their relations with the great powers made the Middle East politics in the 1950s more problematic. Hinnebusch divides

⁴⁷ Oral Sander, *Türkiye'nin Dış Politikası* (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2006), pp.220-221.

the Arab politics until the 1970s into two phases: “the evolution of the Regional System and the Birth of the States System (Quasi-Independence Under Oligarchic Multipolarity) between 1945 and 1955; and, the Rise and Fall of the Egypt-Centric Pan Arab System between 1956 and 1970”⁴⁸ In the light of this categorization, the 1950s coincided with the serious developments both in the Arab world, and in the Cold War. Therefore, the regional superpower rivalry and the conflicts among the states in the region caused harsher and conflictual developments in this decade.

On the other hand, it can be argued that for the states and nations in the region, the regional dynamics were prioritized much more than the superpower rivalry. LaFeber argues that the people in the Middle East were not interested in the ideological struggle between the two superpowers. Their main aims were political independence and getting rid of poverty in their countries.⁴⁹ Thus, as mentioned before, the superpower rivalry was exploited to reach the local aims. The main agenda of the Middle East politics, for the regional actors, were nationalism, Arab Unity, economic development and anti-Zionism, which were related to each other although most of these concerns were heavily exploited for propaganda reasons rather than political realities.

Arab nationalism was the main tool of propaganda and it was used to shape the Arab politics. Kamrawa states that:

In the Middle East, as elsewhere, nationalism has been a powerful force shaping the destiny and character of peoples and countries ...it was in the 1940s and the 1950s that nationalism became what it has been ever since, one of the most dominant forces-if not the most dominant force-in the region's politics.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Raymond Hinnebusch “The Middle East Regional System” in *The Foreign Policies of the Middle East States*, eds. Raymond Hinnebusch and Anoushiravan Ehteshami (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002), pp.34-40.

⁴⁹ LaFeber, p.171.

⁵⁰ Mehran Kamrawa, *The Modern Middle East: A Political History Since the First World War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), p.69. For a detailed analysis of Israeli and Palestinian nationalisms see *ibid.*, pp.74-91.

Choueiri argues that Arab nationalism was shaped by “the end of the Second World War, the Arab-Israeli conflict and the superpower rivalry.” At the same time, in domestic Arab politics, the modernization of the state became the main agenda and thus, domestic dynamics, such as the “land reform, industrialization, unemployment, health and living conditions” became the priorities of the new states. In addition, oil became the main determinant of the relations of the regional states with the West. Therefore, these all prioritized the domestic and regional dynamics and resulted in the rise of Arab nationalism.⁵¹ Arab nationalism had two main external “targets”: the former colonizers and the Israeli state.

However, although Nasserism became dominant 1950s onwards, there were three waves of Arab nationalism: Baathism, the Movement of Arab Nationalism and Nasserism. Baathism was the formal ideology of the Arab Baath Party which was formally established in 1947 by Michel Aflaq and Salah al-din al-Bitar. In 1953, the Baath (rebirth) Party was united with the Arab Socialist Party of Akram al-Hawrani and was named the Arab Socialist Baath Party. The Baath Party represented the peasants in the Syrian city of Hom in their struggle against the landlords. The members of the party were students, workers, peasants and minorities. The Baath Party spread from Syria to Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine, whereas did not provide popular support outside Syria. The Movement of Arab Nationalism was established by Palestinian, Syrian and Kuwaiti students from the American University in Beirut in the 1950s. The “spiritual” leader of the movement was Ali Nasreddine, who was also one of the founders of the Nationalist Movement Union. The leader of the movement was George Habash. The movement focused on taking immediate action rather than producing theories. Its major concern was the struggle

⁵¹ Youssef M. Choueiri, “Ortadoğu’da Milliyetçilik Akımları” in *Ortadoğu Tarihi*, ed. Youssef M. Choueiri (İstanbul: İnkılap Yayınevi, 2011), p.365.

with Israel. As time passed, the Movement of Arab Nationalism moved closer to the Nasserist Movement. More importantly, the Movement of Arab Nationalism became the supporter of the Palestinian Movement.⁵²

In these three waves of Arab nationalism, Nasserism became dominant in the long run. Like the split between the three models, there was a split between the Arab nationalists and extreme Islamists because the nationalists, who came to power in the post-colonial period, tried to implement socialist development. It was different from the Islamic socialism, which took Islam as the reference, and the Arab nationalists did not apply Islamic doctrine in the formation of the regime, economy, law, and social structure.⁵³

As mentioned before, the Nasserist model became the dominant wave of Arab nationalism. Nasserist Arab nationalism was formalized and implemented by the “young Arabs” who sought to topple their old rulers. The defeat in the Arab-Israeli War in 1948 sharpened the hostility of these young people, especially military officers, against their rulers. Kamrawa states that there were three features of the Arab nationalism in the 1950s:

First, it was closely equated with modernity, seeking to rid itself of archaic, feudal traditions. Second, it was militaristic, seeking military might and discipline as immediate remedies for the defeat. Third, it saw strength in numbers, assuming that with unity the Arabs would become a force hard to defeat.⁵⁴

Therefore, Arab nationalism and its heroic leader Gamal Abdel Nasser aimed to provide the Arab unity against external enemies. Nevertheless, the heterogeneity of the Arab world prevented the realization of this project and nationalism became a tool of propaganda in the 1950s. As Kamrawa argues, Nasser was a pragmatic leader

⁵² Choueiri, pp.367-368. See also Dan Smith, *The State of the Middle East: An Atlas of Conflict and Resolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), p.34.

⁵³ Primakov, p.28.

⁵⁴ Kamrawa, pp. 91-92.

and the practitioner. Therefore, he became successful in attracting the masses in the Arab world.⁵⁵ Cleveland argues that Gamal Abdel Nasser was an “assertive, independent leader and engaged in the establishment of a new society free from the imperial past and hopeful of the bright future.” In the 1950s, his policies were copied in the Arab circles supporting of him and Nasserism became the common concern of the Arab world. Although most of his achievements were not real, he was presented as a dynamic leader who saved the Arab world from the colonial powers and the old rulers.⁵⁶

With the image of the “hero of the Arab world”, he kept his office until the 1970s while the other rulers in the Arab world were toppled because of the lack of the popular support behind them. Primakov argues that the uniqueness of Egypt regarding the Arab nationalism stemmed from the efforts to exterminate the economic and military heritage remained from the colonial powers, the lack of genetical linkages with Islam and terrorism, the anti-communist character of domestic politics, the pragmatic relations with the superpowers and the hostility against Israel. The basic reason for the long-lasting rule of Nasser was the popular support behind him. Although the coup of Free Officers in 1952 was accomplished by a small group of officers, as the result of the “patriotism” that emerged during the implementation of reforms in Egypt and its reflections in foreign affairs, Nasser regime gained wide public support.⁵⁷

As Mansfield argues, the years between 1956 and 1959 witnessed the rise of Nasserism. He won the hearts and minds of the Arabs and for the Arabs; Nasser could be regarded as the “modern Saladin” who would bring them together against

⁵⁵ Kamrawa, pp.91-92.

⁵⁶ William L.Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East* (United States: Westview Press, 2000), p.293.

⁵⁷ Primakov, p.19, 23.

the Zionists. However, Mansfield argues, Nasser raised the expectations of the Arabs in a way that he could not fulfill because he also was aware of the military weakness of the Arabs, as the Arab-Israeli Wars in 1948 and 1956 showed, and he tried hard to provide external support to remedy this problem. Nevertheless, in the Arab world, it was the common belief that Nasser was committed to the Arab Unity and he would succeed at uniting the Arabs against external enemies at any cost.⁵⁸

Arab Unity and anti-imperialism were the two pillars, at least for propaganda reasons, of the Nasserite Arab nationalism. However, before the analysis of the Arab Unity projects and the relations of the Arab states with the great powers, the role of the military in Arab politics should be discussed here. In the 1950s, there were several coups in the Arab world. In 1951, Colonel Shishakli toppled the government and ruled Syria until another coup against him in 1954. In 1952, the Free Officers toppled the government of the monarchy and declared a republican regime in Egypt. In 1958, the Iraqi government was toppled by the military. In short, military interventions in the Middle East were a common feature of Middle East politics in the 1950s. However, none of these officers became as successful as Colonel Nasser due to the lack of the public support.

Moreover, Cleveland argues that “none of these officers had the combination of personal skills and good fortune” and they were unable to unite the armed forces politically without splitting into different rival factions, as Nasser did. As a result, the emergence of the military as a political actor caused political instability in the Middle East. As these regimes were changing, Nasser sought to unite the Arab world, as the efforts of Egyptian-Syrian-Saudi Pact in 1955 and the United Republic in 1958 show, but the military leaders in these smaller countries resisted being dominated by

⁵⁸ Mansfield, p.258.

Nasser. In addition, states such as Lebanon and Jordan resisted uniting with Egypt because of their pro-Western orientation.⁵⁹

The military was closely involved in politics in the Middle East because, as Primakov argues, the only powerful actor of opposition in these states, where there was no civilian, powerful opposition, was the military.⁶⁰ More importantly, to provide the security against internal and external threats and prestige, the political actors attached importance to the development of the military. Therefore, the military was, directly or indirectly, became a part of political structure.⁶¹

The Arab Unity notion was one of the pillars of Arab nationalism during the 1950s. During the alliance projects and the crises in the region, particularly, Egypt tried to consolidate the power behind it through Arab Unity. To this end, the Arab states established the Arab League in 1945 and the Arab League Collective Security Pact was signed in 1950.

However, despite these attempts, the rivalry and differences among the Arab states prevented the formation of Arab Unity. On the other hand, the national movements in the Arab world prioritized the interests of the individual states rather than those of the whole Arab world. Egypt was the forerunner of the idea of the Arab Unity and had impact on the Arab states in the spheres of culture and education. The Egyptian radio, television and cinema were tools that enabled Egypt to bolster its influence. Moreover, students from several Arab states were being educated in the Cairo University. However, although Egypt was dominant in Arab politics, and the Arab states declared that the interests and security of the Arab world would be

⁵⁹ Cleveland, p.314.

⁶⁰ Primakov, p.22. See also Gareth Stansfield, "Siyasi Yaşam ve Ordu", in *Ortadoğu Tarihi*, ed. Youssef M. Choueiri (İstanbul: İnkılap Yayınevi, 2011), pp.423-442.

⁶¹ Geoffrey Kemp, "Strategy and Arms Levels" in *Soviet-American Rivalry in the Middle East*, ed. J.C.Hurewitz (New York: Praeger, 1969), pp.25-26.

collectively defended, the intra-Arab problems divided the Arab world.⁶² Even the Arab League was unable to unite the Arab states although it aimed to bring the Arab states together without losing their sovereignty.⁶³

The divisions in the Arab world were reflected in their foreign policies and the relations of the individual states with the superpowers deviated. Even the nationalists in Egypt, Syria and Iraq did not dare to deteriorate their relations with the former colonizers and the United States at the beginning. It can be argued that such a policy derived from their pragmatic worldview.⁶⁴ For example, initially, the Free Officers in Egypt were in favor of cooperation with the United States because in Egypt, as in the Arab world, the perception of the United States was different from that of the United Kingdom and France. The United States was not a colonizer and the approach to the leader of the capitalist “camp” was positive. In return, the United States aimed to cooperate with the new government in Egypt to reach its aims in the region.⁶⁵ More importantly, Egypt was the focus of the plans of the United States such as the Middle East Command and the Middle East Defense Organization.⁶⁶

As time passed, the relations between the nationalist regimes and the West deteriorated. As Primakov argues, the policies of the former colonizers and, later, the United States pushed the Arab nationalists and, even, the pro-Western regimes to cooperate with the Soviet Union. The insistence of the United Kingdom to be actively involved in the Middle East politics, the United States’ support of Israel and the shift of the central role of Egypt to Turkey and Iraq, and the lack of economic and military support to the nationalist leaders could be regarded as some of the reasons for the deterioration of the relations between the Middle East states and the

⁶² Primakov, pp.71-72.

⁶³ *ibid.*, p.80.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*, p.39.

⁶⁵ *ibid.*, p.41.

⁶⁶ Barrett, p.13.

West. In the same vein, the Soviet Union began to support the nationalists much more than the communist parties in the late 1950s, as mentioned before. The Soviet Union and the nationalist leaders needed each other and the nationalists were in efforts to provide economic and military support to reach their internal and external goals.⁶⁷

Although the Soviet Union declared the nationalist leaders to be the agents of Western imperialism in the early 1950s, with the deterioration of the Middle East-West relations and the change of the government in the Soviet Union, the latter extended an olive branch to the nationalists. On the other hand, the real threat perception of the Arab world and the Arab nationalists was Israel, not the communist Soviet Union. Therefore, the relations between the nationalists and the Soviet Union began to develop. The arms agreement between Egypt and Czechoslovakia, covertly the Soviet Union, and the economic cooperation between the two states were indicators of the rapprochement between the Soviet Union and the nationalists.⁶⁸ The relations between Syria and the Soviet Union also developed in the late 1950s and the Soviet Union provided economic and military support to Syria. After the coup d'état in Iraq in 1958, the relations between Iraq and the Soviet Union began to ameliorate.

With the development of the relations between the Arab nationalists and the Soviet Union, the gap between the former and the West widened. Especially Egypt began to act against the alliance projects and the pro-Western states in the region. The Baghdad Pact, which was signed in 1955, was the major target of the Nasser regime and Nasser succeeded at preventing the governments such as Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan from joining the Pact through diplomatic and propaganda pressure.

⁶⁷ Primakov, pp.89, 92.

⁶⁸ Smolansky, p.23. See also Barrett, p.17.

Primakov stated that the Egyptian opposition to the Baghdad Pact, which will be discussed below, stemmed from the belief that the Pact would isolate Egypt and the other Arab states. Moreover, the pro-United Kingdom Iraqi regime and its Prime Minister, Nuri Said, should not have been collaborated, according to Nasser.⁶⁹

The policies of the Western Allies and the rapprochement between the Soviet Union and the nationalists caused the infiltration of the Soviet Union to the region which was perceived as the biggest threat to the Western interests in the Middle East. Upon these developments, the Eisenhower administration took some measures to bolster the containment policy. It was declared in 1957 that the United States would provide military aid, security assistance, and covert assistance to the states in the region to promote regional stability. Moreover, the United States might intervene directly to these states, as would be seen in the intervention of the United States in Lebanon and the intervention of the United Kingdom in Jordan in 1958, to protect the “pro-Western” regimes.⁷⁰

The developments in the Middle East in the late 1950s, especially after the declaration of the Eisenhower Doctrine, are evaluated by Barrett as follows:

By the end of 1957, the situation in the Arab Middle East had reached a revolutionary watershed. Nasser and Nasserism appeared to be the wave of the future. Having assailed the Eisenhower Doctrine for its assumption that the departure of Britain had created a vacuum, Nasser now appeared poised to thwart Washington’s plans to use its agents in the region to split and enslave the Arabs. These agents included the monarchies, the Gulf emirates and Israel. Nasser probably recognized that the Eisenhower Doctrine was not per se a plot to get him or undermine positive neutralism by force, but bashing Washington was a useful a vehicle for rallying regional support. In addition, despite this hostility, policy makers continued to view Nasser as the key to US influence in the region. His victory at Suez had made him the standard by which Arabs judged their leaders. The confluence of Nasser’s simplistic ideas on revolutionary Arab nationalism and his pronouncements on non-alignment and positive neutralism formed an ill-defined ideological potpourri. This very lack of

⁶⁹ Primakov, p.56.

⁷⁰ Barrett, p.36.

definition and systematic ideological structure worked in Nasser's favor. Nasserism promised something to everyone, while challenging the traditional ruling elites, many of whom were aligned with the West. By 1958, Nasser had not only navigated Egypt into the post-colonial period, but had also become the symbol of radical change in the Arab world.⁷¹

Therefore, the main reason for the Eisenhower Doctrine was to prevent the infiltration of the Soviet Union rather than to get rid of the national regimes, particularly Nasser in Egypt, in the region. Similarly, Nasser, as a pragmatic leader and the hero of Arab Nationalism, succeeded at uniting with Syria in 1958 and he declared all parties, especially the Communist Party, illegal and suppressed the Communist elements. Barrett argues that this was the result of the give-and-take between the United States and Egypt.⁷²

Consequently, in the 1950s, the Middle East states and nations were not preoccupied with the superpower rivalry. On the contrary, the conflicts between the Arab states and; between the Arab states and Israel were the basic determinants of Arab and Middle East politics. As the colonies became independent after the Second World War, Arab nationalism began to rise against both the former colonizers and Israel. The Arabs sought to unite against these enemies and Arab Unity, anti-imperialism and anti-Zionism became the pillars of Arab nationalism.

Among the three waves, Nasserism came forward in the 1950s and Nasserism rose in the Arab world. However, Nasser and the other leaders of the Arab states acted pragmatically and this rhetoric became major tools of propaganda and the Arab Unity was not realized. On the other hand, Nasserist Arab nationalism shaped the internal and external policies of the Arab states. The coincidence of the interests of the superpowers and the regional states determined the fate of Middle East politics in this decade.

⁷¹ Barrett, p.43.

⁷² *ibid.*, p.48.

In the light of the analyses of the great power politics and the general dynamics of the Middle East politics, the intrastate dynamics of the regional actors should be approached closely, but briefly, to contextualize the developments which will be analyzed in the following chapters.

The Intrastate Dynamics of the Regional Actors

Egypt

Egypt became independent from United Kingdom's rule in 1922, but the United Kingdom's influence in Egypt remained in the following three decades through the agreements between the two states. In addition, the monarchy in the country preserved the status quo. However, the United Kingdom influence and the monarchy caused resentment in the country. Especially the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936, which protected the rights of the United Kingdom, i.e. the control over the Suez Canal and the United Kingdom's bases, resulted in social uprising and incidents in 1952. The main target of these incidents, which were mainly organized by guerrillas of the Socialist Party and the other extremists, were the United Kingdom's troops in the country. On 19 January 1952, there were serious incidents, i.e., mass fighting, attacking, and mobbing against particularly the foreign commercial, social and cultural establishments. The Wafdist government and its police did not intervene in the incidents and the rioters were supported by the Army. This day was called "Black Saturday" for those who were in favor of the preservation of order and authority.⁷³

⁷³ George Lenczowski, *The Middle East in World Affairs* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), pp.520-521. See also M.W. Daly (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Egypt: Modern Egypt from 1517 to the end of the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp.337-338; Robert McNamara, *Britain, Nasser and the Balance of Power in the Middle East 1952-1967* (London: Frank Cass, 2003), pp.23-25; Saul S.Friedman, A

These incidents enabled King Farouk to dismiss the Prime Minister of the Wafdist Government, Nahas Pasha, to whom he was hostile and replaced him with Ali Maher Pasha on 27 January 1952. Subsequently, anti-Wafdist governments were formed and this period witnessed unrest in the country. Political vacuum emerged after the dissolution of the parliament on 29 March 1952. The Committee of Free Officers, which had been established in 1947 as a secret group, toppled the government and filled the political vacuum in Egypt on the night of 22-23 July 1952.⁷⁴

The powers loyal to the Free Officers kept control of all of the key points in Cairo. Anwar Sadat declared the success of the “revolution” on Cairo Radio. King Farouk was sent into exile to the French Riviera. The Free Officers established the Revolutionary Command Council and General Naguib became its president, but the true leader of the revolution was Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser⁷⁵ who would dismiss Naguib in 1954. The majority of the Free Officers⁷⁶ were nationalists while some of

History of the Middle East (United States: McFarland, 2006), pp.256-257; Goldschmidt, p.254; Sorenson, pp.234-236; Little, pp.163-166.

⁷⁴ George Lenczowski, *The Middle East in World Affairs* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), pp.520-521. See also M.W. Daly (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Egypt: Modern Egypt from 1517 to the End of the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp.337-338; Robert McNamara, *Britain, Nasser and the Balance of Power in the Middle East 1952-1967* (London: Frank Cass, 2003), pp.23-25; Saul S.Friedman, *A History of the Middle East* (United States: McFarland, 2006), pp.256-257; Goldschmidt, p.254; Sorenson, pp.234-236; Little, pp.163-166.

⁷⁵ For a detailed biography of Nasser see Robert Stephens, *Political Leaders of the Twentieth Century: Nasser* (England: Penguin Books, 1973). See also Mohamed Heikal, *Nasser: The Cairo Documents* (London: New English Library, 1972).

⁷⁶ Vatikiotis states that: “On the surface at least, the Free Officers seemed to express and reflect the desires and aspirations of the educated, change-oriented minority in the country – the nascent bourgeoisie, petty or otherwise. They subsumed the frustrations of the masses on the heels of a world war that was economically burdensome (especially for the lower classes) and the humiliating defeat in the Palestine War of 1948. They capitalized on the exhaustion and bankruptcy of a ruling group unable to cope with the problems of a rapidly changing post-war world. Moreover, they surfaced at a propitious time when the patron foreign power was no longer willing to shoulder or able to afford the responsibilities and commitments of world at the time command the active sympathy of its giant wartime ally in the West, the United States. In short, it was apparent that they represented the Egyptian nation, its consciousness and its experience. By 1954, having easily destroyed the superstructure of

them were closer to the Muslim Brotherhood and the Marxists. The main goals of the Free Officers were to exterminate the foreign, particularly United Kingdom, influence in the country, to get rid of the landlords and the monarchic regime and to end the corruption in political life. In January 1953, the Revolutionary Command Council dissolved all of the political parties and seized their funds. A provisional constitution was prepared and the Revolutionary Command Council became the ultimate authority for the following three years. On 18 June 1953; the Egyptian regime was declared republic. After the revolution, power struggle emerged between Nasser, on the one hand, and, Naguib and the Muslim Brotherhood, on the other. In April 1954, Nasser became the prime minister while Naguib was the president without real power. Yet, at the end of 1954, Nasser undoubtedly dominated and controlled Egyptian politics.⁷⁷

After 1954, Nasser's power was consolidated in the country with the settlement of the two disputes, the United Kingdom's military occupation and Sudan. Regarding the United Kingdom's forces in Egypt, talks continued in 1953 and 1954. Ultimately, the United Kingdom and Egypt reached an agreement on the evacuation of the United Kingdom troops, but the maintenance of base with a civil cadre of the United Kingdom. Therefore, the last troops of the United Kingdom left Egypt on 31 March 1956. On the other hand, regarding Sudan, on 12 February 1953, the United

institutions (parties, Parliament, the monarchy and its court) that permitted the political forces of the ancien régime to exercise power, the military regime, contrary to popular assumption, deliberately refrained from and actually avoided creating new ones. Instead, it constructed its power base on the country's two most impressive and massive though manageable and controllable institutions: the army and the bureaucracy. The regime set itself on a course of depoliticizing the public altogether. The brief flirtation with popular participation in the political process of the period from 1923 to 1957 was abandoned. Instead of participation, however limited or inadequate, there was now popular acclamation." P.J.Vatikiotis, *The Middle East: From the End of the Empire to the End of the Cold War* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp.105-106.

⁷⁷ Daly, pp.340-342. See also Mansfield, p.243-245; Goldscmidt, pp.255-256; Kamrawa, pp.92-94.

Kingdom and Egypt reached an agreement of Sudanese autonomy and, later, self-determination. On 1 January 1956 Sudanese independence was declared.⁷⁸

After the consolidation of power within the country and the settlement of the aforementioned disputes, the rise of Nasserist nationalism and Nasser as the “hero” of the Arab world began. Although the United States was sympathetic to the revolution, which was anti-colonial in nature, as discussed in detail before, suspicion and hostility against Nasser arose in the United States.⁷⁹ The development of relations between Egypt and the Soviet Union would most probably instigate this negative stance. On the other hand, Nasser was not a communist and a Soviet sympathizer. He was just against the Western involvement in Egyptian politics and, for him the Soviet Union was a powerful balance to the West. In return, the Soviet Union provided great amount of economic, military and technical support.⁸⁰

Consequently, Nasser was a nationalist with anti-colonial attitudes, but not a Communist. He was a pragmatic politician and Egypt became the dominant power in Arab politics, especially from the second half of the 1950s onwards, and Nasser remained the hero of the Arab people until he died in 1970.

Iraq

Iraq was established after the First World War from the land that had been within borders of the Ottoman Empire. The monarchy was established in 1921 under the mandate of the United Kingdom and Iraq gained independence from the rule of

⁷⁸ Mansfield, p.247. See also Cleveland, pp.295-300; Lenczowski, pp.521-526. For a detailed analysis of Muslim Brotherhood see Friedman, pp.246-247; Fulya Atacan, “Otoriteryanizm Kıskaçında Mısır” in *Değişen Toplumlar Değişmeyen Siyaset: Ortadoğu*, ed. Fulya Atacan (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2004), pp.41-50.

⁷⁹ Mansfield, p.249. See also Cleveland, p.305; Lenczowski, p.528; Goldschmidt, pp.292-294.

⁸⁰ Andrej Kreutz, *Russia in the Middle East: Friend or Foe?* (Westport: Praeger Security International, 2007), pp.110-111.

the United Kingdom in 1932.⁸¹ However, the influence of the former mandatory remained in the country in the following period by means of the rulers, who remained close to the United Kingdom.

From the establishment of the Iraqi state up until 1958, Iraq was ruled by the Hashemite monarchy. Faisal II became the King of Iraq in 1953 at the age of eighteen, but the power behind the scene was regent Abdullah, who was regarded and named in the documents as the Crown Prince.⁸² Prime minister Nuri Said controlled and directed especially the foreign policy of Iraq in the 1950s. He was pro-Western and, particularly pro-British. He tried hard to establish the Baghdad Pact in 1955. This caused a split between the Arab World and Iraq.

The complex population of Iraq influenced its relations with the other Arab states. The Shiites were the majority, but they were underrepresented in the political arena. Moreover, they were against the Pan-Arab Union in which they would be a minority. The Sunni Kurdish Community in Iraq was also against such a Union because they sought to obtain political and cultural autonomy. The complexity of the population and the social and economic tensions in the country resulted in the coup d'état in 1958, as will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5. As early as 1954, John Troutbeck, the ambassador of the United Kingdom in Baghdad, stated that “corruption and stinginess of the groups in power, the living conditions of the poor, the high unemployment among the youth and the decline of the impact of Islam” created resentment and hostility in the society against the rulers.”⁸³ The Iraqi regime, particularly Nuri Said, was the target of the hostility in the country as it was the

⁸¹ For the Iraqi politics between 1920 and 1932 see Peter Sluglett, *Britain in Iraq: Contriving King and Country* (London: IB Tauris, 2007). See also Phebe Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq* (USA: Westview Press, 2004), pp.1-36; Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp.30-74.

⁸² Marr, pp.50-51, 72.

⁸³ Primakov, p.21. See also Marr, pp.77-78.

target of Nasser's hostility. According to Nasser, Iraq was the chief ally of the imperialist West. Therefore, Nasser attacked Nuri Said, who was his rival in the Arab politics.⁸⁴

Consequently, Iraq was the ally of the West in the 1950s, but the domestic problems and the impacts of Nasserism brought an end to the regime in 1958. More importantly, Iraq was the main rival of Nasser's Egypt in the competition for the leadership of the Arab world and this rivalry put a stamp on Middle East politics in the 1950s.

Iran

Iran was one of the most important regional actors in the 1950s with its pro-Western policies and rich oil resources. In this decade, Iran was being ruled by the Pahlavi dynasty, which had ended the Qajar dynasty in 1925, and continued ruling until 1979.⁸⁵ Reza Shah, who became the Shah of Iran in 1926, established a militarily and bureaucratically strong state apparatus. Social rights were provided, i.e., Western type of education, civil law, and women rights. All these policies undermined the religious leadership in the following period. His rule ended in 1941 with the joint Soviet Union-United Kingdom occupation of Iran during the Second World War, which ended in 1946. After Reza Shah's departure, the United Kingdom sought to restore the Qajar rule, but did not succeed. His son, Mohammed Reza

⁸⁴ Mansfield, p.248. For the details of the Iraqi domestic politics and the Prime Minister Nuri Said's foreign policy objectives, see Tripp, pp.123-139.

⁸⁵ For the details of the Qajar dynasty and the transition to the Pahlavi rule see Homa Katouzian, *State and Society in Iran: The Eclipse of the Qajars and the Emergence of the Pahlavis* (London: IB Tauris, 2006), pp.268-342; Sirius Ghani, *Iran and the Rise of Reza Shah: From Qajar Collapse to Pahlavi Rule* (London: IB Tauris, 1998).

Shah, came to power. During his ruling, Iranian relations with the West developed, especially with the United States.⁸⁶

During the decade between 1953 and 1963, Mohammed Reza Shah tried hard to consolidate his power. He got rid of the threats against his authority from different circles, i.e. the Communist Left, the National Front, some right-wing elements, and the mullahs, the religious groups. The Tudeh Party, which was a strong political front in Iran, was destructed. The National Front was suppressed until 1962. The right-wing groups, which consisted of big landowners who were against the Shah's land reform, were pushed aside. The main figure of the "mullahs" in Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini was sent into exile. He would come to power after the Revolution in 1979.⁸⁷

Regarding foreign relations, Iran had a pro-Western stance and got involved in the Western supported alliance projects, i.e., the Baghdad Pact, especially after the overthrow of nationalist prime minister Mossadegh. Oil was the major component of Iranian foreign relations, particularly with the West. The United Kingdom and the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company were the major targets of the Iranian nationalists. In 1949, the Iranian government launched a reform program which required funding. Although the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company's revenues had increased tenfold between 1944 and 1950, this was not reflected in the revenues of the state. The negotiations between Iran and the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company to increase the revenues did not bear fruit and prime minister Mossadegh was authorized to nationalize the Iranian oil

⁸⁶ Sorenson, pp.190-192. See also Halliday, pp.101-102; Ali M. Ansari, *Modern Iran since 1921: The Pahlavis and After* (England: Longman, 2003), pp.75-124.

⁸⁷ Ansari, pp.125-146. See also Lenczowski, p.210; Yetkin Başkavak, "İran'da Değişim Sancıları" in *Değişen Toplumlar Değişmeyen Siyaset: Ortadoğu*, ed. Fulya Atacan (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2004), pp.55-85.

industry. Thereupon, Mossadegh cut the ties with the United Kingdom and closed its consulates in Iran.⁸⁸

After a joint operation of the intelligence services of the United States and United Kingdom, Mossadegh was overthrown. Relations with the United Kingdom were ameliorated, but the United States became the major ally of Iran. The influence of the United States rose in the following period. Regarding the Iranian oil, a consortium of the oil companies from the United States, United Kingdom and Netherlands conducted negotiations with the National Iranian Oil Company and a new agreement was signed to the advantage of the great powers. More importantly, Iran signed a bilateral agreement with the United States and later joined the Baghdad Pact in the same year, 1955, and Iran became a part of the Western camp during the Cold War.⁸⁹

Syria

Syria gained its independence from France in 1946 and entered into instable and conflictual years in the 1950s. Several coups and countercoups succeeded each other. Syria became the center of the Arab socialist movement, the Baath Party, which was supported by young people, army officers, workers and Palestinians. The Baath Party became an advocate of land reform, the nationalization of basic industries, Pan-Arabism and resistance to Zionist Israel and the imperial powers. However, this instigated Pan-Arab, anti-imperialist and anti-Zionist propaganda caused unrest among the social groups in Syria, i.e., the Armenians, Christians,

⁸⁸ Mansfield, pp.250-251. See also Lenczowski, pp.190-200; Westad, *The Global Cold War*, p.122; Friedman, pp.287-288; McMahon, pp.65-66.

⁸⁹ *ibid.*

Shiites, Alawis, Druzes, and Jews, especially after the overthrow of Colonel Shishakli.⁹⁰

Colonel Shishakli controlled Syrian politics after the coup d'état in 1949, behind the scene. On 28-29 November 1951, during another coup d'état to consolidate his power, the prime minister, members of the cabinet and other political leaders were arrested. On 2 December 1951 he dissolved the parliament and upon that president Atassi resigned. After these developments, Colonel Shishakli seized power and directly controlled Syrian politics until he was overthrown by another coup in 1954. He established an authoritarian regime in Syria after he consolidated his power. In this period the political parties and the Moslem Brotherhood were banned, the press was controlled, the political activities for the civil servants were banned and the some university professors were fired.⁹¹

Regarding foreign policy, he followed Nasser's neutralist policy and did not join the Western-supported alliances. The main motive of his foreign policy was pan-Arabism with Syria at the core of the Arab Union. When he resorted to oppressive measures, his popularity and support began to decline. In 1954, he was overthrown by a military faction. After Shishakli, the parliamentary regime and the constitutional life which had been suspended by Shishakli were restored. Hashim el-Atassi was re-elected as the new president and he kept office until he was replaced by Quwatli on 18 August 1955. In the following period, the army was heavily involved in politics, directly or indirectly, despite the existence of the parliamentary regime. In early 1958, Syria was unified with Egypt under the umbrella of the United Arab Republic

⁹⁰ Goldschmidt, p.290. For the demographic details of Syria see Onn Winckler, *Demographic Developments and Population Policies in Ba'thist Syria* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press,1999).

⁹¹ Cleveland, p.315. See also Lenczowski, pp.330-341; Ayşegül Sever, "Bağımsızlıktan Bugüne Suriye" in *Değişen Toplumlar Değişmeyen Siyaset: Ortadoğu*, ed.Fulya Atacan (istanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2004), pp.193-218.

and governed by the president of the Union, Nasser, until the dissolution of the Union in 1961. Cleveland writes that the “divide and rule policy” of the former colonizer France and the “factionalization and politicization of the military” impeded the establishment of a long-lasting, stable and consolidated regime in Syria.⁹²

The dominant political ideology in Syria was Nasserist Arab Nationalism, but the impact of Communism was heavily felt in Syria during the 1950s. In this vein, Syria followed the Egyptian path, acted against the Western-supported alliances particularly the Baghdad Pact, and provided economic and military support from the Soviet Union in 1956. Moreover, Syria recognized Communist China. The leftwards trend in Syria mainly stemmed from the increase of the influence of the Baath Party. The Baath Party had few seats in the Parliament, whereas the key positions were in cooperation with the Baath Party including the ones in the military. Therefore, the Baath Party became an indispensable element of any government in Syria 1956 onwards.⁹³

With the rise of leftist ideology, the Soviet Union shifted the center of its propaganda activities from Lebanon to Syria. The collaboration between the Soviet Union and Syria intensified, especially from 1956 onwards and, the Soviet Union provided \$294 million in the name of economic and military assistance between 1955 and 1958. Furthermore, the Soviet Union came up with the proposal of financial assistance for the construction of hydroelectric plants and irrigation projects. In 1956, president Quwatli visited the Soviet Union and secured the support of the Soviet Union to defend Syrian independence. All these developments caused

⁹² Cleveland, p.315. See also Lenczowski, pp.330-341; Ayşegül Sever, “Bağımsızlıktan Bugüne Suriye” in *Değişen Toplumlar Değişmeyen Siyaset: Ortadoğu*, ed.Fulya Atacan (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2004), pp.193-218.

⁹³ Mansfield, p.260. See also Golan, *Soviet Policies in the Middle East: From World War II to Gorbachev*, pp.140-142; Robert G. Rabil, *Syria, the United States and the War on Terror in the Middle East* (Westport: Praeger, 2006), p.39.

uneasiness in the United States.⁹⁴ With the establishment of the United Arab Republic between Egypt and Syria in 1958, the Communist threat was curbed with the control of Syria by Nasser.

Saudi Arabia

The Saudi Arabian state was established in 1932 by Ibn Saud.⁹⁵ When he died in 1953, his eldest son, Saud, came to power. An incompetent ruler, who had a luxurious life, he assigned the financial management of the country to his brother, Faisal. In time, after failures in foreign policy, he also assigned the management of foreign relations to his brother.⁹⁶

In the domestic politics of Saudi Arabia, the basic problem was the allocation of revenues to meet the needs of the public. Despite the improvements in transportation, health, and school facilities, a great amount of the revenues was allocated to unproductive projects.⁹⁷

The basic source of revenue for the Saudi Arabia was oil production and exports. The involvement of the Saudi Arabia in oil production dated back to the 1930s when the US companies began searching oil resources in the region. Therefore, after the Second World War, the United States-operated Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO) became the largest exporter of the Middle East oil to Europe. Therefore, Saudi-United States relations were shaped in the light of oil relations and the influence of the United States on Saudi Arabia gradually increased

⁹⁴ Kreutz, p.13. See also Rabil, pp.40-41.

⁹⁵ For the details of the developments before the establishment of the Saudi state see Madawi Al-Rasheed, *A History of Saudi Arabia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp.39-71.

⁹⁶ Sorenson, p.129. See also Al-Rasheed, pp.106-109.

⁹⁷ Lenczowski, p.587. See also Fulya Atacan, "Teokratik Monarşi: Suudi Arabistan" in *Değişen Toplumlar Değişmeyen Siyaset: Ortadoğu*, ed.Fulya Atacan (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2004), pp.221-255.

in the following period, not only economically, but also culturally. Westad states that, “American money enabled the regime to fasten its grip on the huge territory that it claimed to control without having to give concessions to opposition groups.”⁹⁸

On the other hand, despite close relations with the United States, Saudi Arabia did not join the alliance projects that were supported by the United States. Kreutz argues that there were two main reasons for this policy: “not to be allied with the traditionally hostile Iran and not to instigate the hostility of the Arab nationalists.” The distanced position of Saudi Arabia to the alliance projects was supported by the Soviet Union and the spokesman of the Soviet Union’s Foreign Ministry praised the Saudi stance on 16 April 1955. In addition, the Soviet Union supported the Saudi Arabia in the Buraimi Dispute with the United Kingdom. However, the flirtation between the two states did not turn into closer relations because of their ideological commitments: Islam for the Saudi Arabia and the Communist Revolution for the Soviet Union.⁹⁹

Finally, the Saudi relations with Nasserism were also conflictual. Although the Saudi Arabia was against Nasserist Egyptian nationalism due to its traditionalism, the former joined the Egyptian-Syrian-Saudi Pact in 1955.¹⁰⁰ Consequently, the Saudi Arabia in the 1950s was Western-oriented, but the regional rivalries and dynamics forced it to collaborate with states which were ideologically and politically irreconcilable.

⁹⁸ Westad, *The Global Cold War*, p.120. See also Al-Rasheed, pp.91-105.

⁹⁹ Kreutz, p.126.

¹⁰⁰ Mansfield, pp.259-260. See also Al-Rasheed, p.106.

Lebanon

Lebanon declared its independence from the French mandate in 1943 during the German occupation in France, but its independence was recognized by the great powers in 1946. Beginning from 1952, Camille Chamoun, who was a Maronite lawyer and had acted as the finance and interior minister in the earlier cabinets, replaced Bishara al-Khuri and ruled Lebanon as the president until he was forced to leave in 1958.¹⁰¹

President Chamoun had a pro-Western stance and tried hard to protect the free enterprise system and banking regulations which were favorable for the foreign investors. Moreover, President Chamoun had to keep the different social groups together because Lebanon had a vibrant socioeconomic structure in which different social groups with their various religious, ethnic, political, cultural backgrounds lived together as a “free and open society” although sometimes several clashes and crises erupted among these groups.¹⁰²

During Chamoun’s Presidency, the Middle East witnessed the most tense years of the Cold War, i.e., the superpower rivalry and the rise of Nasserism. In this vein, Chamoun refused to participate in the alliance system, but tried hard to keep closer relations with the West. Although Lebanon had a pro-Western stance in regional politics, the social crises in Lebanon in 1958 and the tension and crises in the Middle East had impacts on Lebanese politics. In Lebanon, the domestic unrest between the Muslims and Maronites deteriorated and the elections in 1957, in which

¹⁰¹ A.J.Abraham, *Lebanon in Modern Times* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2008), p.128.

¹⁰² For the details of the economic, social and cultural dynamics of Lebanon see Samir Khalaf, *Civil and Uncivil Violence in Lebanon* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), pp.151-203.

Chamoun and the Maronites, who supported him, won by a two-thirds majority in the parliament, were believed to be manipulated and this instigated the crisis.¹⁰³

The Muslims of Lebanon began to demand reform. They sought to prove that they were the majority in Lebanon and as such were entitled to more authority in the government. The Lebanese Muslims were pro-Nasser and Pan-Arabism, while supporters of Chamoun, mostly the Maronites, were pro-Western. Therefore, Chamoun had to satisfy these two communities to keep them together. Ultimately, the Muslim community, who were supported by the United Arab Republic, rebelled in the big cities with the demand to unite with the United Arab Republic in the summer of 1958 and the government was unable to control the events. Moreover, the Iraqi coup d'état urged Chamoun to take measures. The Lebanese Army under the control of General Fuad Chebab, who would be the successor of Chamoun as president, did not act to control and suppress the rebellions and as a result the President Chamoun demanded military intervention by the United States in 1958 to save his rule.¹⁰⁴

The Soviet Union did not get involved in Lebanese politics until the Civil War in 1975, but acted decisively to have influence through the Orthodox Church, the Communist Party, financial, and cultural activities. As a result of the political freedom in the country, the Soviet Union spread propaganda about its achievements and accepted Lebanese students to its universities.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ For a detailed analysis of the Lebanon Crisis in 1958 see M.S. Agwani (ed.), *The Lebanese Crisis 1958* (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1965). See also Khalaf, pp.103-150; Abraham, pp.128-130; Lenczowski, pp.366-368; Cleveland, pp.326-327; Sorenson, pp.293-294; Mansfield, p.259; Fulya Atacan, "Küçük Ülke Büyük Sorunlar: Lübnan" in *Değişen Toplumlar Değişmeyen Siyaset: Ortadoğu*, ed. Fulya Atacan (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2004), pp.285-310.

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ Kreutz, p.33.

To sum up, Lebanon was squeezed between pro-Soviet Nasserism and pro-Westernism. Although the rulers were pro-Western and remained loyal to the West, the pro-Nasserite Muslims and their problematic relations with the Maronites and the support of the United Arab Republic to these Muslims could be regarded as the reasons for the domestic unrest. In addition, the developments in the Middle East, particularly the crises, had significant impact on Lebanese politics.

Jordan

Jordan became independent from the United Kingdom's mandate in 1946. Abdullah became the first King of the independent state. After he was assassinated in 1951, his son Talal came to power. Talal had been the Crown Prince during the reign of Abdullah, but he was mentally ill. After Talal had become ineligible due to his illness, his son Hussein was elected as the King of Jordan by the parliament in 1952 and he began his reign actively in 1953.¹⁰⁶

After Hussein became the King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, he was exposed to the crisis between Egypt and the Western alliance. More importantly, Nasserism was the hope of the Palestinians in the refugee camps, the Palestinian intellectuals, merchants and peasants who did not want to be the subjects of Jordan, which had expanded its territories to central and eastern Palestine as early as 1948 during the Palestinian war. Salibi argues that the Palestinians were against the Hashemite monarchy basically for two reasons: the exclusion of the Palestinians by the Jordanian system and the anti-Hashemite attitudes of the older Palestinians which were passed on to the younger generations. Therefore, the Palestinians both in the

¹⁰⁶ Kamal Salibi, *The Modern History of Jordan* (London: IB Tauris, 1998), pp.176-177.

refugee camps and towns in Jordan became the major mobilized group of opposition in the country.¹⁰⁷

Regarding foreign policy, King Hussein felt pressure from both sides particularly to join the alliance system in the Middle East in the 1950s: the United Kingdom and its allies, including Turkey, forced him to join the alliance system, on the one hand, and Nasser and the Nasserites forced him to resist joining, on the other. Ultimately, Jordan did not participate in the alliance, and, in return the United Kingdom cut its subsidy to Jordan. Rather, Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia compensated for the subsidy of the United Kingdom.¹⁰⁸

In the meantime, as Jordan got closer with the Nasserites, the Soviet Union, which had not recognized Jordan and prevented its membership in the United Nations until the mid-1950s, changed its policy towards Jordan. In April 1954, the Soviet Union backed Jordan in the dispute with Israel after the Israeli attack on the village of Nahalin in Jordan. A year later, the Soviet Union accepted the membership of Jordan in the United Nations. During the Suez War in 1956, the Jordanian parliament accepted the proposal of the government to establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and communist China. However, the domestic and regional uprisings, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5, prevented Jordan from getting closer to the Soviet Union and Jordan approached the West in the late 1950s.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Salibi, p.198. For the details of the Jordanian policy regarding Palestine see Musa S. Braizat, *The Jordanian Palestinian Relationship: The Bankruptcy of the Confederal Idea* (London: British Academic Press, 1998); Joseph Nevo, *King Abdallah and Palestine: A Territorial Ambition* (London: Macmillan, 1996); Lenczowski, p.474.

¹⁰⁸ Cleveland, p.322. See also Sorenson, pp.334-335; Goldschmidt, pp.287-288; Mansfield, p.259; Erhan Keleşoğlu, "Kral Hüseyin'den II.Abdullah'a Ürdün" in *Değişen Toplumlar Değişmeyen Siyaset: Ortadoğu*, ed.Fulya Atacan (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2004), pp.259-282. For the details of the history of the relations of Jordan and the Palestinians before the independence of Jordan see Salibi, pp.120-143.

¹⁰⁹ Kreutz, pp.39-40.

Consequently, Jordan felt the pressure of the tension and split in the Arab world in the 1950s and tried to adapt to the changing dynamics. Nevertheless, eventually, Jordan had to choose the West to suppress the domestic unrest and save the throne.

Israel

The Israeli state was established after the Arab-Israeli war in 1948. From the very beginning, Israel became the common enemy of the Arab states, especially because of the Palestinian conflict,¹¹⁰ and it was exploited as part of the propaganda tool of Nasserite Arab nationalism. The unity of the Arab world against Zionist Israel, the occupier of the Palestine, was the main focus of Arab politics. Moreover, as Cleveland argues, Israel was perceived as the “expansionist arm of the Western imperialism”. The Arabs were afraid of the possibility of Israeli gaining more territory for the Jews in the region. In return, Israel, at least at the very beginning, was afraid of the possibility of united Arab military forces amassing against it. Therefore, the efforts to unite or to strengthen the Arab states, i.e., the Soviet economic and military assistance to Egypt, Syria and, after the coup in 1958, Iraq, worried the Israeli state.¹¹¹ As a result, the unrest, hostility, and tension between the Arabs and Israel continued and several clashes and wars, i.e., the Arab-Israeli War of 1956, the Six Days War in 1967, and the Yom Kippur War in 1973, between the two sides occurred.

¹¹⁰ For the details of the establishment of the Israeli state and the Palestinian conflict see Leslie Stein, *The Making of Modern Israel* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009); Avi Shlaim, *Israel and Palestine: Reappraisals, Revisions, Refutations* (London: Verso, 2010); Harry B.Ellis, *Israel and the Middle East* (The United States: Kessinger Publishing, 2009); Efraim Karsh (ed.), *Israel: The First Hundred Years* (London: Frank Cass, 1999).

¹¹¹ Cleveland, p.328. See also İbrahim Mazlum, “İsrail Siyasal Yaşamının Temel Dinamikleri” in *Değişen Toplumlar Değişmeyen Siyaset: Ortadoğu*, ed.Fulya Atacan (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2004), pp.89-119.

The Israeli state was supported by the Western powers, particularly the United States, politically, economically, and militarily from the beginning. As a Middle Eastern state with Western models of political structure, economy, military and society, Israel received the constant support of the United States. Mansfield states that the Zionist political influence and the pro-Israeli Congress in the United States were the main reasons for the United States' support of Israel.¹¹²

By the same token, the Soviet Union supported the establishment of the Israeli state, too. As discussed above, Gaddis argues that:

In order to exploit the American differences with the British who still held a United Nations mandate over that territory, to ensure turmoil which might have enabled the entrance of the Soviet troops in the region as a part of peace-keeping force and to provide the support of the Communist Party in Israel, the Soviet Union supported the establishment of the Israeli state.¹¹³

On the other hand, Lenczowski argues that when the Soviet Union signed an agreement with Israel as early as 1949 which enabled the former to control the properties of the Orthodox Church in Israel, the relations between the two states began to develop. Moreover, as he argues, the Israeli state signed trade agreements with the states of the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe to develop its economic relations.¹¹⁴ Whatever the reason was, it can be argued that although the Israeli state was established with the support of the Western powers, the relations between Israel and the Soviet Union were closer from the very beginning.

Consequently, the Arab-Israeli relations and Israel's relations with the great powers were affected by the global dynamics and interests as well as the regional dynamics and interests of the Cold War in the 1950s.

¹¹² Mansfield, p.251. See also Little, pp.77-103; Lenczowski, pp.416-417.

¹¹³ Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History*, p.166.

¹¹⁴ Lenczowski, p.418.

Pakistan

Pakistan became an independent state after its separation from India on 15 August 1947. It was founded on the north-western and north-eastern region of India where the majority of the population was Muslim. The leader of the Muslim population, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, became the leader of the new Pakistani state.¹¹⁵ In the following period, particularly after the death of Jinnah in 1948, Pakistani politics became chaotic because of the politicians' inability or disinterestedness to establish a democratic system. During the decade following the establishment of the Pakistani state, seven prime ministers governed Pakistan and attempts to establish democracy failed. In this decade, Ghulam Mohammed, who acted as president between 1951 and 1955; and Iskender Mirza, who was the successor of Ghulam Mohammed, between 1955 and 1958, dominated Pakistani politics. The Pakistani army regarded as the only organization that could provide law and order in the country, became deeply involved in politics. Ultimately, the Chief-of-Staff of the Pakistani Army and the Minister of Defense of Pakistan, Ayub Khan, ended the Iskender Mirza period in 1958 and acted as president until 1969.¹¹⁶

The 1950s witnessed efforts to establish a nation-state in Pakistan in an atmosphere of political volatility. During the establishment of the national state and the national identity, religion was used as a cement to keep people together where the majority was predominantly Muslim. However, the Pakistani Muslims differed from each other in their religious practices. Although most of them were Sunni (about seventy five percent), the other group was Shia. Conflicts between the Sunnis and Shias broke out in Pakistan in this period. More importantly, religion was abused by

¹¹⁵ S.M.Burke and Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy: A Historical Analysis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p.8.

¹¹⁶ Owen Bennett Jones, *Pakistan: Eye of the Storm* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), pp.224-226.

the politicians and the army to reach their political goals. In addition to religious practice, the cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity of the Pakistani population posed a problem for the establishment of the Pakistani “nation state.”¹¹⁷

The foreign policy of Pakistan was also challenging in the early years as well as domestic politics. Pakistan had border disputes with its neighbors India, e.g., Kashmir, and Afghanistan, e.g., Pushtoonistan.¹¹⁸ Therefore, Pakistan needed to provide the support of the great powers, particularly the United States, against its hostile neighbors. Furthermore, as Burke and Ziring write, the Pakistani leaders saw

¹¹⁷ Hilary Synnott, *Transforming Pakistan: Ways Out of Instability* (London: Routledge, 2009), pp.17-27. For the details of nationalism in Pakistan, see Jones, pp.109-145.

¹¹⁸ Kashmir was a dominantly Muslim territory which had remained part of India after the establishment of the Pakistani state in 1947 and it constituted a problem between the two states which is still alive. The invasion of Kashmir by the Pakistani tribes in 1947 and the Pakistani army in 1948 deteriorated the situation between India and Pakistan. After the failure of direct negotiations between the two states, India referred the Kashmir dispute to the United Nations, and the Security Council declared successive resolutions, which mainly pointed out the necessity of a plebiscite in Kashmir. However, the plebiscite was not realized as a result of the disagreement between India and Pakistan. In time, despite the efforts to solve the dispute, the Kashmir dispute still poses a problem between the two states. Burke and Ziring, pp.16-46. See also William J. Barnds, *India, Pakistan and the Great Powers* (New York: Praeger, 1972), pp.38-43; Jones, pp.56-108. For a detailed analysis of the Kashmir dispute, see Alastair Lamb, *Incomplete Partition: The Genesis of the Kashmir Dispute 1947-1948* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Victoria Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict: India, Pakistan and the Unending War* (London: IB Tauris, 2003); A. Z. Hilali, “Historical Developments of the Kashmir Problem and Pakistan’s Policy After September 11”, *Perceptions*, Summer 2004.

In a National Intelligence Estimate the Pushtoonistan issue was described in 1953 as follows: “Ever since 1947, the Afghan government has waged an unsuccessful propaganda and diplomatic campaign for the establishment of an autonomous Pushtoonistan for the several million Pathan tribesmen in Pakistan’s northwest frontier area. The territory was once part of Afghanistan and after its annexation by British India in the late 19th century, its inhabitants continued to maintain close relations with their kinsmen across the border who comprise the dominant Afghan tribal group. Pakistan’s policy of extending economic aid and social improvements to the Pathan tribes within its borders has not only materially reduced their traditional restiveness but has also done much to gain their loyalty and to weaken their ties with Afghanistan. Although this controversy is unlikely to result in war between Pakistan and Afghanistan, it may drag on indefinitely. The Afghan Government shows no sign of abandoning its campaign despite its apparent lack of success in arousing tribal feeling within Pakistan and despite the fact that virtually half its external trade normally passes through Pakistan and has been intermittently subjected to Pakistan obstructions. Pakistan will almost certainly continue to hold that the status of the tribes is a domestic matter in which Afghanistan has no legitimate interest. In view of the basic nature of the tension between Pakistan and Afghanistan, any effective military collaboration between the two appears improbable.” National Intelligence Estimate. June 30, 1953. FRUS 1952-54. v.11. p.2., p.1085.

communism as a threat to the Islamic way of life. The cooperation with the United States was necessary to fight against Communism so Pakistan was ready to be involved in an alliance with the West in the 1950s. However, as Burke and Ziring argue, the United States was not willing to cooperate with Pakistan in the beginning because India was the major actor with its potential and resources in Asia to combat against communism in the eyes of the United States' decision makers who sought to persuade India to act together to the last minute. However, as India became non-aligned, Pakistan became the ally in Asia and was invited to join the Alliance system. In the same vein, Pakistan signed the Pact with Turkey in 1954 and joined the Baghdad Pact in 1955 and provided the buffer zone in Asia against the Soviet expansion.¹¹⁹

To sum up, the 1950s experienced the domestic problems and the search for alliances with other states for the newly established Pakistani state. As time passed, Pakistan sided with the Western powers, particularly with the United States, to provide protection against its neighbors and meet its domestic needs, especially economic and military aid as will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4, in return for completing the alliance system in the Middle East as an Asian state, and providing a buffer zone against Soviet expansion with the support of the United States.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan became an independent state in 1919 after the wars with British India. The leader of the Afghan state, Amanullah Khan, who ruled the country between 1919 and 1929, launched diplomatic initiatives for the recognition of

¹¹⁹ Burke and Ziring, pp. 60, 91, 98, 240. See also Barnds, pp.83-128.

Afghanistan in the international arena.¹²⁰ After Amanullah Khan, Nadir Shah became the King and Nadir Shah ruled the country between 1929 and 1933 until he was assassinated. In 1933, upon the assassination of Nadir Shah, the long reign of Zahir Shah began and he ruled Afghanistan until 1973. In the early years of his rule, his uncles acted as prime ministers and governed the state until 1953 when Daoud Khan became the prime minister after a palace revolution and held office until 1963. King Zahir Shah and prime minister Daoud Khan were the prominent figures in Afghan politics in the 1950s.¹²¹

Rasanayagam describes prime minister Daoud Khan as a “fervent nationalist and a modernizer” who aimed to modernize Afghanistan and he was critical of the policies of his predecessors regarding modernization. The modernization of Afghanistan needed foreign financial support and the Daoud Khan period witnessed the change of the traditional “neutralist” Afghan policy.¹²²

During the government of prime minister Daoud Khan, efforts were made to develop the economic and social structures of Afghanistan. Dams and roads were built and communications and basic industries were established. In addition, the school system was developed. To reach his goals, Daoud Khan secured foreign financial assistance. He established an autocratic political structure to modernize the country and to control society. Afghan society was dominantly Pathans or Pushtuns, but there were many smaller linguistic, ethnic and national groups, i.e., Hazaras, Uzbeks, Turkomans, Tajiks, Baluch, Kirghiz, Nuristani, Qizilbash, Aimaq, and Brahui which constituted the half of the population. Daoud Khan established a strong

¹²⁰ Amalendu Misra, *Afghanistan* (Cambridge: Polity, 2004), pp.19.

¹²¹ Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History* (London: IB Tauris, 2005), p.25.

¹²² *ibid.*, p.27.

central authority and one-party state to rule these people from different backgrounds.¹²³

Regarding foreign policy, Afghanistan had closer ties with the Soviet Union in the 1950s because the Soviet Union provided financial support to Afghanistan for its modernization. In 1955, several agreements were signed between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan to develop barter trade between the two states. In the same year, Khrushchev visited Afghanistan and provided a \$100 million loan for the development of the country. However, not to be fully dependent on the Soviet Union, a powerful neighbor which might have swallowed Afghanistan, and to balance the relations between the two superpowers, Afghanistan approached the United States in 1954 to provide particularly military aid. However, the United States did not meet the needs and the demands of the Afghan government and Afghanistan remained closer to the Soviet Union.¹²⁴ In other words, the disinterestedness of the United States towards Afghanistan resulted in the development of relations between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan. Misra explains why the United States ignored Afghanistan as follows:

From the end of the Second World War II until 1979, when the Soviets invaded it, the West and the international community blissfully ignored Afghanistan. Various factors contributed to this lack of interest. First, Afghanistan was not a major player in local and regional, let alone international, politics. Second, its contribution to world trade and commerce was almost negligible. Third, its inhospitable terrain and closed culture deterred potential tourists from visiting the country... Fourth, its landlocked position flanked by a secretive Soviet Union in the north and the mighty Himalayan range to the south, effectively sealed off its territory creating a proverbial no-man's land.¹²⁵

¹²³ Lenczowski, pp.249-250. See also Thomas Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), pp.198-225.

¹²⁴ Misra, pp.22-23. See also Rasanayagam, pp.28-31; Barfield, pp. 209-210; Lenczowski, pp.245-247; Amin Saikal, *Modern Afghanistan: A History of Struggle and Survival* (London: IB Tauris, 2004), pp.118-125.

¹²⁵ Misra, p.20.

The importance and the priority of India, and later on Pakistan, to the interests of the United States in the region can be added to these reasons why the United States ignored Afghanistan.

Consequently, the domestic and country specific dynamics of Afghanistan played roles in the formulation of the Afghan foreign policy, especially with the superpowers. In return, the priorities of the superpowers, particularly the United States, resulted in the establishment of closer relations between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan.

Concluding Remarks

The Cold War was not simply a clash between the two superpowers. It was a struggle of the two systems involving their political, economic, social, and military dynamics. However, as they reached a balance, particularly of nuclear weapons, they tried hard to avoid direct confrontation and looked for alternative ways to protect and expand their spheres of influence against the other. The Third World became the arena of competition, and the Middle East witnessed their rivalry in the 1950s.

The main aim of the United States and its Allies was to protect the vital resources of the region, particularly oil, for their survival and power, and to prevent the Soviet Union from infiltrating the region through their policy of containment. Therefore, the United States provided economic and military assistance to the states in the region and tried to bring them together under the umbrella of alliance systems. However, the regional dynamics, i.e., the Nasserite Arab nationalism, anti-imperialism, anti-Zionism and intra-Arab rivalry, caused these policies to fail and paved the way of the Soviet advances into the region, especially in the second half of

the 1950s. The change and flexibility of the Soviet strategy under Khrushchev also played a role in this development.

On the other hand, the states in the region, without considering the clash of ideologies of the two superpowers, leveraged the superpower rivalry to their advantage and maximize their interests. Like the global and regional dynamics, domestic developments also shaped the Middle East politics in the 1950s.

After the analyses of the global dynamics of the Cold War, the reflections of the global dynamics on regional politics and the individual states, the developments in which Turkey was involved, directly or indirectly, in the 1950s, will be examined in the light and the context of these analyses. The first major development of the Middle East politics regarding Turkey was the Middle East Command. In the next chapter, the developments about the Middle East Command will be analyzed in detail.

CHAPTER 3

THE MIDDLE EAST AND TURKEY, 1950-1953

As discussed above, the Middle East was one of the regions that witnessed heated struggles during the Cold War especially in the 1950s. On the one hand, the capitalist countries, led by the superpower United States and its close Ally the United Kingdom, and on the other hand, the communist superpower the Soviet Union competed to control the region. At least, they aimed not to lose control of the region to the other side. However, the struggle among the great powers was only part of the complexity of Middle East politics in this era. By the same token, the struggle among the states in the Middle East, namely Turkey, the Arab states and Israel, characterized the most problematic years in the Middle East during the Cold War. As a result, in order to better understand the developments and Turkey's position in the Middle East politics in the 1950s, both of these power relations should be taken into consideration.

In this chapter, the developments before the mid-1950s, mainly before the establishment of the Baghdad Pact in 1955, which had a major influence on regional politics, will be analyzed. The focus will be on the efforts to establish a regional security system, namely the Middle East Command, between 1951 and 1952, and the Middle East Defense Organization between late 1952 and 1953, in which Turkey was one of the major political actors. The importance of this kind of a security system lie in the promotion of Turkey's leadership in the region by the United States that conflicted with the attempts of Egypt as the leader of the Arab world. The reaction against Turkey's endeavors to be more active in the region cannot be understood

without the regional dynamics that also determined the policies of the great powers of the Middle East.

Thus, in the context of the great power politics, this chapter will analyze the regional factors that determined Turkey's policy-making mechanism throughout the 1950s. Moreover, it aims to flesh out the role of Turkey's domestic actors in the decision-making mechanism in the early 1950s.

First of all, it seems necessary to put emphasis on the policies of the great powers regarding the Middle East before getting into the details of regional politics.

The Great Powers and the Middle East

With the outbreak of the Cold War in the late 1940s, the Middle East became one of the significant areas on which the United States, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union focused. The interests of the United States and the United Kingdom in the region were formulized in the report of the Joint Chiefs of the General Staff, dated 5 August 1948:

Denial to any potential hostile power of any foothold in this area, maintenance of friendly relationships which could be promoted by social and economic assistance, together with such military assistance as might be practicable in order to insure collaboration by the peoples of the region in the common defense of the area, development of the oil resources in the area by the United States and such other countries as had or could be expected to have a friendly attitude towards the United States, assurance of the right military forces of the United States to enter militarily essential areas upon a threat of war.^{126,127}

These strategic principles and goals shed light on the direction of the politics of the great powers regarding the region in the following period. The main aim was to keep the area under control not only militarily, but also economically, especially through the control of the oil resources, which were vital to the interests of both

¹²⁶ FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, p.1.

¹²⁷ All block quotations in this study are original and grammar problems and letter omissions belong to the original texts.

sides. On the other hand, establishing friendly relations in order to provide the control of the region through military and economic support to the countries in the area was the strategy of the Allies. In the light of these strategic principles, the great powers reoriented their policies in order to adapt the requirements of power struggle in the region, and they sought to take the countries in the region to their side by implementing these policies. The targeted countries in the region were named in a report written by the US Assistant Secretary of State of the time, George McGhee,¹²⁸ on 29 November 1950: “Greece, Turkey, Iran, Israel and the Arab States including Egypt and Libya.”¹²⁹

At the beginning, Greece was also included as part of the policy because of the indivisibility of the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle Eastern politics for the decision makers of the United States and the United Kingdom. However, it was excluded by the policy planners in 1950.¹³⁰ In the following two years, the positions of Greece and Turkey regarding the Middle East were hotly debated by the officials of the Allies. After the admission of Turkey and Greece to the NATO in 1952, the policies focused on Iran, Israel, and the Arab States especially in the realm of economic and military assistance.¹³¹ In short, policies regarding Turkey and Greece became parts of the policies regarding the NATO, although later on, Turkey became the focal point of Middle East politics especially for the United States.

After the analysis of the strategy and the depiction of the area by the Allies, the vitality of the Middle East for the Allies, which was discussed in detail in the previous chapter, should be re-emphasized.

¹²⁸ George McGhee was appointed as the US Assistant Secretary of State in 1949 and stayed in office until the end of 1951.

¹²⁹ FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, p.2.

¹³⁰ During the Anglo-American talks in October 1950 the Middle East area was defined and excluded Greece. No command had been set up for the Mediterranean Area.” FO 371.95002.

¹³¹ FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, p.3.

A memorandum sent by the US Assistant Secretary to the Secretary of State stated that the Middle East was important for the defense of the United States and the United Kingdom, and that they both lacked the manpower needed to defend the area against Soviet aggression. Furthermore, they had to make plans for the defense of the Middle East, especially to protect and control the Saudi Arabian oil fields and the Dhahran Air base, which were essential for the strategic aims of the Allies. The loss of the Middle East to the Soviet Union would be a great psychological loss to the free world generally and, more importantly, access to the Middle Eastern oil was vital to Europe and the United States in a long war. In addition to oil resources, the Middle East was strategically important for the Allies because important land, naval, and air bases existed in the region. If the Allies did not actively participate in Middle East politics, the US prestige would decline in the region. If this happened, the US firms might not have been permitted to maintain their oil concessions and other interests in the region.¹³²

The Allies agreed upon the control of the Middle East through the establishment of friendly relations with the countries in the region for strategic purposes, especially for the oil resources and strategic bases in the area. However, although they had common plans regarding the Middle East, there were also some differences in the tactics for the United States and the United Kingdom. A paper drafted in the US Department of State shows how the priorities of the two powers deviated:

In the Middle East the US and UK have similar security interests. All the more striking therefore is the absence of any similarity between US and UK plans for the protection of their interests in the Middle East. UK plans, in spite of heavy commitments in other areas, call for the commitment of British forces to defend part of the Middle East for at least the first two

¹³² Memorandum by the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs (McGhee) to the Secretary of State, FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8., p.4.

years of war. This disparity between US and UK plans had some justification under the World War II concept of British primary responsibility for the defense of the area. Yet, while UK plans envisage (and US plans endorse) British defense of the Suez area and protection of the Iranian oil fields in which British interests are paramount, neither US nor UK plans call for British defense of Dhahran air field and the oil fields in Arabia in which American interests are paramount.¹³³

It can be concluded that the United Kingdom sought to actively participate in regional politics, whereas the United States was planning to control the region behind the scenes and did not want to be involved in regional politics openly.

In harmony with the strategy of establishing friendly relations with the states in the Middle East and economically and militarily supporting them, Turkey and Egypt came into prominence for the great powers. Beginning with Turkey's role in regional politics, how the aforementioned countries became part of power politics in the 1950s must be discussed.

Turkey's Role in Regional Politics

The major priority of Turkish foreign policy following the establishment of NATO was to be a member of this organization. For the Allies, however, supporting Turkey and integrating it into Middle East politics as a supporter of the West was considered the nucleus of the strategies in the Middle East. As early as 1947, the US president Truman emphasized the importance of Turkey for the Middle East as follows:

The future of Turkey as an independent and economically sound state is clearly no less important to the freedom-loving peoples of the world than the future of Greece... Turkey now needs our support. Since the war Turkey has sought financial assistance from Great Britain and the United States for the purpose of effecting that modernization necessary for the maintenance of its national integrity. That integrity is essential to the preservation of order in the Middle East.¹³⁴

¹³³ Paper Drafted in the Department of State. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, pp.9-10.

¹³⁴ President Harry S.Truman's Address Before a Joint Session of Congress, March 12, 1947. http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/trudoc.asp

The basic concern for the Allies was to provide the self-sufficiency of Turkey through economic and military support. A militarily powerful Turkey was essential for their interests and strategies including the Middle East. Therefore, the United States and the United Kingdom agreed to be as close as possible with the Outer Ring (Turkey and Iran) in the region. It was a major component of the great powers' policy because the area including Turkey and Iran (the Turkish-Iranian Mountains) would protect the Middle East with its oil, manpower and strategic facilities.¹³⁵ As McGhee writes, "Turkey's fighting power was the most powerful in Europe following the United Kingdom and to maximize the utility of this power, the surrounding of it by the Soviet Union from the East and South should have been prevented."¹³⁶

Eventually, Turkey was considered the main actor in regional politics by the Allies. Furthermore, the Allies expected that the other states in the region would welcome Turkey's leadership in the region. The report of the Conference of the US Middle Eastern Chiefs of Mission held in Istanbul on 14-21 February 1951 concluded that:

All states in the region recognize Turkey's exposed situation and its importance to Middle East defense. They would approve further aid and support to Turkey. Most of them would be expected to view with approval a special, formalized security commitment to Turkey even if it were not extended to them, although such action would doubtless lead to increased demands on their part. It is probable that the Middle Eastern states, or at least those adjacent to Turkey, would be receptive to the principle of building up Turkey in the role of a "center of attraction" around which closer regional military cooperation could be built.¹³⁷

Turkey's role in the strategies regarding the Middle East was designated as the "leader" of the Middle East as early as 1951. As time passed, the expectations of

¹³⁵ Paper Drafted in the Department of State. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, p.5.

¹³⁶ *ibid.*, p.4.

¹³⁷ Agreed Conclusions and Recommendations of the Conference of Middle Eastern Chiefs of Mission, Istanbul, February 14-21, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, pp.51-52.

the Allies about the recognition of Turkey's leadership in the region failed, especially with the clash of interests of Turkey and Egypt afterwards. Nevertheless, it is important to note here that Turkey's significance for the Allies was not limited to the Middle East. Turkey was important not only for the Middle Eastern affairs but also for the Mediterranean affairs.¹³⁸ The report continued as follows:

Turkey's military strength should be increased as an independent operation as a matter of urgency, through the extension of appropriately increased military aid economic support for the military effort. Joint staff planning with Greece and Turkey should be conducted within the framework of Allied Mediterranean defense planning. Separate Turkish-Middle Eastern defense planning should be encouraged under the principle of Turkey's dual interest in the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

From the Allies' point of view, Turkey was the center of Middle Eastern and Mediterranean politics because it was located at the intersection of the two regions. Moreover, in Turkey, there was a pro-Western government that sought to become an important factor in regional politics. George McGhee's, who was appointed as the US ambassador in Ankara in December 1951, stayed in office until June 1953 and played important roles in US-Turkish relations, report on his conversation with Turkish president Celal Bayar in 1952 illustrates how Turkey was tempted to become a leader of the Middle East by the United States:

A discussion developed about Turkey's role in the Middle East. In an effort to provide an analogy for what I considered the Turkish position to be...Good Neighbor Policy...I suggested to the President that Turkey might well in her own interest pursue such a Good Neighbor Policy in the Middle East. Turkey was the natural leader of the Middle East because of her historical position, military strength, political stability, economic development and membership in NATO.¹³⁹

In this conversation, ambassador McGhee also shared the requirements of this "Good Neighbor Policy" with the Turkish president:

¹³⁸ Agreed Conclusions and Recommendations of the Conference of Middle Eastern Chiefs of Mission, Istanbul, February 14-21, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, p.55.

¹³⁹ Memorandum of Conversation by the Ambassador in Turkey (McGhee) Aboard the Turkish President's Train. May 6-8, 1952. FRUS 1952.v.8.i.14, pp.887-888.

Such a policy would, however, involve positive action on Turkey's part. It need not entail much money- it could be started by granting spaces in Turkish civil and military schools and for students from the other Middle East countries and sending professors and training missions to those countries, as Turkey had done very successfully already in the case of Afghanistan. It was in many ways much easier for Turkey to teach these countries than it was for us, or the Western Europeans. The gap between them and us was too great.¹⁴⁰

The role that Turkey would be expected to play in the region was "to bridge the gap between the Middle East states and the West" through this policy.

It can be argued that, as a result of its political regime, economic development, military strength and historical heritage, Turkey was regarded as the leader by United States which was implementing a policy of control behind the scenes at the time. The United States was to support Turkey and Turkey was to act as a mediator between the West and the Middle East. However, as the developments showed afterwards, the states in the region did not wholeheartedly welcome Turkey's leadership due to mainly Turkey's closeness to the West and its "historical heritage" as will be analyzed below. Furthermore, Turkey was not the only country in the region that was seeking leadership. It clashed with Egypt for leadership, complicating the regional politics, especially in the second half of the 1950s.

Egypt's Role in Regional Politics

Egypt was the other country located in the center of Middle East politics in the 1950s. However, the role determined by the United States for Egypt was different from that of Turkey. Egypt would be included in the regional arrangements to control the area because of the Anglo-Egyptian problem that was one of the impediments in the way of the regional alliance among the states while the United States did not

¹⁴⁰ Memorandum of Conversation by the Ambassador in Turkey (McGhee) Aboard the Turkish President's Train. May 6-8, 1952. FRUS 1952.v.8.i.14, pp.887-888.

want Egypt to play a leader role.¹⁴¹ The US policymakers were aware that the Greece-Turkey-Iran group and the Near Eastern group, mainly Egypt, were not inclined to cooperate. Thus, Turkey was chosen to be the leader of the region, due to the aforementioned reasons. To this end, Turkey and the Middle Eastern states that were closer to the West were to be supported economically and militarily. These states were to be self-sufficient in order to serve the aims of the Allies. On the other hand, the “jealousy” of Egypt regarding the leadership of the region, as the biggest Arab state, might have prevented these efforts from being realized.

Thus, states such as Pakistan represented an alternative for a regional alliance around Turkey, if Egypt impeded the process, although it had conflicts with India as its neighbor.¹⁴² As will be discussed in detail below, after the collapse of the efforts for a regional security alliance, the Middle East Command, and later the Middle East Defense Organization; the Turkish-Pakistani Pact signed in 1954 paved the way for a regional alliance system, the Baghdad Pact.

The Allies tried to establish a regional security system against the penetration of the Soviet Union in the light of their strategies such as the safety of the oil resources and the vital bases for the Western interests. The leadership role was allocated to Turkey, which was closer to the West because of its economic and military interests, especially in the first half of the 1950s. In return, Turkey was to be supported economically for military reasons in the short-term in order to play its leadership role as efficiently as possible.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ Agreed Conclusions and Recommendations of the Conference of Middle Eastern Chiefs of Mission, İstanbul, February 14-21, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, p.56.

¹⁴² Agreed Conclusions and Recommendations of the Conference of Middle Eastern Chiefs of Mission, İstanbul, February 14-21, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, pp.58-59.

¹⁴³ *ibid*, pp.69-70.

Search for a Regional Alliance

To establish a strong regional alliance, the first attempt was to bring Turkey and Egypt together and to persuade other states to join them later. However, these attempts collapsed after long discussions and negotiations continued between 1951 and 1953, and Turkey signed bilateral treaties with Pakistan and Iraq in 1954 and 1955 respectively. The United Kingdom and Iran participated in the alliance, but it did not last long. In the unstable politics of the 1950s, the aims of the Allies were not achieved because their interests and the interests of the Middle East states were not coherent. For example, the major threat for the Allies was the Soviet Union, while the main goal of the Arab states was to keep Israel from expanding. More importantly, the leadership of Turkey was not accepted in the region, Egypt sought to take the leadership. Furthermore, the Arab nationalism was rising especially against the United Kingdom at the time.

Assistant Secretary George McGhee's report after his tour in the Middle East in 1951 shows the dynamics and complexity of the situation in the region:

As a result of my trip I can reaffirm the need for a more positive policy in relation to the Arab states...The basic justification for this is political. The great preoccupation in the area is the problem of security. These countries do not have arms and do not have means of developing strength. For example, Iraq wants arms... The Syrian prime minister also told me that Syria wants arms although Syria has taken a neutralist position. The Lebanese prime minister told me that we can use their bases in time of war but that there must be no French involved. The Israelis also wants arms. They are disappointed that the attitude of the Arab states will not permit them to play a role outside Israel. The Egyptians also wants arms and are aware of the great significance of the present impasse with the British. The Egyptians have just turned down the UK proposal regarding the treaty.... The Egyptians wants the British out in 18 months.... The King and prime minister do not want an impasse but public sentiment is so high that no Egyptian government can accept the UK proposal. I am not sure that any agreement can be obtained. There is not much possibility of cooperation with Egypt while this problem is unsolved.....There is a rising tide of nationalism throughout the area. We must consider carefully whether we can support British policy in the Middle

East. Because Britain is opposed to this nationalist development and they are increasingly unpopular in the area and are a liability to us.¹⁴⁴

After an analysis of the strategies and roles in the region, the process of the efforts to establish a regional alliance system, which was started with the Middle East Command, will be analyzed in order to understand how the aims and strategies of the great powers and the Middle Eastern states were inconsistent and why these attempts collapsed and the Allies had to shift their strategies in the following period.

The Middle East Command (1951-1952)¹⁴⁵

The Middle East Command (MEC), which has not been analyzed in detail in foreign policy analyses particularly in Turkey, was the first major project around which the Allies sought to form a security system in the region.¹⁴⁶ The United States, the United Kingdom and France (especially for the policies regarding Syria and Lebanon which had been liberated from France after the Second World War) were the sponsoring powers and Turkey and Egypt were the key players in the formulation of this policy. However, although the aim of establishing a security system against so

¹⁴⁴ State Department Draft Minutes of Discussions at the State-Joint Chiefs of Staff Meeting, May 2, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, pp.113-114.

¹⁴⁵ Selected literature on the Middle East Command: Ayşegül Sever, "The Compliant Ally? Turkey and the West in the Middle East 1954-58", *Middle Eastern Studies*, no.34 (April 1998), pp.73-90; Ayşegül Sever, *Soğuk Savaş Kuşatmasında Türkiye, Batı ve Ortadoğu* (İstanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 1997), pp.87-106; Michael B.Bishku, "Turkey and its Middle Eastern Neighbors", *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies*, no.3 (Spring 1992), pp.51-71; Behçet K.Yeşilbursa, "Turkey's Participation in the Middle East Command and its Admission to NATO 1950-52", *Middle Eastern Studies*, no.35 (October 1999), pp.70-100; Hüseyin Bağcı, *Türk Dış Politikası'nda 1950'li Yıllar* (Ankara: ODTÜ Yayıncılık, 2007), pp.45-47; William Hale, *Türk Dış Politikası 1774-2000* (İstanbul: Mozaik Yayınları, 2003), pp.126-127; Melek Fırat and Ömer Kürkçuoğlu, "Ortadoğu'yla İlişkiler" in *Türk Dış Politikası*, ed. Baskın Oran (İstanbul: İletişim, 2006), pp.617-620; Pınar Bilgin, *Regional Security in the Middle East* (London: Routledge, 2005), pp.94-97; Kemal Karpat, *Türk Dış Politikası Tarihi* (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2012), pp.201-202.

¹⁴⁶ The Middle East Defense project was named as the Middle East Command (MEC) between 1951 and 1952. In 1952, it was revived and renamed as the Middle East Defense Organization (MEDO) which was negotiated until mid-1953, but failed as the Middle East Command Project. George McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO-Middle East Connection* (London: MacMillan, 1990), p.55.

called “Soviet penetration” to the Middle East was common to all of the Allies, their strategies and tactics differed.¹⁴⁷ Ambassador George McGhee’s statements indicate the nature of the cooperation between the Allies and the reservations towards each other in the Middle East:

Basis of US-UK cooperation in ME... is understood to be that US will not compete with or seek to displace Brit responsibilities or interests in ME, indeed, will seek to strengthen Brit where it can, however US does not recognize any exclusive UK spheres of influence and UK agrees desirability US make contribution over and above Brit contribution wherever it is in common interest. It is believed that Brit have lived up to this agreement. Altho they show natural desire protect interests, particularly in Jordan and Iraq, they have not opposed constructive contributions other powers in ME. Policy of Fr in recent years would appear however to seek preserve special position in Syria and Lebanon even at expense progress these countries and four power cooperation there. Although Fr understandably are not in position extend assistance to Syria and Lebanon or pursue dynamic policy in ME, this would not appear to justify their consistent efforts prevent other powers make contributions where needed.¹⁴⁸

The United States was not willing to actively participate this alliance, except to provide economic and military support to the states in the region. It intended to stay behind the scenes.¹⁴⁹ The basic utility of such a command for the United States was to bring all the Arab states together around Turkey’s leadership and integrate the security of the Middle East to that of the Mediterranean area. Moreover, it was expected that the problems between Israel and the Arab world would be solved and a

¹⁴⁷ Sever, *The Compliant Ally? Turkey and the West in the Middle East 1954-58*, p.74. See also Yeşilbursa, *Turkey’s Participation in the Middle East Command and its Admission to NATO 1950-52*. p.71; Fırat and Kürkçüoğlu, pp.618-619; Bilgin, p.94; Karpat, p.201.

¹⁴⁸ Telegram from the Ambassador in Turkey (McGhee) to the Department of State. March 31, 1952. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., p.201.

¹⁴⁹ With the collapse of the Middle East Command, the Allies shifted their policies and Middle East Defense Organization (MEDO) project appeared, but this strategy of the United States remained somewhat similar. George McGhee’s statements reflect the approach of the United States: “...I stated that our concept of the MEDO was somewhat different. We had conceived of the MEDO as a cooperative effort without a legal basis such as NATO because the political situation in the Middle East did not appear to permit such a legal basis. What was proposed was the next best thing to a legal commitment. It was pointed out that we did not necessarily propose to submit our participation in the Organization to the Congress in the form of a treaty. As far as the area to be defended was concerned, I considered that this should be based on strategic considerations...” Memorandum of Conversation by the Ambassador in Turkey (McGhee). July 2, 1952. FRUS 1952-54.v.8.i.14., p.900.

practical “modus Vivendi” would be established through such cooperation. More importantly, the Middle East Command would be a medium of discussion and solution to the problems between the United Kingdom, on the one hand, and Egypt and Iraq, on the other, arisen from the treaties signed between these states because, for the United States, the United Kingdom should have been an integral part of this alliance system despite the loss of its popularity in the eyes of the Arab states.¹⁵⁰

In the Middle East Command, Turkey was to play an important role as a bridge between the West and the Arab world. Moreover, in the report of the Policy Planning Staff, it was stated that Turkey had double responsibilities as a NATO member: “the defense of the Balkans, Dardanelles and the Aegean as well as the defense of its Eastern frontier.”¹⁵¹

The participation of the Arab states, Israel, Iran and Pakistan was important for the Command as well as the leadership of Turkey. For the US decision makers, this participation needed to be voluntary in order to be successful. To provide this voluntary association of the Middle East states with the West, they were aware of the significance of the necessity of the special US training and supply relationship with Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia. More importantly, in this report, the importance of keeping the Middle East oil flowing to the West was underlined in accordance with the US policy, as discussed above.¹⁵²

These principles constituted the basic approach of the United States to the Middle East Command. Discussing the interests of its major Ally, the United

¹⁵⁰ Working Paper Drafted by the Policy Planning Staff. May 23, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, p.144-145. See also Yeşilbursa, *Turkey's Participation in the Middle East Command and its Admission to NATO 1950-52*, p.71.

¹⁵¹ Working Paper Drafted by the Policy Planning Staff. May 23, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, p.144-145. See also Fırat and Kürkçüoğlu, p.619.

¹⁵² Working Paper Drafted by the Policy Planning Staff. May 23, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, pp.144-145.

Kingdom, is also important in order to understand the establishment process of this Command project.

As opposed to the United States, the United Kingdom aimed to be an active member of this alliance, most probably, as a leader. The following statement shows the basic approach of the United Kingdom to the Middle East Command:

Our idea is that the founder members of the command being the states best qualified by their military and political preeminence should take the lead in the defense of the Middle East and that such states of the area as wish to collaborate with them should be individually associated to the command.¹⁵³

The United Kingdom was in favor of the dominance of the Middle East Command by the great powers and it can be argued that it was in favor of its dominance because of the indifferent attitude of the United States to leadership. For the United Kingdom, the sponsoring powers were not to be subordinate to the Middle Eastern partners in that command. The four-power plan, which was prepared by the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Turkey in 1951, was to be implemented. Moreover, for the UK policy makers, the Middle East Command was only the “first stage” of Middle East policy. It was stated that “there was a second- the association of the Middle East defense liaison organization and possibly a third- the creation of some political superstructure for the command, e.g. by the signature of a Middle East Defense treaty.”¹⁵⁴

For the United Kingdom, the Middle East Command structure was much more an integral part of its Middle East Policy than for the United States. It can be argued that it was regarded as a tool to re-establish its prestige in the region. Like structural principles, the expectations of the United Kingdom from the Middle East Command were also important:

¹⁵³ FO 371.98278.E1193-2. January 4, 1951.

¹⁵⁴ *ibid.*

Our objects were to secure; the creation of a military organization capable of defending the Middle East, the cooperation of the Middle East commitment to assist in that defense, some firmer US commitment to assist in that defense, through the medium of Egypt's participation in the command, a solution of the Anglo-Egyptian defense problem.¹⁵⁵

Like the United States, for the United Kingdom, the Middle East Command would be a medium of discussion and solution to the Anglo-Egyptian problem.

Through Egyptian participation in the Command, it was agreed that a strong alliance system could be established and this could persuade the other states in the region to join.¹⁵⁶

After the decision of principles, the four-power proposals were introduced to Egypt in October 1951. Despite these efforts to solve the Anglo-Egyptian problem and integrate all of the Middle East states to this Command structure, the four-power proposals were rejected by Egypt on 13 October 1951. This rejection influenced the other Arab states. The Egyptian efforts to discredit the proposals show the reasons for the rejection:

The Egyptians naturally did their best to discredit the Command proposals by alleging that they constituted an attempt on the part of the Western powers to dominate the Middle East states and to infringe their sovereignty by setting up military bases on their territory without their consent. They took the line that there was no need for defense organization since there was no threat to the Middle East states except for Israel and that the command proposals might well draw the Arab states into unnecessary conflict with Russia.¹⁵⁷

The policy of the United Kingdom to integrate the Anglo-Egyptian problem with the Middle East Command and solve through this structure collapsed with the rejection of Egypt. As can be understood, there was no perception of a Soviet threat for Egypt; the source of threat was Israel. In that, the problem of the Middle East was the hostility toward Israel. Moreover, Arab nationalism played a role in the rejection

¹⁵⁵ Brief for Sir Roger Making' Visit to the Persian Gulf Area and the Canal Zone. February 11, 1952. FO 371.98278.E1193-10.

¹⁵⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ *ibid.*

of these proposals because Egyptian policy makers argued that their sovereignty rights were violated by the existence of UK military bases on Egyptian soil.

The proposals to Egypt by the Allies also caused a strong reaction in the Soviet Union. On 21 November 1951, the Soviet Union sent a note to the Egyptian government and condemned the proposed establishment of a MEC. Similar notes were sent to Lebanon, Iraq, and Israel and on 22 November 1951 to Saudi Arabia and Yemen. On 24 November 1951, the Soviet Union sent notes to the United States, United Kingdom, France, and Turkey and stated that “establishing a Middle East Command in the area located closer to the Soviet Union was a part of the aggressive plans of the Allies.”¹⁵⁸

The Soviet Union kept on its attacks in the following period. In a Soviet Note declared by the TASS agency, it was claimed that the Middle East Command was the entanglement of the Middle East countries which would result in a new world war and it also meant the encirclement of the Soviet Union and the people’s democracies. Moreover, the Middle East Command was not a voluntary association of the states in the region, but an imposition upon them by the capitalist powers.¹⁵⁹ This kind of notes, which condemned the efforts of the regional alliance, continued in the same tone.

In return, the Allies and Turkey replied to these notes immediately to refute and denounce the Soviet claims.¹⁶⁰ In these notes, however, there was a split among these four-powers. The United States and Turkey were more rigorous in tone than the United Kingdom and France. The Turkish Chargé in the United States, Melih Esenbel, contacted the Assistant Secretary of State, Berry, to offer to harmonize the

¹⁵⁸ FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, p.250.

¹⁵⁹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Moscow to Foreign Office. January 31, 1952. FO 371.98278.E1193-7.

¹⁶⁰ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. February 15, 1952. FO 371.98278.E1193-14.

tone of the notes that were sent to the Soviet Union. Esenbel stated that this effort of harmony and solidarity was a policy of the Turkish government. However, despite the difference in tone, all the notes declared by the Allies contained same principles.¹⁶¹ The significance that was attached to notes by the four-powers, especially by Turkey, in reply to the Soviet notes regarding the Middle East showed the vitality of propaganda as a strategy during the Cold War, as was argued before.

After the rejection of proposals by Egypt and the agitation of the proposals by the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom was in favor of a shift of policy towards the Arab States:

It now seems clear that the Four Power proposals for a MEC are not in their present form sufficiently attractive to secure the collaboration of the Arab states. The latter are considering the alternative of making the Arab League Security Pact the center piece of Middle East defense. It is essential that any organization for the defense of the Middle East should be as effective as possible. If it is to be so it must be led by the power or Powers best qualified for the task. The Arab League security pact is not an effective instrument... On the other hand, it is equally clear that without the collaboration of the Arab states the defense of the Middle East can be little more than an illusion. In the circumstances if we wish both to retain the initiative and to secure Arab collaboration we are bound to consider modifying four-power proposal and more particularly the provision relegating all the Arab states except Egypt to a kind of second-class membership. It is in fact generally agreed that Iraq will have to be treated on a footing of complete equality with the rest of us....Although the UK is expected to be the most important contributor to Middle East defense, we obviously cannot invite Iraq and Egypt to join us without first consulting the other sponsors of the command.¹⁶²

The “top-down” structure of the Middle East Command failed from its very beginning. Moreover, Egypt was seeking for leadership in the Arab world and the UK military bases on its soil became an impediment that the Allies could not overcome in the following period. The attitude of Egypt influenced the positions of the Arab states and they hesitated to participate in any kind of Middle East security

¹⁶¹ Telegram from the Secretary of State (Acheson) to the Embassy in Turkey. December 14, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, pp.252-253.

¹⁶² FO 371.98279.E1193-35.

system. The failure of the Command negotiations also showed the disparity of the tactics and strategies of the United States and the United Kingdom regarding their Middle East policies.

The major conflict between the United States and the United Kingdom emerged over the Command of the Alliance. The United States was opposed to the establishment of a formal political organization. The major concern for the United States was the improvement of military relations in the region.¹⁶³ The United Kingdom, however, insisted on the establishment of a formal structure and demanded a UK commander for the Middle East Command. The United States supported the idea of a UK commander, but it abstained from commitment to the Supreme Commander. The basic concern of the United States was the linkage between the Middle East Command and NATO which was to provide for the security of Turkey.¹⁶⁴

In addition to the structure of the Command, the United States sought to avoid from the internal problems of the region. This was consistent with the US policy of staying behind the scenes. However, US policy makers were aware that active participation in the Middle East Command did not make them free from the regional problems. The US decision makers were aware that in order to be successful in the formation of a security system, they needed to take the power relations in the region into consideration.¹⁶⁵ Especially the perception of imperialist aspirations would result in suspicion towards the outsiders in the Middle East states.

Ambassador McGhee's report showed the possible danger of resentment towards the four-powers by the states in the region:

¹⁶³ Position Paper Drafted in the Department of Defense. September 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, pp.183-184.

¹⁶⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ Telegram from the Ambassador in Turkey (McGhee) to the Department of State. March 31, 1952. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8, pp.199-200.

Doubts of Turkish participation in milit assistance to Arab states because these countries against all outside powers... There is probably some residual reaction against Turks remaining from Ottoman Empire, however, principle complaint ME countries at present is believed to be derived from Turk solidarity with Western powers on ME questions. On imperialist grounds alone, Brit and Fr have had conflicts with ME nationalist aspirations, which on occasions have involved actual warfare.¹⁶⁶

Therefore, there was a possibility of reaction against not only the United Kingdom and France, but also Turkey within the context of the Middle East Command. However, the cooperation between Turkey and its neighbors was to create a buffer zone for the establishment of a Middle East Command structure:

With ref to present Turk position I have no evidence of desire by Turks to advance own special interests in ME at expense of Fr or anyone else....Apart from isolated local ME reactions, which are believed revived mostly for polit reasons by communists and opportunists, it is believed that ME countries now possess respect and growing confidence in Turks. Syrians have sent officers and noncoms to Turkey for training in recent years without apparent misgivings...I (McGhee) welcome department's recognition of Turkey as important element in new deal approach to ME states. Association of Turkey as a neighbor with strong ME ties and no justified suspicion of colonial intent shld greatly assist in proving bona fides of other powers in MEC approach.¹⁶⁷

These statements indicated the vital role that Turkey was to play in the Middle East Command. The assumption that Turkey would act as a bridge between the West and the Middle East was mentioned before. After the rejection of proposals by Egypt, Turkey became more important in regards to the plans regarding the Middle East.

Regardless of its importance for the regional security system, Turkey's position in the Command and its relation to Turkey's membership to the NATO created another split between the United States and the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom linked its support to Turkey's membership in NATO to its position in the Middle East Command. On the other hand, the United States pressed for the

¹⁶⁶ Telegram from the Ambassador in Turkey (McGhee) to the Department of State. March 31, 1952. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8, pp.199-200.

¹⁶⁷ *ibid.*, p.202.

differentiation of Turkey's membership to the NATO and the Middle East Command because they were aware that the priority of Turkey was to participate in the NATO command and demanded a security guarantee directly from the United States. The US policy makers were aware of the importance of the NATO membership for Turkey and they strove to prevent the United Kingdom from abstaining towards Turkey's membership.¹⁶⁸ The report of the deputy director of the Office of Greek, Turkish and Iranian Affairs showed the divergence between the US and UK strategies regarding Turkey and the Middle East Command:

The question of their admission to NATO is an emotional-psychological one and the Turks would be deeply embittered if their application is denied... We might then inform the British: We favor that command structure but as we are not conditioning Turkish admission into NATO on its acceptance of any specific command formula we must insist that this understanding be regarded as tentative and we will exert our best efforts to get the Turks to accept this formula after they are admitted to NATO. On this basis we would hope that the British would recede from their current position and would join with us in exerting every possible effort to get Turkey into NATO.¹⁶⁹

With the rejection of the proposals by Egypt, Turkey became the key player in the region to form the Command. The Allies, however, did not give up their efforts to persuade Egypt to join the Command especially until late 1952. When these efforts proved fruitless, they reset their tactics and approached other states, such as Pakistan and Iraq.

After the analysis of the policies of the Allies towards the Middle East Command, the policies and dynamics of the key players, Turkey and Egypt should be analyzed in detail.

¹⁶⁸ Memorandum of Conversation by the Deputy Director of the Office of Greek, Turkish and Iranian Affairs (Dorsey). August 10, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, p.162-163.

¹⁶⁹ *ibid.*

The Middle East Command and Turkey

Turkey's role in the regional defense system was pivotal. It was a part of both the defense of the Middle East and that of the Mediterranean. Therefore, the US policymakers insisted that Turkey would be involved under the NATO command even if it had been a member of the Middle East defense, which were to be under the control of the United Kingdom. In addition to the defense of the Middle East, the role that was designed for Turkey in the NATO command was the defense of the Dardanelles, European Turkey, and activities in the Aegean and Black Seas. Turkey's role was vital to the interests of the Allies because it was considered to be the outer defense ring of the Middle East, responsible for the protection of the Mediterranean supply route. More importantly, the US decision makers sought to persuade the Turkish decision makers to accept this principles and thus to provide for the cooperation of Turkey in the defense area.¹⁷⁰

As for the US policymakers, for the ones in the United Kingdom, the strategic thinking and interests of the Allies and Turkey overlapped. They were aware of the significance of the Soviet threat to Turkey in its foreign policy. More clearly, they were aware of the fact that the Soviet threat, especially until the death of Stalin, was perceived by Turkey as a pillar of its foreign policy. Turkey was ready to fight against the Soviet expansion at all costs, even if it had to stand against this threat alone. Therefore, this appropriate assumption enabled them to cooperate with Turkey although the allied decision makers were also aware that Turkey might not struggle against the Soviet Union or another threat for the general defense of the Middle East. In short, for the allied diplomats, Turkey was aware of the vitality of the Middle East

¹⁷⁰ Memorandum of Conversation by the Deputy Director of the Office of Greek, Turkish and Iranian Affairs (Dorsey). August 10, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, pp.147-148. See also Yeşilbursa, *Turkey's Participation in the Middle East Command and its Admission to NATO 1950-52*, p.74; Bilgin, p.95.

defense against the Soviet Union although Turkey had to be supported economically and militarily to resist this threat.¹⁷¹

Turkey's position towards the Middle East Command was a bit reluctant because during these early discussions it was not yet a member of the NATO. Although Turkey accepted to join the four-power discussions, its priority was membership in NATO. This became an impediment to the development of the Middle East Command as fast as possible. A paper prepared in the US Embassy in London shows the position of the Allies and Turkey more clearly:

The Turkish Ambassador in London has told the Foreign Office that as the Turkish government had said in their reply to an earlier communication from the British government and as Mr.Köprülü had repeated to Mr.Morrison...Turkey had already accepted the principle of her participation with the United Kingdom, United States and France in an integrated Middle Eastern Organization...Turkey was not willing however to take part in conversations with the United Kingdom, United States and French governments about the detailed working out of this organization until she could do so as a party to the North Atlantic Treaty. As soon as Turkey became a party, talks among the four powers could take place and those could be followed by talks with other powers such as Egypt.¹⁷²

Despite Turkey's insistence on membership in NATO prior to the Middle East Command discussions, the Allies were in favor of beginning informal talks about the Middle East Command and they tried to satisfy Turkey's demands regarding NATO. Moreover, the Allies resented the reluctance of Turkey regarding the defense talks:

Dep can appreciate reluctance Turk Govt to discuss mil and command arrangements prior to action by legislative bodies of present NATO members to formally accept Turkey in NATO. We believe Turks shld know however that NATO members were informed at Ottawa that we were considering sending high milit officer to discuss milit arrangements with Turks on informal basis and that UK and France might do likewise. Hence

¹⁷¹ FO 371.95002.R1071-3.

¹⁷² Paper Prepared in the British Embassy. September 1, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, pp.173-174. See also Yeşilbursa, *Turkey's Participation in the Middle East Command and its Admission to NATO 1950-52*, p.75; Sever, *Soğuk Savaş Kuşatmasında Türkiye, Batı ve Ortadoğu*, p.88.

we do not feel that smaller NATO nations wld react unfavorably to informal Tripartite mission.¹⁷³

The statements above can be interpreted as showing the reflection of Allies' reaction to Turkey's unwilling attitude towards the Middle East Command. There was a difference between the preferences of the Allies and Turkey regarding their foreign policies. Each side sought to maximize its interests. However, the Allies never gave up their efforts to persuade Turkey to become involved in the efforts to establish a Middle East Command. It can be argued that Turkey's strategic value played an important role in this attitude.

As discussed before, Egypt was the other key player in the preparations of the Middle East Command. Thus, the Allies made a division of labor among themselves to integrate these two countries into the regional alliance system which was urgent for them to be established:

We also believe it is urgent that MEC arrangements be worked out earliest and we do not see how this can be done without discussions between representatives of the US, UK, France and Turkey. While Turkey may feel that Gen Bradley can appropriately discuss ME Command arrangements informally with Turks on behalf of all three, Dept requests you pt out to Turkish Fon Min why we feel Bradley-Slim-Fr mission is so important. UK will lead in presenting proposals to Egypt. If Bradley alone visits Turkey, this likely be interpreted by Egypt as reflecting adversely UK status MEC in which Brits will play major role. Slim-Bradley-Fr visit designed originally emphasize solidarity powers and multilateral character proposals partly as background for approach Egypt.¹⁷⁴

It is unnecessary to underline the importance of Turkey, as well as Egypt, for the Middle East Command due to the reasons mentioned above. On the other hand, according to the Allies, the Middle East Command was also significant for Turkey because it would enable Turkey to present and share its views to the military representatives of the Allies. At the time, Turkey's primary concern was to provide

¹⁷³ Telegram from the Secretary of State (Acheson) to the Embassy in Turkey. September 26, 1951. FRUS 1951. v.5.i.8., pp.190-191.

¹⁷⁴ *ibid.*

its security against the threat from its northern neighbor. In addition, after Turkey was persuaded, and presumably, after the discussions between the four-powers had taken place, the policy towards the Arab states would be cautious and careful in order to be successful in their association with the Command structure. For the Allies, Turkey became an indicator of the multilateral nature of the Middle East Command, which might appeal to the Arab states to join.¹⁷⁵

In spite of these calculations on the Allied side, Turkey's priority was to gain full membership in NATO. The Turkish ambassador in Washington, Feridun Cemal Erkin, met with George McGhee, the Assistant Secretary of the State at the time and reiterated the problems which would make the establishment of the Middle East Command more problematic: "The linkage between Turkey's membership to the Middle East Command and to the NATO and the appointment of a British Supreme Allied Commander." Erkin stated that the discussion of Turkey's participation in the Middle East Command before its membership to NATO would cause resentment among the Turkish public with the idea that Turkey's membership to both organizations was conditional. In addition, the appointment of a British Supreme Commander to the Middle East Command would not be accepted by the Egyptians because they would object to any United Kingdom's troops in their soil. In return for these assumptions and claims, McGhee told Erkin and stated that Turkey's NATO membership was not conditional and Turkey would become a full member of the organization with "full rights and privileges". Moreover, McGhee requested

¹⁷⁵ Telegram from the Secretary of State (Acheson) to the Embassy in Turkey. September 26, 1951. FRUS 1951. v.5.i.8., pp.190-191.

Turkey's cooperation to convince the Egyptian decision makers to accept the appointment of a British Supreme Commander.¹⁷⁶

However, the rejection of Egypt of the four-power proposals caused the modification of the structure of the Middle East Command, which will be discussed in detail, below. Turkey was insistent on being a part of a NATO command under the United States rather than a part of the Middle East Command under a British Supreme Commander, but its "misgivings" would be removed with its full membership to the NATO in 1952.¹⁷⁷ In the meantime, the change of proposals by the Allies after the rejection of Egypt was accepted by the Turkish decision makers. The US ambassador in Ankara, Wadsworth, wrote the following statement, after a conversation with the prime minister Menderes, to the Department of State:

Turk Pri Min agreed to instruct Turk Amb Cairo to support current Brit and US démarches designed to deter Egypt Govt from denouncing 1939 treaty... It is clear and to the point. The Fon Min and I will submit it to the Turk Cabinet for formal action; but as of now I can tell you with one hundred percent certainty that we accept all its proposals.¹⁷⁸

It can be argued that Turkey began to behave in accordance with the Allies after its reservations about the Middle East Command began to disappear. The Allies sought to provide Turkey's satisfaction with the Middle East Command and its independence from its membership to NATO. General Bradley's informal meeting with the Turkish decision makers on the Middle East Command, which was held on 13-14 October 1951, was a medium of discussion on the interests of the Allies and those of Turkey. Before the meeting, General Bradley was instructed about Turkey's involvement in Eisenhower's command in the NATO. This would be an important

¹⁷⁶ Telegram from the Secretary of State (Acheson) to the Embassy in Turkey. September 26, 1951. FRUS 1951. v.5.i.8., pp193-194.

¹⁷⁷ Brief for Sir Roger Making' Visit to the Persian Gulf Area and the Canal Zone. February 11, 1952. FO 371.98278.E1193-10.

¹⁷⁸ Telegram from the Ambassador in Turkey (Wadsworth) to the Department of State. September 29, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, p.199.

step toward convincing Turkey to take an important role in the Middle East Command. Moreover, as ambassador Erkin told McGhee, it was important to prevent public resentment towards the Middle East Command and Allies in Turkey.¹⁷⁹

In this meeting, it was emphasized that Turkey's membership to the NATO was not conditional to its participation in the Middle East Command. On the other hand, the importance of the rapid establishment of the Command and Turkey's involvement as a "collaborator" were underlined during these discussions. Besides the structure and urgency of the establishment of the Command, the practicability of a British Supreme Commander rather than an American one was one of the points discussed in the meeting. By the same token, despite these efforts, the US decision makers were aware that Turkey could not be persuaded to enter any formal structure regarding the Middle East until it had been formally included in the NATO command.^{180,181}

After the informal meeting between the Turkish decision makers and general Bradley, ambassador McGhee sent a report to the US Department of State which included similar reservations regarding Turkey's involvement in the Middle East Command. In the report, he rejected the United Kingdom ambassador's proposal that linked Turkey's membership to NATO to its participation in the Middle East Command. Moreover, he rejected the idea that this linkage would be presented to Turkey as a *fait accompli*. McGhee urged that "Turkey should have been consulted as an equal partner by the Allies prior to any action or proposal regarding the Middle East" because he stated that participation to the Middle East Command was not

¹⁷⁹ Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs (Jones) and the Deputy Director, Office of Greek, Turkish and Iranian Affairs (Dorsey) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs (McGhee). October 5, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, pp.203-205.

¹⁸⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁸¹ For the details of General Bradley's Visit to Turkey on October 13-14, 1951, see FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, p.212-226.

popular in government and private circles. Lastly, he reiterated the necessity to separate Turkey's membership to the NATO and its involvement in the Middle East Command structure.¹⁸²

Turkey's reservations regarding its participation in the Middle East Command faded away with its full membership in NATO in 1952 as mentioned before. Especially in late 1952 and 1953, Turkey openly supported the establishment of the Middle East Command, which would pave the way to the leadership of the region that had been determined by the Allies in the early 1950s.

After the rejection of the proposals by Egypt, the proposals and strategy regarding the Middle East Command shifted. The Allies and Turkey agreed on the establishment of the Command structure as soon as possible. They sought to provide the membership of all the Arab states because they were aware that without the support of the Arab states, the regional alliance system would fail. According to them, the MEC efforts had failed because of the perception that it was an imposition of the policy of the Allies to the Middle East states. Therefore, the strategy was shifted to a strategy of persuasion and the policies implemented from 1953 onwards were formulated to seek the active participation of the Arab states in the regional defense system.¹⁸³ The visit of US Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles to the Middle Eastern countries, including Turkey, was a part of this "Arab friendly" Ally strategy.

Dulles visited Turkey in May 1953 and met with Turkish decision makers, mainly the prime minister Menderes and the minister of foreign affairs, Köprülü. In these meetings, the main topic was the Middle East Defense Organization, which

¹⁸² Telegram from the Ambassador in Turkey (McGhee) to the Department of State. February 5, 1952. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8, pp.184-185.

¹⁸³ Telegram from the Ambassador in Turkey (McGhee) to the Department of State. October 24, 1952. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8, pp.301-303. See also Yeşilbursa, *Turkey's Participation in the Middle East Command and its Admission to NATO 1950-52*, p.90.

was the new form of the Middle East Command from 1952 onwards. The Turkish prime minister argued and insisted that:

In the defense of the Middle East, the backbone must be Turkey. In view of Turkey's social and political stability, the determined attitude of Turkey vis-a-vis the Soviet threat, and the very serious efforts which Turkey is making to expand her already strong forces, it is only natural that she would have a primary role in the defense of the area.¹⁸⁴

The Turkish Prime Minister continued and argued that the participation of the Arab states to the structure had to be provided rather than an imposition of the structure to them. However, the involvement of the Arab states in such an organization should have been abandoned because of the problems emerged in the region such as the Canal Zone negotiations between Egypt and the United Kingdom and other internal struggles among the Arab states and between the Arab states and Israel. However, the Prime Minister pointed out that Turkey would exert every effort to succeed in the establishment of such an alliance system in the Middle East.¹⁸⁵ Turkey's insistence on being the nucleus of the Middle East defense continued after Dulles' visit to the region.

In a conversation with Dulles, the Turkish Chargé stated that as the leader of the region, the headquarters of the Middle East Defense Organization could be located in Turkish territory. By the same token, Dulles replied that many people thought of Turkey as a part of Europe rather than of the Middle East. The Chargé insisted that Turkey would act as a bridge between Europe and the Middle East to the extent that it was consistent with the interests of Turkey.¹⁸⁶ Dulles' statements show that he was surprised by this conversation to the Turkish Chargé:

¹⁸⁴ Memorandum of Conversation by the Counselor of Embassy in Turkey (Rountree). May 26, 1953. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.7, pp.139-140.

¹⁸⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ Telegram from the Ambassador in Iraq (Berry) to the Department of State. March 10, 1953. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.353-354.

If chargé's thinking is truly representative of his government, this would appear to give substance to several indications that Turkish government at last had shifted from Kemalist attitude towards Arabs and is now looking to its position of prestige in Middle East world.¹⁸⁷

Turkey's position towards the Middle East Defense Organization can be considered to have been an effort to seek the leadership of the Middle East in order to maximize its interests, especially in the military and the economic realms. When Turkey's foreign policy orientation is regarded as having been West-centered, it would be difficult to argue that Turkey's policy towards the Middle East was a divergence in basic principles. The only rational reason for such a policy was to strengthen its hand in regional politics through adaptation to the regional dynamics. Although its success may be criticized, this rational approach can explain Turkey's attitude.

As mentioned before, after membership in NATO, Turkey supported the idea of the establishment of a Middle East Defense Organization as a result of the rationale just been discussed. The period between the mid-1953 to early-1954 witnessed efforts to establish a regional alliance with the participation of the Middle East states. However, neither Turkey nor the United Kingdom thought there was need to involve all the Arab states from the beginning. The strategy was called as "setting up shop" and presumed the establishment of the structure by the four-powers and the participation of other states in time. However, the strategy did not work in the following period because of the insoluble Anglo-Egyptian problem and the struggles among the states in the region.

The decision makers of Turkish foreign policy at the time, mainly prime minister Menderes, formulated Turkey's Middle East policy and determined

¹⁸⁷ Telegram from the Ambassador in Iraq (Berry) to the Department of State. March 10, 1953. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.353-354.

Turkey's approach to the regional alliance system. The position of the opposition in the parliament is also important to analyze in order to understand to what extent Turkey's Middle East policy was supported or criticized by them. The budget discussions of the parliament were the major medium of evaluation of Turkish foreign policy in the parliament and the opposition parties elaborated on Turkey's Middle East policy as follows in 1953.

The Middle East Command in the Turkish Parliament and Press

After the 1950 elections, the Republican People's Party and Nation Party had representatives in the parliament in addition to the Democrat Party. In 1952, Turkish Peasants Party was established by the MPs who left the Democrat Party.

Regarding the Middle East Command and the alliance projects in the Middle East, the former president and the leader of the RPP, İnönü, stated in the budget discussions in 1953 that the patient efforts of the government to establish the alliance system in the Middle East and the efforts to persuade the states in the region to participate in this system were appreciated. Moreover, he argued that the neighbors in the Middle East should trust Turkey and believe that Turkey had no bad intentions toward any of them. It was expected that the Middle Eastern neighbors would act in accordance with Turkey. The alliance in the Middle East was necessary against the common threat and the RPP supported the policy of the government regarding the Middle East alliance.¹⁸⁸ The position of the RPP could be regarded as supporting the

¹⁸⁸ "Ortadoğu'daki yakın komşularımızı müşterek savunma tertibine inandırmak için, Cumhuriyet hükümetinin sabırla çalıştığını memnunlukla görüyoruz. Ortadoğuda savunma meselesinde hususiyle bizim yakın komşularımızın kendi rızalarıyla müşterek bir savunma tertibine girmeleri verimli bir politikanın esasıdır. Komşularımızdan, Türkiye'nin hudutları dışında hiçbir emeli olmadığını tecrübe ile sabit olduğunu düşünerek, Cumhuriyet Hükümetinin gayretlerini iyi yürekle karşılamalarını beklemek hakkımızdır. Hep beraber aynı tehlikeli ihtimallere maruz bulunuyoruz. Müşterek savunmanın hepimiz için kıymeti ve menfaati müsavi sayılır. Bir bütün olarak müşterek sulh tertiplerinde müttefiklerimizle

policy of the government towards the Middle East, which was friendly and respectful to the sovereignty of the neighbors in the region, as a collaborative policy with the Allies.

The position of the TPP was similar to that of the RPP. Its representative, Remzi Oğuz Arık, criticized the government for being “unprepared” to act with the great powers in the Middle East. As a result, the proximity of Turkey to the great powers had caused reaction and resentment in the Arab world. However, the circumstances had changed and the great powers had been supporting Turkey in the formation of the alliance in the region. More importantly, Arık stated, Turkey was expected to prevent the Soviet threat against the Middle East. His party supported the policy of the government. Arık also stated that Turkey’s relations with Israel were supported by his party, although the Israeli state’s actions and aggressive policies disturbed the Middle East states. According to him, the Turkish statesmen were aware of their responsibility in the region; therefore, the TPP was a supporter of the government’s Middle East policy.¹⁸⁹

beraber bulunmamızı, bizim vaziyetimizin kendileri için de mümkün ve açık olduğunu anlamlarını isteriz...” Republic of Turkey. TBMM Tutanak Dergisi. term 9, session 44, vol.20, 16 February 1953, pp.321-322.

¹⁸⁹ *“1951’de Ortadoğu emniyet sistemini kurmak isteyen dostlarımıza Hükümetimizin hazırlıksız denecek bir aceleyle katılması, memleketimiz için olduğu kadar bu dava için de iyi olmamıştı... Hadiseler bu aceleyle menfi cevaplar vermekte gecikmedi. Şurası meydandadır ki, İngiltere yakın ve uzak bütün doğuda derin ve asırlık endişelerin konusudur. Böyle bir sıra şartlar altında, yalnız Türkiye ona arkadaşlık etmekte, onu yeniden bütün bu milletlere sevdirmek vazifesini yüklenmiş görünmekte idi. Ama şu anda şartlar bir hayli değişmiştir. İran işinde İngiltere’ye Amerikalı dostlarımız yardım etmektedir... Yakın-Doğu’nun çok hassas noktası haline gelen İran üzerinde hükümetimiz neler konuşmuştur, neler düşünmektedir pek iyi bilmiyoruz. Türkiye bakımından bu diyarın önemini alenen bildirip anlaşmazlıklara çare arayacağını söyleyen hükümetimizle beraberiz... Her halde bu alanların komünist nüfuzunun cevelleri yeri olmasını Türk Hükümeti bütün kuvvetiyle önlemeye çalışacaktır. Türkiye’nin ortadoğu siyasetinde İsrail devletine önemli bir yer verdiği doğrudur. Bunu benimsiyoruz... Ancak şurası meydandadır ki, nasıl yeni doğan dinler müminlerine eşi görülmemiş bir tassup dinamizmi verirse, Siyonizm de İsrail devletine aynı tatmin edilemez dinamizmi vermiş görünüyor. Bunun, komşularına, uzak ve yakın birçok tesirleri olmakta, Ortadoğu sulhü bundan daima müteessir olur görünmektedir... Yakın-Doğunun saadeti, buraya bağlanan insanlık ümitlerinin selameti için, Türkiye’nin bu kesimdeki rolünün şuuru varması elzemdir. Dışişleri bakanımızı dinleyince, bu şuura*

After the evaluation of the opposition parties, the minister of foreign affairs Köprülü, made a speech that re-emphasized the principles and strategy of the Democrat Party government regarding the Middle East. He stated that it was known that all the states in the Middle East under threat from a common enemy. Therefore, Turkey sought to establish closer ties with the neighboring states in order to resist this enemy collectively. He emphasized that the states in the region needed to participate in the alliances voluntarily without abandoning their rights of sovereignty. On the other hand, such a regional alliance was the appropriate tool to provide common interest in and abstain from participation for individual interests, which might bring disastrous results for the states in the Middle East. The only concern of Turkey was the defense of its territorial integrity and sovereignty with the help of such an alliance. Like İnönü, he emphasized that Turkey would not cause a threat to its neighbors as an expansionist state.¹⁹⁰

Consequently, the opposition in the parliament supported the efforts of the government in the formation of the alliance system in the Middle East. Like the opposition, the press¹⁹¹ was favorable for the establishment of a defense system in the Middle East.

Devlet adamlarımızın sahip olduğu görülmüştür. Bu rol icabı, yakın-Doğu devletlerinin her bakımdan işbirliği yapması ve bunu Türkiye'nin bütün gönü ile yürütmesi gerekir..." Republic of Turkey. *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*. term 9, session 51, vol.20, 23 February 1953, pp.834-835.

¹⁹⁰ Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, term 9, session 51, vol.20, 23 February 1953, p.828.

¹⁹¹ In the 1950s, the press was vibrant and closely reported on the developments in both the domestic politics and foreign politics of Turkey. There was a split in the press. Newspapers such as *Zafer* (Victory) and *Son Posta* (Last Post) were ardent supporters of the government and they unconditionally supported its policies not only in domestic politics, but also in foreign relations. *Cumhuriyet* (Republic) supported the Democrat Party government moderately, and in the late 1950s it took a balanced position between the government and the opposition. Newspapers such as *Ulus* (Nation) and journals such as *Akis* (Reflection) and *Forum* (Forum) heavily criticized the policies of the Democrat Party government. *Ulus* and *Akis* were closely engaged with the Republican People's Party.

The split in the press revealed itself in the tension and competition in domestic politics. On the other hand, regarding the foreign policy of the Democrat Party, there was a

In an article published in *Zafer*¹⁹² titled “The Return from London” (*Londra Dönüşü*), Mümtaz Faik Fenik supported the establishment of the Middle East Command in the early 1950s in order to solve the conflicts and the tension in the region. He stated that Turkey was the key player in the Middle East and should implement policies to provide peace and security in the region in close cooperation with the West. Therefore, Turkey should implement realistic and cautious policies towards the developments in the Middle East as the government was doing.¹⁹³

kind of consensus, particularly until the late 1950s, in supporting the policies of the government. Regarding their approaches to Turkey’s foreign policy in the 1950s, there were some common characteristics of the newspapers and the journals. First of all, all of these media organs focused on the analyses of the developments rather than the government policies. Therefore, the writers and the articles were pro-Western, anti-Soviet Union, and anti-Communist in nature. In the same vein, Egypt and Syria were the two states in the Middle East heavily criticized due to their close relations with the Soviet Union. The developments in the Middle East were closely followed, but the main concern especially after 1957 was the Cyprus issue.

Besides these common features, there were several differences between the newspapers and the journals as was mentioned before. *Zafer*, *Son Posta*, and to some extent *Cumhuriyet*, were pro-government and unconditionally supported the government policies. They praised the Middle Eastern states and the statesmen with whom the government was in close cooperation and strongly criticized the ones with whom the government was not. In short, they acted as the organs of the government.

Ulus and *Akis* were against the domestic policies of the government although they supported the foreign policies as soon as they were in harmony with the policies of the West and the status quo. During the crises in the late 1950s, particularly the Iraqi, Lebanese, and Jordanian Crises, they harshly criticized the government. *Forum*, on the other hand, had a different stance and criticized the foreign policies of the government. Regarding the Middle East, it was pro-Arab nationalism. Therefore, it criticized the policies of the government which were in harmony with the West and against the Arab nationalism. *Forum* was also pro-Western and anti-Soviet Union and anti-Communist. Its major concern was to support Arab nationalism in the Middle East. The writers suggested that Turkey respect the nationalist movements in the Arab world.

¹⁹² *Zafer* was the organ of the Democrat Party. It was published by Mümtaz Faik Fenik, who was also the editor. He wrote articles and wholeheartedly supported the policies of the government. In addition, Mücahit Topalak wrote articles on foreign policy issues regularly.

¹⁹³ “Orta Şark’ta birçok ihtilaflı meselelerin bulunduğu muhakkaktır. Ama bu ihtilaflar, onu herhangi bir hisse kapılarak devam ettirmek isteyenler için hayati bir mesele teşkil edebilir. O halde hislerin esaretinden kurtulmak, ileride herhangi bir feci ve fiili esareti önlemek için mantığın ve basiretin emrettiği yoldur. Türkiye bulunduğu coğrafi ve siyasi mevki dolayısıyla bu hususta gereken tavassutları ve çalışmaları yapabilir. Bunun için de müspet bir planla ortaya çıkmak lazımdır. İşte Orta Şark müdafaa teşkilatı bu planın esasını teşkil edecektir. Dost İngiltere’nin Orta Şark meselelerine alaka göstermesi Başbakanımızın söylediği gibi bizi ancak memnun ve müteşekkir etmiştir....”
Zafer, 20 October 1952.

In an article published in *Son Posta*¹⁹⁴ titled “The Middle East” (*Ortadoğu*), Selim Ragıp Emeç praised the aide memoire which had been given to Egypt on the Middle East Command by the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Turkey. He also criticized the rejection of the proposal of four by the Egyptian government because the Middle East Command would be a strong basis for the defense of the region against threats from outside.¹⁹⁵

On the Middle East Command, Abidin Daver and Ömer Sami Coşar wrote articles in *Cumhuriyet*¹⁹⁶ discussing the Command and Turkey’s role in it. Abidin Daver emphasized the necessity of the defense of the Middle East and criticized the refusal of Egypt to join the command. He stated that Egypt wanted to maximize its interests in the region and to solve the Suez and Sudan Crises in this vein. Therefore, Egypt did not want to join the command. However, the defense of the region against the Soviet threat was vital and not to establish the Command might have served the Soviet interests. The refusal of Egypt to join the command should not have terminated the project because, rather than Egypt, Turkey would be the backbone of

¹⁹⁴ *Son Posta* was published by Selim Ragıp Emeç, who was also the editor. In addition to Emeç, Refik Erol wrote articles regularly on Turkish foreign policy. They wrote articles on the developments in the Middle East which supported and praised the policies of the government.

¹⁹⁵ “*Memleketimiz de dahil olmak üzere Amerika, İngiltere ve Fransa tarafından Mısır’a verilen son nota, işte böyle bir zeminin sağlam temelini atacak bir formüldü ki Mısır tarafından, bunun bilhassa birtakım ciddi sebeplerle ve büyük bir acelecilikle reddedilmesi, yalnız Ortadoğu’nun emniyetine zarar getirmek bakımından değil, aynı zamanda Mısır’ın da menfaatlerine uygun düşmeyen yüksek mahzurlu bir hareket olarak tecelli göstermesiyle avakibinin, mesuliyetini de, herkesten evvel, bizzat Mısır’ın kendisine taşıyacak siyasi bir hata olmak mahiyetini daha şimdiden ortaya koymuş bulunmaktadır...*”

Son Posta, 17 October 1951.

¹⁹⁶ *Cumhuriyet* supported the policies of the government regarding the Middle East, but not as uncritically as *Zafer* and *Son Posta*. Nadir Nadi, the editor of *Cumhuriyet*, Abidin Daver and Ömer Sami Coşar wrote on Turkish foreign policy. The developments in the Middle East and Turkey’s position were of main concern to them.

the Command. In fact, only if Turkey had not participated would the defense project have been terminated.¹⁹⁷

Similarly, according to Ömer Sami Coşar, Turkey would be the backbone of the Middle East Command. As a result of the refusal of Egypt to join the Command, the only Middle East state would be Turkey with its strong army and stable domestic politics which could enable it to cooperate with the Western powers.¹⁹⁸ In short, the foreign policy writers of *Cumhuriyet* supported the idea of the establishment of the Middle East Command.

Ahmet Şükrü Esmer wrote an article in *Ulus*¹⁹⁹ “The Issue of Our Joining the Pact” (*Pakta Katılmamız Meselesi*) stating that the establishment of a defense system

¹⁹⁷ “Mısır, Ortadoğunun müdafaasına iştirak etmek istemiyor. Bu devletin iştirak etmemesine rağmen Türkiye, İngiltere, Amerika ve Fransa başka Ortadoğu devletlerine müracaat ederek bu bölgenin müdafaasını müştereken sağlamaya çalışıyorlar. Çünkü Ortadoğu bölgesi yalnız Mısır’dan ibaret değildir. Mısır’ın Süveyş ve Sudan davalarını kendi isteğine uygun şekilde hallettirmek yolunda ayak diremesi üzerine bu mühim bölgenin müdafaasını teşkilatlandırmaktan vazgeçmek ve bütün Ortadoğu memleketlerini bir Sovyet tecavüzüne karşı açık bırakmak pek manasız birşey olur ki kızıl çarlığın istediği de zaten budur. Ortadoğu müdafaasının temeli ve belkemiği Türkiyedir. Mısır’ın veya herhangi başka Ortadoğu memleketinin bu müdafaaya iştirak etmek istememesi ile bu mühim dava suya düşmez. Yalnız Türkiye Ortadoğu müdafaasına karışmak istemediği takdirdedir ki bu bölge müdafa edilemez...”

Cumhuriyet, 30 October 1951.

¹⁹⁸ “Türkiye, Birleşik Amerika, İngiltere ve Fransa dün akşam neşrettikleri müşterek bir tebliğde, Ortadoğu’da bir komutanlık kurmaya karar verdiklerini, bununla ilgili planı Arap memleketlerinin muhalefetine rağmen süratle tatbik mevkiine koyacaklarını ilan etmişlerdir... Mevzubahs başkomutanlıkta tek Ortadoğu devleti olarak Türkiye bulunacaktır. Bu bölgede kuvvetli bir orduya ve istikrarlı dahili duruma sahip tek Devlet de o olduğundan Ortadoğu savunma teşkilatının belkemiğini Türkiye’nin teşkil edeceği aşikardır...”

Cumhuriyet, 11 November 1951.

¹⁹⁹ *Ulus* was the organ of the RPP and acted as its “spokesperson” especially in domestic politics. In the second half of the 1950s, domestic politics witnessed several crises and *Ulus* supported the opposition and criticized the government. In foreign policy, *Ulus* took a position that was in line with the leader of the RPP; pro-West and pro-status quo. Therefore, until the crises in 1958, *Ulus* cautiously supported the government policy while during the crises in 1958, heavily criticized the Middle East policy of the government. Ahmet Şükrü Esmer was the foreign policy writer of *Ulus*. His position was similar to that of İsmet İnönü, cautious and pro-status quo. Nihat Erim, the editor of the newspaper, Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, and in the late 1950s, Bülent Ecevit, wrote articles on the government’s Middle East policy. The articles on *Ulus* focused on the developments rather than the policies of the government. Ultimately the articles can be evaluated as support for the government. However, as the crises erupted in 1958, the articles attacked the government and criticized its Middle East policy.

in the Middle East was necessary. However, Turkey's membership to NATO and the Middle East Command should not be linked to each other and membership in the Middle East Command should not be a precondition for NATO membership. Moreover, the leadership of the United Kingdom was not appropriate for the establishment of such a system and the reaction of Egypt had proven the resentment in the region against the United Kingdom.²⁰⁰

Esmer wrote another article on the Middle East Command stating that Turkey should have been fully informed of its responsibilities and duties under the Middle East Command. The borders of the region should have been determined and the meaning of security should have been clarified. Security, for him, meant to defend the region against any possible Soviet threat. On the one hand, Turkey wanted to be a member of NATO to provide its security and, on the other hand, it faced conflicts with the Arab world because the Arabs perceived Turkey as the supporter of the United Kingdom, which had governed and exploited the region in the past and caused the resentment of the Arabs. Esmer added that if the Pact had caused the hostility of the Arabs against Turkey, it should have been abandoned.²⁰¹ In short,

²⁰⁰ “*Bizim Atlantik Paktına katılmamızdan sonra, Ortadoğu'nun emniyeti meselesini ele almakta fayda ve hatta zaruret olduğuna şüphe yoktur. Fakat bu meselede aykırı gördüğümüz nokta, Türkiye'nin Pakta katılmasının şarta bağlanmış olmasıdır. Öyle anlaşılıyor ki, Ortadoğu Komutanlığına bağlanmayı kabul etmemiş olsaydık, Atlantik Paktına alınmayacaktık. Bir taraftan eşit haklarla Atlantik Paktı'na gireceğimiz bildirilirken öte taraftan da diğer üyelerden ayrı bir muameleye tabi tutulduğumuzu görmekteyiz... Ortadoğu'da İngiliz liderliği altında bir sistem kurmanın hayal peşinde koştuktan ibaret olduğunu bu sütunda birçok defa belirtmeye çalışmıştık. Mısır'ın aldığı vaziyet de bu görüşümüzü teyidettiştir...*”

Ulus, 18 October 1951.

²⁰¹ “*Bu ortadoğu emniyet sistemine girerken üzerimize alacağımız mesuliyetlerin mahiyetini iyice anlamalıyız. Bir defa Ortadoğu adı verilen bölgenin sınırları nedir?... Biz üzerimize yeni vazifeler alırken karşılık olarak ne gibi menfaatler elde ettiğimizi de düşünmeliyiz. Bir defa üzerimize almakta olduğumuz vazifenin kendi mesuliyetimiz olduğu da söylenmektedir. Türkiye Ortadoğu emniyetine karşı kayıtsız kalabilir mi? Emniyet'in manası nedir? Biz emniyeti Rus tecavüzüne karşı korunmak manasında anlıyoruz. Rusya'nın tecavüze geçmek noktasındaki cesaretini kıracak vaziyet bizim anladığımız manada emniyettir.... Emniyetini sağlamlaştırmak için Atlantik Paktına girmek isteyen Türkiye, Ortadoğu emniyet sistemi yüzünden şimdiden güneydeki Arap dünyasıyla ihtilaf haline düşmüştür. Çünkü Araplar*”

Esmer emphasized the necessity of the clarity of the objectives and duties of Turkey in the Middle East Command and proposed that the Command should not result in the hostility of the Arab world against Turkey.

Nihat Erim's position in the same newspaper was somewhat different. He was in favor of such a Command structure without any hesitation, like Esmer, but he stated that Turkey should have calculated the possibility of a threat from its southern borders along which Arab states and Iran were located. Therefore, Turkey could not remain indifferent to the Middle East Command. The Middle East Command could not be established without Turkey and like NATO, the Middle East Command would closely link Turkey to the West.²⁰² In other words, the Middle East Command was supported by the *Ulus* writers although somewhat cautiously.

In addition to the external support from the Allies, the opposition in the parliament and the press in Turkey supported the establishment of an alliance system. However, the strategy of a regional alliance in a formal structure was abandoned by the Allies and the discussions and treaties between individual states to strengthen the cooperation in the region became the new issues between of the Allies and Turkey. Turkey began to approach Pakistan and Iraq, respectively, with the failure of the

Türkiye'yi kendilerine ağır gelen bir sistemin idamesinde İngiltere'nin yardımcı rolünde görmektedirler. Halbuki biz şimdiye kadar Ortadoğu milletleriyle iyi münasebetler kurduk... Pakt bütün etrafımızdaki milletleri bize düşman kılmak pahasına ise bu pakttan vazgeçmek daha hayırlı olacaktır..."

Ulus, 23 October 1951.

²⁰² *"Türkiye'yi yakından ilgilendiren konulardan biri de Ortadoğu bölgesinin emniyeti davasıdır. Güney sınırımız Arap memleketleriyle çevrilidir. Güney Doğu'da İran vardır. Bu istikametlerden memleketimizi çevirmek isteyen bir tecavüz ihtimalini hesaba katmaya mecburuz. Bu sebepten Ortadoğu savunması davası önünde ilgisiz kalmak bahis konusu olamaz. Ortadoğu Komutanlığı meselesi Türkiyesiz halledilemez. Kuzey Atlantik Paktı ve Ortadoğu Komutanlığı her iki sistem Türkiye'yi sıkı suretle Batı devletlerine bağlamaktadır..."*

Ulus, 13 November 1951.

efforts to bring Turkey and Egypt together. The shift in this policy determined the developments in the region in the second half of the 1950s.²⁰³

However, in order to understand the dynamics and the problems which negatively influenced the establishment of a Middle East alliance, the policies and strategies of other countries involved, especially Egypt, towards the Middle East Command and the Middle East Defense Organization, should be discussed.

The Middle East Command and Egypt

Egypt was the other pillar of the regional alliance system designed by the Allies in order, firstly, to strengthen the defense of the region against outsiders and, secondly, to solve the Anglo-Egyptian problem that had mainly been caused by presence of the bases of the United Kingdom on Egyptian soil.

The United Kingdom was not ready to give up its possessions in Egypt. Egyptian nationalists demanded the evacuation and the unity of the Nile Valley as well as the Suez Base by the United Kingdom. The Allies sought to overcome this difficulty through the transformation of the bases and control of the United Kingdom in Egypt into a multilateral structure such as the Middle East Command. As discussed before, the Middle East Command was considered a medium for the solution of the problem between Egypt and the United Kingdom. Moreover, the Allies were aware that Egypt needed to be persuaded through economic and military support in order to secure its participation in the alliance system. The main sponsors of Egypt would be the United States and the United Kingdom.²⁰⁴

²⁰³ Telegram from the Ambassador in Turkey (McGhee) to the Department of State. June 10, 1953. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., p.387.

²⁰⁴ Position Paper Drafted in the Department of Defense. September 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, pp.183-184.

Therefore, until the mid-1950s, the efforts to provide the involvement of Egypt to the proposed Middle East Command became the main agenda of the Middle East politics which also affected Turkey's stance in the region. The Allies agreed on the following principles that were proposed for Egypt:

The defense of the ME and specifically of Egypt is vital to the security of the free world. Similarly, the defense of Egypt can only be assured through the effective defense of the ME area as a whole. Egypt is therefore invited to participate as a founder member on the basis of full equality and partnership in an allied ME Command.²⁰⁵

On the other hand, Turkey and Egypt had conflicting interests, and competed for leadership in the region. Thus, in order to succeed in establishing an alliance, the Allies knew they had to solve the conflicts between the two states. It was stated that the Middle East Command would be acceptable to Egypt if Turkey and France had been excluded and the Arab League states had been included.²⁰⁶ The rivalry between Egypt and Turkey can be understood from these statements.

Turkey's position towards Egypt was also important for the Allies and they sought to make decisions jointly with Turkey towards the participation of Egypt in the Middle East Command. Turkey's support of the Allies for the Egyptian membership to the Middle East Command was an important part of the policy of the Allies.²⁰⁷

The message that was sent from the US secretary of state to the embassy in Ankara reflected the position of the Allies on the Middle East Command and Egypt's role in the alliance:

²⁰⁵ Telegram from the Acting Secretary of State (Webb) to the Embassy in Egypt. September 8, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, pp.181-182.

²⁰⁶ Telegram from the British Embassy in Cairo to Foreign Office. March 17, 1952. FO 371.98278.E1193-2.

²⁰⁷ Telegram from the Acting Secretary of State (Webb) to the Embassy in Turkey. September 28, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, pp.191-192.

The defense of the ME and specifically of Egypt is vital to the security of the free world, the defense of Egypt and of other countries in the Middle East against aggression from outside the area can only be secured through the cooperation of the interested powers including those not territorially part of the area...it therefore seems desirable to establish an Allied Middle East Command (MEC) in which the countries able and willing to contribute to the defense of the area should participate. France, Turkey, UK and USA are prepared to participate with other interested countries in establishing such a command, Egypt is invited to participate as a founder member of the Middle East Command on a basis of full equality and partnership with other founding members...All British forces not allocated to MEC will be withdrawn from Egypt starting forthwith, all British forces to be stationed in Egypt in peace and war will form part of the MEC.²⁰⁸

It can be argued that the Allies were ready to meet the demands of Egypt in return for its participation to the Middle East Command as a founding member. It was located in a vital area for the interests of the Allies and it was the biggest Arab state in the Middle East and could influence the others. In addition, a possible alliance between Turkey and Egypt in the region would strengthen the security and control of the Middle East, especially by the Allies.

With these assumptions and plans in mind, General Bradley visited Egypt, as he had Turkey, in order to convince the Egyptian decision makers to participate in the Middle East Command. Before the visit, the political atmosphere in Egypt and the approach of Egypt to the Middle East Command were evaluated as follows:

The situation in Egypt on the surface is calm but this calm is illusory. The Egyptians are fully aware of Iran's success vis-a-vis the British.... If MEC is to be accepted by Egypt, the United States, UK and France must make a genuine effort to make the Egyptians feel that they are given a genuinely New Deal and that they will henceforward be treated as equals....Ancient associations and rivalries will make Egypt unwilling to accept a status inferior to that of Turkey in MEC.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁸ Telegram from the Acting Secretary of State (Webb) to the Embassy in Turkey. September 29, 1951. FRUS 1951. v.5.i.8., pp.196-197.

²⁰⁹ Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs (Jones) and the Deputy Director, Office of Greek, Turkish and Iranian Affairs (Dorsey) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs (McGhee). October 5, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, pp.203-205.

Under these circumstances, Egypt was proposed to be a founding member of the Middle East Command with full equality of rights. The Allies made promises for economic and military support to Egypt. Moreover, they proposed the transfer of the United Kingdom's bases and forces in Egypt to the Middle East Command which was a multilateral structure in which Egypt had an equal right to speak. However, Egypt rejected the four-power proposals regarding the Middle East Command.

Upon the rejection of the proposals by the Egyptian decision makers, the United States administration sent a message to the embassy in Egypt which included the following statements:

The US Govt greatly regrets the decision of the Egypt Govt to reject the proposals which were made to it by the Govts of US, Fr, Turkey and UK. It is the sincere belief of the US Govt, which had collaborated closely with the other three Govts in their formulation, that the proposals offer a sound basis for resolving the Anglo-Egypt Treaty Ques in a manner wholly consistent with Egypt's position as an independent and sovereign power. The US Govt considers that the recent action of the Egypt Govt with respect to the abrogation of the Anglo-Egypt Treaty of 1936 and the 1899 Agreements concerning the Sudan is not in accord with proper respect for internatl obligations and for its part believes it to be without validity. This action must be regarded as a serious retrograde step in the endeavors of the free world to develop systems of cooperative defense and in efforts to promote world law and order.²¹⁰

In summary, the rejection of proposals regarding the Middle East Command caused the Allies to resent Egypt. They, however, did not give up their efforts to persuade Egypt to join in the Middle East Command until the efforts became inconclusive as early as 1953.

The rejection of proposals by Egypt was described as a consequence of "the heat of the domestic political situation". The Allies and Turkey, as friends of Egypt, should have kept on insisting. The possible changes and modifications in these

²¹⁰ Telegram from the Secretary of State (Acheson) to the Embassy in Egypt. October 16, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, pp.226-227.

proposals might have resulted in a change in the Egyptian attitude.²¹¹ On the contrary, in addition to its rejection of the proposals, the Egyptian decision makers exerted pressure on the other Arab states, especially the members of the Arab League, to support the decision and reaction of Egypt to the proposals:

Egypt Fon Min is exerting tremendous pressure on heads of Arab Dels to persuade them issue joint statement or separate statements either Tues or Wed supporting Egypt's rejection MEC as well as its position on Anglo-Egyptian question... If you cld talk to heads of Arab Dels (except Egypt) and impress upon them great importance which we attach to MEC and grave mistake Arab States wld make if they rejected MEC.²¹²

After the rejection of the proposals by Egypt and its pressure on the Arab states, the latter replied to the policy proposals in the following manner:

Arab reactions to this fresh four power démarche were mixed... Lebanese foreign minister stated that the delicate situation then existing in the country forced Lebanon to assume a somewhat reserved attitude toward the MEC... the Jordanian Prime Minister was cordially uncommunicative to the approach merely expressing hope we could have further convers on MEC as plans progressed... the acting head of Saudi Arabian Foreign Office had received the four-power presentation in a friendly fashion even including reference approach Israel which he said manifestly of serious concern to all Arab states... He added that unfortunate presentation project coincided with Egypt crisis as this naturally induced the Egyptian government to see in proposals new move by Brit to induce others to underwrite their imperialistic designs... Iraqis found two principal obstacles in the way of their adherence to the MEC; one concerned the French and Turkish troops and the other the undefined relation of Israel to the pact.²¹³

The approach of the Middle East states to the Middle East Command can be evaluated through several factors. The position of Egypt was one of them. The impact of domestic dynamics was also important. Both regional and domestic dynamics played roles in the approach of the Arab states towards the alliance project. Upon this negative stance of the Arab states towards the Middle East Command, the

²¹¹ Telegram from the Secretary of State to Certain Diplomatic Offices. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, pp.227-228.

²¹² Telegram from the Acting Secretary of State (Webb) to the Secretary of State (Acheson) at Paris. November 18, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, p.248.

²¹³ FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, p.237.

Allies understood the necessity of shifting their policies in order to increase the popularity of the project.

According to the US decision makers, despite the impact of Egypt on the other Arab states, the main philosophy and utility of the Command project needed to be publicly explained. Moreover, the economic side of the project and its vital role in the development of the Arab states needed to be emphasized. They called this economic aid to the Arab states as the “New Deal” and agreed to use this policy to tempt the Arab states to support the Middle East Command.²¹⁴ However, despite these efforts, the policy of the Allies to obtain the support of the Arab states to the regional alliance failed due to the domestic and regional dynamics that influenced their policies.

The rejection of the proposals regarding the Middle East Command was considered as having been the “overtures” to impress upon the public opinion in Egypt by the US policy makers. The report that was sent by the US secretary of state to the US secretary of defense showed the contradictory attitude of the Egyptian decision makers towards the alliance system and their relations with the West:

Fawzi Bey sent for me very urgently this afternoon... He then went on, with considerable intensity of manner, to suggest the possibility of Azzam Pasha seeing Eisenhower informally....In making this suggestion Fawzi said that there has been a very confused situation during recent weeks, in particular since the untimely presentation of the 4 power proposals for MEC...The untimely presentation plus certain unfortunate features of the substance thereof put a “spoke in the wheel” and caused existing confusion to become more confused....By way of further background Fawzi said that Salaheddin was suffering from frustration. He wanted to remain a friend of the US but felt frustrated because he felt his overtures met with rebuffs. Fawzi said Salaheddin was sincere and truthful in this feeling and also sincere and truthful in the feeling of wanting to be a friend even with the UK. He said Salaheddin had no illusions and no connection of any kind with Moscow.²¹⁵

²¹⁴ Telegram from the Deputy under Secretary of State (Matthews) to the Secretary of Defense (Lovett). October 31, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, pp.238-243.

²¹⁵ Telegram from the Acting Chairman of the United States Delegation to the Sixth Regular Session of the United Nations General Assembly (Roosevelt) to the Secretary of State. December 21, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8., pp.255-257.

Although the informal attitude of the Egyptian decision makers towards the alliance system was not unfavorable, the formal attitude remained the opposite. With the negative attitude of Egypt to the Middle East Command and the failure of the efforts, the Allies changed their policy and aborted the project. They reformulated the alliance projects and the Middle East Defense Organization became the new project from 1952 onwards. The Allies also shifted their policy regarding Egypt and prepared new proposals. Egypt was offered a “phased withdrawal of the British forces, retention of peacetime base in the Canal Zone, support for the air defense of Egypt, Egyptian membership in the Middle East Defense Organization, and US and UK military assistance.” The Allies aimed to involve and also control Egypt through making it a part of the Middle East defense system. Moreover, they aimed to overcome the unwillingness of the other Arab States resulted from the Egyptian resistance for participation to the new alliance structure.²¹⁶

Despite these efforts, Egypt did not give up its resistance. It can be argued that the insistence of the Allies on Egyptian involvement in the alliance pushed Egypt into becoming a neutral power in the Middle East. However, the neutrality of Egypt did not prevent it from bargaining and negotiating with the Allies to provide the necessary economic and military assistance. Briefly, it can be argued that Egypt avoided engagement in the alliance system designed by the West in order to keep itself free to maneuver, especially after the revolution, as would be seen in the following period. The United States’ approach towards the Egyptian attitude was as follows in a telegram from Dulles to the embassy in Egypt:

Believe you should know we have recent intelligence reports which indicate Egyptians have no intention cooperating with West in Regional Defense Organization even if Suez question settled to their satisfaction.

²¹⁶ Telegram from the Secretary of State (Dulles) to the Embassy in Turkey. February 13, 1953. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., p.345.

General impression conveyed these reports is that Egyptians planning adopt “neutral” attitude and while willing and eager receive Western assistance would refuse make any public or private commitments in return. This impression reinforced by recent Egyptian public statements and private conversation new ambassador here. Realize this may be bargaining position but we are nevertheless concerned at apparent stiffening Egyptian attitude, especially since some of our information indicates intransigent views may be sincerely held by members inner-circle RCC and are not merely reactions to public opinion. We also wonder whether protestations of desire for peace with Israel might not be simply window dressing to be disregarded once British evacuation achieved.²¹⁷

As a result of the pressure of public opinion and the Egyptian stance in favor of a neutral position resulted in the rejection of the proposals regarding the Middle East Defense Organization, as had happened before to the Middle East Command. Egypt implemented a foreign policy in the second half of the 1950s, especially after Nasser came to power, which was in between the capitalist and communist lines.

Even though this policy was regarded as anti-capitalist and pro-communist, the basic determinant of this policy can be regarded to have been Arab nationalism. Egypt sought to be a leader of the Arab world and the Middle East on the one hand and sought to maximize its interests by taking a so called “neutralist stance”. However, it should be reemphasized that the national aspirations of the Egyptian decision makers strongly influenced their foreign policy objectives. The report of the US officer in charge of Egypt showed the positions of the Egyptian decision makers well:

The Naguib government has the support of the overwhelming majority of the Egyptian people. Opponents consist only of communists and disgruntled landlords... General Naguib is now accused of taking too conciliatory a stand in his relations with the West and of being pro-American. MEDO or a similar organization is completely unacceptable to Egypt. General Naguib instructed him to stress the above point. MEDO was originally presented at a bad psychological moment. The Revolutionary Command Council cannot afford to appear before the Egyptian public less intent on achieving Egypt’s national aspirations than previous governments.

²¹⁷ Telegram from the Secretary of State (Dulles) to the Embassy in Egypt. April 30, 1953. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.363-364.

The Revolutionary Command Council is convinced that acceptance of any type of MEDO would be suicide... Egypt hates communism and realizes it would never be attacked by the West... Egypt would welcome assistance from the West in building up its military strength to increase its defense capabilities.²¹⁸

The United States and the Allies changed their policies after the rejection of the defense proposals by Egypt because the public pressure and national aspirations remained the vital dynamics of Egyptian foreign policy. Moreover, the struggle for leadership between Egypt and Turkey impeded the efforts for positive results. Despite the failure of the efforts to bring Egypt and Turkey together in a regional alliance system, the Allies did not give up their efforts to establish such kind of structure. However, the focus shifted from Egypt to Pakistan and Iraq from 1953 onwards.

The policy regarding Egypt remained crucial and economic and military assistance to Egypt was a part of the Ally policy to keep it closer. The basic reason for this policy was the fact that the Soviet Union was ready to provide the needed assistance to Egypt to provide its development and satisfy its national aspirations. Therefore, Western aid to Egypt was an integral part of policy for both sides in the remaining part of the 1950s.

During his tour of the Middle East, Dulles visited Egypt in May 1953. In the conversation in the US embassy with Nasser, Dulles stated that Egypt was one of the countries that the United States would help because as an important actor of the Arab world, Egypt could be a bridge between the United States and the Arab states. Moreover, the United States wanted to keep Egypt free. Nasser stated that the objectives of Egypt and the United States were common in the sense that Egypt was in favor of an organized defense system in the region, while the United Kingdom was

²¹⁸ Memorandum of Conversation by the Officer in Charge of Egypt and Anglo-Egyptian Sudan Affairs. May 4, 1953. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.373-374.

a serious impediment on this way. Therefore, the Middle East Defense Organization was unacceptable for Egypt because of the public reaction against the existence of the United Kingdom in the alliance. Both Dulles and Nasser agreed on the fact that Egypt would serve for the defense of the region without a formal arrangement such as the Middle East Defense Organization. In this conversation, Dulles promised to allocate the necessary economic and military aid to Egypt.²¹⁹

Despite the agreement on the policies regarding the Middle East, Egypt, under the leadership of Nasser, followed a different path in the following period and, in return, the United States focused on Pakistan and Iraq in addition to Turkey for its policy objectives. With the failure of the establishment of a regional defense system, the Allies and Turkey changed their policies and tried to form alliances with the states in the region separately. These efforts yielded results in the mid-1950s. Iraq became a major actor in alliance projects in the second half of the decade.

The position of Iraq towards a regional alliance system, formerly the Middle East Command and later the Middle East Defense Organization, is important to understanding the role that Iraq played in the alliances of the late 1950s.

The Middle East Command and Iraq

Iraq became an integral part of the alliance projects after the collapse of the efforts to bring Turkey and Egypt together. Especially in the second half of the 1950s, Iraq participated in the regional security system in addition to Turkey. Iraq's policy towards the projects of the early 1950s is important to understanding the regional dynamics more fully.

²¹⁹ Memorandum of Conversation Prepared in the Embassy of Cairo. May 12, 1953. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.7., pp.19-25.

The prime minister of Iraq, Nuri Said, insisted that Iraq be a part of the alliance system and its status equal to that of Egypt and Turkey. He stated that it was unnecessary to involve Syria, Yemen, Lebanon and Jordan in the alliance system. His basic concern was the involvement of Saudi Arabia as one of Iraq's significant neighbors.²²⁰ It can be argued that Iraq's stance towards the Middle East Command and the Middle East Defense Organization was the fact that it wanted to be an important factor in regional politics through membership to such an organization.

More importantly, as the US ambassador in Iraq reported to the department of state, there was a split between Iraq and other states because of Iraq's closeness with the West. Moreover, Iraq was more prone to cooperate with the West, especially the United States. The project of the Middle East Defense Organization became more popular in Iraq although it did not come to fruition. This showed to what extent Iraq was willing to be a part of the alliance in the region as it happened in the following period. In the eyes of the US decision makers, Turkey could act as a bridge between Iraq and the West, and Iraq would persuade the other Arab states to participate in the Middle East Defense Organization.²²¹ Especially after 1953, Iraq and Turkey grew closer and worked to harmonize their policies towards the Middle East alliance.

The conversation between the Iraqi foreign minister and Turkish chargé showed the similarity of the interests of the two states regarding a regional alliance. The Turkish chargé met the Iraqi foreign minister in accordance with the instructions that were given him from Ankara. He stated that the headquarters of MEDO should have been in Turkey in contrast to the UK proposals regarding Cyprus. There should have been no discrimination between the founders and late comers to the

²²⁰ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. February 4, 1952. FO 371. 98278. E1193-8.

²²¹ Telegram from the Ambassador in Iraq (Berry) to the Department of State. October 24, 1952. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., p.300.

organization, so there would be 100% equality among all members. More importantly, the organization should have been open to all Middle East states and the states which had interests regarding the security and well-being of the region. Regarding Egypt, Turkey was against the Egyptian participation as a center of the project. Lastly, the Turkish chargé stated that Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Iraq would not pose a problem to the alliance, but Syria was the major impediment which was closer to Egypt.²²²

The Iraqi foreign minister told Turkish chargé that Iraq would support the idea of the Middle East Defense Organization, but other states might hesitate because of the unpopular approach in the Arab public towards the project. Therefore, the project had to be “camouflaged” with the Arab League in order to find support in the region.²²³

After this conversation, Turkey began to push Iraq to collaborate in the establishment of the Middle East Defense Organization because of Iraq’s positive stance towards the project. Turkey invited Iraq to take part in the establishment of the organization formally, but Iraqi policy was cautious towards the proposal.²²⁴ The basic concern of Iraq was the developments in the region, especially the results of the Anglo-Egyptian negotiations. As mentioned before, Iraq put emphasis on the popularity of the project in the Arab world and the necessity of the support of the Arab League, in which Egypt was a major actor. Therefore, Iraq did not give up its

²²² Telegram from the Ambassador in Iraq (Berry) to the Department of State. February 27, 1953. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.348-349.

²²³ *ibid.*

²²⁴ Telegram from the Ambassador in Iraq (Berry) to the Department of State. March 10, 1953. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.352-353.

“wait and see” policy despite the Turkish pressure to cooperate in the regional alliance project.²²⁵

With the collapse of the alliance proposals and negotiations which would involve the whole region, Iraq emerged as one of the major actors that cooperated with Turkey to establish a defense structure in order to strengthen the ties with the West, especially the United States, to maximize its interests.

The Middle East Command and Syria

Syria was closer to Egypt in the region and was more remote to the defense arrangements designed by the West and advocated especially by Turkey. As the Turkish chargé in Iraq stated, Syria became one of the major impediments to the establishment of a formal regional alliance system. The basic tool of the Syrian decision makers was to agitate against the Middle East defense projects. The significance of the propaganda in the Middle East, particularly in Syria, can be understood from the following statements of a diplomat in the United Kingdom Legation in Damascus:

During the last two weeks there have been signs in the Syrian press that a more favorable eye is being cast upon the command by the Syrian authorities. Not only has there been a notable lack of criticism in the more responsible papers but more positively in several different papers there have been pleas for Western arms aid, the example being cited of Turkey, who has obtained this aid to suit her own interests as much as those of the West. In another paper, Nahas Pasha has been severely criticized for rejecting the defense proposals out of hand against the best interests of the Arabs.²²⁶

It can be argued that Syria wanted to maximize its interests. The Western economic and military aid was the basic concern. In other words, from the United

²²⁵ Telegram from the British Embassy to the Department of State. April 22, 1953. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., p.362.

²²⁶ Telegram from the British Legation in Damascus to Foreign Office. February 19, 1952. FO 371.98278. E1193-20.

Kingdom's point of view, Syrian decision makers would use their position towards the Middle East Command and later the Middle East Defense Organization in order to be more powerful in their negotiations with the West in order to secure aid. The United Kingdom's diplomat argued that Syria would participate in the alliance right after the satisfaction of its demands.²²⁷ However, his observations did not go beyond miscalculations because Syria did not shift its policy to a more pro-Western one regardless of the results of the aid negotiations and remained an ally of Egypt. The miscalculation about Syrian attitude stemmed from the ignorance of regional dynamics, especially the Arab nationalism propagated by Egypt and Syria.

According to the same diplomat, the Syrian decision makers, like the leader of Syria at the time Colonel Shishakli, thought that the Middle East Defense plan was premature and the people in the region were responsible for their own defense. Moreover, Syria was ready to fight against any threat from outside. There was no need for collective security project in accordance with the West. According to Shishakli, the Arab League was the medium of discussion and solution of problems among the Arab states. More importantly, he emphasized that Syria was respectful of Egyptian national aspirations and agreed with the Egyptian decision makers that the presence of foreign troops in the Egyptian soil, United Kingdom's bases and personnel, was a breach of the principles of the United Nations.²²⁸

Colonel Shishakli repeated his basic opinions regarding the Middle East Defense Organization to Dulles during his visit to Damascus on 16 May 1953. Dulles asked Shishakli whether he had an alternative solution to the collective Middle East Defense project being aware of Shishakli's opposition to such kind of an alliance.

²²⁷ Telegram from the British Legation in Damascus to Foreign Office. February 19, 1952. FO 371.98278. E1193-20.

²²⁸ Telegram from the British Legation in Damascus to Foreign Office. July 24, 1952. FO 371. 98279. E1193-63.

Shishakli replied that he did not have an alternative to the collective defense because there was no need for such a system. Syria was not afraid of aggression from outside. In the meantime, he emphasized that he hated communism. The major problem of the region was the United States' and United Kingdom's support to Israel although Syria and other states did not benefit from Western aid as much as they needed. Therefore, the Middle East states and their people were responsible for their security and they should have made their own decisions without pressure from outside. Lastly, Shishakli criticized that Western powers did not discuss the project of the Middle East security with the states in the region except Egypt.²²⁹

Syria's negative approach towards the Middle East defense projects continued throughout the 1950s. In addition to non-alignment with the collective defense, it spoke out against the efforts to establish a regional alliance.

The Middle East Command and Israel

The main target of Arab nationalism, not only as true in the cases of Egypt and Syria, and for other Arab states, was Israel. It can be argued that the hostility toward Israel played a more important role in the formulation of Middle East politics than the perception of the Soviet threat.

In return for the hostility against Israel by the Arab states, Israel's basic concern became not to remain alone in the region. Turkey became a natural ally of Israel in the region although relations between two states remained secret in the 1950s as will be discussed below. As the prime minister Ben Gurion stated, during the Dulles' visit to Israel on 14 May 1953 that Israel was "historically, culturally and spiritually part of the free world". Moreover, Israel was a country in the region with

²²⁹ Memorandum of Conversation Prepared in the Embassy in Syria. May 16, 1953. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.7, pp.60-61.

an effective military potential, skilled population, modern industry and well-trained army. The basic concern of Israel was to strengthen her military and industrial potential.²³⁰

Israel's main goal was not to stand alone in the region and to be as close as possible to Turkey in the face of the Arab hostility. However, this strategy had one problem: Turkey aimed to lead the Arab states around a security alliance and this project prevented Turkey from a formal association with Israel due to the negative stance against Israel in the Arab world. Therefore, Turkish-Israeli relations were kept secret and the secrecy of these relations determined the policy of Israel towards the Middle East Command and the Middle East Defense Organization.

In order not to agitate the hostility in the Arab world and negatively influence the development of the regional alliance, Israel decided not to join the alliance and to maintain its relations with the United States and the United Kingdom bilaterally.²³¹

The prime minister Ben Gurion's statement reflects the stance of Israel towards the regional command structure:

Israel sympathetic with purposes MEC and appreciative great importance of decision defend region. Believes his country can be of real assistance, but feels its assoc can be just as effective and less embarrassing to all concerned if its relationship is informal. He does not exclude possibility of working thru MEC, but refers to danger adverse Arab reaction if undue or untimely attention directed to Israelis connection with Command. As to Israel it has two fears: first, that Jewish immigration from Iron Curtain countries might be stopped as reprisal if Israel's cooperation too much publicized; and, second, that Israel might be exposed to aggression by neighbors if they were to know the exact size of Israel's standing army.²³²

As a result, despite its positive attitude toward the command, Israel remained out of the proposals and the efforts to establish the regional alliance system.

²³⁰ Memorandum of Conversation Prepared in the Embassy in Israel. May 14, 1953. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.7., p.37.

²³¹ Brief for Sir Roger Making' Visit to the Persian Gulf Area and the Canal Zone. February 11, 1952. FO 371.98278.E1193-10.

²³² Telegram from the Ambassador in Israel (Davis) to the Department of State. November 11, 1951. FRUS 1951.v.5.i.8, p.247.

The Middle East Command and Pakistan

Pakistan had a positive attitude towards the Middle East Command in order to be a part of Middle East politics. The basic concern of Pakistan's foreign policy was to create a buffer zone against its neighbor India, especially regarding the Kashmir dispute, which was discussed in Chapter 2. Moreover, Pushtoonistan dispute with Afghanistan, which was also discussed above, was another dynamic that determined the policy objectives of Pakistan regarding the Middle East.

Relations with Pakistan were important for Turkey in its efforts to find the support to the Middle East Command, in which Turkey sought to play a leadership. In a conversation between Turkish and Pakistani officials, Turkish prime minister and minister of foreign affairs planned to discuss the Kashmir and Pushtoonistan issues in a constructive manner. Turkey's efforts to implement an active foreign policy towards Pakistan stemmed from its "close and warm" relations with Pakistan and also Afghanistan in the region also overlapped with the expectations of the Allies regarding Turkey. Turkish prime minister and minister of foreign Affairs thought that Pakistan would be a major ally once it was freed from aforementioned problems.²³³

According to the Allies, especially to the United Kingdom, Pakistan needed to be a part of the alliance projects regarding the Middle East due to its potential assistance to the Middle East defense. First of all, Pakistan was located in a strategically important position to control the Persian Gulf, which was vital to the economic interests of the Allies because of the oil resources. Pakistan could also play a leading role with Turkey in the region because of its susceptibility to the possible

²³³ Telegram from the Ambassador in Turkey (McGhee) to the Department of State. February 13, 1952. FRUS 1952-54. v.9.p.1.i.8, pp.192-193.

threats to the Middle East security which were also linked to its own security. However, the Pakistani government was not expected to enter the alliance system so long as the Kashmir dispute remained unsettled, which was a similar expectation to that of Turkey regarding Pakistan. The Allies agreed on the necessity of integrating Pakistan to the regional defense system without putting pressure on it. For them, the participation of Pakistan to the alliance system as a founding member, namely the MEDO, would be welcome. Nevertheless, they argued that if Pakistan did not voluntarily join the alliance at that time due to its own problems, the postponement of Pakistani membership to the alliance would be accepted.²³⁴ This policy could be regarded as a diplomatic maneuver that was consistent with the change of ally policy regarding the Middle East Defense Organization. In the end, this policy brought positive results and Pakistan became one of the major actors of the Middle East alliance in the following period.

In a conversation between the US assistant secretary of state, Byroade, and the Pakistani foreign minister Zafirullah, the latter stated that he was afraid of the public reaction against the MEDO membership and he emphasized the necessity of public education and orientation to the membership idea. Byroade stated that the MEDO project did not provide development in the recent period due to the resistance of Egypt so that there was no need to discuss membership although Pakistan had a positive official attitude.²³⁵

The resistance of Egypt influenced Pakistan as it had impact on the other Arab states and Pakistani officials decided not to indicate its support to the MEDO project until the other Arab states finished bargaining with the Allies because of the

²³⁴ Telegram from the Secretary of State to Certain Diplomatic Missions. November 13, 1952. FRUS 1952-54. v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.315-316.

²³⁵ Memorandum of Conversation by the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs (Byroade). January 27, 1953. FRUS 1952-54. v.9.p.1.i.8., p.344.

close relations between Pakistan and the Arab states. Moreover, they abstained from declaring their support as a result of the possibility of the reaction of Nehru's India to Pakistan. The collaboration between India and Egypt intimidated Pakistani officials regarding their membership to the alliance system. The Pakistani chargé in Egypt declared that India had been exerting pressure on Egypt to remain neutral and because the revolution in Egypt was an anti-communist, middle class revolution, Egypt had to collaborate with the enemies of communism.²³⁶ The statements of the Pakistani chargé confirmed the aforementioned arguments regarding Egypt, in that, in order to maximize its interests, Egypt negotiated with both the Allies and the Soviet Union as long as they satisfy its national aspirations.

In summary, although Pakistan was in favor of the Middle East Defense Organization and intended to participate in it at least officially, the domestic and country-specific dynamics played a role in its hesitation to support the alliance system overtly. However, with the collapse of the alliance projects, specifically the MEC and MEDO, at the end of 1953, Pakistan became an active pillar of the bilateral defense arrangements between the states in the region that appeared as the alternative policy to the policies formulated in the early 1950s.

The Alternative Approach(es) to the Regional Alliance

The plans of the Allies to establish a Middle East Command structure between 1950 and late 1953 failed. First, the Middle East Command, and, second, the Middle East Defense Organization did not attract the Arab states. As mentioned before, the rivalry among the key actors such as Turkey and Egypt and the rise of Arab nationalism in relation to hostility against Israel and the United Kingdom can

²³⁶ Telegram from the Ambassador in Egypt (Caffery) to the Department of State. February 19, 1953. FRUS 1952-54. v.9.p.1.i.8., p.346.

be given as the two main reasons for this failure. Before having their plans left aside, the Allies tried to formulate an alternative approach, which also failed.

The last trial of the MEDO project was to make the principles of the Middle East Defense Organization and the Arab Collective Security Pact (ACSP)²³⁷

²³⁷ The Arab Collective Security Pact: The Arab League Collective Security Pact was signed by Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Egypt and Yemen on June 17, 1950. The principles of the Pact were as follows:

“Article 1: The Contracting States, in an effort to maintain and stabilize peace and security, hereby confirm their desire to settle their international disputes by peaceful means, whether such disputes concern relations among themselves or with other Powers.

Article 2: The Contracting States consider any [act of] armed aggression made against any one or more of them or their armed forces, to be directed against them all. Therefore, in accordance with the right of self-defense, individually and collectively, they undertake to go without delay to the aid of the State or States against which such an act of aggression is made, and immediately to take, individually and collectively, all steps available, including the use of armed force, to repel the aggression and restore security and peace. In conformity with Article 6 of the Arab League Pact and Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, the Arab League Council and U. N. Security Council shall be notified of such act of aggression and the means and procedure taken to check it.

Article 3: At the invitation of any one of the signatories of this Treaty the Contracting States shall hold consultations whenever there are reasonable grounds for the belief that the territorial integrity, independence, or security of any one of the parties is threatened. In the event of the threat of war or the existence of an international emergency, the Contracting States shall immediately proceed to unify their plans and defensive measures, as the situation may demand.

Article 4: The Contracting States, desiring to implement fully the above obligations and effectively carry them out, shall cooperate in consolidating and coordinating their armed forces, and shall participate according to their resources and needs in preparing individual and collective means of defense to repulse the said armed aggression.

Article 5: A Permanent Military Commission composed of representatives of the General Staffs of the armies of the Contracting States shall be formed to draw up plans of joint defense and their implementation. The duties of the Permanent Military Commission which are set forth in an Annex attached to this Treaty, include the drafting of necessary reports on the method of cooperation and participation mentioned in Article 4. The Permanent Military Commission shall submit to the Joint Defense Council, provided hereunder in Article 6, reports dealing with questions within its province.

Article 6: A Joint Defense Council under the supervision of the Arab League Council shall be formed to deal with all matters concerning the implementation of the provisions of Articles 2, 3, 4, and 5 of this Treaty. It shall be assisted in the performance of its task by the Permanent Military Commission referred to in Article 5. The Joint Defense Council shall consist of the Foreign Ministers and the Defense Ministers of the Contracting States or their representatives. Decisions taken by a two-thirds majority shall be binding on all the Contracting States.

Article 7: The Contracting States, in order to fulfill the aims of this Treaty, and to bring about security and prosperity in the Arab countries, and in an effort to raise the standard of living in them, undertake to cooperate in the development of their economies and the exploitation of their natural resources; to facilitate the exchange of their respective agricultural and industrial products; and generally to organize and coordinate their economic activities and to conclude the necessary inter-Arab agreements to realize such aims.

harmonious because the Arab leaders emphasized the necessity of the primacy of the Arab states' responsibility in the defense of the region. To this end, they had signed the ACSP in 1950 and the decision makers of the Allies were aware that they had to harmonize their plans with those of the Arab states. The harmony was important because the ACSP prevented the Arab states from entering any organization contradictory to the principles of the treaty.²³⁸

In addition to the ACSP, the Arab states used the MEDO negotiations as leverage to maximize their interests, basically economic and military aid. Thus, the Allies decided policies that would satisfy the needs and aspirations of the Arab States in order to provide their support, especially Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Lebanon. To this end, they put emphasis on harmonizing especially the military terms of the MEDO with those of the ACSP in order to provide a medium to keep on negotiations with

Article 8: An Economic Council consisting of the Ministers in charge of economic affairs, or their representatives if necessary, shall be formed by the Contracting States to submit recommendations for the realization of all such aims as are set forth in the previous article. The Council may, in the performance of its duties, seek the cooperation of the Committee for Financial and Economic Affairs referred to in Article 4 of the Arab League Pact.

Article 9: The Annex to this Treaty shall be considered an integral and indivisible part of it.

Article 10: The Contracting States undertake to conclude no international agreements which may be contradictory to the provisions of this Treaty, nor to act, in their international relations, in a way which may be contrary to the aims of this Treaty.

Article 11: No provision of this Treaty shall in any way affect, or is intended to affect, any of the rights or obligations devolving upon the Contracting States from the United Nations Charter or the responsibilities borne by the United Nations Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Article 12: After a lapse of 10 years from the date of the ratification of this Treaty, any one of the Contracting States may withdraw from it, providing 12 months' notice is previously given to the Secretariat-General of the Arab League. The Secretariat-General of the League shall inform the other Contracting States of such notice.

Article 13: This Treaty shall be ratified by each Contracting State according to the constitutional procedure of its own government. The Treaty shall come into force for the ratifying States 15 days after the receipt by the Secretariat-General of the instruments of ratification from at least four States. This Treaty is drafted in Arabic in Cairo on April 13, 1950. One signed copy shall be deposited with the Secretariat-General of the Arab League; equally authentic copies shall be transmitted to each of the Contracting States."

http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/arabjoin.asp

For the analysis of the Arab Unity and the Arab League see Lenczowski, pp.735-749.

²³⁸ Telegram from the Secretary of State to Certain Diplomatic Missions. May 1, 1953. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.365-369.

the Arab states due to the contradictory political and economic terms of the two treaties.²³⁹

In addition to these modifications, the other impediment was Israel, because any solution that would strengthen any of the Arab states would cause the reaction of Israel. Thus, the Allies considered that despite the harmony between the two structures, the MEDO project should not have been close to the later membership of Israel. Interestingly, the Allies hoped to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict through the MEDO project which would also be proven unsuccessful.²⁴⁰

Despite these trials during the development of the Middle East defense project, neither of these efforts bore fruit. The Allies abandoned the idea of an alliance with the participation of all the states in the region, regardless of their statuses as a founder or a participant. The new strategy in the following period was bilateral negotiations with the individual states to form an alliance system. The statement of the US deputy assistant secretary of state showed clearly the shift in the minds of the decision makers:

We had decided that the MEDO concept had to be put on the shelf for the present. The political atmosphere in the Arab states simply made it useless to push this plan. We thought that the best plan for the moment would be to work individually with those states which seemed most disposed to cooperate with the West for defense. These would include Iraq, Syria and Pakistan. So far as concrete military planning for area defense was concerned in the absence of participation by states in the area we had reached no firm position... I did not think we would recommend the recent Turkish suggestion that the Western Powers proceed immediately to establish a formal public planning organization for Middle East defense. NEA at least considered such a formal public organization would be badly received by the Arabs.²⁴¹

²³⁹ Telegram from the Secretary of State to Certain Diplomatic Missions. May 1, 1953. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.365-369.

²⁴⁰ *ibid.*

²⁴¹ Memorandum of Conversation by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs. June 17, 1953. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.389-390.

The Allies postponed the idea of a comprehensive organization and decided to contact the states in the region individually. However, Turkey was in favor of the establishment of a defense organization as soon as possible without the support or participation of the Arab states. It criticized the Allies for the inaction regarding the Middle East. However, the United States had two strategy alternatives; “to ignore the dynamics in the region and take an immediate action as was insisted by the United Kingdom and Turkey or to take no action.” The basic approach of the United States was the following:

Desirable course of action might be to leave MEDO project in abeyance for time being while intensifying unpublicized planning for defense Middle East by United States, British and Turkish military representatives... Informal exchanges of views among British, United States and Turkish representatives have already taken place.²⁴²

For the United States, the establishment of the Middle East Defense

Organization by the Allies and Turkey would “confuse and irritate Arabs”. To overcome this possibility, there should have been attempts to combine the Arab states with the Turkey-Pakistan axis although it was a premature project at that time. The basic strategy of the Allies to appeal the Arab participation to the Western efforts was to keep bilateral military aid at beginning.²⁴³

After the abandonment of the establishment of the Middle East Defense Organization by the Allies and the late participation of the Arab states, the support of the Turkey-Pakistan Axis intensified and this paved the way to the signing of the Turkish-Pakistani Pact in 1954 and the Turkish-Iraqi Baghdad Pact in 1955, with which Turkey became a more active player of the Middle East with the change of the

²⁴² Telegram from the Ambassador in Turkey (McGhee) to the Department of State. June 18, 1953. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.390-391. McGhee left his post in Ankara on June 19, 1953.

²⁴³ Telegram from the Ambassador in Egypt (Caffery) to the Department of State. August 30, 1953. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., p.413.

domestic dynamics, especially the deterioration of the Turkish economy, which would undermine the rule of the Democrat Party government.

Concluding Remarks

In the early 1950s, the Middle East witnessed the rivalry of the great powers and the rivalry between the states in the region. The vital importance of the region for the West was the control of oil resources and the prevention of the expansion of the Soviet influence in the region. As a result, the interests of the West were pursued with the military alliances in the region. More importantly, Turkey became the leader of the region in the eyes of the West, especially the United States. Therefore, the Middle East Command and the Middle East Defense Organization projects were formulated under the direction of the West. The Allies worked to persuade the states in the region through economic and military aid.

Nevertheless, the Allies did not consider the intra-regional rivalries and conflicts which impeded the Western-imposed military alliances. The conflicts and rivalries among the Arab states, the hostility against Israel, and the rivalry for leadership between Turkey and Egypt did not allow realizing the establishment of such a military alliance in the Middle East. Consequently, the Allies changed their strategy and tried to establish an indigenous military alliance in which the axis shifted to Turkey-Iraq and Pakistan rather than Turkey and Egypt.

CHAPTER 4

THE MIDDLE EAST AND TURKEY, 1954-1960

The failure of the efforts to set up a command structure in the Middle East forced the Allies to reexamine their strategies regarding the region. The new strategy involved the Northern Tier concept, which was announced by the United States' secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, during his tour in the Middle East in 1953. The Northern Tier concept shifted the focus from the Turkey-Egypt line to the Turkey-Iraq-Pakistan line. In the same vein, the policy of the Allies shifted from the cooperation among the states in the region under the command of the Allies to cooperation among the states in the region through bilateral agreements stemming from the indigenous efforts. The basic principles of the Allies remained unchanged: the United States stayed behind the scene from the beginning to the end and did not become a party in the pacts formally. The United Kingdom aimed to be a leader of the command structure or cooperative bodies and participated in the Middle East pacts, specifically the Baghdad Pact, formally.

However, as the policies and the strategies of the Allies, the dynamics of the Middle East played an important role in the fate of the cooperation among the states in the region. The regional dynamics, such as the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Arab nationalism and neutralism, especially in Egypt and Syria, determined the success of the Middle East cooperative efforts. In addition, the country-specific developments, such as the regime changes in the states, i.e., Syria and Iraq, and the country-specific objectives and strategies, such as the acquisition of economic and military development of the individual states, determined the success of cooperation efforts. All these external and internal dynamics played roles to some extent in the success

and failure of the projects in the Middle East in the 1950s. Moreover, Turkey appropriated the Middle East pacts in the second half of the 1950s much more than the early 1950s because, firstly, it wanted to play the leader role in the region to acquire more assistance from the United States economically and militarily. Secondly, it had reached its major foreign policy objective with the membership to the NATO in 1952, which enabled it to expand its aims in the Middle East.

This chapter focuses on the pacts in which Turkey was a key player and analyzes the conflicts and similarities of the regional states regarding these pacts which were signed in the problematic and conflictual second half of the 1950s. The Turkish-Pakistani Pact, which was signed in 1954, will be examined. After the analysis of the reactions to the pact, the developments before and after the signing of the Baghdad Pact, which was signed in 1955, will be clarified comprehensively. In the context of great power politics, the events will be analyzed in light of the developments in the individual states to better understand the Middle East politics in the second half of the 1950s.

The Turkish-Pakistani Pact (1954)²⁴⁴

The Turkish-Pakistani Pact, which has been overshadowed by the Baghdad Pact in the literature, was the first attempt of the new strategy of the Allies in the Middle East. First of all, it is important to analyze the developments before the signing of the pact in order to understand the reactions that would also influence the events that happened before and after the Baghdad Pact.

²⁴⁴ Selected literature on the Turkish-Pakistani Pact: Fırat and Kürkçüoğlu, *Ortadoğu'yla İlişkiler*, pp.621-622; Bağcı, pp.49-50; Mehmet Gönlübol and Haluk Ülman, "İkinci Dünya Savaşı'ndan Sonra Türk Dış Politikası" in *Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası 1919-1995*, ed. Mehmet Gönlübol (Ankara: Siyasal Kitabevi, 1996), pp.251-254.

The Turkish-Pakistani Pact and the United States and the United Kingdom

As discussed above, the Northern Tier concept was the determinant of the policies of the Allies in the second half of the 1950s. Thus, Pakistan and Turkey became the main actors of the Middle East policies after the failure of the efforts to bring Turkey and Egypt together in the early 1950s. The United States shifted its policy regarding the region.

The demands of Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan from the United States to provide more military assistance to enhance the defensive capabilities, especially of Iran, resulted in the encouragement of these countries, including Iraq, to form a defense structure. The association of the indigenous military forces of these countries would strengthen the defense of the Middle East against the communist threat. More importantly, the defense association would be open to other Middle East countries in time. The United States' officials put emphasis on the independence of the formation of such a structure from the solution of the internal conflicts, i.e., the Anglo-Egyptian and Arab-Israeli problems, because the solution of these crises seemed impossible in the short run, and this could set back the cooperative efforts in the area. On the other hand, the United States' military aid was vital to these states, but this had to be done indirectly so not to cause the reaction of the neighboring states, especially those of Pakistan, i.e., India and Afghanistan with which Pakistan had problematic relations. Upon the solution of these impediments, the indigenous cooperative body could be established and there would be no necessity for the allocation of the foreign forces in the region to provide security.²⁴⁵

²⁴⁵ Memorandum by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Secretary of Defense (Wilson). November 14, 1953. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8, p.431.

Although the Turkish-Pakistani Pact would be open to other states in the region, the key actor was Turkey for the United States. In the same vein, Pakistan would have had a potential to strengthen the Middle East defense if it had been assisted by the Western powers. However, Turkey had to be consulted about the whole project of military assistance to Pakistan.

Even though the support of the area defense and to the regional states was vital to the United States' objectives, it would refrain from being involved in the disputes among the states in the region. Regarding the Turkish-Pakistani Pact, the basic disputes were those between Pakistan and its neighbors, India and Afghanistan. The United States had to satisfy Turkey and not to destroy Turkey's obligations to NATO. Therefore, the Turkish-Pakistani Pact was envisaged as a looser arrangement, in accordance with Turkey's goals, which would provide consultation and joint defense planning. In this alliance, the role of the United States and the other Western powers would not go beyond supporting the pact members economically and militarily. Thus, the Western powers would not participate the pact as member states.²⁴⁶

Regarding the participation of the Arab states, the United States' officials put emphasis on a cautious strategy. For them, the participation of Iran and Afghanistan was premature because of the weakness of the former and the problems of the latter, such as the Pushtoonistan dispute with Pakistan. More importantly, the Arab states were primarily focused on the Palestine issue and it was thought that pressure on them to join the pact would cause irreversible outcomes. Exceptionally, Iraq might welcome the defense strategy despite the reaction of other Arab states especially

²⁴⁶ Telegram from the Secretary of State (Dulles) to the Embassy in Turkey. December 24, 1953. FRUS 1952-54.v.11.p.2., pp.1835-1836.

Egypt and Syria. Iraq was such a vital part of the defense chain, whereas it should not have been forced to participate immediately.²⁴⁷

The reaction of the Middle Eastern states needed to be taken into consideration and the pact needed to be envisaged as a bilateral initiative between Turkey and Pakistan. The negotiations were to be kept secret at first and then the two countries should have declared their intentions to negotiate. At the same time, Pakistan was to make a formal request for the US' aid and in return the latter was to make a public response which was based on the support to the proposed Turkish-Pakistani Pact.²⁴⁸

The strategy of the United States was to stay behind the scene and support the regional states militarily and economically to utilize the Northern Tier defense concept. The support of the United States paved the way for the negotiations and the signature of the Turkish-Pakistani pact in 1954. In this process, the United Kingdom was a secondary player and Turkey was the major ally of the United States. Being put in second place irritated the United Kingdom, as will be discussed below. However, this did not cause a problem and it acted in harmony with the United States in the negotiation process of the Turkish-Pakistani Pact. Like the positions of the United States and the United Kingdom, that of the Soviet Union should be considered to understand the impact of the Pact.

The Turkish-Pakistani Pact and the Soviet Union

The reaction of the Soviet Union to the proposed Turkish-Pakistani Pact was harsh and the Soviet propaganda against the pact intensified in this process. The deputy minister of foreign affairs of the Soviet Union, Valerian Zorin, called the

²⁴⁷ Telegram from the Secretary of State (Dulles) to the Embassy in Turkey. December 24, 1953. FRUS 1952-54.v.11.p.2., pp.1835-1836.

²⁴⁸ *ibid.*

Turkish chargé on 18 March 1954 and handed him a note to protest the Pact. This note was published in the Soviet press. It stated that:

Turko-Pakistani pact is calculated to involve other countries in military bloc... Inasmuch as no attack, this pact cannot be considered defensive... as is evident from statements of officials of Turkey and Pakistan, its preparation is closely connected with military plans of Atlantic bloc and affects security of number of countries, especially in region Near and Middle East and also Southeast Asia... Such policy cannot but harm Soviet-Turkish relations. Acting in this fashion Turkish government takes on itself responsibility for consequences of such situation.²⁴⁹

The Soviet reaction and propaganda was consistent with the Soviet policy towards the Middle East Command and would be consistent to the policy towards the Baghdad Pact. Nevertheless, the Soviet threats did not come up with results and, interestingly, despite Turkey's moves in the Middle East in the second half of the 1950s, the Soviet Union sought to ameliorate the relations with Turkey in the same period.

After the analysis of the great power politics towards the Turkish-Pakistani Pact, the policies of the pact members will be examined.

The Turkish-Pakistani Pact and Pakistan

The stand of the Pakistani officials was articulated in an interview of *New York Times* correspondent Hangen upon his question about the Turkish-Pakistani Pact. In the interview, the Pakistani officials, namely Major General Ayub Khan, the Commander of the Pakistani Field Forces and the Pakistani Defense Secretary Iskender Mirza stated that they were in favor of a pact with Turkey and probably with Iraq. However, they were opposed to the participation of Iran due to its weakness. To this end, the sponsorship and support of the United States was

²⁴⁹ Telegram from the Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Bohlen) to the Department of State. March 20, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., p.490.

extremely important and Pakistan was ready to act in accordance with the United States. In other words, for the Pakistani officials, the economic and military aid from the United States was a “prerequisite” of such a pact. On the other hand, the officials criticized the previous United States policy which had been preoccupied with the Arab states to form such an alliance. The basic concern of the Pakistani officials was their problematic relations with their neighboring countries especially India.²⁵⁰

It can be argued that the objective of the Pakistani officials was similar to that of Turkey and the United States: to form an alliance in accordance with the Northern Tier concept. Nevertheless, their policy was not independent from their country-specific dynamics. Their priority was to strengthen their country’s economic and military capabilities in order to resist their neighbors, specifically India. To this end, they were ready to act with the United States, which was the leading source of economic and military aid at the time. Thus, Pakistan used the Turkish-Pakistani Pact as leverage to meet its needs. In the same vein, the United States was ready to help Pakistan, as mentioned before, and agreed to provide economic and military help.

With the guarantee of the United States’ support, the Pakistani officials intensified their negotiations with the Turkish officials. In November 1953, the Pakistani Governor General, Ghulam Mohammed, had extensive conversations with the Turkish president, Bayar, prime minister, Menderes, and minister of foreign affairs, Köprülü. In these conversations, the Turkish officials expressed their willingness to enter into an alliance with Pakistan and the participation of Iran later on if it indicated stability for the defense structure. However, interestingly, they were opposed to the inclusion of Arab states, especially Iraq, in the alliance. For them, the

²⁵⁰ Telegram from the Ambassador in Turkey (Warren) to the Department of State. September 17, 1953. FRUS 1952-54. v.9.p.1.i.8., p.418.

basic reason was not to involve the Arab-Israeli conflict in the alliance through the participation of the Arab states in the defense project.²⁵¹

In a telegram sent from the United States' ambassador in Karachi to the US Department of State, the ambassador said he thought that the Ghulam Mohammed's visit to Turkey convinced him to Turkey's willingness to enter into an alliance with Pakistan. On the other hand, despite Turkey's willingness to sign a Pact with Pakistan, Pakistan's first priority was the direct and immediate military aid by the United States in order to strengthen its bargaining position with Turkey when they began to negotiate a pact. Moreover, after the grant of military support to Pakistan, she was ready to bring Iran into the agreement. Possibly, the Saudi participation to the pact could be provided because the new Saudi King was a close friend of the Governor General.²⁵²

As mentioned before, Pakistan was willing to sign a pact with Turkey as long as its country-specific needs were satisfied. More importantly, the sponsorship and public support of the United States were necessary for the pact to be accomplished.

The Turkish-Pakistani Pact and Turkey

Turkey was regarded as the leader of the Middle East defense by the United States. It worked to formulate a Middle East policy in harmony with the United States. Therefore, Turkish and American officials often met to set up a common approach about the Turkish-Pakistani Pact, as happened throughout the 1950s.

Turkey's basic concerns were to play the leader role in the area, despite the

²⁵¹ Telegram from the Ambassador in Turkey (Warren) to the Department of State. November 30, 1953. FRUS 1952-54. v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.433-434.

²⁵² Memorandum of Conversation by the Ambassador in Pakistan. December 7, 1953. FRUS 1952-54. v.11.p.2.i.7., pp.1831-1832.

resentment of Egypt and Iraq, and to bolster the ties with the United States in order to receive more military and economic assistance.

Regarding the Turkish-Pakistani Pact, the United States' support of Pakistan and the participation of the Arab states were discussed in a conversation between the officials of the two states as was the position of the United Kingdom because of the divergences between the Allies regarding the Middle East policy. The exclusion of the United Kingdom from the Turkish-Pakistani Pact and Turkey's leadership irritated the United Kingdom because it wanted to play the role of dominant leader in the region. However, they did not raise any objection to the United States' policy regarding the pact.²⁵³ In the same conversation, the possible difficulties and the course of action were also discussed, as follows:

In trying to bring Iraq into a pact, we would have to reckon with the fact that the Iraqi people as distinguished from their government would probably be opposed. Afghanistan would be very much upset and might adopt an unfavorable attitude toward the US and Turkey if she were not at least offered the opportunity to join any arrangement which might be forthcoming. With respect to Iraq I said we fully appreciated the delicacy of the Iraqi government's position and did not intend to exert any pressure...With respect to Afghanistan, I expressed the hope that Turkish influence could be exerted to reassure the Afghans....The Ambassador and I agreed that the Pushtanistan issue would have to be at least tacitly shelved if Afghanistan were to join in any group with Pakistan. In this connection he said the Iraqi ambassador in Washington was optimistic that Iraq could play an effective role in adjusting the Afghan-Pakistan difficulties.²⁵⁴

In the meantime, the military aid to Pakistan was approved by the president of the United States, Eisenhower. Moreover, the United States proposed to Turkey the principles and strategy of the Turkish-Pakistani Pact. They thought that the pact was to be loose, even looser than the Greek-Turkish-Yugoslav Pact, because of the absence of what they called "geographical continuity, strategic unity and NATO

²⁵³ Memorandum of Conversation, by the Officer in Charge of Turkish Affairs. January 9, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.447-448.

²⁵⁴ *ibid.*

direction in the case of Turkish-Pakistani Pact.” Moreover, the participation of Iraq in the pact needed to be taken into consideration. The reaction of the third states, especially India, Afghanistan and Iran, also needed to be considered and the means to appease the reactions of them needed to be decided. Lastly, the views of the “MEDO sponsors”, mainly the United Kingdom, needed to be sought to provide the support of this state to the Middle East alliance.²⁵⁵

In the meeting of the officials of the two countries, the proposed principles of the United States were accepted by the Turkish side. Turkey emphasized the principles and, additionally, proposed that the word “defense” should be avoided in the title agreement and in its place more “suitable phraseology as in case tripartite pact” sought. Moreover, Turkish officials reemphasized that the timing needed cautious collaboration. They proposed to approach Iraq and to present Turkish-Pakistani Pact in “light invitation” to the Iraqis to join or simply as information. Regarding Afghanistan, Turkey would explain the nature and principles of the agreement and emphasize Turkey’s impartiality on the Pushtoonistan dispute. In addition, Turkey would offer written assurances if Afghan officials desired. Iran would also be informed without any reference to its participation in the proposed agreement. The Turkish chargé in India would inform the Indians, but would leave to the United States to offer Pakistan further assurances. Lastly, the United States’ and Turkish officials agreed to fully inform the United Kingdom and France in order to seek their cooperation and advice.²⁵⁶

In sum, upon the agreement of the basic principles and strategies between the United States and Turkey, Turkey became responsible for the presentation of the pact

²⁵⁵ Memorandum to the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs (Merchant). January 12, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.450-451.

²⁵⁶ Telegram from the Ambassador in Turkey (Warren) to the Department of State. January 21, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.458-459.

in the regional states, especially to the neighboring states around itself and Pakistan. In light of these principles, the course of action was decided by the United States and Turkey. In the following period, Turkey would approach Pakistan with the support of the United States. The United States would guarantee the necessary military aid to Pakistan within the framework of the Turkish-Pakistani Pact secretly. At the same time, the other states in the region would be broadly informed about the pact and Turkey would make an explanatory statement at NATO. After that, Turkey and Pakistan would announce a joint communiqué stated that they would consult on matters of mutual interest in the political, economic and security matters. After a short time, Pakistan would make a public request for military aid from the United States. Upon this request and favorable reply, the Indians would be informed and a special message would be sent to Nehru. With the mitigation of the tension of the states in the region, Turkey and Pakistan would accelerate negotiations and sign the pact as soon as possible.²⁵⁷

Although the principles and the plan of action were decided in February 1954, the Turkish-Pakistani Pact had to wait for two more months. The developments and reactions in this period must be considered in order to understand the conflicting and somewhat rival positions and policies of the states in the region.

The Turkish-Pakistani Pact in the Turkish Parliament and Press

During the ratification discussions of the Turkish-Pakistani Pact in the Parliament, the Democrat Party representatives, Cihad Baban, Bahadır Dülger, Yusuf Hikmet Bayur and Sabri Özcan San dominated the discussions and praised the Pact. The only representative of the RPP, Fethi Ülkü, expressed his views regarding it. In

²⁵⁷ Memorandum by the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs (Byroade) to the Acting Secretary of State. February 3, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.479-480.

his speech, Ülkü praised the Pact and supported the policy of the Democrat Party government regarding the Pact.²⁵⁸

In the press, the newspapers *Zafer* and *Son Posta*, supported the Pact. Like the Middle East Command, the Turkish-Pakistani Pact was supported by *Cumhuriyet*. Nadir Nadi wrote an article, “A Fortunate Pact,” (*Hayırlı Bir Pakt*) and stated that the Pact was a means to link the two states to each other and to expand the Western defense system to the East. The basic feature of the agreement was the lack of any aggressive intention against any other state and its openness to all states. Therefore, Turkey would welcome the Pact as a nation that attached importance to the preservation of peace. The Turkish-Pakistani Pact would strengthen the security of Turkey as well as the security of the Middle East and the whole world. Therefore, he praised the Turkish government for its efforts to conclude and sign the Pact.²⁵⁹

The Turkish-Pakistani Pact was also supported by *Yeni Ulus* at the time. Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın stated that the relations between Turkey and Hindu Muslims, later on the Pakistanis after the establishment of the independent Pakistani state, were

²⁵⁸ “... O zaman bir mana, bir ruh halinde bulunan bu birleşmenin bugün muhterem huzurunuzda ve muhterem Pakistan başbakanının huzurunda mesul şahısların ve iki devletin anlaşması şeklinde tecelli edişi cidden bana, sizlere olduğu gibi, büyük heyecan ve ruh huzuru vermektedir. Bunun için andlaşmanın tasdikının her iki milletin istikbali için olduğu kadar bu iki milletin menfaatini seven bütün İslam alemi için de memnuniyet verici hadise olarak kaydeder, tasdikını bilhassa rica ederim.”
Republic of Turkey. *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*. term 10, session 7, vol.1, 11 June 1954, pp.150-156.

²⁵⁹ “Türkiye ile Pakistan arasında evvelki gün Karaşi’de imzalanan anlaşma, iki millet birbirine bağlayan, aynı zamanda Batı savunma alemini Doğuya doğru geliştiren müsbet bir başarıdır. Anlaşmanın başlıca özelliği, hiçbir devlete karşı saldırgan bir hedef gütmemesi, iyi niyetli bütün devletlere açık bulunmasıdır... Biz Ortadoğu bölgesinde barışın korunmasına önem veren ve bunun sorumluluğunu taşıyan bir milletin vatandaşları olarak Türk-Pakistan anlaşmasını büyük bir sevinçle karşılıyoruz. Böylece 1951 yılında resmen katıldığımız Batı savunma teşkilatını bir ucundan doğuya doğru tamamlama yolunda esaslı bir adım atıyoruz demektir. Bunun açık manası, Türk emniyetinin, Ortadoğu emniyetinin dolayısıyla hür dünya emniyetinin kuvvetlenmiş olmasından ibarettir... Bu uğurda harcadığı müsbet gayretlerden ötürü hükümetimizi tebrik etmeyi bir vazife biliriz...”
Cumhuriyet, 4 April 1954.

everlasting. Although the Pact between the two states had not borne fruit in the short run, this would be a starting point to provide peace and security to the region.²⁶⁰

In *Yeni Ulus*, Ahmet Şükrü Esmer's position towards the Turkish-Pakistani Pact was cautious. He stated that the basic reason for the Pact was to provide a basis for the United States' military aid to Pakistan and it would not bring any benefit to Turkey. Turkey could sign any Pact without having to be obliged to any movement outside its borders. However, Esmer stated, the Turkish-Pakistani Pact would not bring the harmonization of the policies of the two states; rather, they would follow their own course of action. The only benefit of the Pact would be the United States' military aid to Pakistan.²⁶¹ Esmer once again approached the developments cautiously and more realistically, saying it could be argued that the major benefit of the Turkish-Pakistani Pact was the provision of aid to Pakistan by the United States.

Consequently, the opposition in the Parliament and the press supported and praised the signature of the Turkish-Pakistani Pact.

²⁶⁰ "Türkiye ile Pakistan arasında bir dostluk anlaşmasını pek tabii buluruz. Hint Müslümanlarıyla yakınlığımız epeyce eskidir... Türkiye ile Pakistan'ın birleşmesinden derhal ameli neticeler beklemek imkanını göremiyoruz. Fakat, askeri bakımdan pratik bir hal çaresi teşkil etmemekle beraber, Türk-Pakistan anlaşmasının Orta Asya'ya doğru bir emniyet ve huzur hissini neşir ve temin edeceğini ümit ederiz. Bu bir başlangıç olacaktır. Ve iyi olacaktır."

Yeni Ulus, 18 February 1954.

²⁶¹ "Bir yılan hikayesine benzeyen Türk-Pakistan Dostluk Paktı nihayet geçen gün Karaşi'de imzalanmıştır. Pakt, Amerika'nın Pakistan'a askeri yardımda bulunmasını temin için düşünülmüş ve gerçekleştirilmiş bir tedbirden ibarettir... Kendisini uzak memleketlerde askeri vecibelere bağlamayan ve maceralara sürüklemeyecek olan her Paktı Türkiye'nin imzasında bir mahzur olamaz. Paktın imzası ile Müslüman Devletler Birliği'nin gerçekleşmesine doğru adım atıldığının metinde ifade edilmemesi realist olan Türk görüşünün hayalperest Pakistan görüşüne galebe çaldığını anlatmaktadır... Siyasi alanda işbirliğine gelince: Pakistan şimdiye kadar Arap-Asya grubu ile birlikte yürümüştü; Fas, Tunus gibi meselelerde Arapların yanında yer almıştır. Türkiye ise bu davalarda Batılı devletlerle yürümüştür. Pakt ile işbirliğinin kurulmuş olduğu bildirilmiş ise de üstün ihtimale göre Pakistan da Türkiye de bu meselelerde bildikleri eski yollarda yürüyeceklerdir. Hülasa paktın tek hikmeti Pakistan'a yardım için Amerika'ya fırsat hazırlamaktan ibarettir. Pakistanlılar için şüphesiz Paktın kendisinden ziyade yardım önemlidir."

Yeni Ulus, 7 April 1954.

The Turkish-Pakistani Pact and Iraq

Iraq became a significant actor after the collapse of the alliance projects, namely the Middle East Command and later the Middle East Defense Organization, which had been designed to bring Turkey and Egypt together, but failed in the early 1950s. In the same vein, as mentioned in the principles and strategies agreed by the United States and Turkey, this state was a potential member of the Turkish-Pakistani Pact. However, neither the United States nor Turkey insisted upon the initial participation of Iraq in the pact even though they fully informed it about the nature of the arrangement.

On the Iraqi side, the prime minister Jamali²⁶² considered the possibility of an invitation of accession to the Turkish-Pakistani Pact, which was open to the accession of other Middle East states. Nevertheless, although he was in favor of such an alliance, he refrained from the reaction of Egypt. In a meeting with the Egyptian officials, he asked for the Egyptian reaction to a possible joining of Iraq to the Pact. In return, the Egyptians replied that Egypt did not object to Iraqi participation, but such a move might negatively affect the Egyptian position on the Suez base dispute against the United Kingdom. As a result, Jamali assured the Egyptians that Iraq would not participate into an arrangement which might adversely affect the Egyptian position and the Egyptians would be fully informed if Iraq moved in such a direction.^{263,264}

²⁶² The Prime Minister Jamali held the office between 1953 and 1954 until he was replaced by Nuri Said. Nuri Said governed Iraq until the coup d'état in 1958.

²⁶³ Telegram from the Ambassador in Iraq (Berry) to the Department of State. January 26, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.467-468.

²⁶⁴ It seems that the Jamali government was more sensitive to Iraq's relations with Egypt than the Nuri Said government because the Nuri Said government caused a split with Egypt by signing the Baghdad Pact with Turkey despite the resistance of Egypt. This will be discussed in detail below.

The United States' military aid to Pakistan and Turkey set a precedent for Iraq and it also demanded military aid from the United States. The United States government approved of the military aid to Iraq as to Pakistan, but needed to inform the Iraqi government about the necessity of cooperation with Turkey and Pakistan for the security of the area. In a telegram sent by the US Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Iraq, it was stated that:

He might also state that while US assistance not conditioned on such cooperation and no commitments or undertakings will be required of Iraq except those stipulated Mutual Security legislation, USG will naturally take account of country's potential contribution to area defense.²⁶⁵

Although the United States and Turkey agreed that Iraq would not be pressed to be a member of the Turkish-Pakistani Pact and left to its own initiative to join, the United States implemented a policy to persuade Iraq through military aid. This can be regarded as a stick-and-carrot policy, which was common in the United States' policy towards the Middle East states in the 1950s.

Turkey continued its efforts to tempt Iraq to join the Pact. The Turkish ambassador in Baghdad met the Iraqi prime minister and the minister of foreign affairs. The conversation between the Turkish ambassador and the Iraqi Prime Minister was interesting to be stated here:

Turkish Ambassador met Prime Minister and Foreign Minister together this afternoon... Immediately thereafter, he informed me that Iraqi officials had received his message with satisfaction, Prime Minister saying that he felt great joy and pride because he himself put forward a similar suggestion last year. Prime Minister asked if he could accept this information as an invitation to participate. Ambassador replied "are you awaiting an invitation?" Prime Minister said "yes". Ambassador then said, "in such case you may accept this communication as an invitation".²⁶⁶

²⁶⁵ Telegram from the Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Iraq. January 28, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.474-475.

²⁶⁶ Telegram from the Ambassador in Iraq (Berry) to the Department of State. February 17, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.486-487.

The Iraqi government was not against participating in the Turkish-Pakistani Pact, but it was against sending its soldiers beyond the Iraqi frontiers in time of war as a possible result of its membership.²⁶⁷ The Turkish ambassador did not make a comment on this issue, but it was understood that Iraq did not want to be a part of such an arrangement. More importantly, the Iraqi prime minister asked whether Israel was going to become a member of the Pact or not. If so, Iraq would not join the Pact. The Turkish ambassador replied that there was no plan to include Israel. Lastly, the Turkish ambassador asked whether the publicity of the Pact might have caused a reaction in Iraq. The prime minister stated that the only possible reaction might have come from the Communists or the Istiqlal Party, which was a party that had demanded the “full” independence of Iraq from the colonialists 1945 onwards.²⁶⁸

The possible participation of Iraq in the Turkish-Pakistani Pact became a matter of discussion in an Iraqi parliamentary session. In reply to the criticisms of the opposition deputies regarding the membership of Iraq in the Pact, the prime minister Jamali denied that no defense arrangement existed in which Iraq was a member except the Saadabad Pact and the Arab League Collective Security Pact. Despite the fact that Iraq had been informed about the Pact, Iraq had not had any commitments to any party and had not joined such an arrangement. Nevertheless, he added that Iraq might join any such arrangement in the future upon the consultation of the parliament.²⁶⁹ In other words, the prime minister did not reject the possibility of Iraq’s joining to the pact in the future.

²⁶⁷ The extension of the Pact beyond the frontiers would be a matter of discussion and hesitation during the Baghdad Pact talks as will be discussed below.

²⁶⁸ Telegram from the Ambassador in Iraq (Berry) to the Department of State. February 17, 1954. FRUS 1952-54, v.9, p.1.i.8., pp.486-487.

²⁶⁹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to the Foreign Office. February 24, 1954. FO 371.110787. V1073-7.

The Prime Minister's press conference on 24 February 1954 was as important as the above mentioned parliamentary session. In this conference he stated that

Iraq's right to join any pact which resulted from the Turkish-Pakistani negotiations if it should be in her interests to do so... Iraq dared to announce the rest of the Arab states that she would sign any pact she pleased. The Arabs must either arm the Arab League Collective Security Pact or relinquish it as useless. Arms could come either from the Russia or from the West. Turkey and Pakistan had clearly chosen to get their arms from the West... Iraq would do so.²⁷⁰

In this conference, the Prime Minister criticized the Egyptian press comment, which was closely linked to the Egyptian government, which stated that those Arab states, which were bound to foreign powers militarily and economically, were not able to join the Arab states on an equal basis. The Prime Minister said that all the Arab states including Egypt had treaties with foreign powers.²⁷¹

The Prime Minister's statements in the parliament and the press conference come up with three important results: Firstly, the rightness of the confidence of the United States and Turkey on Iraq about its positive stance towards the Pact. Secondly, the readiness of Iraq to be involved in an alliance with Turkey and the West. The alliance would be embodied with the Baghdad Pact a year later. Thirdly and more importantly, the flexibility of the policies of the Arab states in the Middle East towards the West and the Soviet Union.

Despite the positive approach of Iraq towards the proposed Turkish-Pakistani Pact, the reactions of the other states in the region were somewhat different.

The Turkish-Pakistani Pact and Afghanistan, Iran and India

As planned during the talks between the United States and Turkey, before the joint communiqué was publicized, the diplomatic preparations intensified in

²⁷⁰ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to the Foreign Office. February 27, 1954. FO371. 110787. V1073-9.

²⁷¹ *ibid.*

Afghanistan. Turkey endeavored to provide assurance that the Pact would not affect the “long established friendship” of Turkey and Afghanistan. Moreover, Turkey would not become involved in the Pakistan-Afghanistan dispute.²⁷² In return, the Afghan Prime Minister stated that he was in favor of such pacts between Asian countries. These pacts were for “mutual understanding and economic progress.” About the Afghan adherence to the Pact, the Prime Minister said that Afghan relations with Turkey were “cordial and conducive to general peace and security in the Middle East.” Nevertheless, the Pushtoonistan dispute between Pakistan and Afghanistan impeded the establishment of closer relations between the two states. Thus, Afghanistan would not be a member of such a pact with Pakistan.”²⁷³

In Iran and India, the Turkish diplomats provided advanced information about the nature of the pact. Iran was given the impression that the pact was open to its joining, but there was no insistence and pressure upon it. On the other hand, Indian authorities were also informed, but this did not cause harsh reaction in India against neither Turkey nor Pakistan.²⁷⁴

In the preparation process of the Turkish-Pakistani Pact, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, India and even Egypt did not react against the Pact. The main offensive criticism came from Turkey’s neighbor, Syria.

The Turkish-Pakistani Pact and Syria

During the negotiations of the Pact between Turkey and Pakistan, the Syrian government took a negative stance toward the arrangement. The reasons for the

²⁷² Telegram from the Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Iran. February 13, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.483-484.

²⁷³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Kabul to the Foreign Office. March 2, 1954. FO 371. 111984. DA1022-1.

²⁷⁴ Telegram from the Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Iran. February 13, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.483-484.

Syrian opposition were discussed between the ambassadors of the United States and the United Kingdom in Damascus. They argued that:

The Syrians felt jealous of a movement which will give added importance to Iraq, the arming of Iraq would make it easier for Iraq to unite with Syria, the new United States-Iraq link tends to remove Iraq from the Arab orbit like the existing Anglo-Iraq treaty, the Arab-Asian bloc is weakened by the Pakistan-United States link, the whole connected movement tends to upset what may be Shishakli's idea of a neutral zone, i.e. one which will be free of Soviet or Western influence and which will eventually be dominated by an Arab bloc armed by and loosely allied to the West.^{275,276}

Although these predictions regarding the Syrian policy were not proven, they had implications on Syrian foreign policy in the following period. In the same vein, the Syrian government criticized Pakistan and stated that by accepting the American arms, Pakistan dissatisfied Syria. Before the Pact, the Arabs had taken Pakistan as a member of their bloc in opposition to the Western powers for granted. However, by accepting the American arms, Pakistan left the Arab bloc as opposed to India, which remained neutralist and hostile to the West.^{277,278}

The opposition of the Syrian government was supported by the local press, as it was the case in Egypt in the 1950s, and the Turkish-Pakistani Pact was criticized during the negotiation process. Mainly, the Pact was described as “a tool to tempt Iraq and even Iran to establish a new kind of MEDO.” The most favorable

²⁷⁵ Syria was opposed to the Baghdad Pact for several reasons, but the fear of Iraqi invasion of Syria dominated the Syrian agenda. This will be discussed in detail in the Baghdad Pact topic.

²⁷⁶ Telegram from the British Embassy in Damascus to the Foreign Office. January 19, 1954. FO371. 110787. V1073-2.

²⁷⁷ Telegram from the British Embassy in Damascus to the Foreign Office. February 15, 1954. FO371. 110787. V1073-3.

²⁷⁸ The Syrian policy can be regarded as ambiguous and hollow because the bloc policy did not work in the Arab world as the “Arab unity” from the beginning to the end. In the early 1950s, Egypt and Syria negotiated with the West to be supported economically and militarily. Moreover, Iraq and Egypt had signed treaties with the United Kingdom for economic and military aid. With the shift of focus from Egypt to Turkey and Iraq, Egypt and Syria became the forerunners of Arab nationalism and neutralism without wholly cutting their ties with the West. Again, the satisfaction of interests dominated the agenda of these states and they endeavored to provide aid through negotiations with both sides. Especially in the second half of the 1950s, the Soviet Union became the major sponsor of these two states.

comments in the press were those that stated that Pakistan might have influenced Turkey towards more friendly relations with the Arab states.²⁷⁹ Like the local press, the public reaction, which stemmed mainly from the university students, was against the Turkish-Pakistani Pact. On 29 March, a student demonstration erupted directed against the pact and the “colonizers” behind it. The United Kingdom ambassador in Damascus stated that “such demonstrations were becoming a form of amusement among the students and the demonstration in Damascus seemed to have been motivated by sympathy with the student demonstrators in Beirut.” After the demonstration, a manifesto was published in the local press which was signed by the students of the Syrian University. They declared that “the Turkish-Pakistani Pact was not a proper subject for Syrian interference and that of the university students.”²⁸⁰ The reaction against the Turkish-Pakistani Pact was rigorous not only at the government level, but also at the public level, most probably, with different motivations.

Shortly, the reaction of Syria toward the Turkish-Pakistani Pact was much more negative than that of the other states in the region. Despite these different reactions to the Pact, Turkey and Pakistan ended their negotiations and signed the agreement.

The Signature of the Pact

On 2 April 1954, Turkey and Pakistan signed an Agreement for Friendly Cooperation. With this pact, the two parties agreed on:

²⁷⁹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Damascus to the Foreign Office. February 23, 1954. FO371. 110787. V1073-6.

²⁸⁰ Telegram from the British Embassy in Damascus to the Foreign Office. March 30, 1954. FO371. 110787. V1073-31.

Providing for consultation on international matters of mutual interest, continuing cultural, economic and technical cooperation; consultation and cooperation on certain defense matters; and accession of any state, whose participation is considered by the contracting parties useful for achieving the purposes of the present agreement.²⁸¹

The agreement would last for five years and be automatically renewable additional five year periods unless denounced a year before each such period ended.²⁸² The period, right after the signing of the pact, witnessed the efforts to tempt the states in the region to join Turkish-Pakistani axis. The reactions to and positions of the states in the area regarding participation varied, as will be analyzed below.

The Reaction of the United Kingdom to the Pact

On the Turkish-Pakistani Pact, the United Kingdom harmonized its policy with that of the United States so as not to give an impression of a split among the Allies regarding the Middle East policy. The policy of the United Kingdom was coherent with that of the United States despite the former's objective to be actively engaged in Middle East politics. This can be regarded as a result of the change of the balance of power to the advantage of the United States, especially in the second half of the 1950s. Nevertheless, the officials of the United Kingdom had some reservations about the Turkish-Pakistani Pact.

First of all, the United Kingdom was in favor of the prior settlement of the Anglo-Egyptian dispute over the Suez base in order to take collective measures in the area to provide collective security. Thus, there could have been little progress unless the Anglo-Egyptian dispute was settled. This assumption was opposed to that of the United States that the Turkish-Pakistani Pact and other initiatives regarding the

²⁸¹ FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., p.491.

²⁸² *ibid.*

“Northern Tier” were independent from the settlement of the disputes in the region, i.e., the Anglo-Egyptian and Arab-Israeli disputes.²⁸³

Secondly, and in relation to the prior reservation, the United Kingdom had to support the United States’ policy including the Turkish-Pakistani Pact not to lose its influence especially in Iraq, because any discrepancy between its stance and that of the United States might harm the long-term interests of the United Kingdom. On the other hand, the officials urged that it would be unwise for the United Kingdom to insist that Iraq adhere to the agreement. More importantly, for the United Kingdom thought, the Iraqi government needed to take the parliamentary and public opinion into consideration before deciding to participate in the pact. After Iraq had decided to take such an initiative, the United Kingdom would welcome the Iraqi accession. Despite the difference in interests, the strategy was similar to that of the United States: “to implement a wait-and-see policy not to make the same mistakes as happened in the Middle East Command and Middle East Defense Organization projects.” The policy of the United Kingdom should be reemphasized here with the words of the United Kingdom’s officials:

We should try to bring the US to take account of our long standing military relationship with Iraq and consequently we should take the US government into our confidence as soon as a decision has been taken to embark on military talks with Iraq with a view to treaty revision. We should not try to influence other Middle East governments at least until Iraq’s own attitude becomes clearer.²⁸⁴

It can be argued that there were some divergences between the policies of the Allies in the Middle East and regarding the Turkish-Pakistani Pact, as happened in the other developments mentioned before. On the other hand, the policies and

²⁸³ The Report: “Iraq: Possible Accession to the Turkish-Pakistani Pact”. April 10, 1954. FO 371.110787.V1073-34.

²⁸⁴ *ibid.*

positions of the states in the area diversified despite the claims of the existence of the so-called “Arab Unity.”

The Reaction of Iraq to the Pact

Iraq became the potential member of an alliance in the Middle East after Egypt denounced the alliance projects in the early 1950s. The Turkish-Pakistani Pact accelerated this process. In the meantime, Iraqi prime minister, Jamali, was replaced by Nuri Said. The basic reservations of Jamali about the pact had been not to send Iraqi soldiers beyond the Iraqi frontier and not to be a part of an alliance with Israel.

Prime minister Nuri Said acted in a similar line. He stated that Iraq could join the pact, but first, the problem of mitigating the Middle Eastern public opinion regarding the Palestine issue had to be solved. He argued that since Israel felt confident in its own strength, the tripartite declarations should be enough to guarantee to Israel against Arab aggression, whereas the Arab states did not feel confident of their strength, they needed something more.²⁸⁵ In other words, the Arab-Israeli dispute had to be reconciled and the Arab states had to be strengthened militarily by the West especially the United States. It can be argued that the prime minister was seeking to use the Turkish-Pakistani Pact as leverage to maximize his country's interests.²⁸⁶ Consequently, although Iraq was in favor of membership in the Turkish-Pakistani Pact, it did not do so and this paved the way for the Baghdad Pact negotiations with Turkey in the following period.

²⁸⁵ Telegram from the Ambassador in Iraq (Berry) to the Department of State. April 5, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.491-492.

²⁸⁶ Nuri Said would have acted similarly during the negotiations of the Baghdad Pact. This will be discussed in detail in the Baghdad Pact topic.

The Reaction of Iran, Egypt and Afghanistan to the Pact

As a result of its military incapability, Iran was not in favor of being part of an alliance until it could show its strength to provide its security and territorial integrity. Thus, Iran did not participate in the Turkish-Pakistani Pact because its basic concern was to increase its military potential and the Pact, as a loose alliance, could not meet its needs and objectives.²⁸⁷

Afghanistan was also in need of increasing its military potential and the Turkish-Pakistani Pact did not provide it the chance to reach this goal. More importantly, the Pakistani-Afghan Pushtoonistan dispute had not been settled, and, as mentioned before, the conflict was the basic impediment to the Afghan participation to the Turkish-Pakistani Pact.²⁸⁸

Egypt did not act accordingly to the objectives of the Allies and participate in the agreement, but it did not attack the Turkish-Pakistani Pact harshly. The basic concern of Egypt to support the objectives of the Pact was the settlement of Anglo-Egyptian negotiations regarding the Suez base. If these negotiations had been successful and Egypt gained what it had wanted, then Egypt would have looked favorably at the Pact. Moreover, the US officials assumed that the Western military aid to Egypt might have changed the attitude of Egypt towards the Pact.²⁸⁹

The willingness of the other Arab states such as Lebanon and Jordan depended on the policies of Iraq and Egypt. As will be discussed below, the Arab states did not want to take sides in a split between Iraq and Egypt. The officials of the United States predicted that “if Iraq and Egypt had acted differently towards the

²⁸⁷ Telegram from the Ambassador in Iraq (Berry) to the Department of State. April 5, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.491-492.

²⁸⁸ *ibid.*

²⁸⁹ Paper Prepared in the Office of Intelligence Research, Department of State. May 3, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.503-504.

Pact, this would have increased the fear of Israel, intensified the Arab balance of power rivalries and ultimately the “collective Arab response” could not be expected.”²⁹⁰ On the other hand, if either Egypt or Iraq had not been a part of the Pact, this non-membership would have led the other Arab states not to join the Turkish-Pakistani Pact.

The Reaction of Saudi Arabia to the Pact

The Saudi Arabian reaction to the Turkish-Pakistani Pact was negative. The Saudi minister of foreign affairs, Yusuf Yassin, met his Turkish counterpart in Amman and stated that:

Saudi Arabia could not of course interfere with the Turkish policy, but she was sorry to see that this policy was more and more contrary to Arab interests and that Turkey was in the enemy camp... The King’s appeal was to the effect that Moslem states, including Turkey, ought to form a common front against Israel. Turkey ought therefore to revise her policy, since her present relations with Israel were against the interests of the Arab states.²⁹¹

The basic concern of Saudi Arabia was to unite the Arab world against Israel. However, the alliance with the West under the Turkish-Pakistani Pact could split the Arab world and weaken the front against the common enemy.

By taking the process of the negotiations, signature, and reactions to the Turkish-Pakistani Pact into consideration, it can be argued that the agreement was dead-born. Beyond the Turkish-Pakistani cooperation, it did not serve for the establishment of the Northern Tier Defense Grouping as a result of the divergences and conflicts not only between the Allies, to some extent, but also in the Arab world.

²⁹⁰ Paper Prepared in the Office of Intelligence Research, Department of State. May 3, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.503-504.

²⁹¹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to the Foreign Office. July 3, 1954. FO371. 110787. V1073-43.

The telegram from the United Kingdom's embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office reflected the situation in the Middle East:

Whatever success may attend efforts to bring about a regional defense grouping on the Turk-Pakistani pattern, prospects for a tighter defense organization with planning and coordinating functions and perhaps a combined command are not likely to become more favorable unless there is a reduction of the basic incompatibilities of Western and Middle Eastern political objectives and in particular a lessening of the tensions between the Western powers and the Middle East states which arise from the Anglo-Egyptian and Anglo-Iranian disputes and the Arab-Israeli conflict.²⁹²

On the other hand, despite its failure, the Turkish-Pakistani Pact paved the way for a broader alliance system, the Baghdad Pact, through bringing Turkey, Pakistan, and mainly Iraq, together. The period after the signing of the Turkish-Pakistani Pact witnessed maneuvers and negotiations not only between the Allies and the Middle East states, but also between the Middle East states. An analysis of the Baghdad Pact can be made in the light of the developments regarding the Turkish-Pakistani Pact.

²⁹² Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to the Foreign Office. July 3, 1954. FO371. 110787. V1073-43.

The Baghdad Pact (1955)²⁹³

In the literature on Turkish foreign policy or more specifically on the Democrat Party's foreign policy, the Baghdad Pact constitutes the focus of the analyses. The Baghdad Pact can be taken as a turning point in regional politics and Turkey's policy towards the region. The conclusions of the studies on the Baghdad Pact or Turkey's Middle East policy in the 1950s differ. Most of the studies are critical of the Baghdad Pact and the policy of the Turkish government although these studies have not made complex analysis of the Baghdad Pact by solely focusing on the developments regarding the Pact. Recent studies, on the other hand, have emphasized the power relations and the national interests of the Pact members and the other regional states related to the Baghdad Pact and they brought more analytical conclusions. Before getting into the analysis of the Baghdad Pact, some studies related to the Pact should be mentioned.

Lenczowski states that although the Baghdad Pact was a project to unite the Middle East against the Communist threat, on the contrary, it divided and polarized the Middle East and the Arab world. More importantly, it did not establish a frontier against the Soviet expansion and enabled the Soviet Union to penetrate the region. The Pact instigated the Pan-Arabist and Nationalist movements in the region and the Pact was exploited by the Soviet Union as a tool of Western imperialism with the

²⁹³ Selected literature on the Baghdad Pact: Behçet Kemal Yeşilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact* (London & New York: Frank Cass, 2005); Turgay Merih, *Soğuk Savaş ve Türkiye 1945-1960* (Ankara: Ebabil Yayıncılık, 2006), pp.168-178; Philip Robins, *Turkey and the Middle East* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1991), pp.24-25; Nasuh Uslu, *The Turkish-American Relationship between 1947 and 2003* (New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2003), pp.111-128; Oral Sander, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri 1947-1964* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1979), pp.125-134; Goldschmidt, p.292; Sever, *The Compliant Ally? Turkey and the Middle East 1954-58*, pp.74-80; Sever, *Soğuk Savaş Kuşatmasında Türkiye, Batı ve Ortadoğu 1945-1958*, pp.107-156; Bilgin, pp.97-98; Bağcı, pp.61-70; Fırat and Kürkçüoğlu, pp.622-627; Gönlübol and Ülman, pp.254-271; Hale, *Türk Dış Politikası 1774-2000*, p.129; Karpat, *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Ortadoğu'da Millet, Milliyet, Milliyetçilik*, pp.270-274 and *Türk Dış Politikası Tarihi*, pp.202-206.

claim that the Soviet Union was the “true friend” of the Arab states in the Middle East.²⁹⁴ Lenczowski has a negative stance towards the Baghdad Pact and there are many scholars who have written articles and books on Turkish foreign policy who negatively approach the Baghdad Pact and the Democrat Party government’s policy.

Robins states that the Democrat Party government did not calculate or understand the resentment and hostility in the Arab world against the West, especially against the United Kingdom. Specifically, the Democrat Party government did not understand the political blow in the Arab world. Therefore, after the Baghdad Pact was signed, it caused many problems and crises in the following period.²⁹⁵

In the same vein, according to Fırat and Kürkçüoğlu, the Baghdad Pact was a failure of the Democrat Party government. In the end, Turkey was unable to provide the development of the relations between the Middle East states and the West. Moreover, Turkey was unable to play the leadership role in the region. On the contrary, Turkey caused the revival of the image of the imperial Ottoman past in the eyes of the Arab states. Furthermore, the Baghdad Pact resulted in the deterioration of Turkey’s relations with Israel, which perceived the Pact as a threat to its survival. Lastly, Turkey failed to acquire the needed support from the West.²⁹⁶

Karpat’s approach to the Pact is much more critical. Karpat argues that the Baghdad Pact was “unnecessary, ineffective and harmful to the interests of the members.” He argues that the Pact negatively influenced the Western interests in the region, accelerated the development of relations between the Arab states and the

²⁹⁴ Lenczowski, p.145, 780-781. See also Fırat and Kürkçüoğlu, p.626; Sander, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri 1947-1964*, p.132.

²⁹⁵ Robins, pp.25-26.

²⁹⁶ Fırat and Kürkçüoğlu, p.626. See also Ülman and Gönübol, p.255, 269-271; Sander, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri 1947-1964*, pp.133-134.

Soviet Union, and destroyed the image of Turkey in the region. However, he emphasizes that all the Pact members had their interests to join the Pact.²⁹⁷

In the same vein, Sever emphasizes the impact of the national interests in the establishment of the Baghdad Pact. She argues that the major goal of the Democrat Party government was to expand the Baghdad Pact and include more regional states between 1954 and 1958. With the success of the Baghdad Pact project, Turkey would secure its southern border. More importantly, the Baghdad Pact would enable the Democrat Party government to prove its loyalty to the West which might have increased the amount of the economic and military aid.²⁹⁸ Sever points out the influence of Turkey's country specific dynamics on the establishment of the Baghdad Pact, such as the security, economic, and military aid from the West.

Yeşilbursa, in his comprehensive and analytical book on the Baghdad Pact, concludes that the pact established the nucleus of the regional defense. However, it is not clear that to what extent that the Pact would provide the collaboration of the other regional states or the satisfaction of the political and military aims of the Allies. Although it was assumed that the economic and military support would provide the cooperation of the Middle East states, this did not work. The opposition to the Pact erupted from different circles, but mainly the opposition was against the Western sentiments in the region, which were exploited for propaganda reasons. More importantly, the deviation of the national interests of all the Pact members caused the weakening of the Pact. All the Pact members, excluding the United Kingdom, were politically, economically, and militarily weak states and, thus, they sought to satisfy their national needs and interests: to provide their territorial integrity and economic and military support from the West. Therefore, rather than uniting the Middle East,

²⁹⁷ Karpat, *Türk Dış Politikası Tarihi*, pp.202-204.

²⁹⁸ Sever, *The Compliant Ally? Turkey and the West in the Middle East 1954-58*, p.75.

the Baghdad Pact failed and caused the instigation of the intra-Arab rivalry and anti-Western campaign which enabled the Soviet Union to penetrate the region.²⁹⁹

In the light of these different approaches in the literature, the Baghdad Pact will be discussed in detail. Therefore, the power relations and the interests of the great powers and the regional states, including Turkey, will be analyzed separately to provide more analytical results regarding the Baghdad Pact.

The Baghdad Pact was the last attempt in the 1950s to form an alliance among the Middle East states after the failure of the previous ones, i.e. the Middle East Command, the Middle East Defense Organization and, to some extent, the Turkish-Pakistani Pact. The last arrangement was different from the earlier efforts in nature, as mentioned before, but paved the way for the signing of the Baghdad Pact by bringing Turkey, Pakistan, and Iraq together. The Baghdad Pact included the United Kingdom and Iran in addition to the aforementioned states. Nevertheless, as happened before, the processes of the negotiation, signature and the extension of the Baghdad Pact witnessed conflicts and struggles not only among the pact members, but also among the pact members and the other states in the region. Before getting into the details of the Baghdad Pact, the developments happened between the Turkish-Pakistani Pact and the Baghdad Pact should be analyzed in order to understand the meaning and the success or the failure of the pact for the Middle East.

The Background of the Pact: The Developments after the Turkish-Pakistani Pact

After the signing of the agreement between Turkey and Pakistan, the time came to press or tempt the other Middle East states to adhere to the arrangement. Not surprisingly, the main target was Iraq because of its relatively positive stance towards

²⁹⁹ Yeşilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, pp.216-222.

the Turkish-Pakistani Pact and its strategic importance in the eyes of the Allies for the defense of the Middle East. However, the policy of Iraq and its relations with Egypt were criticized by the pact members especially by Turkey in the very beginning.

In a meeting between the prime ministers of Turkey and Pakistan, they agreed upon the tactics to press or tempt the Middle East states to participate in the agreement between the two states. The prime ministers, as Menderes shared with the US ambassador Warren, were critical of the “Iraqi policy which was “ambiguous, uncertain and irresponsible. The Iraqis were talking to Americans, Pakistanis, Turks and the Arab League differently. This caused resentment in the Pact members.” Regarding Iran, the parties agreed on setting up a common front and encouraging the attitudes in Iran to participate in the pact.³⁰⁰

In the same meeting, the attitudes of Israel and Egypt, which were “unfavorable and neutral,” respectively to the pact, were also discussed. Menderes stated that, “Turkey is discouraging Israel from joining the pact should be considered as positive action by all of Arab states. At the same time, Turkey is not disposed to take any anti-Israel action.”^{301,302}

The position of Egypt and the Egyptian attitude towards Turkey and Pakistan were also matters of conversation. Turkish Prime Minister Menderes stated that, “Egyptians feel themselves challenged as leaders of Arab League and their attitude towards the Paks is almost as critical as it is towards Turks.” This statement stemmed from the Egyptian press criticisms, which were supposed to be linked to the Egyptian

³⁰⁰ Telegram from the Ambassador in Turkey (Warren) to the Department of State. June 15, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8, pp.513-516.

³⁰¹ *ibid.*

³⁰² Turkey’s relations with Israel were based on economic and military cooperation in the 1950s although these relations were to be kept secret not to cause any Arab reaction in the Middle East.

government, against the Prime Minister Menderes and the denunciation of Turkish-Pakistani agreement as an instrument to destroy the Arab League.^{303,304}

The vital goal of the pact members and the United States was to tempt Iraq and, possibly, Iran to the Turkish-Pakistani Pact and both parties endeavored to reach this aim in the following period.

The conversation between the US secretary of state, and the Turkish prime minister shed light on the strategy and the priority of the two parties to include Iraq and Iran in the alliance. They agreed on the fact that the participation of the two countries to the Pact should come true “as quickly as possible” because this was “politically feasible.” In addition to the military goals, the alienation of Iraq from the Arab League was strategically important. On the other hand, Iran needed to be approached and persuaded to be a part of the alliance in order to secure the oil settlement in the region. Dulles and Menderes discussed the need to put pressure on these two countries. The former stated that the United States would not hesitate to push the two countries to participate as long as it could be fruitful.³⁰⁵

Another topic in the discussion was to mediate between Afghanistan and Pakistan to bring these two countries into an alliance. The two parties agreed that in order to ameliorate the dispute between the two states, the Pushtoonistan dispute, they should work “individually and confidentially” with the countries.³⁰⁶ It can be

³⁰³ Telegram from the Ambassador in Turkey (Warren) to the Department of State. June 15, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8, pp.513-516.

³⁰⁴ Despite the modest attitude of Egypt to the Turkish-Pakistani Pact at the very beginning, the second half of the 1954 and of the decade witnessed the rise of the aggressive stance and propaganda of the Egyptian government and the press. This can be explained by the deterioration of the Anglo-Egyptian dispute on the Suez Base. The linkage between the attitude of Egypt towards the Turkish-Pakistani Pact and the Anglo-Egyptian Dispute should be reminded, which was mentioned in the “Egypt and the Turkish-Pakistani Pact” part of the Turkish-Pakistani Pact discussion.

³⁰⁵ Memorandum of Conversation by the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs (Byroade). June 4, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.8.i.14, pp.946-949.

³⁰⁶ *ibid.*

argued that in mid-1954, the United States and Turkey determined to include Iraq and Iran, not primarily Afghanistan, in the alliance much more decisively than before.

The fundamental concern of Iraq was the position of Israel in a possible alliance as mentioned before. The minister of foreign affairs of the Nuri Said government, Jamali, argued that Iraq was the long-standing leader of the Middle East defense against communism and he assured that Iraq would not attack Israel unless it was attacked by the latter. Nevertheless, Iraq wanted the guarantee of the United States not to allow the Israeli attack and to punish it in case of possible aggression. Moreover, he stated that the Iraqis could associate with Turkey, Pakistan and Iran; but, in return they demanded a change in Turkey's attitude towards Israel." Clearly, they demanded Turkey's revision of its closer relations with Israel. Lastly and more importantly, the Iraqi government sought to provide the United States' economic and military aid to persuade to carry the Iraqi people in "pro-Western moves."³⁰⁷

Again, Iraq demanded the US aid as leverage to satisfy its needs to carry out the alliance project. The Iraqi government was to continue its demands for economic and military aid and a guarantee against Israeli aggression until the signing of the Baghdad Pact. The Iraqi government continued negotiations with Turkey and the United States. At the same time, Egypt was the other party of the Iraqi negotiations. Until the Baghdad Pact negotiations accelerated, Iraq tried to keep its relations with Egypt closer. In the meantime, Iraq proceeded with negotiations with Egypt to modify the Arab League Collective Pact to include non-Arab states such as the United Kingdom, Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan. Although Egypt was opposed to Pakistan and the multilateral agreements with Pakistan, because Pakistan was neither

³⁰⁷ Memorandum of Conversation by the Deputy Director of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs (Dorsey). July 12, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., p.523.

geographically nor militarily an Arab state, the Egyptian side welcomed the Iraqi offer, which also surprised the Nuri Said government.³⁰⁸ This can be regarded as an Egyptian move not to allow the Iraqi alignment with the West, which could also jeopardize the Arab League.

Iraqi-Egyptian Negotiations

Before aligning itself with Turkey and the Allies, Iraq under the Nuri Said government conducted negotiations with Egypt to modify the Arab League Collective Security Pact, which was planned to be open to the membership of non-Arab states, and to establish a new defense structure in the Middle East. However, these efforts were evaluated by the US ambassador in Iraq as “ambiguous and impractical.” The ambassador stated that:

Embassy aware that Iraqi-Egyptian proposals regional defense scheme lack essential details, propose undertakings without indicating how they may be implemented and give no indication exact degree of agreement between Iraq and Egypt re their firm intentions.³⁰⁹

Moreover, these proposals were specified as disappointing as the Iraqi prime minister’s previous support for the Turkish-Pakistani Pact was taken into consideration, whereas they were useful for convincing Egypt to collaborate with the West in the indigenous regional plans to set up a defense structure to accomplish the policy objectives of the US in the area.

The priority of the United States in the area was to bring Turkey and Iraq together with the later participation of the Middle East states. The Iraqi-Egyptian negotiations disturbed the United States in the sense that Iraq was perceived to move away from the policy of adherence to the Turkish-Pakistani Pact. The United States

³⁰⁸ Telegram from the Chargé in Iraq (Ireland) to the Department of State. August 22, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.541-543.

³⁰⁹ Telegram from the Chargé in Iraq (Ireland) to the Department of State. August 23, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., p.544.

had promised Iraq that it would give military support. However, the oscillation in Iraqi policy forced it to reconsider this support because the United States did not want to allow a common front against Israel under the umbrella of the Arab League. Therefore, the negotiations between Iraq and Egypt conflicted with the policy and strategy of the United States in the region and this resulted in the use of military aid to Iraq as leverage to put pressure on it to move toward alignment with Turkey and Pakistan.³¹⁰

Despite the negative stance and pressure of the United States, Iraq and Egypt continued negotiations. In September 1954, the Iraqi ambassador in Cairo met Egyptian prime minister Gamal Abdel-Nasser, the Egyptian deputy prime minister Gamal Salem, and the Egyptian minister of national guidance, Salah Salem. In this conversation, Nasser stated that “it was premature to approach US and UK before Egypt and Iraq had reached full agreement between themselves and had consulted other Arab states on plans for revision ALCSP.”³¹¹

It can be argued that Nasser wanted to bolster the rivalry between Iraq and Egypt and force Iraq to be solely involved in this process with Egypt to maximize Egyptian interests and emphasize its leadership in the Arab world. However, this strategy caused resentment on the Iraqi side and the prime minister Nuri Said stated that Egypt wanted to divert Iraq in order to alienate Iraq from the West. His disappointment can be understood from the following statements:

Nuri’s reply was... “I cannot wait. Iraq is in an exposed position. I must do something. But whenever I do something I shall have in mind that eventually Egyptians might participate in it”...I said “what had you in mind?” He said “nothing very definite”... Obviously this is all something less than concrete and direct, but patently his thoughts are not as yet

³¹⁰ Memorandum by the Secretary of State to the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs (Byroade). August 23, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., p.545.

³¹¹ Telegram from the Ambassador in Egypt (Caffery) to the Department of State. September 8, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.547-548.

well defined. Obviously, too, he was disappointed with the Egyptians.³¹²

After the collapse of the negotiations with Egypt, although the impact of the position and the pressure of the United States could not be clearly known, the Iraqi prime minister changed his policy and the alignment with Turkey and the West accelerated in late-1954. The prime minister's course of action is implied in his following statements:

I shall talk a bit with Pakistan and Iran; eventually Turkey and afterwards possibly Lebanon and Syria. Jordan has an agreement with British. Had word last week from the Shah of Iran that he would like to take part in a regional pact. Perhaps I shall suggest a pact with Iraq and Pakistan, and then little later Turkey, or perhaps a pact with Pakistan and Iran and Turkey, and eventually Syria and Lebanon.³¹³

The disagreement between Iraq and Egypt fully paved the way to Turkish-Iraqi cooperation. However, as had happened in all the previous efforts, the Turkish-Iraqi negotiations and alignment involved conflicts, suspicion, and the clash of interests.

Turkish-Iraqi Negotiations

In October 1954, Iraqi prime minister Nuri Said visited Turkey. Before his visit, the ambassador of the United Kingdom in Ankara had met with Turkish deputy prime minister and the acting minister of foreign Affairs Fatin Rüştü Zorlu and made an evaluation of Iraqi policy. Neither of them had anticipated the ideas of Nuri Said about the Middle East defense grouping because of the developments mentioned before. However, Zorlu put emphasis on Turkey's policy and strategy regarding Iraq, "the defense of the Iraqi frontier in the event of a war." Moreover, he had underlined Turkey's principle regarding the United Kingdom: "to proceed at every step in

³¹² Telegram from the Ambassador in Egypt (Caffery) to the Department of State. September 16, 1954. FRUS 1952-54.v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.548-549.

³¹³ *ibid.*

complete accord with the United Kingdom.” Zorlu had continued that during the talks in London in 1952, it had been agreed that Turkey and the United Kingdom would cooperate in working with the individual Arab states with the aim to persuade them to participate into the Middle East defense structure.³¹⁴

A telegram circulated in the Foreign Office of the United Kingdom is important to mention here to understand the Nuri Said’s policy regarding the alliance. The United Kingdom Foreign office considered that Nuri Said’s proposals could not be described as an attempt to revive the Middle East Defense Organization project because Nuri Said stated that an indigenous initiative was a necessary feature of a cooperative defense structure. On the other hand, he told the United Kingdom that his plan was to approach Turkey, Pakistan and Syria firstly rather than Turkey, Pakistan and Iran.³¹⁵ In the light of these developments, it can be argued that the crux of the Baghdad Pact began to be materialized in late 1954. Iraq and Turkey began to get closer to each other as the nucleus of this project.

In the meeting of the Prime Ministers of Turkey and Iraq, Nuri Said asked Menderes for his ideas about the Turkish-Iraqi cooperation. In return, Menderes inquired of Nuri “how his government faced political, economic and social problems of the area as applied to Iraq and what was his solution?” Nuri Said clearly said that “Iraqis feared Russians less and they hated Israelis more. Their primary preoccupation was to find friends who would help them to meet threat of Jewish expansion.” Interestingly, Nuri Said offered to negotiate an agreement with Pakistan and Syria rather than Turkey. The main reason of such a policy was Turkey’s ignorance of the Israeli threat because of the lack of territories “contiguous” to Israel.

³¹⁴ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to the Foreign Office. October 6, 1954. FO 371.110788.V1073-54.

³¹⁵ Telegram from the Chargé in the United Kingdom (Butterworth) to the Department of State. October 12, 1954. FRUS 1952-54. v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.553-554.

On the other hand, in his opinion Pakistan would be more willing to identify itself with the Arabs in the containment of Israel. Despite the policy differences, Nuri Said and Menderes agreed on beginning the negotiations and Iraq took the responsibility of approaching Pakistan, and Turkey did the same for Syria. By the same token, Menderes stated that he would attempt to provide the support of Egypt during the visits between Turkish and Egyptian prime ministers. Moreover, he stated that this course of action would bear fruits in the Middle East defense in a manner satisfactory to the United States and the United Kingdom and also would ameliorate the Arab-Israeli dispute. With the appeasement of the dispute, the Arab states might participate in the Middle East defense.³¹⁶

After his visit to Turkey, Iraqi prime minister Nuri Said shared with the ambassador of the United Kingdom in Baghdad some details of his conversation with the Turkish prime minister. He argued that:

The Turks had suggested to him that Turkey and Iraq should sign a pact engaging each country to come to the assistance of the other in the event of its being attacked. He had objected that such an agreement would be meaningless as the Iraqis had no troops to send into Turkey and the Turks had no troops to send into Iraq.³¹⁷

On the contrary, he suggested that:

There were three ways through which Turkey and Iraq could help each other in matters of defense. The first was by their each defending their own frontiers; the second was by cooperation in air defense; the third was by Turkey giving facilities for communication between Iraq and the Mediterranean. could defend their own frontiers. Secondly, they could cooperate in air defence.³¹⁸

³¹⁶ Telegram from the Ambassador in Turkey (Warren) to the Department of State. October 23, 1954. FRUS 1952-54. v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.554-555.

³¹⁷ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to the Foreign Office. October 27, 1954. FO 371. 110788. V1073-69. This statement seems vague. However, Nuri Said might have mentioned about the impossibility of such an action because of the military weakness of Iraq and Turkey's allocation of its troops to the NATO.

³¹⁸ *ibid.*

After the discussion of these bilateral offers, the parties concluded that Turkey would approach Egypt in order to understand the possibility of bringing all the Arab states defense organization. If this approach had failed, there would have been an effort to establish a defense structure between Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria. Unless the second attempt had worked, the two parties would have come up with another solution.³¹⁹

As the developments in the following period showed, the attempt to consult Egypt to bring all the Arab states under the umbrella of the defense arrangement failed. Then, the parties implemented their second option: the defense structure between Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Pakistan rather than Egypt.

In the meantime, apart from Turkey and Iraq, the Iranian attitude towards participation in the security pact improved and the Iranian government began to prepare the public for moves to participate in a regional security arrangement. The change of Iranian policy most probably stemmed from the US military aid to strengthen the Iranian forces.³²⁰

Regarding the Egyptian position it was the fact that the Egyptians declared Nuri Said that Egypt would stay out of any defense arrangements involving the Allies for internal reasons.³²¹ Moreover, the intended visit of Menderes to Egypt at the end of December 1954 was cancelled by Nasser, who said that he needed to prepare the ground for such a visit and to calm down the internal reaction. The negative stance of Egypt to approach Turkey strained the relations between the two

³¹⁹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to the Foreign Office. October 27, 1954. FO 371. 110788. V1073-69.

³²⁰ Telegram from the Chargé in Iran (Rountree) to the Department of State. November 3, 1954. FRUS 1952-54. v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.556-557.

³²¹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to the Foreign Office. October 30, 1954. FO 371.110788.V1073-59.

states.³²² Egypt continued to stay out of the regional arrangements and, as time passed, it increased the tone of its opposition and propaganda against the arrangement. More importantly, the second half of the 1950s witnessed a change of balance in the Egyptian foreign policy to the advantage of the Soviet Union as will be discussed below.

Upon the failure of the efforts to approach Egypt, Menderes focused on the development of bilateral relations with Iraq in order to negotiate and sign the agreement, which had been agreed by him and Nuri Said during latter's visit to Turkey, as soon as possible. Therefore, Menderes decided to visit Baghdad at the end of 1954, which could provide the opportunity to discuss the principles of the bilateral agreement with the Iraqis in line with the Turkish-Pakistani Pact.³²³

The approach of the Turkish prime minister was coherent to the United Kingdom's policy, which stated that the arrangement involving Turkey and all the Middle Eastern states with the adherence of the United Kingdom and the United States needed to be implemented step-by-step. The first stage was to be an agreement between Turkey and Iraq. Regarding Egypt, the cardinal principle was the development of relations and confidence. Iran should not be put pressure to participate at the very beginning due to their geographical and traditional policies. The Indian reaction needed to be observed for the participation of Pakistan.³²⁴

As Turkey was trying to harmonize its policy regarding the Middle East defense, Iraq was trying to calm down the reaction of Egypt through contacts with Egyptian officials. The Egyptian stance towards the Middle East defense was somewhat conflictual. On the one hand, as Nasser told Nuri Said that Egypt was on

³²² Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to the Foreign Office. November 27, 1954. FO 371.110788.V1073-80.

³²³ *ibid.*

³²⁴ Telegram from the Foreign Office to the British Embassy in Ankara. December 8, 1954. FO 371. 110788. V1073-86.

the side of the West because there was no alternative for Egypt. However, Egypt was opposed to the participation of Iraq to the Turkish-Pakistani Pact. Egypt would not object to Iraq if Iraq went ahead. Moreover, there would be no attack on Iraq in the press in Egypt, but Egypt would not support Iraq in the Arab League.³²⁵ The period before the Menderes' visit in the early 1955 witnessed the efforts of both sides to prepare the ground for bilateral negotiations through diplomatic contacts.

The Turkish Prime Minister's Baghdad Visit

The Turkish Prime Minister's visit to Baghdad was scheduled for 6 January 1955. Remembering that Menderes decided to visit Iraq after his request for a visit to Cairo was rejected by Nasser. Before Menderes' visit, Nuri Said seemed to be suspicious and uneasy of a possible treaty between Turkey and Iraq. He stated that during this visit, there would be no agreement. There should be some clarification about the content and the principles of a pact between the two states. Nuri Said was in favor of a pact based on the Articles 51 and 52 of the United Nations' Charter.³²⁶

³²⁵ Telegram from the British Embassy in Cairo to the Foreign Office. December 17, 1954. FO 371. 110788. V1073-88.

³²⁶ The Article 51 of the UN Charter states that "nothing in the present charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a member of the UN, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by members in the exercise of this right of self-defense shall be immediately reported to Security Council and shall not in any way affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council under the present Charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security." The Article 52 of the UN Charter states that "nothing in the present Charter the existence of regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security as are appropriate for regional action, provided that such arrangements or agencies and their activities are consistent with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations. The Security Council shall encourage the development of pacific settlement of local disputes through such regional arrangements or by such regional agencies either on the initiative of the states concerned or by reference from the Security Council. The Members of the United Nations entering into such arrangements or constituting such agencies shall make every effort to achieve pacific settlement of local disputes through such regional arrangements or by such regional agencies before referring them to the Security Council."

The insistence of Nuri Said on contextualizing a pact with the United Nations Charter can be explained by his suspicion of Turkey, which will be discussed in detail below. His basic concern was to guarantee the support of the Allies and the control of the United Nations before signing a pact with Turkey. Moreover, Nuri Said was in favor of the participation of the United States and the United Kingdom to the pact both to provide the necessary military and economic support and to stand against the opposition, especially Egypt, through signing an agreement with the support of the Allies. Otherwise, Nuri Said stated that it would be very hard for him to be involved in such commitments.³²⁷

Before the Baghdad visit, the Turkish officials contacted to the United Kingdom and the United States. The secretary general of the Turkish ministry of foreign affairs met with the officials of the United Kingdom and in this conversation both sides declared their requests to each other. The United Kingdom suggested that the Turkish prime minister should have kept in mind the importance of the continuation of the United Kingdom's defense facilities in Iraq, specifically the units of the Royal Air Force. In return, Turkey suggested that the United Kingdom should persuade the Iraqi government to participate in a defense group with Turkey. However, the United Kingdom was reserved in the fact to encourage Iraq because of the position of Egypt. The negative position of Egypt in the last Arab League meeting against the Iraqi defense arrangement with Turkey or any non-Arab state deterred the United Kingdom and she decided "not to force the pace." The ultimate

³²⁷ Telegram from the Ambassador in Iraq (Gallman) to the Department of State. December 21, 1954. FRUS 1952-54. v.9.p.1.i.8., pp.562-563. See also Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to the Foreign Office. January 5, 1955. FO 371.115484.V1073-4.

United Kingdom policy was to provide an eventual defense agreement to sustain the security of the region.³²⁸

The bilateral demands were approved by the two sides. The Turkish prime minister would take the stationing of the Royal Air Force in Iraq into consideration during the talks with Nuri Said and the United Kingdom would encourage the Iraqi government to be firm with the Egyptians and to be involved in a defense grouping in the region with Turkey.

The reason that Turkey was pressing Iraq to sign an agreement as soon as possible was the “geographical position as the most important element in the Arab States from the point of view of regional defense” as Zorlu said. Egypt was also a decisive factor in the Arab League and it was vital to persuade Egypt that any defense arrangement with Iraq would not influence its position as the “leader of the Arab world.”³²⁹ Moreover, another reason why Turkey accelerated its efforts to make some progress and sign an agreement with Iraq was that the Israelis were trying to undermine Turkey’s attempts to establish closer relations with the Arab states.” The Turkish government feared that” unless some definite progress could be made, soon the effects of these Israeli efforts at obstruction might become more serious.”³³⁰ Under these circumstances, the Prime Ministers of Turkey and Iraq met at Baghdad on January 6, 1955.

The Baghdad meeting of the Turkish and Iraqi prime ministers lasted between 6-14 January 1955. Before the formal discussions began, the internal elements in Iraq were observed by Menderes. He stated that the negative public elements, especially

³²⁸ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to the Foreign Office. January 3, 1955. FO 371.115484.V1073-2.

³²⁹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to the Foreign Office. January 7, 1955. FO 371.115484.V1073-5.

³³⁰ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to the Foreign Office. January 7, 1955. FO 371.115484.V1073-5A.

the neutralists, which Nuri Said had to face, were preoccupied with Israel beyond every other problem. Iraq had suspended its relations with the Soviet Union and Menderes thought that this was a suitable proof for the Iraqi government to move ahead into the Western camp. Although Menderes had not sought to “force the pace”, the dynamics in Iraq assured him to press the Iraqis. If the signing of the pact were delayed, these neutralist forces might act against the pact.³³¹

In other words, Menderes aimed to benefit from the preoccupation of the internal factors with Israel to conclude the treaty with Iraq. In return, the United Kingdom was to help to assure Nuri Said to sign the treaty. He was afraid of becoming isolated not only in the Arab League, but also internally.³³²

Despite the aim to form the alliance between Iraq and Turkey as quickly as possible, the Secretary General of the Turkish ministry of foreign affairs, Birgi, stated that “spectacular results” should not be expected during the Baghdad meeting. There might be a “substantial progress” and an eventual agreement between Iraq, Turkey and Pakistan. On the other hand, the process of the agreement should not be delayed. Therefore, unless a definite stage had been followed up, the project might be “rotten” and become like another projects of the Middle East defense³³³

Before the beginning of the negotiations, the Iraqi Prime Minister prepared a course of action to propose to the Turkish side. According to him, the agreement needed to cover the following points:

- (i) Staff conversations in which the two powers would exchange information about progress of their respective defense arrangements, (ii) free transit through ports and over transport system of each country of defence material destined for the other, extension of (ii) and possibly (i) to other friendly powers i.e. the United Kingdom and the United States, the agreement

³³¹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to the Foreign Office. January 10, 1955. FO 371.115484. V1073-6.

³³² *ibid.*

³³³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to the Foreign Office. January 3, 1955. FO 371. 115484. V1073-8.

when signed would be for 5 years.³³⁴

However, the Nuri Said government was not ready to sign an agreement before February or March 1955, before these principles were systematically discussed between Turkey and Iraq as well as with the United States and the United Kingdom. This draft plan was regarded by the United Kingdom as a “slow pace” and they feared this would disappoint the Turkish side, which was in a hurry to sign an agreement with Iraq. However, Nuri Said repeated that the negotiations should be slow and systematic and not force Iraq to commit itself outside its frontier. Therefore, the entrance of troops into each other’s territory in time of an emergency was the basic drawback for the Iraqi prime minister. The United Kingdom’s ambassador commented that:

It was also clear that he still has the deepest suspicion of Turkish irredentism and would strongly oppose any arrangement involving Turkish troops entering Northern Iraq.³³⁵

This statement reflects the suspicion between the states even cooperating in the region and this affected the process of negotiations later on.

After the discussions had lasted for a week, no final treaty had been prepared, although these discussions had paved the way for negotiations for an agreement of cooperation with the principles declared in a joint communiqué. With this declaration, Turkey and Iraq stated that

Iraq and Turkey have decided to conclude a treaty under which both parties will undertake to cooperate, in conformity with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, against any aggression against them from any quarter, whether it comes from within the Middle Eastern region or from outside. The treaty will be drawn up and signed in the very near future. The two powers consider it useful and necessary that those states should participate in the treaty which have given proof of their determination to resist aggression and cooperate in ensuring the stability of the Middle East, and are able to further these aims in virtue of their geographical position or

³³⁴ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to the Foreign Office. January 12, 1955. FO 371. 115484. V1073-11.

³³⁵ *ibid.*

the forces at their disposal. During the short period preceding the final drafting and signature of the treaty, Iraq and Turkey will maintain close contact with such states as are desirous of acting with them. They will, if possible, arrange for these States to sign the treaty at the same time as themselves, but will in any event continue their efforts after the signature of the treaty.³³⁶

The communiqué reflects the principles of the Nuri Said government in terms of the slow pace of developments and the inclusion of the principles of the United Nations Charter. Regarding the Turkish side, the communiqué reflects the willingness of the Iraqi government to sign a treaty with Turkey in line with the latter's intention from the very beginning. After Menderes' Baghdad visit, the negotiations for the Baghdad Pact began and this process witnessed conflicts, reactions and diplomatic maneuvers, as had happened in the other developments of the Middle East in the 1950s.

The Reactions to the Proposed Pact and the Meeting of the Arab Prime Ministers

After the agreement on the principles of the negotiations and the declaration of the joint communiqué, Turkish and Iraqi officials began to approach the states in the region to provide their support or at least to appease possible reactions to the pact.

Lebanon was one of the targeted countries to be persuaded to support the agreement between Turkey and Iraq. The Turkish prime minister and the minister of foreign affairs met with the officials of the Lebanese government on 15 January 1955. In the conversation between the ambassadors of the United Kingdom and

³³⁶ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. January 13, 1955. FO 371.115484. V.1073-12.

Turkey, the latter stated that the discussions with the Lebanese government did not go too badly although they did not occur too well, either.³³⁷

The Lebanese Prime Minister stated that “during Menderes’ visit to Lebanon, Turkey did not propose a bilateral defense agreement with Lebanon. The only aim of the visit was to explain the nature and principles of the Pact and to provide the support of the Lebanese government. The Lebanese policy would be to consult the other Arab governments and “to keep in line” with the majority of the Arab League.”³³⁸ The Lebanese Prime Minister declared a statement right after the joint communiqué of Turkey and Iraq in order to “enlighten the public opinion” and to declare the position of the Lebanese government towards the Pact.³³⁹

To remember Lebanon, like Jordan, did not want to be a part of the split between Egypt and Iraq in the Middle East. Therefore, the Lebanese stance towards the Baghdad Pact was moderate because of the possible Egyptian reaction and negative propaganda, which might have occurred later. On the other hand, the reaction of the Lebanese press is important to note here. Generally, the Lebanese press encouraged the Menderes’ visit to this country right after his visit to Baghdad and the outcome of his talks. Only the Leftists, who were supposed to be under Egyptian influence, were critical of the Menderes’ visit and the developments regarding the Pact. Most commentators were encouraging the recent developments although they had some reservations about the nature of the pact and the position of the pact members, especially Turkey, towards Israel. Iraq’s unilateral action and cooperation with Turkey was supposed to split the Arab League, as it would do, and

³³⁷ Telegram from the British Embassy in Beirut to Foreign Office. January 15, 1955. FO 371. 115484. V1073-21.

³³⁸ Telegram from the British Embassy in Beirut to Foreign Office. January 17, 1955. FO 371. 115484. V1073-29.

³³⁹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Beirut to Foreign Office. January 18, 1955. FO 371.115485.V1073-39.

Turkey's attitude to Israel was regarded as an impediment in the way of the development of Turkish-Arab relations.³⁴⁰

Efforts were made to overcome Lebanese sensitivity about the possible impacts of the Pact on the Arab League during a meeting of the Arab League prime ministers. At a press conference on 16 January 1955, the Egyptian minister of national guidance Salah Salem, declared that Egypt had called a meeting of Arab prime ministers, including Iraq, "to discuss the Arab policy regarding the Turkish-Iraqi agreement", which was planned to be held in Cairo on January 22. In the same declaration, Salem was critical of the Iraqi policy towards the cooperation with Turkey and stated that:

Iraq had decided to conclude the Agreement without consulting any Arab government, and before the Collective Security Pact had been made effective. This action might threaten the very existence of the Arab League. Egypt, which had always maintained the principle of unified Arab policy, hoped that the Prime Minister's meeting would avoid a serious crisis. Egypt would not withdraw from the Arab League if Iraq persisted in its present policy. The question whether would be expelled from the League or not was a matter for the League to decide. He also said that Agreement had been a complete surprise to Egypt, and that it was contrary to the spirit of his talks with Iraqi authorities at Sarsank.^{341,342}

The Egyptian minister of foreign affairs explained the logic of the meeting of the prime ministers of the Arab League to the ambassador of the United Kingdom. The minister stated that Egypt wanted to give the opportunity to the Arab Prime Ministers to declare their views on the proposed Turkish-Iraqi Pact. Egypt had a

³⁴⁰ Telegram from the British Embassy in Beirut to Foreign Office. January 15, 1955. FO 371. 115484. V1073-22.

³⁴¹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Cairo to Foreign Office. January 17, 1955. FO 371.115484.V1073-25.

³⁴² In mid-August 1954, Iraqi prime minister Nuri Said and the Egyptian minister of national defense Salah Salem met at Sarsank. They discussed several problems including the Middle East defense. During the meeting Salah Salem opposed the Turkish-Pakistani Pact and a possible agreement between Pakistan and Iraq because he argued that Pakistan was not an Arab state. At the end of the discussions, Salem and Said agreed on the fact that a regional defense system should have been based on the Arab League Collective Security Pact and the Article 51 of United Nations Charter. Yeşilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, pp.55-56.

constructive position in the sense that the Egyptian government sought to understand that there would be public support among Arab peoples for such an initiative and to be sure that such an initiative would develop the efforts of cooperation with the West. Moreover, the Egyptian government sought to make it clear that they were in favor of strengthening the region against aggression. More importantly, he said, Egypt was not unfriendly to the West. The major problem of the Iraqi initiative was the “timing.” Egypt preferred the strengthening of the individual Arab states and then such kind of cooperation. Therefore, the Egyptian government thought that the public feeling in the Arab states was not ready for such an initiative.³⁴³

In contrast to the relatively moderate and constructive efforts of the Egyptian government, at least at the very beginning, the Egyptian press, which was linked to the government, condemned the decision of the Iraqi government that was regarded as a deviation of the policy which had been agreed upon at the last Arab League Council. At this meeting, the members of the League decided not to conclude agreements with the outside powers. Moreover, it was argued that the unilateral decision of the Iraqi government to negotiate a pact with Turkey, which was supported by the Allies, would put the Egyptian government in a difficult position. There were two policy alternatives for the Egyptian government: to denounce the Iraqi government which would reveal the split in the Arab League or to accept the situation which would undermine the Egyptian claim to be the leader of the League.³⁴⁴

In the following period, the Egyptian government chose the second option to press the Iraqi government through diplomatic moves and propaganda to strengthen its claims as being the leader of the Arab world. More importantly, this policy was

³⁴³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Cairo to Foreign Office. January 17, 1955. FO 371. 115484.V1073-27.

³⁴⁴ FO 371.115484.V1073-28.

conducted against Turkey, which had been assigned the role of leader of the Middle East by the Allies especially the United States.

In the meantime, upon the declarations of the Egyptian government, the United States' chargé d'affaires met with the Egyptian minister for foreign affairs to inform him about the idea of the United States which was as follows:

The proposed Turkish-Iraqi treaty may be a source of real strength in the Middle East as a whole and need not conflict with the role which might be played by the Arab League. Other states would make a contribution to objects of the proposed treaty. Egyptian hostility to the treaty would earn Egypt an unfavourable public reaction in the United States. It was to be hoped that the Egyptian government could restrict their official or semi-inspired comment to moderate terms and not take up a public position from which it might be difficult for them to withdraw.³⁴⁵

The United States sought to mediate the members of the pact and the other states, specifically Egypt, to strengthen the hand of the former during the pact negotiations.

The Egyptian reaction and the efforts to publicize the Turkish-Iraqi agreement caused the resentment of the Iraqi Prime Minister. Nuri Said stated that the Iraqi government was only responsible to Iraqi parliament. Moreover, Nuri Said underlined that Egypt had not consulted Iraq before signing the Anglo-Egyptian treaty, thus Iraq did not have to do so. In addition, Iraq would consult the Arab states before signing an agreement with Turkey. Iraq had had a "long and special relationship with Turkey" which the Egyptians did not understand. The initial reaction of him to the meeting of the Arab League Prime Ministers was not to attend, but he would decide after he consulted the cabinet, the Palace and elder Statesmen.³⁴⁶

Ultimately, Nuri Said informed the Egyptian government that he could not attend the proposed meeting as a result of his "health problems". Moreover, he

³⁴⁵ Telegram from the British Embassy in Cairo to Foreign Office. January 18, 1955. FO 371.115485.V1073-41.

³⁴⁶ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. January 18, 1955. FO 371.115485. V1073-38.

demanded other Arab governments not to attend the meeting because such a meeting would be meaningless in the absence of him. The ambassador of the United Kingdom in Baghdad argued that there was a possibility of the impact of Menderes in such a decision. In the meantime, the Turkish and Iraqi prime ministers proposed an alternative that Menderes would visit King Saud to provide his support to invite Egyptians to Saudi Arabia for talks.³⁴⁷

However, the Foreign Office of the United Kingdom evaluated the Turkish-Iraqi Plan to approach Saudi Arabia as a mediator and concluded that a possible visit by Menderes to Saudi Arabia would not work because Saudi Arabia was a member of the Arab League and was not willing for the formation of a Northern Tier defense grouping.³⁴⁸ The assessment of the United Kingdom was right. The Saudi crown prince denounced Iraq for having moved without consulting the Arab League. The basic concern of the Arab states was to form an alliance against common dangers that would be supported by the Allies. However, the unilateral Iraqi move was not consistent with this policy.³⁴⁹

Rather than Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Lebanon were ready to act as mediator between Turkey and Iraq, on the one hand, and Egypt, on the other. The Lebanese president, Chamoun, stated that he hoped that Nuri Said would go to Cairo for the Meeting of the Arab League Prime Ministers. If he had needed support, Jordanian and Lebanese Prime Ministers would have helped him. Moreover, the Lebanese President sent messages to King Saud and Prime Minister Nasser and stated that he was convinced that the Turkish proposals were the best for the interests not only of

³⁴⁷ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. January 19, 1955. FO 371. 115485. V1073-42.

³⁴⁸ Telegram from Foreign Office to the British Embassy in Baghdad. January 19, 1955. FO 371. 115486. V1073-65.

³⁴⁹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Jedda to Foreign Office. January 22, 1955. FO 371. 115486. V1073-80.

Iraq, but also of all the countries in the region. Therefore, the Arab states should support these proposals.³⁵⁰

The United Kingdom ambassador in Amman analyzed the Jordanian policy and stated that the alignment of Iraq with the West could weaken the bargaining power of the Arabs in their efforts to provide Western support especially against Israel. Therefore, the Egyptian reaction would find little support, except the Palestinian question, and the Arab states would be moderate towards the Turkish-Iraqi agreement as their attempts for mediation between Turkish-Iraqi alliance and Egypt indicated.³⁵¹ The efforts of Lebanon and Jordan did not work and Egypt pressed the Arab governments to take its side.

The attitude of Syria to the proposed Turkish-Iraqi pact was similar to those of Lebanon and Jordan before the meeting of Arab League Prime Ministers in Cairo. The Syrian minister of foreign affairs talked to the United Kingdom ambassador in Damascus and reiterated that the previous objections to the Turkish-Iraqi pact in Syria had been overcome and the Syrian stance would be favorable in the following meeting of the Arab League. The Syrian minister stated that they had repeated the same assurances to the Iraqi government when they telephoned their Syrian counterparts not to attend the meeting. The Syrian position was the fact that different threats stemmed from different sources towards the Arabs in varying degrees and all the states were responsible to take the necessary measures against these threats appropriately. However, these measures should not be conflictual to the interests of the Arab League. Therefore, in the Syrian point of view, the proposed Turkish-Iraqi treaty was not unfavorable to the Arab League although they prepared a treaty

³⁵⁰ Telegram from the British Embassy in Beirut to Foreign Office. January 19, 1955. FO 371. 115485. V1073-46.

³⁵¹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Amman to Foreign Office. January 19, 1955. FO 371. 115485. V1073-54A.

proposal between Syria and Turkey. Iraq was exposed to the threat of the Soviet Union, and, thus, the proposed treaty should not be objected.³⁵² Shortly, the Syrian stance toward the Turkish-Iraqi pact was moderate and favorable before the meeting of the Arab League Prime Ministers in Cairo.

Despite the positive attitude of the Arab states smaller than Egypt, the ambassador of the United Kingdom in Cairo expected that Egypt would try to control and influence the Arab League in the meeting against Iraq. Therefore, the possible Egyptian “ambitious” propaganda would result in the deterioration of the Iraqi and Turkish feelings.³⁵³ Under these circumstances, the meeting began on 22 January 1955.

The Iraqi prime minister Nuri Said did not attend the meeting, but sent a representative, Fadhel al-Jamali, his predecessor who was supposed, even by Nuri Said, to be unpopular with the Egyptians. Before, Nuri Said had sent a message to Nasser to send a cabinet minister to the meeting, but this message received no reply. As a result, Nuri Said decided to send Jamali to Cairo and his basic mission in Cairo was “to keep the Lebanese, Jordanians and Syrians up to the mark.” Rather than make contact with and explanations to the Egyptians, to provide support of aforementioned states was Nuri Said’s main objective. The Egyptians had rejected the proposals of the Iraqi ambassador in Cairo who represented the Iraqi government in the meeting.³⁵⁴

Although the impact of Jamali cannot be known, the Lebanese, Jordanian and Syrian Prime Ministers pressed Salem, the Egyptian minister of national guidance, to

³⁵² Telegram from the British Embassy in Damascus to Foreign Office. January 20, 1955. FO 371. 115486. V1073-60.

³⁵³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Cairo to Foreign Office. January 20, 1955. FO 371. 115485. V1073-57.

³⁵⁴ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. January 22, 1955. FO 371.115486. V1073-71.

improve the atmosphere through moderating the press, contacting with the Turkish officials, and sending suitable messages to the Iraqi prime minister, Nuri Said. Their efforts were successful to some extent. Nasser sent a polite telegram to Nuri Said to inquire about his health and to state the hope that he could attend the conference later on. The next day, another message was sent to Nuri Said by the Lebanese prime minister which said that without him the meeting could achieve little and they were prepared to wait for a few days. In these developments, the Egyptian prime minister cooperated with the other Arab Prime Ministers. The Lebanese chargé d'affaires in Cairo commented that the moderate Egyptian attitude in the meeting resulted from "the fear of isolation." If the other Arab states participated into the Turkish-Iraqi Pact, Egypt would be "relegated to the second tier" in any defense arrangement and it would lose its bargaining power.³⁵⁵

In the meeting, the Lebanese, Jordanian and Syrian Prime Ministers supported Iraq. The Saudi Prince Faisal acted with the Egyptians, however, and displayed a negative attitude towards the Turkish-Iraqi Pact. Egypt and Saudi Arabia insisted on the passing of a resolution both to condemn the Turkish-Iraqi Pact as contrary to the Arab League Collective Security Pact and to prevent all pacts with the States which were not party to the Arab League Collective Security Pact.³⁵⁶

According to the telegram that was sent from the embassy of the United Kingdom to Foreign Office, the passing of such a resolution was not accepted by the mediators of the meeting namely Syria, Lebanon and Jordan . He stated that he could not agree on the public denunciation of Iraq. The Arab Unity had to be protected. In order to strengthen the Arab League Collective Security Pact, its scope had to be

³⁵⁵ Telegram from the British Embassy in Cairo to Foreign Office. January 22, 1955. FO 371. 115486. V1073-75.

³⁵⁶ Telegram from the British Embassy in Cairo to Foreign Office. January 24, 1955. FO 371. 115486. V1073-86.

broadened to cover aggression not only from Israel, but also from all “quarters.” The Syrian Prime Minister also criticized the Lebanese and Jordanians because of their oscillation to please everybody.³⁵⁷ After the discussions to decide the course of action about the attitude towards Iraq and the proposed Turkish-Iraqi Pact, a committee was established to visit Iraq and to share the views of the Arab League prime ministers.

The Drafting Committee was composed of the Lebanese prime minister, Jordanian and Syrian ministers for foreign affairs and the Egyptian minister for national guidance. The main objective of the committee was to reach an agreement with the Iraqi government on “cooperation between all the Arab states and the West which would also consider the special needs of Iraq.”³⁵⁸ The committee was to leave Cairo to visit Baghdad as soon as possible. The Libyan prime minister said that the Egyptians stressed that if Iraq had kept up with the negotiations with Turkey, Egypt would have left the Arab League.³⁵⁹

On the Iraqi side, the conference was criticized. It was perceived that the goal of the Egyptian government was to convince the Arab states that Iraq had made a mistake by joining an alliance with Turkey. The Iraqi ambassador in Cairo told his United Kingdom counterpart that:

The other Arab governments were privately in favor of Iraq but they had been intimidated by Egypt’s attitude and, with the surprising exception of Syria, seemed to have toed the line publicly. The Egyptian Prime Minister had put the question to the other Arab Prime Ministers, whether they would join a Turco-Iraqi Pact. With the exception of the Syrian Prime Minister, they had all finally said they would not do so. The Egyptian Prime Minister had then announced that if Iraq persisted in her intention, they would withdraw from the Arab Collective Security Pact and would thereafter consider her position in the Arab League. This

³⁵⁷ Telegram from the British Embassy in Cairo to Foreign Office. January 27, 1955. FO 371. 115487. V1073-110.

³⁵⁸ Telegram from the British Embassy in Cairo to Foreign Office. January 30, 1955. FO 371. 115487. V1073-125.

³⁵⁹ *ibid.*

had had a profound effect on the other Arab Prime Ministers.³⁶⁰

The conversation between the ambassador of the United Kingdom in Lebanon and the permanent under secretary of the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs shows the Egyptian attitude in the conference as follows:

The Egyptian Prime Minister had stated categorically that if Iraq signed the pact Egypt would withdraw from the League. The Arab states would then be the losers, for the Egyptian army was now stronger at every point than the Israeli. Egypt would be satisfied with a future in Africa, but would nevertheless be prepared to take defensive pact against Israel with Saudi Arabia and Jordan. The Lebanon and Syria would have to look after themselves, and Gamal Abdul Nasser implied that they would inevitably become part of an internationalized Ottoman Empire.³⁶¹

The Egyptian propaganda against Turkey and Iraq and the threats to the Arab States intensified during the Cairo Meeting and the Drafting Committee visited Baghdad under these circumstances.

The Drafting Committee visited Baghdad on 1 February 1955 and met with the Iraqi government. The Nuri Said government assigned Saleh Jabr, the former Iraqi minister of interior, and Tawfiq Suwaidi, the former Iraqi prime minister, to convince the Drafting Committee that the Iraqi policy regarding the Turkish-Iraqi Pact was the policy of Nuri Said government, which had also provided the general support of the political circles in Iraq. In the meeting with the Committee, the Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Said showed determination to conduct his policy. During the negotiations, the Egyptians argued that the Turkish prime minister Menderes would visit Israel after his visit to Rome. The Iraqi crown prince stated that if this story were true, Nuri Said would have broken off the pact negotiations with Turkey. According to the Crown Prince, the argument needed to be validated from the

³⁶⁰ Telegram from the British Embassy in Cairo to Foreign Office. January 31, 1955. FO 371. 115487. V1073-134.

³⁶¹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Beirut to Foreign Office. February 1, 1955. FO 371. 115487. V1073-138.

Turkish government. Until then, the Iraqi government would assume that the story was not true.³⁶²

According to Jamali, the former Iraqi prime minister who informed the Oriental Counselor of the United Kingdom, on the second day of the negotiations between the Iraqi government and the Drafting Committee, the result was a “complete deadlock.” The stand of the Iraqi representative, Tawfiq Suwaidi weakened the Iraqi position and prime minister Nuri Said urged him to act “firmly.” Jamali also argued that the position of Nuri Said towards the pact changed and he decided to sign it as soon as possible as a *fait accompli* to the Arab League.³⁶³

At the end of the talks on 2 February 1955, the Iraqi government decided to continue the negotiations with Turkey. The suggestions of the Drafting Committee for postponement were rejected. Nuri Said told the Committee members that:

Iraq was taking this line not only in her own interest but that of the other Arab countries who ought to support and indeed join her. Iraq and her neighbors ought to act responsibly in the light of the world situation. If there were further assassinations in Persia, Iraq might find Communism on her doorstep. The situation in the Far East was tense. The Arab Governments owed it to their peoples to provide for their safety by linking hands with the West against Communism.³⁶⁴

The communist threat was again used as leverage in the interests of Iraq, although the main threat for the Arab states was Israel. It can be argued that Iraq and Turkey exploited the communist threat to maximize their interests and to have a say in the Middle East politics in the 1950s. The Baghdad Meeting of the Iraqi government and the Drafting Committee did not have an impact on the former and,

³⁶² Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. February 1, 1955. FO 371. 115487. V1073-139.

³⁶³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. February 2, 1955. FO 371. 115487. V1073-143.

³⁶⁴ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. February 3, 1955. FO 371. 115488. V1073-152.

in the following period, the negotiations between Turkey and Iraq continued and ended up with the signature of the Baghdad Pact.

After the Baghdad talks, the attitude of the Arab states, especially Jordan and Lebanon, remained unchanged because their basic sensitivity regarding the Middle East politics was not satisfied: the harmonized Arab policy against the enemy neighbor Israel and the protection of the Arab Unity. Therefore, as the Jordanian prime minister stated to the United Kingdom ambassador in Amman:

Jordan was herself committed to the West unconditionally and if general war broke out... Arab legion would fight with Iraq, but Jordan had no direct interest in the fate of Turco-Iraqi Pact and since the maintenance of Arab unity was the basis of Jordan policy and expressly reaffirmed in his government's programme, all his efforts had been directed to avoid a split in that unity.³⁶⁵

The officials of the United Kingdom commented on the Jordanian foreign policy saying that:

The Jordanian government more likely to be influenced than the other Arab governments by the popular Arab view that so long as the Palestine question remains unsettled, Arab states should not enter into agreements with the West. The Jordanian press have come out against the proposed Turco-Iraqi Pact on these grounds... While the Jordanian Government may well be aware that their own best interests would be served by joining the Pact, which would incidentally enable them to re-open the question of treaty revision, they probably do not feel able to take a course contrary to Jordanian public opinion now that the question is being linked with Palestine.³⁶⁶

Like the Jordanian government, the Lebanese government was uneasy about the developments regarding the Pact, especially the reaction of Egypt to it. The Lebanese president instructed his prime minister to propose that Nuri Said and Nasser meet in Beirut. The efforts to mediate between Iraq and Egypt did not bear fruit. Although Nuri Said accepted the proposal, Nasser rejected it forcing the

³⁶⁵ Telegram from the British Embassy in Amman to Foreign Office. February 2, 1955. FO 371. 115487. V1073-142.

³⁶⁶ FO 371.115488. V1073-146.

Lebanese president to give up his mediation efforts.³⁶⁷ More importantly, as the Baghdad Meeting between the Iraqi government and the Drafting Committee had failed, the result of the mediation efforts caused the acceleration of Turkish-Iraqi negotiations and the deepening of the split in the Arab world.

Like the attitudes and reactions of the Arab states, the position of Iran and Israel, as a key player in the region and the common enemy of the Arab world, respectively, towards the proposed Turkish-Iraqi Pact are also important to mention here. The Iranian minister of foreign affairs stated that:

The Persian government have received no invitation to participate in a defence agreement, have conducted no official talks on regional defence with other countries, and have no intention at present of adhering to the Turco-Pakistani pact or to any other Middle East defence agreement.³⁶⁸

The Iranian attitude was not unfavorable to the proposed pact despite the divergences of objectives and priorities of this country. As would be seen later on, Iran would join the Turkish-Iraqi alliance after the satisfaction of its needs through the Western aid to its economy and military.

By the same token, according to the ambassador of the United Kingdom in Israel, it was favorable to the Turkish-Iraqi Pact as a result of different motives and objectives in spite of some reservations. The ambassador argued that:

Israel sees a chance that the Pact will split the Arab League, drive Egypt and Iraq apart, and so diminish the combined political and military strength of Israel's enemies... On the debit side Israeli imaginations see a throng of spectres. Instead of Turkey influencing Iraq, Turkey may herself agree, as the price of Iraqi cooperation to abandon her sympathy for Israel... Some Israelis fear that even if the Arab League splits Israel will not benefit; they argue that Egypt will seek support in the Arab states by stepping up her hostility towards Israel, and that Iraq will be obliged to cooperate... Another nightmare is that Iraq, strengthened by her pact with Turkey, will proceed to realize her dream of a Greater Syria.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁷ Telegram from the British Embassy in Beirut to Foreign Office. February 3, 1955. FO 371. 115488. V1073-149.

³⁶⁸ Telegram from the British Embassy in Tehran to Foreign Office. January 25, 1955. FO 371. 115487. V1073-114.

³⁶⁹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Telaviv to Foreign Office. February 1, 1955. FO 371. 115488. V1073-156.

In light of these arguments, the Israeli attitude towards the Turkish-Iraqi Pact was shaped with the calculations and fears of possible outcomes. Turkey, however, was not ready to abandon its smooth relations with Israel, and the Menderes government guaranteed the Israelis side that there would be no changes in Turkey's Israeli policy even if the proposed pact were signed. In a conversation Menderes and an Israeli minister, the former told the latter that "Baghdad Agreement entailed no change whatever Turkey's policy towards Israel that he had expressed satisfaction at the sensible attitude taken by the Israeli government in the matter." Moreover, Menderes argued that the clause of internal aggression would also be a guarantee for Israel against any aggression from any Arab state. More importantly, Menderes reiterated that Turkey would continue to support the solution of the Palestine issue in the light of the United Nations' resolutions.³⁷⁰ In other words, before intensely beginning the negotiations of the Turkish-Iraqi Pact, Turkey endeavored to calm down the fears of Israel.

The Baghdad Pact Negotiations

The Turkish and Iraqi governments accelerated their efforts to accomplish the Baghdad Pact negotiations upon the failure of the Arab Prime Ministers attempts to postpone the process of the treaty. The pressure of the Turkish government on the Iraqi side also played a role in this development. The Iraqi government prepared a draft text, which will be given in detail below, and the negotiations proceeded in the light of this draft:

³⁷⁰ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. February 1, 1955. FO 371. 115489. V1073-180.

Whereas the friendly and brotherly relations existing between Iraq and Turkey are in constant progress, and in order to complement the contents of the Treaty of Friendship and Good Neighborliness concluded between His High Majesty The King of Iraq and His Excellency The President of the Turkish Republic signed in Ankara on March 29, 1946, which recognized the fact that the peace and security of all the nations of the world and in particular the nations of the Middle East and that it is the basis for their foreign policies.

Having realized the great responsibilities borne by them in their capacity as members of the United Nations concerned with the maintenance of peace and security in the Middle East region which necessitate taking the required measures in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

Whereas agreement concluded between Her Britannic Majesty's Government and the Egyptian Government has considered that any armed attack on Turkey or any other member state of the Arab League should necessitate taking defensive measures to preserve peace and security in the region.

They have been fully convinced of the necessity of concluding a Treaty fulfilling these aims:

Article 1: Consultations and discussions shall be held between the respective competent military authorities of the two high contracting parties for the purpose of obtaining reciprocal information regarding security measures and defense plans in countries of the high contracting parties. Exchange of views and information shall also be carried out for the sake of benefitting from the technical experience and progress achieved by any of the two high contracting parties in the field of defensive armament.

Article 2: The high contracting parties undertake to furnish all facilities and assistance for the passage of arms, military equipment, supplies and other materials used for defensive purposes pertaining to their respective armies through the territory of the other party without being subject to customs or any other duties.

Article 3: This treaty shall be open for accession to any member State of the Arab League or any other State concerned with security and peace in this region. Accession shall come into force from date on which the instruments of accession are deposited with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of (blank).

Article 4: This treaty remains into force for a period of five years renewable for another period of five years unless one of the high contracting parties

³⁷¹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. February 6, 1955. FO 371. 115488. V1073-165.

notifies the other party of their desire to terminate it six months before the date of its expiration.

Article 5: This treaty shall be ratified by the two high contracting parties and ratifications shall be exchanged as soon as possible. Thereafter it shall come into force from the date of the exchange of ratifications.

The Iraqi draft treaty could be regarded as coherent with the ideas and demands of the Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Said during the Turkish prime minister's visit to Baghdad in early January 1955. The two sides were to cooperate especially in technical and logistical matters without taking much responsibility for the defense of each other or the Middle East. The draft treaty was discussed by the officials in Turkey. The Turkish deputy prime minister told the United Kingdom ambassador in Ankara that the Turkish government needed to consult the governments of the United States and United Kingdom as soon as possible through their ambassadors in Ankara. Moreover, the Iranian and Pakistani governments, who were favorable to the proposed pact, should have been immediately contacted. According to the Minister, the basic problem of the Iraqi draft was the absence of a clause which would give the authority to the parties for defense arrangements with various countries.³⁷²

After the preparation of the Pact, both sides intensified their contacts with the United Kingdom and the United States. The Turkish government was in favor of the accession of the Allies to the Pact as signatories. The alternative would be the initial signature of the Pact between Turkey and Iraq and the joining of the United Kingdom and the United States right after. Moreover, the early participation of Iran and Syria in the Pact would be practicable for the Turkish government. Shortly, the

³⁷² Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. January 31, 1955. FO 371. 115487. V1073-133.

participation of the Allies either as signatory or late-participant would be the focus of the Turkish and Iraqi governments.³⁷³

As in the closer contacts with the Allies, the Turkish government put pressure on the Nuri Said government. In return Nuri Said told the ambassador of the United Kingdom in Iraq that as the result of the pressure, he had given the Turkish side a draft text, which was discussed in detail above. According to him, “if the Turks were sufficiently insistent, he was prepared to sign or initial this draft more or less at once. But he could not, in that case, agree to alterations.” Specifically, Nuri Said opposed to accept any clause which could imply or meant that “Turkish forces might operate in Iraq in time of war.” As the United Kingdom ambassador argue, regarding the United Kingdom, the draft text meant that she had to “give up the idea of securing the inclusion of future defense arrangements with Iraq.”³⁷⁴

Nuri Said’s opposition to the discussion of the major principles of the draft treaty and the possible postponement in the case of alterations irritated the Turkish government. The Turkish prime minister stated that the Iraqi proposal was unacceptable to the Turkish government because of the absence of the “umbrella” clause and provision for the defensive cooperation. However, the Turkish government was in favor of discussions and joint decisions on the text of the Turkish-Iraqi Pact. Thus, the Turkish side was mistrustful of Nuri Said’s idea of signing an “anodyne” agreement which would be expanded as the others acceded. The Turkish government proposed changes in the draft treaty and expected the full acceptance of these proposals. On the other hand, the Turkish government was ready to drop the references to the internal and external aggression which might hurt the

³⁷³ Telegram from the British Consulate General in Istanbul to Foreign Office. February 4, 1955. FO 371. 115488. V1073-160.

³⁷⁴ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. February 5, 1955. FO 371. 115488. V1073-171.

feelings of the Arab states. More importantly, Menderes said that “he attributed Nuri’s present attitude to his natural tendency to temporise, and possibly fear for his personal safety as a result of Egyptian inspired threats.”³⁷⁵ The threat to the Nuri Said government might come from the domestic opposition sources, the Communists and the Nationalists.

The statements of Menderes reflect the tension and suspicion between the so-called allies of the Middle East. As was discussed above, Nuri Said was against Turkey’s sending troops in the event of a war and resisted a defensive cooperation clause that could be interpreted as such. However, despite these problems, the negotiations did not collapse and the mediation of the United Kingdom played a role in the continuation of the efforts.

The policy of the United Kingdom was in harmony and supportive of the Turkish policy regarding the Pact. It insisted on the inclusion of the “umbrella” clause, especially to cover the provisions of the treaties between Iraq and the United Kingdom in the Pact with the aim of enabling the latecomers to participate in the Pact without any conflict or need to redraft the treaty. Nuri Said agreed with the United Kingdom officials on the inclusion of the “umbrella” clause, but did not like the Turkish counter draft, which brought some amendments to his original text. Nevertheless, Nuri Said was ready to negotiate the Turkish proposals to meet the demands of Turkey and the United Kingdom especially regarding the “umbrella” clause.³⁷⁶

Upon the counter proposals of the Turkish side, the Iraqi government held a meeting to discuss the Turkish proposal and the changes that had been demanded.

³⁷⁵ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. February 9, 1955. FO 371. 115489. V1073-192.

³⁷⁶ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. February 9, 1955. FO 371. 115489. V1073-194.

The Article 1 of the Iraqi draft text provided “military consultation on defense plans and facilities for passage of arms through each other’s territories.” The Turkish government suggested that Article 1 should be amended to include “cooperation in accordance with the provisions of the Article 51 of the United Nations Charter in confronting any armed aggression against one of them from inside or outside Middle East region and in pursuit of this cooperation.” Article 2 should include “for establishment of joint military plans and measures which could be made subject of special agreements.” In addition, Article 6, which had not existed in the Iraqi draft, should provide the clause that “the treaty was open for accession to any member of the Arab League or other State concerned with peace and security of region and that accession shall take place after agreement between contracting parties and State applying for accession.”³⁷⁷

Iraqi prime minister stated that he wanted to reach an agreement with Turkey as soon as possible and he would accept the amendments that the Turkish government might propose. Moreover, Nuri Said proposed that if the Turkish government had agreed, the Articles 2, 3 and 4 could be omitted from the treaty and the content of Articles 3 and 4 could be embodied in a protocol or annex with any suitable changes.³⁷⁸

By the same token, the Turkish government was ready to accept the draft treaty after some revisions. The Turkish prime minister stated that the Turkish government did not wish to sign an agreement with Iraq, in which the defense

³⁷⁷ Outward Telegram from Commonwealth Relations Office. February 10, 1955. FO 371. 115490. V1073-216.

³⁷⁸ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. February 11, 1955. FO 371. 115490.V1073-220.

cooperation between the two countries were limited, after long negotiations with the Iraqi Prime Minister.³⁷⁹

The insistence of the Turkish government to broaden the scope of the defensive cooperation impeded the negotiations to reach an agreement. The ambassador of the United Kingdom in Baghdad argued that the Iraqi prime minister became suspicious of Turkey's hidden intentions to invade Iraq in a possible war. The insistence of the Turkish government on the revision of the Articles of the draft treaty made him uneasy about accepting the amendments of the former. He reiterated that he could not agree on a provision which might be interpreted as permitting Turkey to enter Iraqi soil under certain circumstances. In case of a possible proposal of the inclusion of such a provision in the treaty, Nuri Said was determined to abandon the treaty with Turkey. The Iraqi crown prince and the Turkish ambassador in Baghdad requested the United Kingdom ambassador in Baghdad to mediate and calm down Nuri Said. Nuri Said, for his part, demanded the ambassador to help him with the Turkish government. Thus, the United Kingdom ambassador stated that he tried to convince the Iraqi prime minister by stating that the only objective of the Turkish government was to avoid the pact from "being worded discriminatory or derogatory to Turkey."³⁸⁰

At the end, he was persuaded and accepted to make necessary amendments in the draft text: The Articles 2, 3 and 4 would be omitted. Iraq and Turkey would conclude a special agreement between themselves derived from the Article 1 of the pact. In return, he would be satisfied if a new article about "non-interference in internal affairs and peaceful settlement of disputes between the signatories" were

³⁷⁹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. February 12, 1955. FO 371. 115490. V1073-223.

³⁸⁰ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. February 16, 1955. FO 371. 115491. V1073-245.

included in the treaty. Furthermore, a reference to the fact that “the Arab League Collective Security Pact provided for regional agreement under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter” needed to be made. He concluded that if Turkish government did not accept his amendments, he would give up the idea of signing a pact with Turkey and rather than that he would sign a treaty with the United Kingdom and Pakistan.³⁸¹

After the discussion with Nuri Said, the United Kingdom ambassador commented on the text which the Iraqi Prime Minister revised. He stated that:

Although this text is far from ideal it seems, as seen from here; to give us the umbrella we want, to remove any possible appearance of discrimination against Turkey, to be in a form to which other countries could accede without much, if any, amendment.³⁸²

The revised text, which had been proposed to Turkey on February 16, 1955; was the following³⁸³:

Whereas the friendly and brotherly relations between Iraq and Turkey are in constant progress and in order to complement the contents of the treaty of friendship and good neighborhood concluded between His Majesty the King of Iraq and His Excellency the President of the Turkish Republic signed in Ankara on March 29, 1946 which recognized the fact that peace and security between the two countries is an integral part of peace and security of all nations of the world and in particular nations of the Middle East, and that it is the basis for their foreign policies; and whereas the Article 2 of the treaty of joint defense and economic cooperation between the Arab League states provides that no provision of the treaty shall in any way affect, or is designed to affect any of the rights and obligations accruing to contracting parties from the United Nations charter; having realized the great...borne by them in their capacity as members of the United Nations concerned with the maintenance of peace and security in the Middle East region which necessitates taking the required measures in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter; and whereas the agreement concluded between Her Britannic Majesty’s government and the Egyptian government has considered any armed attack or a threat of an armed

³⁸¹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. February 16, 1955. FO 371. 115491. V1073-245.

³⁸² *ibid.*

³⁸³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. February 16, 1955. FO 371. 115491. V1073-246.

attack on Turkey or any other member state of the Arab League should necessitate taking defensive measures to preserve peace and security.

They have been fully convinced of the necessity of concluding a treaty fulfilling these aims”:

Article 1: The high contracting parties will cooperate for their security and defense in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. Such measures as they agree to take to give effect to this cooperation may form the subject of special agreements with each other.

Article 2: In order to ensure realization provided for in Article 1 above, the competent authorities of the high contracting parties will determine the measures to be (taken) as soon as the present treaty enters into force. These measures will become operative as soon as they have been approved by the Governments of the high contracting parties.

Article 3: The high contracting parties undertake to refrain from any interference whatsoever in each other's internal affairs. They will settle any dispute between themselves in a peaceful way in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

Article 4: The high contracting parties declare that dispositions of the present treaty are not in contradiction with any of the international obligations contracted by either of them with any third State or States. They do not derogate from, and cannot be interpreted as derogating from, the said international obligations. The high contracting parties undertake not to enter into any international obligation incompatible with the present treaty.

Article 5: This treaty shall be open for accession to any member State of the Arab League or any other State concerned with security and peace in the region.

Article 6: This treaty remains in force for a period of five years renewable for other five years unless one contracting party notifies the other of their desire to terminate it six months before its expiration.

Article 7: This treaty shall be ratified by the contracting parties and ratifications shall be exchanged as soon as possible. Thereafter it shall come into force from the date of exchange of ratifications.

It can be argued that the revised text reflected the sensitivities and priorities of Iraq, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. Moreover, it was much more detailed than the initial draft. However, it should be admitted that there were vague statements which were open to interpretation such as “such measures as they agree to take to

give effect to this cooperation” as was stated in Article 1, or “dispositions of the present treaty are not in contradiction with any of the international obligations contracted by either of them with any third State or States” as it was stated in Article 4. This vagueness can be interpreted as a means to stretch the principles of the treaty in the future.

After the revised treaty was proposed to the Turkish government, the United Kingdom’s ambassador in Baghdad made an attempt to convince Nuri Said to get rid of the reference to the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty in the Preamble. He argued that “Nuri Said wants to show that the Egyptians themselves agreed that Turkey was a factor in the safety of the Middle East.” The ambassador, who was aware of the delicacy of the situation, did not insist on his attempt not to lose the whole agreement.³⁸⁴

For the United Kingdom government, the revised text was acceptable. They expected that it was also acceptable for the Turkish government and sent a message to the latter via the United Kingdom’s ambassador in Ankara. They urged the Turkish government that the essential requirements were provided by the United Kingdom and Turkey should sign the treaty without further delay before Nuri Said changed his mind.³⁸⁵

By the same token, the new draft was also acceptable for the Turkish government despite some points which could be settled when the prime minister visited Baghdad to sign the treaty. The Turkish minister of foreign affairs stated that these points were the references to the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty and the Arab League Collective Security Pact in the Preamble. He stated:

³⁸⁴ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. February 17, 1955. FO 371. 115492. V1073-271.

³⁸⁵ Telegram from Foreign Office to the British Embassy in Ankara. February 16, 1955. FO 371. 115492. V1073-269.

On general grounds, the Turkish government considered it inappropriate that an agreement between Turkey and Iraq should refer to agreements to which Turkey was not a party... The Turkish Prime Minister will do his best to induce Nuri to drop these points when he is in Baghdad.³⁸⁶

In the meantime, the Turkish government decided the amendments that would be proposed to the Iraqi government on 20 February 1955. These amendments were as follows:³⁸⁷

Preamble, paragraph 3. Omit the words “the required” and substitute “consistent with” for “in accordance with.” (The Turkish Prime Minister when in Baghdad will try to get Nuri’s agreement to the following redraft of the paragraph in question:

“Recognizing the great responsibilities borne by them in their capacity as members of the United Nations concerned with the maintenance of peace and security in the Middle East region to cooperate in order to be in a position to take measures against armed aggression consistent with the rights affirmed by Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.”

Article 1: The first sentence to read as follows: “Consistent with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter the High Contracting Parties will cooperate for their security and defence.”

Article 3: To read as follows: “They will settle international disputes by peaceful means and in a manner consistent with the purposes of the United Nations.”

Article 5: Insert “actively” before “concerned” and add a proviso for new accessions to be subject to the agreement of existing members. (The Turkish Prime Minister when in Baghdad will propose the following text:

This treaty shall be open for accession to any member State of the Arab League or any other state actively concerned with the security and peace in this region, provided that the Contracting Parties shall agree to such accession.

This treaty shall come into force with respect to an acceding state on the date of the deposit by it of any instrument of accession with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of which shall notify each of the Contracting Parties of any such deposit.”

³⁸⁶ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. February 18, 1955. FO 371. 115492. V0173-273.

³⁸⁷ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. February 20, 1955. FO 371. 115492. V1073-288.

Article 6: Amend to allow for the withdrawal of a Contracting Party without bringing the Agreement to an end for the rest. (The Turkish Prime Minister when in Baghdad will propose the following text:

This treaty shall remain in force for a period of five years renewable for other 5-year periods, but any Contracting Party may withdraw from, and cease to be a party to, this Treaty at the expiration of any such five-year period by giving written notice to the other parties, at least six months before the expiration of such period of its desire to withdraw and cease to be a party.”

In the light of the Turkish demands regarding the amendments in the Treaty, the Turkish and Iraqi delegations met to reach an agreement regarding these changes on 21 February 1955. The discussions and the changes in the treaty were as follows:³⁸⁸

Preamble: The Turks propose the deletion of Paragraph 2. The Iraqis prefer retaining it. The Turks propose the deletion in Paragraph 3 of the words “The required measures in accordance” and substitution of “measures consistent.” The Iraqis agreed. Both sides agree to omission of Paragraph 4.

Article 1: The Turks propose that the first sentence should read as follows: “In conformity with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, the High Contracting Parties will cooperate for their security and defense.” The Iraqis agree.

Article 2: The Iraqis agree to our proposal to add “concerned” at the end of the article.

Article 3: The Turks propose the deletion of the last sentence and the substitution of: “They will settle international disputes by peaceful means and in a manner consistent with the purposes of the United Nations.”

Article 4: Remains unchanged.

Article 5: The Turks wish to insert “actively” after the words “other state”. They also wish to add the following sentence after words “this region”: “Accession to the Pact will be subject to the unanimous approval of all parties signatory to the pact.” The Iraqi side disliked both amendments which might have excluded Pakistan. They would like the Article to stand as originally drafted but with the addition after “this region” of the words “and which is fully recognized by both of the High Contracting Parties.” The Iraqis agree.

³⁸⁸ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. February 21, 1955. FO 371. 115492. V1073-294.

Article 6: The Turks wish to add the following sentence: “In case of a withdrawal the pact will continue to be valid for the remaining party”.

Throughout the text the Iraqis wish to substitute the word “pact” for “Treaty.”

In the meantime, on 21 February 1955; the Iraqi prime minister Nuri Said met with the Cabinet and the Elder Statesmen. In the meeting he provided the unanimous support for the ultimate text of the pact and the separate exchange of letters with Turkey. If the signing of the pact or the exchange of letters, mentioning the United Nations’ resolutions on Palestine, were postponed, he feared that the Pact would be “lost”. For him, the exchange of letters would enable “to deter the Soviet Union from attacking or possibly enable it to persuade the Arab States to join the Pact. Therefore, the signing of the Pact and the exchange of letters, as soon as possible, was urgent to strengthen the position of Nuri Said.³⁸⁹ By the same token, the exchange of letters was also regarded as important for the Turkish prime minister Menderes. However, Menderes emphasized that the letters would not be annexed to the treaty.³⁹⁰

After the amendments in the draft text, the Iraqi government invited the Turkish prime minister to come to Baghdad on 23 or 24 February to sign the pact the day after. The Turkish ambassador in Baghdad confirmed that Menderes come.³⁹¹ The Baghdad Pact negotiations were problematic because the suspicion of both sides, especially that of Iraq to Turkey, towards each other and divergences of their interests were the impediments in the way of the agreement. However, despite these shortcomings, the Pact was signed on 24 February 1955.

As Turkey and Iraq focused on negotiations, the Arab world also concentrated on the developments regarding the Pact and they had different attitudes

³⁸⁹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. February 23, 1955. FO371. 115493. V1073-314.

³⁹⁰ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. February 24, 1955. FO 371. 115493. V1073-331.

³⁹¹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. February 20, 1955. FO 371. 115492. V1073-285.

and reactions, which should be analyzed before getting into the details of the signature of the pact and the developments in the following period.

The Reactions during the Baghdad Pact Negotiations

The Meeting of the Arab League prime ministers continued after the Drafting Committee left Cairo to visit Baghdad and to persuade the Iraqi prime minister, Nuri Said, to postpone the Turkish-Iraqi Agreement. The meeting ended on 6 January 1955 without any resolution or joint communiqué, which had been expected, especially by the Egyptian government. However, an informal committee was composed of the Jordanian minister of foreign affairs, the Lebanese chargé d'affaires in Cairo and Colonel Riad from the Egyptian ministry of foreign affairs. This committee prepared a resolution which stated that:

Arab foreign policy should be based on the Arab League Charter, the Arab Collective Security Pact and the United Nations Charter, the reservations made by Iraq in December were rejected, a unified Arab command should be established, but any state, i.e. Iraq, which had made reservations on joint Arab foreign policy should be excluded, there should be cooperation between Arab states and the West, but short of alliances and without military commitments, no Arab state should join the Turkish Pact.³⁹²

The Iraqi delegation refused to discuss this resolution. On the other hand, the Syrian and Lebanese delegates left the issue to their governments. Therefore, the meeting did not bear fruit and no voting occurred. The Iraqi ambassador in Cairo stated that the Egyptians failed because they could not prevent Iraq from keeping on negotiations with Turkey and they could not “bring about a censure to Iraq.” Thus,

³⁹² Telegram from the British Embassy in Cairo to Foreign Office. February 7, 1955. FO 371. 115489. V1073-177.

the Arab states were to act individually although most of them were unfavorable to participate into alliances with the Allies.³⁹³

After the failure of the Meeting of Arab League prime ministers the propaganda and the threats of the Egyptian government towards both the Pact negotiators and the Middle East states intensified. In the meantime, the Egyptian government reiterated its intention to leave the Arab Collective Security Pact, not the Arab League, to leave the Arab States alone against any threat, especially from Israel, in case of the continuation of Iraq to negotiate and possibly sign the Pact with Turkey. The Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Said commented this policy of Egypt and stated that “if Egypt did so, it would do wrong and none of the Arab States, i.e. Syria, Jordan and Lebanon would follow her.”³⁹⁴ As mentioned before, the declaration of Egypt to leave the Arab Collective Security Pact and the pressure on the Arab states accelerated the Turkish-Iraqi negotiations.

The Egyptian minister of national guidance, Salem, explained why Egypt would withdraw from the Arab Collective Security Pact and what the alternative approach of Egypt would be to establish an alliance system in the Middle East.

Salem stated that:

If Egypt considered that her obligations towards Iraq under the Arab Collective Security Pact were in this way extended to Turkey and the Western powers, she would withdraw from that pact. She then would be prepared to cooperate with countries unwilling to join foreign alliances. Egypt would follow her own course, with or without support. Her population was 23 millions compared with the 15 million of the other Arab states combined. She could not therefore, leave the League. Turkey was seeking to establish her domination over the Arab countries... Egypt proposed that a unified Arab military command should be set up within a month and that a unified Arab economic programme should be established... By announcing

³⁹³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Cairo to Foreign Office. February 7, 1955. FO 371. 115489. V1073-177.

³⁹⁴ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. February 8, 1955. FO 371. 115489. V1073-182.

his decision to sign the Pact with Turkey, Nuri Said had closed the door to any solution of the present crisis.³⁹⁵

The Egyptian course of action inspired some other Arab states such as Saudi Arabia, which was as critical as Egypt, of the Turkish-Iraqi Pact. Saudi Arabian Prince Faisal announced on 8 February 1955 that “Saudi Arabia would follow Egypt’s example if the latter decided to withdraw from the Arab Collective Security Pact.” He also stated that the policies of the two governments were consistent. His declaration also reflected the resentment of Saudi Arabia toward Iraq and the Prince stated that “Nuri Said was clearly hoping to carry out his Fertile Crescent plan, but that it was to be hoped that Iraq would return to the Arab fold.”³⁹⁶

At the same time, the smaller states in the region, such as Lebanon and Jordan, did not give up their mediation efforts between the two sides. The Lebanese president, Chamoun, stated that Egypt should be persuaded to give up its opposition to the Turkish-Iraqi Pact and she should have considered the pact as the initial step in the establishment of a defense system in the region. In consistence with this point of view, he sent a personal message to Nasser arguing the necessity of a system that would be extended from Turkey to Pakistan.³⁹⁷ However, his efforts did not bear fruit and in the Egyptian reply that was delivered to Chamoun by Salem, it was stated that the Egyptian attitude towards the Turkish-Iraqi Pact had not changed.³⁹⁸

Like Egypt and Saudi Arabia, the Syrian attitude began to change during the negotiations of the Pact, which had been moderate and supportive before. The former Iraqi prime minister, Jamali, was assigned to prevent the loss of the Syrian support of

³⁹⁵ Telegram from the British Embassy in Cairo to Foreign Office. February 8, 1955. FO 371. 115489. V1073-183.

³⁹⁶ Telegram from the British Embassy in Cairo to Foreign Office. February 9, 1955. FO 371. 115489. V1073-189.

³⁹⁷ Telegram from the British Embassy in Beirut to Foreign Office. February 11, 1955. FO 371. 115490. V1073-222.

³⁹⁸ Telegram from the British Embassy in Beirut to Foreign Office. February 21, 1955. FO 371. 115490. V1073-222A.

the Turkish-Iraqi Pact, as he represented the Iraqi government in the Meeting of Arab prime ministers in Cairo to do the same. According to the United Kingdom's ambassador in Damascus, the Syrian president asked Jamali to provide the support of the United States and United Kingdom ambassadors in Damascus in order to prevent the Egyptian, Saudi Arabian and, more importantly, the French intrigues in Syria, which aimed to agitate the hostility towards the Turkish-Iraqi Pact. The president argued that all the aforementioned countries were bribing the Syrians and the Saudi Arabia took the lead in this policy. Regarding France, Jamali argued that the French chargé d'affaires in Cairo had advised the Syrian ambassador against the treaty by having argued that the proposed pact would lead "the disruption of the Arab League, arms race between Israel and the Arab States and foreign intervention in Syria."³⁹⁹

After the unexpected dissolution of the Syrian government in 1954, which was at least not unfavorable to the proposed pact, the Syrian attitude changed. As the United Kingdom's ambassador in Damascus stated the attitudes and opinions expressed in the Syrian Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee were critical of the policy of Iraq. Most of the Ministers in the new government, which was supposed to come to power as a result of the Egyptian, Saudi Arabian and to a lesser extent French intrigues, were unfavorable to Iraq. Especially this attitude was apparent on the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who was supportive of neutralism and opponent of any alliances outside the Arab League. According to the ambassador, the position of the new prime minister was "less clear", who had not been anti-Iraqi, but "ambition" and "Saudi gold" might lead him to accept office in return for splitting his party.⁴⁰⁰

The statements of the United Kingdom's ambassador should be cautiously

³⁹⁹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Damascus to Foreign Office. February 14, 1955. FO 371. 115490. V1073-235.

⁴⁰⁰ Telegram from the British Embassy in Damascus to Foreign Office. February 15, 1955. FO 371. 115491. V1073-244A.

approached because he acted as the “devil’s advocate” and the claims were not proven. However, conversations between the Iraqi representative Jamali and the new Syrian prime minister and the minister of foreign affairs shed more light on the policy of the new Syrian government regarding the Middle East and the proposed Turkish-Iraqi Pact.

Before leaving Damascus for Beirut, the Iraqi representative Jamali met with the new prime minister and the minister of foreign affairs. Jamali stated that the Minister of Foreign Affairs was prudent, whereas the Prime Minister could be considered as pro-Egyptian. The minister of foreign affairs affirmed his negative attitude towards communism, but he stated that the development of socialism was the best “cure” for communism. The prime minister underlined his positive stance towards the West, but he said that was unable to express his views explicitly at that time. His opinions regarding the Turkish-Iraqi Pact were the following as Jamali told:

He declared that he would resign rather than agree to anything against Iraq. But he could not adhere to the Turkish-Iraqi Pact. He would be neutral. Thus he made the unhelpful and rather meaningless remark that if Egypt produced a new defence group in place of the present Arab Security Pact, Syria would join it while being remained the member of the old Pact which included Iraq.⁴⁰¹

Regardless of the reasons or intrigues that were mentioned, the only reality was the change of the Syrian attitude, which had been moderate in the initial stage of the Turkish-Iraqi negotiations especially during the Meeting of Arab prime ministers in Cairo, after the formation of the new government in Syria.

Upon the changes in the policies of the states towards the Pact, the situation was taken into consideration by the Allies. The policy of the United Kingdom, as the

⁴⁰¹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Damascus to Foreign Office. February 16, 1955. FO 371. 115492. V1073-260.

main supporter of the Pact, with the calculation to participate later on, was “to wait and see” the developments of the following period regarding the Pact. It was decided to postpone the major diplomatic attacks to the lingering states such as Jordan and the states which changed their attitudes such as Syria until the signing of the Pact. The major reason was to wait until the conclusion of the negotiations was the fact that “to keep down the break out of the opposition in the Arab world” against the Pact. It was expected that the Jordanians and Syrians could not do much at that time when the negotiations between the Turkish and Iraqi governments were tense and problematic. As a result, approaches to Jordan and Syria needed to be delayed until the Pact was signed.⁴⁰²

On the contrary to the wait-and-see policy regarding Syria and Jordan, the United Kingdom intensified diplomatic contacts with the Egyptian prime minister Nasser during the Turkish-Iraqi negotiations. Nasser admitted and stated that the relations with the Allies were the best strategy to serve his interests. Nevertheless, he did not give up his negative stance towards the Pact, as he would not do so, with having argued that the Turkish-Iraqi Pact was “timeless” and its content was “unfortunate” that might set back the development of the cooperation between the Arab States and the West. Despite all the efforts of the United Kingdom’s ambassador in Cairo to convince him at least to constrain his criticism against the proposed Pact and or to give them up if the Pact were reasonable, Nasser did not step back.⁴⁰³ Although Nasser said that he had sympathy for the West and for the cooperation with the West, he was definitely against the Turkish-Iraqi Pact. The ambassador commented on this position and stated that “jealousy” and the “desire” to lead the Arab world were the two main components of the position of Nasser, and

⁴⁰² FO 371. 115492. V1073-258.

⁴⁰³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Cairo to Foreign Office. February 21, 1955. FO 371. 115492. V1073-289.

of Egypt, that played role in the formation of the opposition and criticism against the Turkish-Iraqi Pact.⁴⁰⁴

In the meantime, the United Kingdom tried to calm down the Syrian attitude towards the Turkish-Iraqi Pact. Apart from the Iraqi representative, Jamali, the United Kingdom's ambassador met with the Syrian minister of foreign affairs just before the signing of the Turkish-Iraqi Pact. In this conversation, the Syrian Minister argued that "Iraq, by agreeing with Turkey, is turning away from the Arab world and her duty to defend it." The ambassador replied that "Iraq would strengthen her Syrian friends when signing the treaty with Turkey by reiterating publicly her solidarity with the Arab world and her determination to stand by the other Arab states in the event of Israeli aggression." The minister of foreign affairs stated that "Jamali had assured him that such was Iraq's position, but this was a private statement and, therefore, unquotable and, moreover, made at a moment when Jamali was very excited."⁴⁰⁵

On 22 January 1955, the new Syrian government declared that all the recommendations of the Arab League Foreign Ministers that had been made in December 1954 were accepted by the government. In these recommendations, it was stated that "the policy of the Arab states should rest on the Charters of the Arab League and the United Nations and on the Arab Collective Security Pact." Moreover, the Syrian government stated that it was ready to cooperate with the West and all friendly states in accordance with the United Nations Charter. More importantly, it was underlined; the closer cooperation would be with the states which were the supporters of the Arab cause in Palestine. The Syrian government reiterated that any

⁴⁰⁴ Telegram from the British Embassy in Cairo to Foreign Office. February 21, 1955. FO 371. 115492. V1073-289.

⁴⁰⁵ Telegram from the British Embassy in Damascus to Foreign Office. February 21, 1955. FO 371. 115492. V1073-296.

of the Arab governments would adhere to the Turkish-Iraqi Pact and the major enemy of Syria was Israel. Therefore, Syria would not conduct any relations with Israel.⁴⁰⁶

The opposition in the Arab world towards the Turkish-Iraqi Pact continued through the whole process of negotiations. The Turkish-Iraqi Pact was signed and this bolstered and widened the split in the Arab world. More importantly, the propaganda and criticism against the Pact intensified. On the same day of the signing of the Pact, the Egyptian minister of national guidance was in effort to organize a group of Arab states to denounce Iraq. Syria, Saudi Arabia and Jordan were ready to act accordingly, but Lebanon abstained and sought for the help of the West to prevent the group of these states from acting against Iraq.⁴⁰⁷

The reactions of the Arab states during the Baghdad Pact negotiations have been discussed so far. Before getting into the details of the impacts of the Pact, the process of signing and the participation of other members should be explained in brief.

The Signature of the Pact

After the long and problematic negotiations and discussions, Turkey and Iraq signed the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation, which became known as the Baghdad Pact in 1955. The content of the Pact can be summarized as follows without getting into the details, which were discussed above:⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁶ Telegram from the British Embassy in Damascus to Foreign Office. February 22, 1955. FO371. 115493. V1073-305.

⁴⁰⁷ Telegram from the British Embassy in Beirut to Foreign Office. February 24, 1955. FO 371. 115493. V1073-329.

⁴⁰⁸ FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., p.97.

The stated aim of the Pact... is the further improvement of good relations between the two countries in order to contribute to world peace and security, particularly in the Middle East. Specifically, the parties pledge themselves to cooperate for their security and defense consistent with the United Nations Charter. They agree to determine specific measures to realize this aim as soon as the pact enters into force.

A permanent council at the ministerial level is to be set up to implement the pact when at least four powers have become parties to the Pact. The Pact is open for accession to any member of the Arab League or any other state actively concerned with the security and peace of the Middle East. Acceding states may conclude special agreements with other parties to the pact.

The pact remains in force for five years and is renewable for five year periods. Any signatory may withdraw, after giving notice, at the end of a five year period, in which case the agreement remains in force for the other members. The document contains such standard phraseology as an undertaking not to interfere in each other's internal affairs, and a pledge to settle disputes in accordance with the UN Charter.

An exchange of letters between the Iraqi and Turkish Prime Ministers at the time of signing the pact recorded their understanding the Pact that would enable their countries to cooperate effectively in resisting any aggression directed against either of them and to work in close cooperation for effecting the carrying out of the UN resolutions concerning Palestine.

The Baghdad Pact was signed as a result of the efforts of Turkey and Iraq with the mediation of the United Kingdom during times of crises. However, the role of the United States should be discussed. The United States was the major the sponsor of the developments, specifically the bilateral agreements in the Middle East. The Baghdad Pact could be regarded as coherent to the US policy, which had been preoccupied since the end of 1951 with setting up a defense grouping in the region. Secretary Dulles' visit in 1953 bore upon the concept of "Northern Tier." With the support of the United States, initially, the Turkish-Pakistani Agreement was signed and the Baghdad Pact was prepared and signed in 1955. Later on, the United Kingdom joined the Pact on 5 April 1955, Pakistan on 23 September 1955 and Iran

on 3 November 1955.⁴⁰⁹ The extension of the Pact was welcomed by the United States government although this state did not participate or even thought of participating from the very beginning.

On the other hand, the Pact caused resentment, hostility and suspicion especially in the Arab states against the Pact members and, thus, widened the gap between the two sides. More importantly, the period after the Baghdad Pact coincided with the years of serious crises in the region, i.e., the Suez Canal Crisis, the Arab-Israeli Dispute, the Turkish-Syrian Crisis, the Iraqi coup d'état and the Jordanian and Lebanese Crises. Consequently, the period after the signing of the Baghdad Pact should be taken into consideration in order to understand the dynamics and development of politics in the second half of the 1950s.

The Baghdad Pact and the United States and the United Kingdom

The United States was a supporter of the Baghdad Pact, which was consistent with its defense policy of the Northern Tier, which had been formulated in 1953, as discussed above. However, it was not in favor of participation in the Pact from the beginning to the end. The interests and strategies of the United States determined its policies towards the Middle East and to the Baghdad Pact. A telegram that was sent from the Department of State to the United States' ambassador in Jordan shows how the United States supported and welcomed the Baghdad Pact:

We have always supported efforts states achieve greater degree stability and security through cooperative undertakings. In particular we have favored increased collaboration between states interested in developing Middle East defense against possible Communist aggression. We welcome Turkish-Iraqi declaration intention as constructive step taken recognition need develop effective defenses in areas at present exposed and unprotected against danger Communist expansion. We prepared assist

⁴⁰⁹ FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.1-2.

Turkish and Iraqi efforts achieve realistic and effective defense arrangement. We believe Arab states should welcome development as important step contributing to their own security.⁴¹⁰

During the Turkish-Iraqi negotiations for the Pact, the United States guaranteed to support the Pact members militarily and economically. It should be recalled that, the basic reason to set up a defense structure against “Communist expansion,” was to provide the security of the region with its resources, especially the Middle Eastern oil. Another objective of the United States was to protect Israel against the Arab states and the rising Arab nationalism. It was expected that the establishment of the alliance in the region would provide the security of the region including Israel. As mentioned before, Turkey was the only state in the region that had closer relations with Israel. Through the alliance between Turkey and Iraq, the latter was expected to have smooth relations with Israel because from the very beginning, Iraq was aware of the close relations between Turkey and Israel. The United States officials in the Department of State commented that “the willingness on Iraq’s part subordinate hostility toward Israel to compelling threat from North is encouraging sign.”⁴¹¹

As the Iraqi Prime Minister had stated before, Iraq would not be a part of an arrangement in which Israel was a part, the United States did not refrain from giving a guarantee that Israel would be able to be integrated into the alliance system within an appropriate time, although this would not happen due to the crises between Israel and the Arab states. Moreover, the United States worked to convince Israel to support the Turkish policy by having taken on its long-term policy objectives.⁴¹²

⁴¹⁰ Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Jordan. January 14, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.2-3.

⁴¹¹ Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Israel. January 14, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.3-4.

⁴¹² *ibid.*

These efforts can be regarded as the aim to decrease the level of Israeli confusion regarding the Pact, as mentioned before.

With these two major objectives, the United States government was in favor of the signing and extension of the Pact to the other states, especially the Arab ones, as soon as possible. It desired to appease the Egyptian reaction against the pact and possible adverse effects of the Egyptian policy in the near future. Besides the Turkish-Iraqi Pact, the development of Turkish-Egyptian relations, probably a treaty between the two, through conducting closer relations, was seen as vital for the security and the stability of the Middle East. Therefore, the rapid conclusion and signature of the Turkish-Iraqi Treaty was important to convince Egypt to be a part of the system, according to the officials of the United States. They claimed that Nasser had told the United States' officials that "he recognizes threat could develop only from the USSR," and for the United States, the treaty would provide the grounds for defense against this threat and Egypt might have joined the Pact in the long run.⁴¹³

The objectives and the course of action of the United States were definite regarding the Turkish-Iraqi Pact. Nevertheless, the question of adherence to the Pact specifically at an early date preoccupied the decision makers and diplomats. The Department of State was of the opinion that, despite the insistence of Turkish and Iraqi governments, the United States government should not be an original signatory of the Pact or a participant at an early date.⁴¹⁴

Although the Turkish and Iraqi governments might welcome the United States into the Pact, the United States was not in favor of such action. The basic reason was not to give the impression that the Pact was imposed from outside the

⁴¹³ Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Egypt. January 14, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12. i.8., pp.4-5.

⁴¹⁴ Circular Telegram from the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic Missions. February 15, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12. i.8., pp.19-20.

area. The United States' strategy was to enable the Pact to be signed as an indigenous effort, although it was behind the scenes. On the other hand, the support of this country was proven at least indirectly. The association of the Northern Tier with the military arrangements with Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Pakistan was one indication of the United States support to the Pact. As a result, there was no reason to join the Pact for the United States, whereas the decision of participation for the United Kingdom belonged to the decision makers of this state. The United States had no objection to the United Kingdom joining the Pact.⁴¹⁵ This country would join the Pact after Turkey and Iraq signed.

The telegram from the Department of State to the embassy in Ankara indicated the policy of the United States on participation to the Pact. The "hands-off" attitude of the United States stemmed from the consideration of "tactics and timing." For them, the next step would be the joining of Pakistan to the Pact, which was supported by the United States. The United States was in favor of a rapid progress regarding the Pact for the establishment of an effective defense system in the Middle East and, thus, after Pakistan, Iran would be tempted, but not pressed, to join the Pact. On the other hand, interestingly, the memberships of the Arab states bordering Israel were not a priority for the United States. It had decided neither to encourage nor discourage these states to join at that time. Consequently, the military relations with Turkey and Pakistan improved before the Pact, so the participation of the United States was not vital for the interests of this country.⁴¹⁶

For the US Department of State, the Pact would be supported indirectly and without participation of Pakistan and Iraq would be provided in accordance with the

⁴¹⁵ Circular Telegram from the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic Missions. February 15, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.19-20.

⁴¹⁶ Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Turkey. May 28, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.59-60.

Northern Tier concept and the objectives of the United States. The United States' ambassador in Iraq, however, was in favor of the participation of the United States to the Pact as soon as possible. He stated that:

We are originators of the northern tier concept and it is we who gave inspiration and encouragement which resulted in Iraq-Turk Pact. Indigenous interest has now been adequately proved. Yet task of forging paper northern tier into effective northern tier defense organization has still to be accomplished and we do not see how this can be done without US adherence. Psychological value of our adherence now would also serve as potent centrifugal force in winning additional adherents including perhaps fence-straddlers such as Lebanon and Jordan. Our adherence along with British would give this part of the world a telling example of how British and we are cooperating for common defense of free world... Our adherence is certain to enhance considerably overall US influence in area. This might eventually prove useful too in working towards Arab-Israeli settlement... US association with Iraq-Turk pact might well help allay current Israeli fears that pact may be used to her detriment... US adherence would help allay possible fears which have not entirely disappeared from minds of Nuri and other Iraqi political leaders of possible Turkish irredentist designs on Mosul.⁴¹⁷

Despite all the efforts of the United States' ambassador in Iraq, the Department of State did not change the policy of the United States. The determination of the United States government not to participate in the Pact can be derived from the letter of the United States' secretary of state to the United Kingdom ambassador in Washington. In this letter, the secretary of state told the ambassador that:

It has been my thought that it was not feasible for the United States to join the Baghdad Pact until there was a relaxation of tension between the Arab states and Israel. At that time, we would be disposed to seek formal adherence. In the meanwhile, the Arab states in the area know of our support for the Baghdad Pact and we will continue to make this support known to them. We are also prepared to establish liaison arrangements with the Baghdad Pact Organization when it is set up.⁴¹⁸

⁴¹⁷ Telegram from the Embassy in Iraq to the Department of State. March 16, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.35-36.

⁴¹⁸ Letter from the Secretary of State to the British Ambassador (Makins). August 19, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.152.

The United States government was firm to keep its indirect relations and support to the Baghdad Pact.

After the signature of the Pact, the United Kingdom continued to insist that the United States to join the Pact at every turn. In the SEATO Council Meeting in March 1956, the United Kingdom's minister of foreign affairs Selwyn Lloyd, shared his views with his US counterpart. In a telegram from the delegation in the meeting to the Department of State it was stated that:

He hoped we might be able to send fairly senior representative from Department to attend April 16 meeting Baghdad Council in addition to our permanent representative Ambassador Gallman. Secretary replied that he would have think about this and could not give answer this juncture. Lloyd smilingly suggested it might not be necessary since possibly US would have become member of Pact by that time. Secretary replied he did not think there was any chance of this.⁴¹⁹

Despite the insistence in the political circles of the United States not to officially join the Baghdad Pact and its determined policy not to participate, the officials of the United States continued to prepare reports and evaluations regarding the possible membership of the United States in the Pact. A report prepared by the National Security Council Planning Board was comprehensive and, thus, important to mention.

The report was on the immediate joining of the United States to the Pact and focused on the possible advantages and disadvantages. Regarding advantages, the going with the Pact:

Would make continued public acceptance of the Pact in the Middle East member countries more certain, would enable the US to exercise greater influence in development of Pact activities by permitting formal participation... would strengthen the position of Nuri Said and other pro-West elements in Iraq, and the Shah and other pro-West elements in Iran, would help to stem growing criticism and dissatisfaction within Pakistan... would strengthen the Pact's appeal to pro-Western elements

⁴¹⁹ Telegram from the Delegation at the SEATO Council Meeting to the Department of State. March 7, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.251-252.

in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan, and might increase the chances of accession to the Pact by Lebanon and Jordan, would demonstrate the firm, consistent and continued support by the US of the concept of the collective security... would strengthen NATO's southern flank... would increase the possibility of developing adequate capabilities to resist aggression with a minimum expenditure of US resources.⁴²⁰

Besides these possible numerous advantages, the report analyzed the disadvantages that might have negatively influenced the policy of the United States regarding the Middle East. It was stated that US joining the Pact:

Would provide Israel with a pretext for renewed demands for a US security guaranty and for armaments, would cause Nasser and possibly Saudi Arabia and Syria to seek greater support from the USSR, would stimulate the USSR to give even greater support to the Egypt-Syria-Saudi Arabia Axis, might provide a pretext for a coup d'état in Jordan that would take Jordan firmly into the Egypt-Syria-Saudi Arabia Camp, would provide a pretext for increased attacks on the Baghdad Pact in some of the Arab States and Israel, in the absence of an Iraqi-Saudi rapprochement, would cause possible complications in Saudi-US relations and in forthcoming negotiations for the extension of air base rights, might involve the United States more directly in the Hashemite-Saudi and Iraqi-Egyptian disputes and would complicate US relationship to the Arab-Israeli dispute, would bring a new wave of dissatisfaction with US policy in India, would increase expectations and demands of Pact members for increased US military and economic aid, would further exacerbate US-USSR relations, might lend some color to charges of US imperialism in a new form, would tend to give the impression that the United States continues to place priority emphasis on military pacts in the face of the new Soviet economic diplomatic offensive.⁴²¹

It can be argued that the advantages to join the pact did not outnumber the disadvantages and the possible losses in the Middle East would be more vital than the gains for the United States. The policy and strategy of the United States regarding the Baghdad Pact should be evaluated by taking all these possibilities into consideration. More importantly, some of these possible negative outcomes occurred, i.e. the formation of the Egyptian-Syrian-Saudi Axis, the increase in the support of the Soviet Union to these countries, and the increase in the demands of the Pact members from the United States militarily and economically in the following period

⁴²⁰ Draft Paper by the NSC Planning Board Assistants. May 2, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.295-297.

⁴²¹ *ibid.*

even though the United States did not join the Pact. These developments showed that the internal dynamics and the interests of the individual states played important roles in Middle Eastern affairs.

However, despite the United States' policy to stay behind the scenes, the pressure and insistence on it to participate in the Pact continued by the Pact members. It is important to remember here that the participation of the United Kingdom, Pakistan and Iraq were completed by the end of 1955.

The Meeting in Tehran in November 1956 witnessed these efforts. In the Meeting, the Shah of Iran appealed to the United States to join. In addition, the Turkish prime minister Menderes stated that the reasons of the United States not to join the Pact became invalid because Israel attacked Egypt, which will be discussed later, and expanded its territory. Thus, Israel did not need the protection of its territorial integrity by the United States. In addition, although the public opinion in the United States had not been ready for its participation, the Baghdad Pact was proven as a means of protection of security and peace in the region. On the other hand, Menderes added that there was no necessity for the United States to appease Egypt and Syria because they had already aligned with the Soviet Union. However, the encouragement of the non-communist Arab nations to join the Pact was urgent to provide "peace and stability" in the region." Menderes also stated that he could not understand why the United States deferred from formal participation to the Baghdad Pact although it had been "guiding genius" for NATO and SEATO.⁴²² The Iranian shah stated that the failure of United States' participation to the Pact might be interpreted as "its lack of confidence in Iran as a key player of the Northern Tier." Menderes ended his statements by saying that the Prime Ministers of the Baghdad

⁴²² Telegram from the Embassy in Iran to the Department of State. November 9, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.318-320.

Pact powers had agreed that the United States participation in the Baghdad Pact was essential to stand against the Soviet threat.⁴²³

Despite the attempts to put pressure on the United States in the meeting of the Baghdad Pact prime ministers, the United States policy remained unchanged. When the efforts of Menderes to refute the reservations of the United States regarding the adherence to the Pact are taken into consideration, it was not easy to persuade the United States due to the numerous reasons, which were enumerated in the National Security Council Report above. Rather than participation, the United States continued its efforts to publicize its support to the Pact and intensified its military and economic support of the Pact members.

On 29 November 1956; the Department of State issued a press release, in which the United States praised the Baghdad Pact countries “for their determination to uphold the United Nations Charter, to further a peaceful and lasting settlement of current Middle Eastern problems.”⁴²⁴ In the press release, it was asserted that the representatives of the Baghdad Pact members had met twice in the previous weeks “in order to bring to bear their influence and wisdom in the interest of the nations of the free world.” The United States reiterated its support to the Baghdad Pact and the efforts of these nations to retain their independence. At the end, it was stated that “a threat to the territorial integrity or political independence of the members would be viewed by the United States with the utmost gravity.”⁴²⁵

The United States supported the Baghdad Pact from the very beginning to the end. However, as it was understood that the role of the Baghdad Pact in the ideal defense grouping in accordance with the Northern Tier would be limited due to the

⁴²³ Telegram from the Embassy in Iran to the Department of State. November 9, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.318-320.

⁴²⁴ FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., p.360.

⁴²⁵ *ibid.*

reasons mentioned above, the United States government prepared some alternatives to the Baghdad Pact as complementary to the nucleus of the Pact.

The basic objective of the new grouping, which was systematized in December 1956, was to establish a new and larger body through the integration of the new states to the Baghdad Pact structure. In addition to the Pact members, i.e., Turkey, Iraq, the United Kingdom, Pakistan and Iran; Saudi Arabia and Lebanon might be the new members of the group. The attitude of Saudi Arabia, which joined the Egypt-Syria Axis right after the Baghdad Pact, was the key factor for such a grouping.⁴²⁶ In a memorandum from the assistant secretary of state for near eastern, south Asian and African affairs to the secretary of state, it was stated that:

King Saud is increasingly aware of the Communist menace, being particularly disturbed by the trend of events in Syria and Jordan. He is also increasingly distrustful of Nasser's ultimate objectives in the Arab world. His relations with Iraq have shown some improvement, and there seems to be real cordiality between him and the Pakistani leaders. These factors taken together provide a favorable atmosphere for pressing the merits of a new area grouping with Saud. His decision will, however, be based on his estimate of the extent of our interest in and potential assistance to the group and its members, particularly Saudi Arabia. The potential field of membership of the new grouping extends from Pakistan to westward to Morocco, excluding Israel. Initially, however, the founding members should invite only Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Yemen, Jordan and Syria to join. An invitation to Afghanistan would probably be rejected in view of that country's unresolved problems with Pakistan and its heavy economic involvement with the USSR.⁴²⁷

To sum up, the United States' major objective became to broaden the scope of the Baghdad Pact and the alliance in the Middle East. The project would not work, but the United States produced new projects based on military and economic

⁴²⁶ Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs (Rountree) to the Secretary of State. December 5, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.376-382.

⁴²⁷ *ibid.*

assistance of the United States in the region. The Eisenhower Doctrine⁴²⁸ became the major tool for trying to reach this goal.

On 5 January 1957, president Eisenhower presented to the US Congress his proposal for military and economic cooperation with the Middle East states, which desired such assistance. He emphasized the importance of the Middle East to the interests of the United States and warned of the danger posed by the Soviet Union to the area. He proposed that the Congress authorize the following actions:

Cooperation with and assistance to any nation or group of nations in the general area of the Middle East in the development of economic strength dedicated to the maintenance of national independence, programs of military assistance and cooperation with any nation or group of nations in the region that desired such aid, employment of the US armed forces to secure and protect the territorial integrity and political independence of nations requesting such aid against overt armed aggression from any nation controlled by international communism, employment, for economic and defense military purposes, of sums available under the Mutual Security Act of 1954 as amended, without regard to existing limitations.⁴²⁹

The Eisenhower Doctrine could be regarded as a tool to broaden the Middle East defense grouping by tempting the states through economic and military assistance and to take measures against the expansion of the Soviet Union, as had been seen in Egypt and Syria, through the same means of assistance.

The Eisenhower Doctrine failed in the region, especially the targeted countries of the “new” defense grouping. As was stated in the meeting of the United States National Security Council on 11 January 1957, the reactions of the Arab states and Israel were cautious. Syria and Jordan did not seem to be tempted by these proposals. Nasser ordered the Egyptian press to act prudently towards the president’s statements and it was supposed that Nasser expected such a declaration from the Soviet Union, which would “guarantee to protect all the Arab states and a massive

⁴²⁸ For a detailed analysis of the Eisenhower Doctrine, see Salim Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism: The Eisenhower Doctrine and the Middle East* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004.)

⁴²⁹ FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.437-438.

aid program to these states.” The Syrian attitude was supposed to be identical to that of Egypt. On the contrary, Lebanon and Iraq, however, appreciated the United States’ aid program as a result of the new policy. More importantly, the Israeli press was critical of the Eisenhower Doctrine in the sense that “it left too many problems - such as the Suez Canal- unsolved.”⁴³⁰

It can be argued that the new policy of the United States involved shortcomings and again faced the resistance of the interests of the states in the region. The United States government provided military and economic support both to the Baghdad Pact states and other states in the region which were willing to have closer relations with it.

The new policy and programme did not bring about the expected results, but the United States continued to support the Baghdad Pact. The basic tool was to cooperate in the military matters and support the member countries. During a visit to the Middle East region, the United States’ ambassador and the president Eisenhower’s special assistant, Richards, informed the Baghdad Pact governments confidentially and, beginning with Turkey, that the United States would join the Baghdad Pact Military Committee if it were invited by the Pact Ministerial Council. The ambassador emphasized that the proposed action was an indication of the willingness of the United States government to support the Pact countries against the Soviet Union. However, this proposal was to be kept secret and not be publicized until the participation took place.⁴³¹

The ambassador informed the Turkish prime minister, as was intended, that the United States wanted to join the Military Committee of the Baghdad Pact. Menderes replied and reiterated that the Turkish government was in favor of the full

⁴³⁰ FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.440-441.

⁴³¹ Circular Telegram from the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic Missions. March 12, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.459-460.

membership of the United States in the Baghdad Pact to bolster the security of the region. He added that Eisenhower's proposal could be regarded as a progressive step of the United States' participation in the Pact. The ambassador said that the proposals declared in the Eisenhower Doctrine were "far-reaching than Pact membership." Menderes replied that the Turkish government was aware of this, whereas the accession of the United States to the Pact would have a great influence on other states in the area and would cease any possible doubts that the United States did not really support the Pact.⁴³²

Upon these developments, the United States joined the Pact Military Committee in March 1957 with the invitation of the Pact Ministerial Council as it had joined the Pact Economic and Counter-Subversion Committees in April 1956. However, the United States avoided becoming a full member due to the reasons that have been discussed before. Until Iraq withdrew from the Pact in 1959 and the Pact turned into CENTO, the United States remained as an observer and sponsor. A memorandum sent from the deputy assistant secretary of defense to the secretary of state Dulles can be regarded as the best summary of the United States policy regarding the Baghdad Pact:

The Baghdad Pact is today the principal manifestation of the Northern Tier Concept... Although not a member of the Pact, the United States was largely responsible for its formation and has consistently given it strong moral and material support... The Pact members are concerned over the possibility of external aggression; in whatever forms it take... This concern of the Pact members is accentuated and twisted by the play of each member's national interests. In addition, all Pact governments are weak economically and politically and each wishes to increase its economic development and political longevity at the same time that it builds military strength. For such reasons the Pact members will undoubtedly continue to press the United States for more military assistance. I believe the United States will be susceptible such pressure for several reasons: because of the entry of the USSR into the Middle East and the volatile political situation throughout

⁴³² Telegram from the President's Special Assistant (Richards) to the Delegation at the Bermuda Conference. March 21, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.462-463.

the area; because of your encouragement of and increasing participation in Pact military planning and our pledged support of the Pact; and because of the counter-attraction of neutralism if we appear to falter in our support.⁴³³

The attitudes and policies of the Allies, especially, the United States, have been discussed so far. However, in order to better understand the context of Middle East politics regarding the great powers, the attitude and policy of the Soviet Union should also be taken into consideration.

The Baghdad Pact and the Soviet Union

The Soviet Union viewed the Baghdad Pact as an indication of capitalist imperialism and as a threat to it in the Southern borders, regarding Turkey and Iran. The United States' ambassador in Moscow, Bohlen, made some statements in the US Department of State in April 1956. Although his observations were speculative, they could be regarded as indications of the Soviet policy regarding the Middle East. Bohlen stated that the Soviet Union began to move diplomatically into areas, which had not reached before. He added that he was not sure that the Soviet Union wanted communist regimes in the countries of the Middle East.⁴³⁴

It is important to note here that, as it will be discussed under the topic "Egypt and the Baghdad Pact," the countries which had closer contacts with the Soviet Union were not inclined to have communist regimes, either. More importantly, the ambassador noted that, "the Soviet Union was already in the Middle East and the problem was to control and counteract in the area, not how to keep them out of it."

⁴³³ Memorandum from the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Irwin) to Secretary of State Dulles. February 28, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.12..i.8., pp.42-45.

⁴³⁴ Memorandum of Conversation, Department of State, Washington. April 13, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., pp.278-279.

Moreover, he said that “the Soviet Union did not want war in the area because of the danger of such a war spreading.”⁴³⁵

Regarding the Arab-Israeli War, he stated that “due to their inexperience, the Soviets oversimplify and probably feel that an Arab-Israeli War could not break out if the UK and the US did not wish it to.” Regarding the Baghdad Pact, the ambassador said that “the Soviets really fear the potentialities of the Pact, and the establishment of the Pact may have triggered their move on the arms deal... The accession of Iran really worried them.”⁴³⁶

Although they were supposed to be speculative, the statements of the United States ambassador shed light on the Soviet perception of the Baghdad Pact and developments in the Middle East. Moreover, the Soviet Union could enter the region, as the ambassador stated, through the demands of the pro-Soviet countries, i.e., Egypt and Syria which moved away from the West and conducted closer relations with the Soviet Union after the signing of the Baghdad Pact. These states enabled the Soviet Union to be an actor in Middle Eastern affairs in return for the Soviet military and economic support that enabled them to be the forerunners of neutralism and Arab nationalism.

After a short discussion of the attitude of the Soviet Union, the positions and policies of the Pact members and the other states in the region in the period following the Baghdad Pact can be analyzed.

The Baghdad Pact and Turkey

Turkey was the keystone of the Middle East Defense system and the Baghdad Pact. The United States and the United Kingdom encouraged and supported Turkey

⁴³⁵ Memorandum of Conversation, Department of State, Washington. April 13, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., pp.278-279.

⁴³⁶ *ibid.*

to lead the process. In return, Turkey appropriated the project as its own design and put pressure on Iraq to negotiate and sign the agreement. After the signing of the Baghdad Pact, the major concern of Turkey was to expand its zone of influence and to persuade the United States to join the Pact. However, in accordance with its policy regarding the region, which has been discussed in detail above, the United States refrained from becoming full member of the Baghdad Pact. In time, this strategy caused resentment and disappointment in Turkey.

A telegram which was sent from the United States' embassy in Turkey to the Department of State illustrates the Turkish attitude towards the United States' Middle East policy. The ambassador stated that the officials in Turkey were discouraged and confused after the developments in the region. This perception stemmed from the "hands-off" attitude of the United States towards the Middle East and the establishment of the rival "Egyptian-Syrian-Saudi" Pact," which will be discussed, and the ignorance of the United States to this Pact. More importantly, according to the ambassador, the confusion resulted from the indifference of the United States in contrast to its previous "fervent support of the Northern Tier concept", which had been demonstrated during the processes of the Turkish-Pakistani and Turkish-Iraqi Pacts. Therefore, Turkey felt that the United States "disowned her own child." The Baghdad Pact, which would be more practical and realistic than the former attempts such as the Middle East Command and the Middle East Defense Organization, was not appropriated by the United States and this caused uneasiness on the Turkish side.⁴³⁷ The policy change and the new grouping attempts can be regarded as one of the basic reasons of the resentment of the United States' policy in Turkey.

⁴³⁷ Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State. May 21, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., pp.55-56.

On the other hand, Menderes expressed his views in line with the statements of the United States ambassador in Ankara. A conversation between Menderes, and Eisenhower's special assistant, Richards, was as follows:

The Prime Minister stressed that Turkey is primarily interested in the Middle East security, but felt that the US should look to its friends first, consider the uncommitted states second, and disregard the opposition states. Richards said that these priorities are understood in the US, but we feel that encouragement to the weaker states might have a tonic effect. Richards announced US willingness to join the Baghdad Pact Military Committee if invited and referred to the regional projects in terms of our financial limitations. He also declared US willingness to supplement the Turk military program. Seager conducted economic talks with the Turks but they requested no additional aid. The Turks were pleased by the Baghdad Pact announcement through them and further flattered by Richards' request for comments on other Middle East states, which they gave freely.⁴³⁸

After the conversation, Richards reported that he "was impressed by the Turks, admired their self-confidence and steadiness, their strength of character, and their open-eyed attitude with few delusions."⁴³⁹ However, he added that "it would be an error to assume that they are pliable and always responsive. They have chartered their own road and intend to follow it. They are more ready to listen us in foreign than in internal affairs, as in divergences over anti-inflation."⁴⁴⁰

The statements of the special assistant Richards imply significant points. Firstly, the change of policy and indifference of the United States towards the Baghdad Pact disappointed Turkey. Deriving from this, it can be argued that the involvement of Turkey in the Middle Eastern defense system was to play the leadership role, despite the resistance of Egypt and even Iraq, and, more importantly, to secure more economic and military aid from the United States, especially in the following period, when the severe economic crises in the Turkish economy began to

⁴³⁸ Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs (Rountree) to the Secretary of State. April 4, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., pp.487-488.

⁴³⁹ *ibid.*

⁴⁴⁰ *ibid.*

be chronic. Accordingly, the Turkish officials specifically the prime minister Menderes tried very hard to convince the United States government to be a full member of the Pact.

In a conversation with the US president in the US embassy in Paris, Menderes said that the US full membership would be “very helpful” in the sense that it would strengthen the Middle East against Communism and would curb the impact of Arab neutralism. The president replied that the United States had carefully studied the participation to the Baghdad Pact. The United States was a member of the Pact “in all but name” and the secretary of state might attend the Meeting in Tehran. The Saudi and Jordanian opposition to the Pact was taken seriously by the United States and it was trying “to calm their fears.”⁴⁴¹

As the first original signatory of the Baghdad Pact, Turkey was a major factor in the process. With the support and encouragement of the United States and in coherence to its policy objectives, i.e., to provide the security and the economic and military development of the country, Turkey was actively involved in the process as was discussed in detail above. Despite the opposition arose in the region, the Baghdad Pact process accomplished. After the analysis of the policies and reactions from the outsiders, the attitudes of the domestic actors in Turkey towards the Pact should be clarified to complement the picture.

The Baghdad Pact in the Turkish Parliament and Press

During the discussions on the ratification of the Baghdad Pact, the representatives of the opposition parties expressed their views. The representative of the RPP, Nüvit Yetkin, stated that despite the tensions and conflicts in domestic

⁴⁴¹ Memorandum of a Conversation, US Embassy Residence, Paris. December 18, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., pp.673-674.

politics, his party supported the government's policy, including that concerning the Middle East, which was committed to the preservation of the world peace. In the same vein, he stated that the government was acting in accordance with Turkey's alliances and friendships and was conducting efforts to reach its foreign policy objectives.⁴⁴²

The leader of the Republican Nation Party, which had been established in 1954, Osman Bölükbaşı, stated that in accordance with the United Nations Charter and the North Atlantic Treaty, the RNP was in favor of the establishment of cordial and peaceful relations with the Middle Eastern states, which had recognized the independence of Turkey. Moreover, the RNP supported the policy of the Democrat Party government in accordance with this policy. Therefore, the treaty, which had been signed with the "ally and brother" Iraq was the positive result of the policy of the government. His party hoped that this treaty would serve the peace and security in the region. He said that he was to congratulate the government as the result of the Pact. More importantly, there was no divergence from the government in relation to the Baghdad Pact and the Republican Nation Party would vote in favor of the treaty.⁴⁴³

⁴⁴² "Arkadaşlarımız; iç siyasetimizde bu elim huzursuzluklara mukabil dış siyasette hükümetlerimizin dünya sulhuna bağlılık, bunun tahakkuku uğrunda gayret ve fedakarlık, sulh ve demokrasi cephesinde taahhütlerimize ve dostluklarımıza sadakat düsturlarından kuvvet alan dış politika anlayışında iktidarla ittifak halinde bulunmaktan ve onun bu sahada gayretlerine müzahir olmaktan milletçe aldığımız kuvvet ve duyduğumuz iftihar bir kere daha belirtmek isteriz..." Republic of Turkey. *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*. term 10, session 42, vol.5, 18 February 1955, p.231.

⁴⁴³ "Muhterem arkadaşlar, Birleşmiş Milletler ideali dairesinde ve NATO çerçevesi içinde, kolektif güvene müstenit barışçı ve dürüst bir siyaset takibedilmesini, memleket menfaatlerine en uygun yol saydığımızı ve bu vadede şimdiye kadar intacına muvaffak olunan anlaşmalar ve karşılıklı yardımlaşmalar yanında... Ortadoğu memleketleri sahasında da bir güvenlik kurulması hususunda son zamanlarda iktidarca sarf edilen mesainin müspet neticeler vermesini temenni ettiğimizi... ifade etmiştik. Dost ve kardeş Irak'la yapılan ve sulhçu ve tedafii bir maksat taşıyan ve taahhütlerimizi mahfuz tutan bu anlaşmayı bu vadedeki gayretlerin ilk semeresi olarak karşıladığımızı ve hükümeti bu başarıdan dolayı tebrik ettiğimizi ifadeden zevk duyuyoruz. Bu vesile ile bir kere daha belirtmek isteriz ki, dış politikamızın milli bir mahiyet almış olan gaye ve prensiplerinde iktidarla aramızda bir

Like the RNP, the RPP's attitude was positive towards the Baghdad Pact, despite some reservations. The representative Turgut Göle stated that the aim of the treaty between Turkey and Iraq was to provide closer relations and cooperation. He was happy to say that the two states had agreed to extend their relations to strengthen their capabilities to provide security and defense. However, there were some points in the treaty that needed further clarification. The treaty did not include military commitments that might be automatically conducted for both sides. On the other hand, the measures that would be taken to bolster the cooperation between the two states were allocated to the jurisdiction of the government. Therefore, it was understood that possible military commitments were not under the jurisdiction of the government, which was the duty of the Parliament to decide. Article 4 of the treaty determined the bilateral commitments, but they did not seem consistent with the NATO commitments of Turkey. This was an urgent matter which should be clarified by the government. The RPP considered the Turkish-Iraqi treaty to be a "peace treaty." Thus, there should not be any commitment against any state in the region. Lastly, he congratulated the government with having stated the hope that the treaty would serve for the peace and the solution of disputes in the region.⁴⁴⁴

görüş farkı yoktur... Bu görüşlere sahip bulunan C.M.P Meclis Grubu bu anlaşmaya müspet oy verecektir. Bunu da arz ederiz."

Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, term 10, session 50, vol.5, 26 February 1955., p.811.

⁴⁴⁴ "Muhterem arkadaşlar, Irak'la yapılan Andlaşma iki memleketin arasında yakın münasebet ve işbirliği temin etmeyi hedef tutmuştur. Öteden beri aralarında dostluk ve itimat hüküm süren iki memleketin münasebetlerini emniyet ve müdafaa hususlarının icapları kadar genişletmeleri memnuniyetle kaydolunacak mesut bir hadisedir. Andlaşmanın bazı hususi karakterlerini kaydetmeyi lüzumlu görüyoruz. Andlaşma Taraflar için otomatik işliyen bir askeri taahhüt mahiyetini taşımamaktadır. Buna mukabil iş birliğinin tahakkuk ve tatbikini temin maksadıyla alınması gereken tedbirleri hükümet kararıyla derhal tatbik mevkiine koymak salahiyeti verilmiştir. Öyle anlıyoruz ki hükümete verilen salahiyetler otomatik askeri taahhüdüün veya Anayasanın Büyük Meclise hasrettiği salahiyetler hududuna karışamaz. Andlaşmanın dördüncü maddesi Tarafların bugün mevcut olan taahhütleri ile münasebetini izah ediyor. Maruf tabiri ile mevcut taahhütler için ihtirazi kayıtlar dercetmektedir. Bu kayıtlar bizim NATO içindeki hak ve vecibelerimizi koruyan bir vuzuh taşımadığı intibainı alıyoruz. Hükümetin açıklamasını lüzumlu buluyoruz. Irak Andlaşmasını

Upon the speech of the representative of the RPP, the minister of foreign affairs, Köprülü, made a speech in order to clarify the arguments of Turgut Göle. He replied the statements of Göle and stated that the agreement, which had been prepared in accordance with the Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, was a “cooperation agreement.” In addition, there were not any hidden commitments as had been implied by the representative of the RPP as the DP government had not done so before. The states in the region and the West recognized the transparency of Turkish foreign policy. He said that he wished such a policy, which was trusted by the outsiders, would provide the trust of the opposition party. The DP government did not intend to bypass the Parliament, which was responsible for the foreign affairs especially the declaration of war, in conflict with the Constitution. Moreover, Article 4 of the treaty was clear as opposed to the accusations of the representative of the RPP. The Article was not contradictory to Turkey’s commitments in NATO.⁴⁴⁵

After the discussions in the Parliament and the explanations of the minister of foreign affairs, the Baghdad Pact was ratified with the support of the opposition parties.

bir sulh eseri telakki ediyoruz. Bu itibarla Orta-Doğu’da diğer bir devlet aleyhine her hangi bir maksadı bulunmamasını tabii sayıyoruz. Andlaşmanın Orta-Doğu’da sulh içinde beraberlik temini ve ihtilafların kaldırılması için faydalı olmasını temenni eder hükümeti bu başarısından dolayı tebrik ederiz.”

Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, term 10, session 50, vol.5, 26 February 1955., pp.811-812.

⁴⁴⁵ “...Birleşmiş Milletler Andlaşmasının 51nci maddesine istinaden hukukan vücuda getirilmiş olan bu Andlaşma, tabiatıyla, ancak tedafüi bir ittifak Andlaşması mahiyetindedir. Bu bir. İkincisi, biliyorsunuz ki, hükümetimiz anlaşmalar yaparken hiçbir zaman, altında, gizli manalar yahut gizli taahhütler, yahut da o şekilde tefsire müsait kaçamaklı ifadeler kullanmasını asla sevmez ve asla yapmaz. Bütün dünya bizim siyasetimizin bu açıklığına kani olmuş bulunuyor. Dost ve düşman bunu açıkça bilmektedir. Bütün dünyaya itimat telkin etmiş bir siyasetin C.H.Partili arkadaşlarıma da aynı itimadı telkin etmiş olmasını çok isterdim. Anayasa, bildiğiniz gibi, dünyanın bildiği gibi, memleketin, devletin temelidir. Ona muhalif hareket, hiçbir fertten ve hiçbir hükümetten elbette beklenemez...NATO’daki vaziyetimiz pek vazıh değildir, diyorlar. Dördüncü madde tamamıyla vazıhtır. Tamamıyla sarihtir...”

Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, term 10, session 50, vol.5, 26 February 1955., p.812.

In the press, Mümtaz Faik Fenik wrote an article in *Zafer* in praise of the efforts of the government and to support the signing of the Pact. In the article, “The Signing of the Baghdad Pact” (*Bağdat Paktı'nın İmzası*), Fenik stated that, for the government, the Baghdad Pact was very significant because Turkey and Iraq were close friends and the Baghdad Pact was an indicator of this friendship. Despite the propaganda against the Pact that stemmed from Egypt and the Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Iraq resolutely had continued the negotiations and signed the Pact which would strengthen the NATO defense in the Middle East.⁴⁴⁶

In *Son Posta*, Selim Ragıp Emeç supported and praised the Baghdad Pact, calling it a “diplomatic masterpiece.” He stated that despite the negative efforts of the Egyptian government, the Baghdad Pact had been signed. The Pact was not against the Arab Union and it was open to all the states in the region except the ones who had aggressive intentions. It would serve the peace and stability in the region. He also emphasized that the Turkish and Iraqi governments, which signed the Pact after having overcome all difficulties, should be praised.⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴⁶ “*Büyük Millet Meclisi'nde bütçe müzakerelerinin hararetle devam ettiği bir sırada, Başvekilimizin böyle bir seyahate çıkmış olması, Türkiye'nin Irak'la olan ittifaka ve bu işin mümkün olan süratle neticelenmesine ne kadar büyük bir ehemmiyet atfettiğini açıkça gösterir. Zaten birbirleriyle dost olan ve aralarında hiçbir ihtilaf mevzuu bulunmayan iki Devlet, bu ittifakla artık herhangi bir taarruz karşısında tam bir mukadderat birliği yapacaklar ve birbirlerinin kuvvetini tamamlayacaklardır. Bundan dolayı ne kadar sevinsek yeridir. Irak'la ittifak meselesi ortaya atıldığından beri bu mevzuda yapılan menfi propagandalar, hatta paktı baltalamak için sarfedilen korkunç gayretler cümlelerin malumudur. Mısır'dan ve onun teşvikiyle Suudi Arabistan'dan gelen bütün tepkilere rağmen Irak'ın bu işi azimle yürütmüş olması ve bu kadar kısa bir zamanda bu neticeye varılması her türlü sitayişin üstündedir... Türkiye bu son pakt dolayısıyla NATO'nun müdafaa çemberine yeni bir zırh daha ilave etmiş ve bu manzumenin geyretlerini bir kat daha kuvvetlendirmiştir... Yine Türkiye Pakistan'la bir ittifak yapmış ve barış cephesinin bir kolunu Hind okyanusuna ve Himalayalara kadar tahdit etmiştir...Mısır'ın idraki dardır ve hesabı yanlıştır çünkü mevhum bir liderlik uğrunda istiklal ve Hürriyet gibi mukaddes mevhumlar feda edilemez. Edilirse neticesi büyük bir hüsrana olur.*”
Zafer, 25 February 1955.

⁴⁴⁷ “*Bazı Arap birliği memleketlerinin ve bu arada bilhassa Mısır hükümetinin bütün menfi gayretlerine rağmen Türk-Irak Paktı artık bir emir vakidir ve bu satırların intizar ettiği anda da yürürlüğe girmiş bulunmaktadır... Bu pakt ne Arap birliği aleyhinedir ne de tecavüzi bir mahiyeti haizdir... Bu da gösterir ki Büyük Millet Meclisi'nin dünkü Cumartesi büyük bir*

Cumhuriyet also supported the Baghdad Pact and criticized the reaction of the Arab states to the Pact. Nadir Nadi stated that the Baghdad Pact would force Turkey to defend the Arab world and the free world. This would make Turkey much more responsible politically and militarily in the region. Therefore, the reaction of the Arab world was inexplicable. However, Egypt's reaction was the reflection of the perception of threat to its leadership in the Arab world from Turkey. Therefore, Egypt was any the collaboration between the Arab states and Turkey.⁴⁴⁸

The position of *Ulus* was expected to be supportive in the light of its approach to Democrat Party's Middle East policy, but the issues regarding the Pact could not be found at the Atatürk and Beyazıt Libraries.

Journal *Akis*⁴⁴⁹ supported the Baghdad Pact. In an article after the signature of the Pact it stated that the Baghdad Pact was similar to the Turkish-Pakistani Pact and Turkey had made a great contribution to the West by saving the Arab Union and the Middle East from the pressure of Nasser's Egypt. The policy of Egypt was

tezahürat ile kabul ve tasdik ettiği anlaşma, sadece mütearriz emeller besleyen ve bu emellerin tahakkukunu temenni eden memleketler dışında bütün Ortadoğu milletlerinin ve bu arada sulh davasının hayrına ve faydasıdır. Böyle bir anlaşmanın akdi lüzumuna inanarak en gayri müsaıt gibi zannolunan şartlar içinde onun tahakkuku için bütün zorlukları yenmesini bilen Türk ve Irak devletleri bu müşterek ve muvaffak eserlerinden dolayı ne derece takdir ve tebrik edilseler yine azdır.” Son Posta, 27 February 1955.

⁴⁴⁸ “Irak anlaşması ile Türkiye kendinden ziyade Arap alemini ve ondan sonra demokrasi dünyasının can damarını müdafaaya çalışmaktadır ve Irak anlaşması belki de Türkiye'ye daha fazla siyasi ve askeri külfetler yükleyecektir. Bundan memnun olması gereken Arap alemi ve Mısır neden ayaklanmış? Mısır, büyük askeri kuvvetleri bulunan Türkiye'nin adeta himaye eder gibi Arap alemine girmesini kendi liderlik ümitlerinin tahakkukuna engel görmektedir... Mısır bunun için Arapların Türkiye ile anlaşmasını istemez ve istemeyecektir...”

Cumhuriyet, 26 January 1955.

⁴⁴⁹ *Akis* was as closely engaged with the RPP, especially after the editor of the journal, Metin Toker, became son-in-law of İnönü in 1955, as *Ulus* and acted as the spokesperson of İnönü. The articles in *Akis* were critical of government's Middle East policy especially in the years of crises.

harshly criticized and Iraq was praised as a result of the agreement with Turkey. The Baghdad Pact was called a successful development in the region.⁴⁵⁰

On the other hand, the Baghdad Pact was implicitly criticized by the journal *Forum*⁴⁵¹. It was stated that although Turkey was the “natural leader” of the Middle East, the Pact would provoke the Arabs and cause resentment and hostility against Turkey. The reactions following the Pact were not surprising and they should have been calculated before. The basic reasons for these reactions were the impact of Arab nationalism and the rivalry of prestige among the Arab leaders. Therefore, the

⁴⁵⁰ “*Türk-İrak Paktı etrafında aşırı bir gürültünün koparılmış olduğu şüphesizdir. Bunun, nazarları iç politikadan dış politikaya çekmek gayretinden mühlhem bulunduğu da meçhul değildir. Zira haddi zatında Türk-İrak paktının Türk-Pakistan paktından daha ileri bir tarafı yoktur. Fakat Irak ile ittifak akdetmekle Türkiye Batı alemine hizmetlerin en büyüğünü yapmakta, Arap Birliği’ni ve Ortadoğu’yu Mısır’ın elinde bir şantaj vasıtası olmaktan kurtarmaktadır. Hakikaten Süveyş meselesini Arap birliği kozu ile hallettiğini unutmayan Kahire hükümeti bu birliği daima istismar etmiştir. Şimdi de batı ile yeniden masa başına oturup Kuzey Afrika’dan Yemen çöllerine kadar bütün Arap aleminin davalarında bir pazarlığa girişmek niyetindedir. Hatta bu pazarlıktan karlı çıkabilmek için Sovyetlere yaklaşmaya bile hazırdır. Yahut hiç olmazsa Nehru’nun tarafsızlık politikasını güdecektir. Halbuki burnunun hemen dibinde tehlike bulunan Arap aleminin daha dikkatli davranması sadece kendileri değil, bizim için de adeta bir zarurettir. Irak bunu anlayarak uzatılan eli hararetle sıkışmış, böylece Arap birliğinin, Mısır’ın şantaj vasıtası olarak kalmasını da önlemiştir. Batılılar için uzun zamandır bir dert kaynağı olan Arap Birliği korkuluğunu, Türkiye yere sermiş ve hakiki maksatları ortaya çıkardığı gibi bu paktın en kuvvetli unsurlarını batıya kazandırmak yolunu da tutmuştur. O tatil günü Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi’nde verilen 449 beyaz rey –tam ittifak- işte bu muvaffak politikanın milletçe tasvibi manasını taşıyordu.”*

Akis, 5 March 1955.

⁴⁵¹ *Forum* was published between 1954 and 1970. It was a platform for the opposition against the Democrat Party’s anti-democratic policies. The journal was in favor of the Western type democracy and institutions. The first publisher of the journal was Nilüfer Yalçın. It was first published on 1 April 1954. Bahri Savcı, Osman Okyar, Bedii Feyzioğlu, Aydın Yalçın, Turhan Feyzioğlu, Turan Güneş, Nilüfer Yalçın, Bülent Ecevit, Kemal Salih, Nejat Tunçsiper, Cavit Erginsoy, Mukbil Özyörük, Ziya Müezzinoğlu, Yaşar Karayalçın, Kudret Ayiter and Akif Erginay were the prominent figures who wrote articles in the journal. Diren Çakmak, *Forum Dergisi 1954-1960* (İstanbul: Libra Yayıncılık, 2010), pp.93-96.

Regarding the Middle East, *Forum* was in favor of Arab nationalism in the Middle East and proposed that Turkey should conduct closer and friendlier relations with the Arab nations rather than having engaged to the Western powers to the disadvantage of the Arabs. On the other hand, Turkey’s Middle East policy was supported and not explicitly criticized by the writers in the journal. As happened in *Ulus* and *Akis*, the developments and crises in the second half of the 1950s were a turning point in the position of *Forum* and more critical articles began to appear. In the column “Notes of the Fifteen Days” (*15 Günün Notları*) and in the articles of Mümtaz Soysal, the Middle East policy of the Democrat Party were evaluated and criticized.

Baghdad Pact had ignited hostility against Turkey in the Arab world, especially in Egypt and Syria.⁴⁵²

Consequently, the Baghdad Pact and government's policy regarding the Pact was supported by the opposition in the Parliament and the press despite some reservations.

The Baghdad Pact and Iraq

Iraq was the other original signatory of the Baghdad Pact, which was of vital importance for the Allies. Nevertheless, the membership of Iraq in the Baghdad Pact ended earlier. The coup d'état in Iraq on 14 July 1958, which will be discussed in detail below, toppled the government and the policy of Iraq towards the Baghdad Pact changed with the new government, which was closer to the neutralist camp. As a result, Iraq withdrew from the Pact in 1959.

Upon the change of the government, the Pact powers needed to decide what they would do in the future. Regarding the future of the Baghdad Pact, the heads of state of Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan reached the conclusion that it was vital for the

⁴⁵² “Türk-İrak Paktının hazırlanma safhasında bariz engellerle karşılaşılmağı olması bu anlaşmanın sonradan ortaya çıkardığı akislere az çok bir sürpriz mahiyetini vermiştir. Fakat son günlerde birbirini takip eden ve Ortadoğunun sükunetini ihlal eden hadiselere bir sürpriz olarak bakmak yerinde midir? Bu beklenilmedik aksülamel evvela Mısır'da belirmiş sonra İsrail'e sirayet etmiş ve nihayet kendini Suriye'nin mütecavizane tavrında göstermiştir. Gerçekten Türk-İrak Paktı bu üç memleketin mukadderatına alakalıdır ve bu memleketlerin gösterdikleri reaksiyon paktın kendi siyasetlerine dokunan tarafı ile ilgilidir...Türk Irak Paktı'nın yarattığı akisleri evvelden kestirmek belki de zordu. Herhalde anlaşmanın doğurduğu reaksiyonu önceden teferruatına görmek imkansızdı fakat yakındoğu'daki vaziyetin gayet nazik olduğu şeklindeki umumi mülahaza herkesin bildiği bir hakikattir. Tahminimize göre, burada beklenilmedik bir aksülamelle karşılaşmış olmak doğrudan doğruya bu nazik kelimesinin bugün için ne ifade ettiğini anlamamanın doğurduğu bir vaziyettir. Bu aksülamellerin kendilerini gösterdikleri bütün memleketlerde en ehemmiyetli faktör, bu memleket halklarının şu veya bu sebeplerden dolayı gayet patlayıcı bir unsur haline gelmiş olmalarıdır... Kendi prestijlerini sarsacak herhangi bir hareket bu liderleri endişeye düşürecektir. Binaenaleyh burada zahiri hareket hattının büyük bir ehemmiyeti vardır. Türkiye'nin zaten Yakın Doğu'nun önderi iken, bu kadar bariz bir şekilde önderliğini ilan eden bir hareketinin, bu memleketlerde önder rolündekileri korkutacağı beklenebilirdi. Bugün Mısır ve Suriye'de gördüğümüz tepki tamamen bunun neticesidir.” Forum, 1 April 1955.

Pact powers to hold a meeting with the participation of the United States immediately. They stated that the necessity of such a meeting resulted from the events in Baghdad, which was significant for the Middle East and the “free world.” The support of the close ally, the United States was important and such an “extraordinary” meeting needed to be held as soon as possible at any appropriate place.⁴⁵³ The Pact powers met with the United States, and the decision to leave Iraq to itself and not put any pressure was made. The Pact remained valid because of the clause that stated “even in case of a withdrawal of one Pact member, the Pact would continue to be valid for the other members.” Iraq did not withdraw from the Pact immediately.

Upon the possibility of the withdrawal of Iraq from the Pact, the officials of the United States began to formulate alternative policies regarding the regional security arrangements in the Middle East. There were four approaches:

To encourage the Pact members to dissolve the Baghdad Pact, to encourage the remaining members to preserve the “Northern Tier” concept by continuing the Pact without Iraq, to encourage continuation of the Pact without US-UK membership, not only encourage continuation of the Pact, but agree to join it at an appropriate time.⁴⁵⁴

The debits and credits of these alternatives were evaluated. The first alternative was dissolving the Pact and the argument for this possibility was as follows:

Since the inception of the Baghdad Pact many Arabs have viewed it as a mere cover for Western efforts to divide and dominate the area, to challenge Egyptian leadership in the area and to minimize the importance of the Israeli threat. There has also been opposition to the Pact on the ground that it increases the risk of bringing WWII to the area. Dissolution of the pact would diminish a major source of the Arab belief that the United States was opposed to the objectives of Arab nationalism. Such action would gain for the United States new freedom for maneuver in the Near East. Turkey, Iran and

⁴⁵³ Telegram from the Consulate General at Istanbul to the Department of State. July 17, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.12. i.8., p.78.

⁴⁵⁴ Paper Prepared by the National Security Council Planning Board. July 29, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.12.i.8., pp.120-121.

Pakistan could rely instead upon bilateral arrangements and existing NATO and SEATO commitments. Moreover, dissolution of the pact could reduce demands for United States military assistance based upon Pact force goals.⁴⁵⁵

The second alternative was to preserve the Pact with its remaining membership and the argument for this possibility was as follows:

It would be a mistake to dissolve the Pact, for its elimination has been a major objective of the USSR and UAR policy and its dissolution would represent a major victory for them. Dissolution could also have very adverse effects upon the confidence of Turkey, Iran and Pakistan in the desirability of continuing to follow a policy of military and political commitment. The pact remains an important element in Western collective security arrangements and must be preserved. On the other hand, it would be a mistake for the United States to join the Pact at present because to do so would increase tensions in the area and make solution of immediate problems more difficult.⁴⁵⁶

The third alternative was the preservation of the Northern Tier concept without United Kingdom participation and the argument for this possibility was as follows:

Elimination of the UK from the Pact would help to remove its “imperialist coloration” and would be welcomed by Iran. Such action might also give the remaining Pact members more of a feeling of running their own affairs, even though it might lead, particularly in the case of Iran, to some reduction in Western influence in their military planning. If the UK were eliminated from the membership of the Pact, there would be greater pressure on the US to join.⁴⁵⁷

The last alternative was the participation of the United States into the Pact.

The argument for US membership was as follows:

With the elimination of Iraq from the Pact, the only Arab member, the bases of the previous objections to US membership in the Baghdad Pact have been largely eliminated. US adherence now could be an important means of reassuring Turkey, Iran and Pakistan of our continued interest in the area and our continuing determination to resist Communist aggression.⁴⁵⁸

Ultimately, the Baghdad Pact was not dissolved and the United States did not join the Pact, either. After the withdrawal of Iraq, the Pact was turned into the

⁴⁵⁵ Paper Prepared by the National Security Council Planning Board. July 29, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.12.i.8., pp.120-121.

⁴⁵⁶ *ibid.*

⁴⁵⁷ *ibid.*

⁴⁵⁸ *ibid.*

Central Treaty Organization and existed until the late 1970s, as will be discussed below.

The Baghdad Pact and Pakistan

Pakistan did not participate in the Baghdad Pact negotiations between Turkey and Iraq in 1955. However, it joined the alliance on 23 September 1955. Pakistan had already signed a treaty of cooperation with Turkey in 1954 and its joining to the Baghdad Pact completed the Turkish-Pakistani Pact and enabled Pakistan to secure the support of the United States.

The intention of Pakistan, as its prime minister stated was to establish a unity of the Moslem states which was different from that of the “purely” Arab states. The targeted states were the four Baghdad Pact countries except the United Kingdom and Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and the ones in Africa such as Morocco, Tunisia, Libya and Sudan and probably Ethiopia although it was not “distinctively” a Muslim state. More importantly, the Pakistani prime minister intended to bring Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Lebanon together with the Baghdad Pact. He said that Lebanon seemed to be ready for such cooperation, but she could not act alone. On the other hand, Egypt and Syria were not parts of the Pakistani plans because “they were isolating themselves from the Moslem world as a result of their community with the Communists.”⁴⁵⁹

The intentions of the Pakistani prime minister were similar to those of the United States in that they formulated a new grouping in the Middle East that has been discussed before. Nevertheless, these plans were realized because of the differences of the attitudes of the Arab states.

⁴⁵⁹ Memorandum of Conversation Between Secretary of State Dulles and Prime Minister Suhrawardy, Department of State, Washington. July 10, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.556-557.

The Baghdad Pact and Iran

As mentioned before, the Iranian attitude towards the Baghdad Pact was positive. However, the priority of the Iranian government was the development of Iranian economic and military power rather than the initial participation in the Pact. Iran joined the Baghdad Pact on 3 November 1955. The developments which paved the way the Iranian accession are important to emphasize.

The arms aid agreement between the Soviet Union and Egypt, which was after the Baghdad Pact, had strong repercussions in the region and set a precedent for the relations of the states with the West. Iran was no exception. The Iranian government informed the United States, it was ready to join the Pact if the United States assured that it would bolster the Iranian economic and military potential. The initial response of the United States was somewhat confused. The secretary of state, Dulles, did not intend to promise the United States' support that Iran wanted. The reason cited was the "shortage of the money and material for such support." However, the Iranian request was not rejected, either. This stemmed from the fact that the United States did not want to encourage the Soviet Union to approach Iran in case of a power vacuum in the area, which was vital for the interests of the West, i.e., the Iranian oil resources. Dulles stated that they had still "great hopes that the relations between the Soviet Union and Egypt could be held to a minimum of significance." The United States did not give up trying to persuade Iran to join the Baghdad Pact.⁴⁶⁰

In the meantime, Iran secured the support of the United States for the development of its economic and military development despite the limitedness of this

⁴⁶⁰ Memorandum of Conversation at the 260th Meeting of the National Security Council, Washington. October 6, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., pp.158-168.

support and joined the Baghdad Pact. Nevertheless, the Iranian government continued its demands. In the third meeting of the Baghdad Pact's Ministerial Council in 1956, the Iranian Husein Ala expressed his appreciation of the progress of the Baghdad Pact since its establishment. He stated that the pact two related goals, "to increase the defensive capability of member states in order to be able to deter aggression, and take effective steps to improve conditions of people and raise their standard of living." He added that, however, most members of the Pact including Iran were short of the necessary resources to reach these objectives. The powers that were assisting the free countries might pay greater attention to the Baghdad Pact members and increased aid to neutralists could only cause "doubts among members." "True and loyal allies" needed to be considered. He said that Iran was in need of foreign capital and knowhow in order to accomplish its domestic program which included "balancing budget which it is hoped can be done in 3 years time, educational program to wipe out illiteracy, encouraging public health and sanitation ... the modernizing agricultural methods, encouraging development of the industries and mining."⁴⁶¹

At the same meeting, the Iraqi prime minister Nuri Said spoke similarly. He argued that even though the Pact was defensive, its economic aspects were growing and there was a public demand for the economic development in the Pact members. He added that, however, domestic resources were not adequate to meet both military and economic commitments of the Baghdad Pact members. He also demanded the increase in "outside" economic and military aid.⁴⁶²

⁴⁶¹ Telegram from the Embassy in Iran to the Department of State. April 18, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.286-292.

⁴⁶² *ibid.*

Pakistani representative Mohammed Ali acted similarly with his Iranian and Iraqi counterparts and emphasized the necessity of the increase of economic and military aid of the United States.⁴⁶³

The US representative at the Meeting replied that the United States had already had security arrangements with the member governments to build up effective military forces without burdening these states' economies with military costs and that the United States would continue this policy.⁴⁶⁴

These conversations clearly show the aims of the states to use the Baghdad Pact or any defensive buildup as leverage for their interests, including their domestic politics. The basic strategy of the United States, however, was to establish a defense structure through providing military aid without making commitments beyond these promises. Through bilateral relations, the United States succeeded in bringing the states together which were pro-Western under the Baghdad Pact. However, this pact widened the split and hostility in the region and resulted in the formation of another front with the support of the Soviet Union: Egypt, Syria and the Saudi Arabia did not join the Pact and acted against it. Moreover, they pressured on Lebanon and Jordan to force them to act accordingly.

The Baghdad Pact and Egypt

The Egyptian reaction to the Turkish-Iraqi Pact was negative and critical from the very beginning to the end. Before the signing of the Pact, the Egyptian Minister of foreign affairs Mahmoud Fawzi told the United States' ambassador in Cairo that:

Egypt would have to learn more about pact from Nuri and would have to consult its Arab friends, but he wished to make it distinctly clear Egypt does not approve of the way, the timing and some other ingredients of

⁴⁶³ Telegram from the Embassy in Iran to the Department of State. April 18, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.286-292.

⁴⁶⁴ *ibid.*

what Iraq has done. Nuri's move in Egypt's view goes counter to what Egypt considers is the normal sequence of events, i.e., each Arab state should be strengthened and then coordinated into a larger unit of strength. He felt that parallel to military unreadiness for Iraq's move among the Arabs. He feared pact would cause a retrogression in the improving atmosphere in the Arab states towards the West and remarked that it is not wise for anybody to try to force the kicking and screaming Arab world into a position for which it is unready. He said pact idea was very badly timed and reminded him somewhat of the clumsy MEDO proposals in the autumn of 1951... He feared that West would experience some loss of popularity as a result of new development since many Arabs will believe pact has been fomented by the West and is Western effort to destroy Arab unity.⁴⁶⁵

It can be argued that the statements of the Egyptian minister of foreign affairs were the reflections of the Egyptian attitude rather than the whole Arab world because, as discussed above, the Arab world was not united. Moreover, as the leader of the Arab world, Egypt put heavy pressure on the Arab states to criticize and denounce Iraq and the Turkish-Iraqi Pact, as was seen in the Meeting of the Arab League prime ministers in Cairo. The Egyptian reaction became more critical and the propaganda against the Pact intensified in the following period.

In return, the rise of criticism and the denunciation agitated by Egypt and its leader Nasser caused resentment in Iraq and its prime minister Nuri Said. He was disturbed by the campaign which was conducted over him by Nasser. He defended himself by saying that:

Turkish-Iraq relations have been close since the early 20s. The closeness of these direct relations was underscored and their scope defined in the treaty of 1946. What he had done last week in his talks with Menderes was in keeping with traditional Iraq-Turkish relations and within the spirit and framework of the 1946 treaty... He was responsible only to the people of Iraq and to the Parliament. He was not responsible to any other country or government. He was sensitive, though, to Iraq's relations with her Arab neighbors. For that reason he had asked Turkish Prime Minister on his visits to Arab capitals to explain the nature of the agreement reached between the two countries. Egypt has on occasion acted independently in the past. She had a right to do this and he had not objected... Neither Iraq nor any Arab country

⁴⁶⁵ Telegram from the Embassy in Egypt to the Department of State. January 17, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.5-6.

had been consulted by Egypt on that occasion. Regardless of the opposition from Egypt, he said he was going to push ahead with the formulation of the treaty with Turkey.⁴⁶⁶

Turkey and Iraq continued the Pact negotiations and during the negotiations the Iraqi Prime Minister declared his hope for the association of the other Arab states, especially Egypt, to the Turkish-Iraqi Pact at every turn. Nuri Said reiterated that he wanted to see a general Pact including the Arab world. However, to him, the initial step for him was to sign a bilateral agreement with Turkey. In the following period, the Arab states could join the Pact one-by-one. The attitude of the Iraqi prime minister was to associate the Egyptians and Syrians to the Pact. In addition, the Iranian participation was important.⁴⁶⁷

Contrary to these expectations, the Egyptian position remained solid towards the Turkish-Iraqi Pact. The Egyptian leader Nasser told the United States' ambassador in Cairo "in a friendly, but determined and self-assured way" that:

Announcement of Iraq-Turkey pact had been shock to him. He had thought that US understood and shared his point of view and his concern re timing. To his disappointment, US had decided to move independently by instigating Pact; he felt free now to move independently also. It is possible that you may get away with pact and that Nuri may remain in power for a few months, but your pact will be only piece of paper and will gain you nothing from point of view of area defense because you have not taken into account the "internal front" about which I have talked to you so often and which I have been so carefully moving along the road to believing in good faith of the West"... Within six months pact would have caused Communist and nationalists in Iraq to be drawn together by same old fears of foreign domination, British and American imperialism and colonialism, et cetera, as in past. Everyone thinks of Nuri as a British agent. The Turks are under your influence.⁴⁶⁸

Nasser's expectations about Iraq realized three years later and the Nationalists toppled the Nuri Said government, which had not had popular support behind it as

⁴⁶⁶ Telegram from the Embassy in Iraq to the Department of State. January 17, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.7-8.

⁴⁶⁷ Telegram from the Embassy in Iraq to the Department of State. February 3, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.11-12.

⁴⁶⁸ Telegram from the Embassy in Egypt to the Department of State. February 6, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.15-16.

mentioned in detail before. However, it is important to underline here that it could be regarded as clear that Nasser was in a close contact with the Nationalists and the Communists in the Arab world. As an opponent of the Turkish-Iraqi Pact and the forerunner of the Arab nationalism and so called “neutralism” in the region, Egypt began to move independently from the West and it sought to have closer relations with the Soviet Union in the period following the signing of the Baghdad Pact in order to acquire the necessary economic and military aid. Moreover, the efforts to establish an Arab front would bear fruit later on although it was limited in scope.

Right after the signing of the Baghdad Pact, Egyptian minister of national defense Salem visited Damascus and met with the new government which was closer to the line of Egyptian action. During this visit, Salem proposed the formation of an Arab Federation of all the Arab states which would publicly denounce the Turkish-Iraqi Defense Treaty. In addition, the present status quo of the Arab states should be protected. More importantly, a united command of the armies should be established, and the foreign, financial and cultural policies of the members of this federation should be unified. To organize and control the policies of the federation, a council of the representatives of the member states should be established.⁴⁶⁹

These statements were the reflections of the Egyptian vision regarding the Arab world. However, such a project would not come to except for the signing of the Egypt-Syria-Saudi Arabia Pact and the establishment of the United Arab Republic in the following period, which will be discussed in detail below, despite the limited success and dissolution of these entities in the short run. More importantly, these attempts and projects failed due to the internal problems of the so-called “united Arab world.”

⁴⁶⁹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Cairo to Foreign Office. February 28, 1955. FO 371. 115491. V1073-360.

The project of Arab unification was sponsored by the Soviet Union as the result of the attempts of Nasser right after the signing of the Baghdad Pact. The Arms Agreement between Czechoslovakia, backed by the Soviet Union, and Egypt was signed in 1955 and this caused a resentment and unrest in the United States. In a meeting of the National Security Council, the US secretary of state Dulles expressed upon the Arms Agreement that “the Soviet Union had deliberately opened a new front in the Middle East.” Dulles told that he asked the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs Molotov regarding the agreement, but the latter replied that “the arms deal with Egypt was a simple commercial transaction from which no serious political repercussions were to be expected.”⁴⁷⁰ Dulles added that:

The Soviet moves in the Near East confronted the West with a very grave situation. The loss of the oil of the Middle East would be almost catastrophic for the West. Moreover, Egypt was the gateway to Africa and retention of which was so very important for us. If Europe were to lose Africa, little would be left of Europe in a short time... He did not believe that the Arab governments were entirely happy over the prospect of possible future dependence on the USSR. It was obvious that they wanted to play off with the West against the Soviet bloc... The only solution that Secretary Dulles could perceive for the short-range problem was a general solution of the quarrel between the Israelis and the Arabs. Such a solution he believed by no means impossible... There was a measure of truth in Nasser’s reasoning. Nasser felt that he must hold his job. The Army was the key to holding the job, and the army was demanding armament. Accordingly, there was no clear demonstration yet that Colonel Nasser actually proposed to turn his back on the West and cast his lot with the Soviet bloc.⁴⁷¹

It can be argued that the Baghdad Pact accelerated the development of relations between the Soviet Union and Egypt. The arms agreement between these states urged the United States to take measures to support the Pact and the states which were closer to the West. With time, the split in the region widened and a rival bloc was set up under the leadership of Egypt and with the support of Syria and Saudi Arabia, with the sponsorship of the Soviet Union. The attitude of Syria

⁴⁷⁰ Memorandum of Discussion at the 267th Meeting of the National Security Council, Camp David, Maryland. November 21, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12..i.8., pp.200-203.

⁴⁷¹ *ibid.*

towards the Baghdad Pact was described before, but the developments after the signing of the Pact have to be considered to understand the Syrian policy, which eventually became harmonious with that of Egypt.

The Baghdad Pact and Syria

The change of government in Syria in the middle of the negotiations between Turkey and Iraq caused a change in the Syrian policy towards the Pact. Contrary to the policy of the previous government, which had been seen at the Meeting of the Arab League prime ministers in Cairo, the new government did not look favorable on the Pact in consistency with Egypt. The attitude of the United States towards the new government regarding the Pact was a “wait-and-see” policy. The US Department of State remarked that:

There is anything we can usefully do in Syria to affect situation other than continue let it be known privately that USG fully supports Turkey-Iraq agreement and Northern Tier defense concept and therefore hopes Syrian government whatever its composition will not oppose Iraq’s efforts develop realistic organization for Middle East Defense.⁴⁷²

The Syrian Minister of foreign affairs told the United Kingdom’s ambassador in Damascus that Syria would not “attack or condemn Iraq.” Syria did not approve the expulsion of Iraq from the Arab League and from the Arab League Collective Security Pact or to put pressure on Iraq to leave. He added that the Arab League Collective Security Pact needed to be strengthened against Israel and for Syria the key and the strongest element in the defense was Egypt.⁴⁷³ It can be argued that the policy of the new government towards the Baghdad Pact and the collective security of the Arab states were similar to that of the Egyptian government.

⁴⁷² Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Syria. February 16, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.13.i.13., p.516.

⁴⁷³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Damascus to Foreign Office. February 28, 1955. FO 371. 115491. V1073-347.

As the United Kingdom's ambassador in Damascus reported, the policy of the United States towards Syria resulted in complaints from the latter. The Syrian minister of foreign Affairs, who was supposed not to be "pro-American," was critical of the United States' attitude of supporting the Turkish-Iraqi Treaty, which would most probably disrupt the Arab League. Moreover, the dependence of the United States' military aid to the development of Arab-Israeli relations and the establishment of an organization by the Arab states against the Soviet aggression were seen as unfortunate. Moreover, the ambassador argued, the "aggressiveness" of the Turkish chargé d'affaires in Damascus irritated the Syrian minister of foreign affairs. The ambassador stated that he tried to calm the minister down. The minister of foreign affairs stated that he wished to be "good neighbors" with Turkey and they could settle their problems, frontier and otherwise, in a friendly way.⁴⁷⁴

The reserved and somewhat negative attitude of the Syrian government towards the Baghdad Pact, and the policies of the United States brought Syria in line with the Egyptian government. Right after the signing of the Pact, the Egyptian minister of national defense Salem arrived in Damascus on 26 February 1955 to discuss the Egyptian proposal for a new Arab defense Pact which might include the Arab states opposed to alliances with the non-Arab states. Upon the end of the discussions, the Syrian and Egyptian governments signed a communiqué on 2 March 1955 and declared that neither of these governments would join the Baghdad Pact or any other alliances and they would set up a joint Arab defense and cooperation Pact which would involve the other Arab states in the following period. After his visit to Damascus, the Egyptian Minister visited Jordan and Saudi Arabia. The latter agreed

⁴⁷⁴ Telegram from the British Embassy in Damascus to Foreign Office. February 28, 1955. FO 371. 115491. V1073-348.

upon adherence to Egypt and Syria, and the Egyptian-Syrian-Saudi Pact was signed on 6 March 1955, which will be discussed in detail below.⁴⁷⁵

The Baghdad Pact and Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia was not in favor of the Turkish-Iraqi Pact, although it was a supporter of close relations between the Arabs and the West, especially the United States. The Saudi King, Faisal, stated that Arabs and the United States were not enemies and they sought the same objective against the communist Soviet Union. The move of Nuri Said, on the other hand, caused the deterioration of the relations between the Arabs and the West. After the recognition of the possibility of the Arab-Western cooperation by the Arab League in December 1954, the Turkish-Iraqi Pact appeared and changed the atmosphere against the United States.⁴⁷⁶

The King continued his remarks as follows:

Arabs are again asking: What have we had from US entering Near East? They answer: Palestine. They believe policy of US and its allies is to break ACSP in interest of Israel. They believe too its aim is to make Arab states appendages of Turkey and Pakistan. We have been willing to cooperate with Turkey but not as her tail. We have lost confidence in the West. To regain it you should drop this plan, strengthen and have confidence in Arab unity, work directly with Arab states and not behind the scenes through Turkey. We can cooperate both with the northern tier of Turkey, Iran and Pakistan and with West. Why cannot you build northern tier without Iraq, strengthen Arab League and tier both into strong structure area defense? If there be war, we know Near East will again be battlefield. So strengthen this second line of defense. It is to common interest. That is all we ask of you.⁴⁷⁷

In response to the attitude and statements of the Saudi King, the United States bolstered to improve relations with the Saudi Arabia for the involvement of the latter in the defense structure. For the President of the United States, the Saudi King was to

⁴⁷⁵ FRUS 1955-57. v.13.i.13., p.518.

⁴⁷⁶ Telegram from the Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the Department of State. February 27, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., pp.23-25.

⁴⁷⁷ *ibid.*

be a main and powerful actor in the region. Therefore, to develop the relations of Saudi Arabia, the Buraimi problem⁴⁷⁸ between the United Kingdom and the Saudi Arabia needed to be solved. Moreover, the restoration of the Saud's oil markets in the Western Europe should be guaranteed. If these conditions had been provided and the Suez dispute⁴⁷⁹ had been settled, the area would relax and the Saudi Arabia might be persuaded to support the Western policy.⁴⁸⁰

The conversation between the United States officials and the Saudi King indicate the position of Saudi Arabia towards the Baghdad Pact very well. The Saudi King stated that:

His position was the same as it had been before. It was his view that there was harm in the Pact. Especially unfortunate was the fact that one member of the Pact had attacked the Arabs, and the impression has been gained that since one member had aggressed, and no other member had condemned its action, it must be that all Baghdad Pact members were against the Arabs. The fact that the US had not joined the Pact had given the US a good position with the Arabs. But how could one expect the Arabs to work with Turkey which itself worked with Israel and had economic relations with it? ... Pakistan had its own justification for being a member of the Pact. It was threatened by India and needed friends. It was also threatened by the USSR and this applied also to Iran and Turkey. But, Iraq was a truly Arab state, and the singular position it was taking had caused a rift in the Arab front. If, before joining the Pact, Iraq had consulted with the other Arab states, some understanding might have been worked out... This was his position on Iraq as a Baghdad Pact member but, regarding relations with Iraq as an Arab state, he was ready to cooperate with it... Turkey, for example, insisted it was a lay country, not an Islamic one... Saudi Arabia was also ready to cooperate with Iran and Pakistan as Islamic states.⁴⁸¹

⁴⁷⁸ Buraimi Problem was a problem between the United Kingdom and the Saudi Arabia. The Saudi Arabia claimed jurisdiction over villages on her south-eastern border on the frontier of Muscat, Oman and Abu Dhabi. The claim of Saudi Arabia was resisted by the Sultans of Muscat and Oman and the Shaikh of Abu Dhabi. With the authority that special agreements with these Sultanates and Shaikhdoms gave and upon the request, the United Kingdom intervened in the problem and involved in direct negotiations with the Saudi Arabia in the name of them. The problem turned into a United Kingdom-Saudi Arabia problem. J.B.Kelly, "The Buraimi Oasis Dispute", *International Affairs*, vol. 32 no.3 (July 1956), p.318.

⁴⁷⁹ The Suez Canal Dispute will be explained in detail in Chapter 5.

⁴⁸⁰ Memorandum of Conference with the President, White House, Washington. November 21, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., pp.340-342.

⁴⁸¹ Memorandum of a Conversation, Blair House, Washington. January 31, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.13.i.12., pp.439-440.

When all these statements of the Saudi King and the officials of the United States are taken into consideration, the perception of interests and policy objectives seem different on both sides. Saudi Arabia seemed a follower of Arab nationalism and in favor of the strengthening of the Arab League,⁴⁸² but the United States sought to keep closer with Saudi Arabia through the settlement of the Buraimi dispute and the protection of the markets for Saudi oil in Western Europe. However, the position of the Saudi Arabia towards the Baghdad Pact can be regarded as having been ambiguous. On the one hand, it disliked the Pact because of the “harm” involved; on the other hand, it was willing to cooperate with the Pact powers “outside” the Pact, although there were differences between them. The ambiguity of the Saudi Arabian attitude was also seen in its adherence to the Egyptian-Syrian Pact, from which it would withdraw due to the clash of interests and the suspicion of Egypt.

The Egyptian-Syrian-Saudi Pact

In consistence with the Egyptian alternative alliance project in the Middle East, the Egyptian, Syrian, and Saudi governments came together to bolster their military and economic cooperation. On 6 March 1955, the three governments jointly declared that “their armed forces would be placed under a unified command.” As mentioned before, the announcement and the participation of Saudi Arabia followed the declaration of the Egyptian and Syrian governments’ joint communiqué on 2 March 1955 which had declared that the two governments had agreed “not to join the Turkish-Iraqi Pact or any other alliances, to establish a joint Arab defense and

⁴⁸² Lenczowski states that the Saudi opposition to the Baghdad Pact possibly stemmed from the rivalry between the Saud and the Hashemite dynasties in the Arab world and the Saudi Arabia’s search to increase its prestige in the region rather than the Arab Unity or the Arab League. Lenczowski, p.590. Lenczowski’s argument seems probable, but whatever the reason, the Saudi King expressed his opposition to the Pact with the reasons that have been discussed.

economic cooperation Pact and to advance these objectives with other Arab states.”⁴⁸³

After the signing of the triple Arab alliance, the Syrian minister of foreign affairs stated that the Egyptian-Syrian-Saudi Pact only aimed to establish a common defense of Arab states which was threatened by Israel. The Pact was not against Iraq, Turkey or the West. Syria recognized the right and duty of Iraq and Turkey to set up a defense against the principal threat to their security, i.e., the Soviet Union, but claimed the right to do so against Israel. Syria agreed with Egypt and the Saudi Arabia on a “unified foreign, military and economic policy.” Furthermore, these three states expected the possible adherence of Lebanon.⁴⁸⁴

More importantly, the minister of foreign affairs stated that there would be cooperation efforts of the triple alliance with the Turkish-Iraqi grouping with which Pakistan, Iran, the United States and the United Kingdom would probably be associated. He added that there was no urgency of the Israeli threat, but Egypt, Syria and the Saudi Arabia decided make defensive cooperation. Furthermore, “the Arab League Collective Security Pact was abandoned because it included states not immediately threatened by Israel, states neither threatened nor able to assist in common defense, and states which by virtue of treaty engagements had lost full liberty of action.”^{485,486}

The Egyptian-Syrian-Saudi Pact’s success was limited. In time, the Saudi Arabia withdrew from the Pact for reasons such as the suspicion of Egyptian plans to

⁴⁸³ FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., p.28. See also Telegram from the British Embassy in Cairo to Foreign Office. March 7, 1955. FO 371. 115496. V1073-410.

⁴⁸⁴ Telegram from the Embassy in Syria to the Department of State. March 11, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., pp.32-34.

⁴⁸⁵ At the time, neither the United Kingdom nor Pakistan and Iran had joined the Baghdad Pact yet.

⁴⁸⁶ Telegram from the Embassy in Syria to the Department of State. March 11, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., pp.32-34.

dominate the Pact and bolster its leadership under the Pact. The Egyptian-Syrian alliance resulted in the United Arab Republic which was formed in 1958. However, the Pact did not bring the Arab world together and it became as useless as the Baghdad Pact after a short time. The states which had been expected to join either side did not participate any of the alliances, i.e., Lebanon and Jordan. They were against a split in the Arab world especially between Iraq and Egypt from the beginning to the end. Therefore, they, especially Lebanon, tried hard to mediate between the two sides. However, their efforts failed. Despite the failure of their attempts, the policies and positions of these relatively smaller states in the Middle East should be considered.

The Baghdad Pact and Lebanon

Lebanon refrained from taking sides in the split between Iraq and Egypt throughout the whole process of the Turkish-Iraqi Pact and the events following the Pact because the priority of this state was the preservation of Arab unity against Israeli threat. Therefore, the expectations of both sides regarding the participation of Lebanon in any of the Pacts in the region failed.

The conversation between the Lebanese ambassador, Malik, in Washington and the United States' secretary of state, Dulles, shed light on the Lebanese policy regarding the developments in the Middle East. In the conversation, Malik said that the events in the region were happening as the result of the policies and actions of the United States' secretary of state, particularly the Northern Tier concept which had come up with the tour of the secretary of state in 1953. The Turkish-Iraqi Pact resulted in clash of policies and views in the Arab world. Lebanon supported the idea of the Pact and the Iraqi policy of signing a defense Pact with Turkey, and tried to

play a mediator role between Iraq and Egypt during the Meetings of the Arab League prime ministers. He added the Egyptian attitude towards the Iraqi policy was a combination of “a deep strain of neutralism in that country”, which lacked in Iraq or Lebanon, and Egyptian rivalry with Turkey and Iraq.⁴⁸⁷

After the explanation of the Egyptian attitude, the ambassador asked the following questions to the secretary:

What is the precise nature of the improvement in the Arab-Israeli relations which will be necessary before the US can contribute effectively to area defense? Would the United States look with a favor or disfavor on the joining of all the Arab states in defense arrangements for the Middle East, with Iraq and Turkey proceeding with their own presently-proposed defense Pact? Would the United States have any objection to, or would it have any comment to make, on the calling of a Middle East conference composed of the Arab states concerned, Turkey, Pakistan and Iran to elaborate a comprehensive scheme for Middle East defense, if Lebanon could persuade Egypt to call such a conference? Would the United States be willing to proceed immediately with economic and military aid to Lebanon ... especially with regard to planning for the enlargement of the Port of Beirut and the development of a network of international highways which the Lebanon government had had very much in mind? What would be the attitude of the United States toward Lebanon as an individual member of a defense organization, whether that organization was all-embracing or included only some Arab states together with the non-Arab states of the area excluding of course Israel?⁴⁸⁸

The questions of the ambassador can be regarded to aim to understand the United States policy on the Middle East and the defense organization and, specifically Lebanon and its position in such an organization, and the possibility of economic and military aid to this country by the United States to provide and satisfy its domestic needs as an individual country.

The secretary of state replied that:

We are sympathetic in general to the idea of mutuality in defense matters, since no country, not even the United States can stand alone in the world today. However, as to precise details of the type about which the Ambassador

⁴⁸⁷ Memorandum of a Conversation between the Lebanese Ambassador (Malik) and the Secretary of State, Department of State, Washington. February 9, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., pp.16-18.

⁴⁸⁸ *ibid.*

was inquiring, he would have to consider these questions carefully before formulating a reply.⁴⁸⁹

Then, the secretary asked the following question to the ambassador:

The state of Israel is constantly stressing its isolation, and the fact that it alone has no guarantees when all these developments, defense arrangements and military aid programs, are taking place in neighboring countries. What would the Ambassador do if he were in the secretary's position?⁴⁹⁰

The ambassador replied that:

In his personal and unofficial view what the secretary should do was to continue trying to achieve peace between the Arab states and Israel, but that these moves should be made slowly. Too much haste would not be as productive of results as moving at a slow pace.⁴⁹¹

After the signing of the Turkish-Iraqi Pact, the Lebanese government continued its policy of being the mediator between Iraq and Egypt. However, after the government change in Syria and the Syrian move to the Egyptian side, Lebanon and Jordan remained the two states which did not take any side in the region and remained alone against the Israeli threat. Therefore, the pressure on the Lebanese government increased. Lebanon and Jordan, which were closer to the West through the closer relations of the West with the Hashemite family, especially that of the United Kingdom, were expected to join the Turkish-Iraqi Pact. On the other hand, the position of "in-betweenness" forced especially the Lebanese government not to take sides and to stand alone against possible threats in the region.⁴⁹²

Considering the position of Lebanon and other smaller states in the region, the United States was to suggest Nasser and his colleagues that they should give up quarrels, and the Egyptian press and radio, which were the sources of these quarrels,

⁴⁸⁹ Memorandum of a Conversation between the Lebanese Ambassador (Malik) and the Secretary of State, Department of State, Washington. February 9, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., pp.16-18.

⁴⁹⁰ *ibid.*

⁴⁹¹ *ibid.*

⁴⁹² Telegram from the British Embassy in Beirut to Foreign Office. February 28, 1955. FO371. 115491. V1073-350.

should stop agitation in order to lift the pressure on these states. Nasser would be urged that if this policy continued, he would lose the support of the Arab world and remain alone against a possible threat from Israel. The other Arab states, especially Lebanon, would be tempted to participate in the defense organization in the future although the United States was not in favor of putting pressure on them to do so in the short term.⁴⁹³

It can be argued that the policy of staying behind the scenes and avoiding from any commitments to the states in the region caused resentment and disappointment in Lebanon. In the meeting with the United States' officials, the Lebanese ambassador declared the message from his government which was as follows:

The government of Lebanon deeply regrets the frigidity and immovability of United States policy as regards Lebanon's needs during this crucial period in the Near East. Lebanon has for years consistently acted in ways friendly to the United States and has supported United States policy to a notable extent. It has proved its desire to maintain peace in the Near East. It has gone as far as is possible in the direction of American policy in the matter of organizing the defense of the Middle East, and especially as regards the conclusion of the Turkey-Iraq pact. Lebanon is continuing to do what it can do ensure that the Arab states agree to this pact, or at least that they do not oppose it... In sum, there has never been any doubt as regards Lebanon's position at the side of the West, especially the United States; or about Lebanon's readiness to offer all assistance, in case of emergency, to the Western powers.⁴⁹⁴

In addition, the Lebanese ambassador "personally" expressed that:

The Government of Lebanon is probably under very strong pressure from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, France, local extreme nationalists, pro-Egyptian and pro-Saudi elements, leftists and communists to go along with the Egyptians, Saudis and the Syrians in opposing the Turkey-Iran(?) agreement, the "Northern Tier" and Western ideas for the defense of the area.⁴⁹⁵

⁴⁹³ Telegram from the Embassy in Lebanon to the Department of State. June 25, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., pp.123-125.

⁴⁹⁴ Memorandum of a Conversation, Lebanese Embassy, Washington. February 24, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.13.i.10., pp.170-173.

⁴⁹⁵ *ibid.*

Lebanon remained out of the Pacts, not only the Turkish-Iraqi Pact, but also the Egyptian-Syrian-Saudi Pact and continued to act in accord with the policies of the United States and its Allies in the region. On the other hand, it was exposed to the strong pressure of the anti-Baghdad Pact front. More importantly, it remained alone against a possible attack from Israel, its close neighbor. The “desperate” situation of the Lebanese government resulted in the events and crises in Lebanon in 1958, which will be discussed in detail below. Shortly, Lebanon stayed in between regarding the Baghdad Pact, as Jordan did, even though its policy was in line with that of the United States.

The Baghdad Pact and Jordan

The Jordanian attitude towards the Turkish-Iraqi Pact was similar to that of Lebanon. For the Jordanian government, Arab unity was of utmost importance and everything needed to be done to preserve it. The Jordanian prime minister told the United Kingdom’s ambassador in Amman that Jordan could not join the Pact because they were not in favor of taking side against the Arab Unity. On the other hand, they would not attack the Pact, either. He added that Jordan was opposed to the denunciation of Iraq. However, they did not want to oppose to any Arab state because they needed the support of all against a common threat from Israel.⁴⁹⁶

Therefore, throughout the whole process of the Turkish-Iraqi Pact and the Meeting of the Arab League prime ministers, the attitude of Jordan was moderate in keeping with its policy of mediation between the two rival sides.

In the meantime, the Turkish government and the president aimed to convince the Jordanian government to join the Pact. It was planned that during his visit to

⁴⁹⁶ Telegram from the British Embassy in Amman to Foreign Office. February 26, 1955. FO 371. 115491. V1073-343.

Jordan in late 1955, the Turkish President would seek the support and participation of Jordan in the Pact. The deputy prime minister and acting minister of foreign affairs Zorlu asked the opinion of the United States' secretary of state in a conversation in Geneva. The secretary said that:

US had opposed southward extension Baghdad Pact for two reasons: Would antagonize Egypt, adherence countries bordering Israel would be viewed as giving anti-Israeli character to pact and inhibit US support to Pact... If pact did not assume anti-Israeli character but took form of promoting settlement Jordanian border, might make a difference.⁴⁹⁷

Zorlu argued that the United States could give security guarantee to Israel join the Pact at the same time. He added that strengthening the position of the Western-oriented states, such as Iraq and Iran, was also important.⁴⁹⁸ The secretary of state told Zorlu that "he would give question Jordanian adherence careful consideration but could not give him an answer until he had consulted his advisers."⁴⁹⁹

The United States government decided not to advise Jordan to declare against joining the Pact during president Bayar's visit. In addition, in case of Jordanian demand for the US views, the United States government would declare that "the Baghdad Pact continues to enjoy our full support and we consider it useful instrument development of collective security of area."⁵⁰⁰

By the same token, Jordan did not intend to participate in the Turkish-Iraqi Pact as it did not the Egyptian-Syrian-Saudi Pact.⁵⁰¹ However, the pressure on the Jordanian government did not end. The prime ministers of Turkey and Iraq,

⁴⁹⁷ Telegram from the Office of the Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to the Department of State. October 26, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., pp.176-177.

⁴⁹⁸ *ibid.*

⁴⁹⁹ *ibid.*

⁵⁰⁰ Telegram from the Department of State to the Delegation at the Foreign Ministers Meeting at Geneva. October 29, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., pp.180.

⁵⁰¹ Telegram from the Embassy in Jordan to the Department of State. November 1, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., pp.181.

Menderes and Nuri Said, met with the Jordanian prime minister in Baghdad on 23 November 1955. In the meeting the Jordanian Prime Minister demanded military and economic aid from Turkey and Iraq if Jordan participated in the Pact. Rather than Turkey and Iraq, the United Kingdom declared that it was ready to extend some arms aid and to revise the Anglo-Jordanian treaty. Upon the United Kingdom's initiative, the Turkish and Iraqi Prime Ministers were confident this would bring Jordan into the Pact. Moreover, the same assurances might bring Lebanon into the Pact. The participation of Jordan and Lebanon possibly could have weakened the leftist elements in Syria and strengthened the pro-Western ones to the advantage of the Pact.⁵⁰²

The insistence of the United Kingdom with Turkey and Iraq on Jordan bore negative results in Jordan. On 6 December 1955 officials of the United Kingdom Imperial General Staff arrived in Amman to accelerate the Jordanian participation in the Pact. The visit caused the resignation of the Jordanian prime minister, Said al-Mufti, and four members of his cabinet, who were opposed to the Pact and the proposals of the United Kingdom, on the following week. Upon the assignment by the Jordanian King, Haza Al-Majali, who was in favor of the Pact, formed the new government. However, protests against the new government and the Turkish-Iraqi Pact erupted on 18 December 1955 and he resigned the following day.⁵⁰³

The events in Jordan were evaluated in the United States' National Security Council on 22 December 1955 and the attempts of the United Kingdom were criticized. The demonstrations indicated that the result of the United Kingdom's policy to push the Jordanian government to participate into the Pact had been a failure. According to the United States' officials, "the riots had been supported in

⁵⁰² Telegram from the Embassy in Iraq to the Department of State. November 24, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., pp.203-204.

⁵⁰³ FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., pp.211-212.

part by bribes from Saudi Arabia and in part by inflammatory broadcasts by the Cairo radio. The result had been a severe blow to the British, to some extent, to Western prestige.”⁵⁰⁴

Despite the events in Jordan upon the efforts of the United Kingdom to press the Jordanian government to participate in the Pact, the United States government was hopeful about the Jordanian attitude and the country’s possible participation in the future. The Jordanian position was described as “one of caution and balance dictated by her position of economic and military weakness” by the United States’ ambassador in Amman. He added Jordan was principally oriented toward the West. The present government was, at least, favorable to the Baghdad Pact. The ambassador argued that the Jordanian prime minister said the possible “withdrawal or disinterest” of Egypt from the Arab League Collective Security Pact would result in the dissolution of the Arab League and enable the individual Arab States to realign themselves. Therefore, most probably, the Arab states would adhere to the Turkish-Iraqi Pact and support the development of relations with the Western powers. The attitude of Lebanese and Jordanian governments would be favorable to join the defense grouping in the Middle East.⁵⁰⁵

The expectations of the Turkish officials regarding the situation in the Middle East and the Jordanian policy were similar to those of the officials of the United States. On 18 December 1957 United States’ president Eisenhower met with prime minister Menderes and acting minister of foreign affairs Zorlu during a Meeting of the NATO Heads of Government in Paris. During the meeting, the Egyptian attitude was discussed initially. The President asked the Prime Minister whether he had been expected an Egyptian disentanglement from the Soviet Union. Menderes replied that

⁵⁰⁴ FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., p.214.

⁵⁰⁵ Telegram from the Embassy in Jordan to the Department of State. February 7, 1955. FRUS 1955-57. v.13.i.8., pp.1-2.

“Nasser was always gambling. He was merely seeking time to consolidate his position. Eisenhower argued that “Nasser must give convincing proof of a change of heart.” Then, Zorlu commented that “the yardstick in question must be Jordan. Nasser should stop trying to overthrow the Jordan government.” The President agreed and stated that “we would continue to support Jordan and that no doubt if Egypt or Syria should attack Jordan, we would invoke the American Doctrine.”⁵⁰⁶

To sum up, Jordan was exposed to heavy pressure from both sides to participate into the Pact and not to do so. The Jordanian priority was not to take side and in case of possible participation to maximize its interests, i.e., to provide its security as well as its economic and military needs. From the beginning to the end, the Jordanian government did not attempt to join the Turkish-Iraqi Pact regardless of the pressure, but stayed favorable to the West. The basic concern of the Jordanian government was to be supported against any attack. However, 1958 brought Jordan an internal crisis, which will be discussed in detail below. The Hashemite Kingdom was saved with the support of the United Kingdom and the United States.

The Baghdad Pact and Israel

The Israeli threat, rather than the Soviet threat, was the major preoccupation of the Arab states. They wanted to protect so called “Arab unity,” which had never existed, against the common enemy. The basic criticism of the Turkish-Iraqi Pact was as follows: “not to be against the Israeli threat and to be supported by the United States, which was the main protector of Israel.” Moreover, Turkey and its existence in the Turkish-Iraqi Pact were also criticized as a result of its cooperation and good relations with Israel.

⁵⁰⁶ FRUS 1955-57. v.13.i.8., p.168.

Israel's attitude towards the Pact was confused. There were some actors in favor of the Pact who considered it a tool to divide the Arab world, and there were some who opposed the pact, considering it a tool to break off Turkish-Israeli relations and to serve the designs of Iraq regarding the Middle East, as discussed in detail above. The confusion on the Israeli side continued throughout the process of the Turkish-Iraqi Pact.

The ambassador of the United Kingdom in Tel Aviv argued that "terms of the pact and particularly the accompanying exchange of letters are generally regarded here as confirming Israel's worst fears and intensifying her isolation." He added that the Israeli press interpreted "the Pact as proof that the West, on this occasion represented by Turkey, will always be ready to appease the Arabs at Israel's expense, and regards it as dangerous encouragement of Arab hostility to Israel."⁵⁰⁷

The position of Israel could be regarded as having been one of the impediments to the United States' participation in the Pact. The United States' secretary of state told the Turkish officials in a conversation in Paris that the United States needed to study its membership in the Pact carefully. The United States was in favor of strengthening the Pact without giving a security guarantee to Israel, which might cause serious results in the Arab world. He added that "the friends of Israel" in the US Congress could block the participation of the United States in the Pact unless the security guarantee was given to Israel. Through accession to the Military Committee of the Pact, the United States showed its support to the Pact powers. Formal membership might provide great prestige for the United States, but the price was too high. If the Turkish government persuaded the Israeli government not to demand security guarantee, one of the impediments on the United States' adherence

⁵⁰⁷ Telegram from the British Embassy in Tel Aviv to Foreign Office. February 28, 1955. FO 371. 115491. V1073-351.

would be overcome.⁵⁰⁸ The Turkish prime minister said that Turkey would do this,⁵⁰⁹ but it did not happen.

It can be argued that the Turkish-Iraqi Pact had conflictual repercussions on the Israeli side. On the other hand, the United States government used the Israeli card to avoid membership in the Pact, as mentioned before. However, the Turkish-Iraqi Pact or the Baghdad Pact was short-lived, and with the Iraqi withdrawal from the Pact after the Coup d'état in this state in 1958, the Baghdad Pact changed its form and structure, as will be discussed below. Moreover, Israel showed its power and confidence when it beat Egypt and its Allies in the Arab-Israeli war, which had impact on Arab-Israeli relations in the long run.

The Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) (1958-1979)⁵¹⁰

The Coup d'état in Iraq in 1958 was a turning point for the Baghdad Pact. The Iraqi government withdrew from the Pact and the Pact was turned into the Central Treaty Organization, which endured until 1979. However, the Central Treaty Organization was looser than the Baghdad Pact. More importantly, the focus of the West and the member countries diverged in time. In Turkey, the Menderes government was preoccupied with internal problems after 1958, and it was toppled with a military Coup in 1960.

Before the meeting of the Baghdad Pact Ministerial Council in Karachi in January 1959, the approaches of the Pact members had changed regarding the Pact. The Assistant White House staff secretary John Eisenhower presented a report to the

⁵⁰⁸ Memorandum of a Conversation, Paris. December 19, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., pp.674-675.

⁵⁰⁹ *ibid.*

⁵¹⁰ For a detailed analysis on CENTO see Cihat Göktepe, "The Forgotten Alliance? Anglo-Turkish Relations and CENTO", *Middle Eastern Studies*, v.35 (4) (October 1999), pp.103-129.

president and remarked that the statements of the Pact members were discouraging. There were reports about the situation in the Pact members, and in these reports the attitudes of the parties were evaluated as follows:

The situation in Iran has taken an ugly turn. The Shah has stated that he will have to turn more to the Communists for help if American aid is not increased. He may sign a non-aggression pact with the USSR. Pakistan has shown discouragement over the amount of aid received by India, and has expressed a view that there is nothing to be gained by standing up to be counted. The policies of the opposition party in Turkey advocate withdrawal from the Baghdad Pact. This is significant in view of the fact that the regime of Menderes is losing strength. Qasim in Iraq is in a weak position and largely dependent on Communists. He has stated twice that he plans to maintain a strict neutrality. This can hardly be conducive to enthusiastic support of the Baghdad Pact.⁵¹¹

The Pact alliance began to shatter in early 1959. It can be argued that the instability of the domestic politics of the Pact members played a role in this development.

In the meantime, there was an operation against the Secretariat building of the Pact in Baghdad by the Iraqis. The Turkish government received reports from the Embassy in Baghdad regarding the situation, but the intention of the Iraqi government with this operation could not be clarified.⁵¹² The Turkish ambassador in Baghdad proposed the Iraqi Minister of Foreign Affairs to move the contents of the Secretariat to Ankara. The ambassador asked when this would be possible and the Minister replied that the “competent authorities” would be consulted. The minister of foreign affairs promised to reply in a short time.⁵¹³ The proposal of the Turkish ambassador was accepted, and with the transfer of the content of the Secretariat, Ankara became the headquarters of the Baghdad Pact, lately CENTO.

⁵¹¹ FRUS 1958-60. v.12.i.8., pp.207-208.

⁵¹² Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. January 15, 1959. FO 371. 140696. EB1019-13.

⁵¹³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. January 24, 1959. FO 371. 140697. EB 1019-21.

As mentioned before, Iraq withdrew from the Pact and upon the Iraqi action, the representatives of the Pact members met and, as the United Kingdom's ambassador in Ankara stated, the meeting was as follows:

The treaty remained valid without amendment ... and an attempt to revise it would probably lead us into serious practical difficulties. The Turk had an open mind. The Iranian ambassador said his Government were in no hurry but thought the matter might be considered at the next Ministerial meeting. In his Government's eyes the Baghdad Pact looked at present like a slightly stronger version of the Saadabad Pact and they hoped it could be reinforced to become more like NATO. It was agreed that the question of revision might be deferred till the next Ministerial Meeting when any country which desired to raise the matter could do so. No one had very firm views of the name of the Pact, due largely no doubt to the difficulty of finding a satisfactory new name. The Iranian Ambassador, however, indicated that his Government considered a change of name desirable and the United States Ambassador also said that his Government favoured a new name which they thought should incorporate the word "economic." I said that I saw no need for a change but that we would be willing to go along if the majority wanted to. It was then agreed to leave the name unchanged for the moment.⁵¹⁴

More importantly, in the same meeting, the reply to the announcement of the Iraqi withdrawal from the Pact was also decided. The members agreed to send identical replies to the Iraqi government. The Turkish representative, Kunalp, said that "his government had already sent a reply to the Iraqi government and they had also publicly announced that Turkey had accepted Iraq's withdrawal."⁵¹⁵

In 1959, the name of the Baghdad Pact was turned to the Central Treaty Organization and the headquarters remained in Ankara. The members of the Pact had already lost their enthusiasm regarding the Pact. The United States, as the main sponsor and the supporter of the Pact, began to consider new objectives regarding the Pact especially after the withdrawal of Iraq, which had been the original signatory. The uneasiness of the Pact members regarding the United States approach forced the latter to formulate new policy. In a letter from the acting assistant of defense for

⁵¹⁴ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. May 2, 1959. FO 371. 140682. EB1019-53.

⁵¹⁵ *ibid.*

international security affairs to the under secretary of state for political affairs it was stated that:

The Department of Defense has become increasingly concerned about the possibility that the Central Treaty Organization may be seriously weakened, if not dissolved, as the result of an apparent feeling on the part of Middle East members that the United States refuses to give this organization whole-hearted support. A number of our people are convinced that this possibility may arise as a result of the negative attitude which the United States has had to take toward some of the proposals of Turkey, Iran and Pakistan. The consequences of dissolution of CENTO are so grave as to mean that we must take every reasonable action to remove the risk of such a development. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have presented a number of proposals directed toward the assertion on the part of the United States of a more active role in the Central Treaty Organization's military affairs. Foremost among these is the proposal that the United States immediately join CENTO as a full member rather than participating, as it does now, as an observer having full membership on certain subordinate committees. In the past, Defense has been advised that joining the Baghdad Pact might place some limitations on our relations with the Arab states and with Afghanistan and India... This Department believes that a reappraisal of the US position on joining CENTO is urgently required.⁵¹⁶

The United States began to reevaluate its policy regarding CENTO. However, the position of the US Department of State regarding membership in CENTO was different. In a memorandum from the under secretary of state to the secretary of state, its position was described as follows:

In accordance with your desire, I have reviewed our position in regard to CENTO in view of the strong desire of the Iranians that we join as full members... It is the considered opinion of our best experts on the subject that Iran will not leave the CENTO Pact and adopt a neutralist attitude in her relationships with the Soviet Union simply because we fail to become full members of CENTO... If we should join it would sharply reduce our influence in another critical country –Afghanistan– and we also have little ability to mediate between India and Pakistan on such matters as Kashmir... In addition, our membership in CENTO would not diminish the Shah's appetite for military assistance and might even increase it. The final argument against joining CENTO is the vague character of the treaty itself.... For all these reasons, I believe that our present policy of avoiding full membership in CENTO should be maintained.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹⁶ Letter from the Acting Assistant of Defense for International Security Affairs (Knight) to the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs. August 31, 1959. FRUS 1958-60. v.12.i.8., pp.235-236.

⁵¹⁷ Memorandum from the Under Secretary of State (Dillon) to Secretary of State Herter. September 23, 1959. FRUS 1958-60. v.12.i.8., pp.237-238.

The policy of the United States remained unchanged and after the change of name and the status, the Baghdad Pact continued under the name of CENTO until the withdrawal of Pakistan and Iran in the late 1970s.

Concluding Remarks

The Turkish-Iraqi Pact or the Baghdad Pact was the ultimate project in the Middle East to set up a defense structure in the 1950s. After the failure to establish the Middle East Command and the Middle East Defense Organization, the Northern Tier concept was formulated by United States' secretary Dulles after his Middle East tour in 1953. The Northern Tier concept involved Turkey, Pakistan, Iraq and Iran in an alliance for the defense of the Middle East against the Soviet threat. The divergence of Egypt from the West to a "neutralist" line caused such a policy change. Moreover, the basic difference of the new strategy was to create an indigenous effort that stemmed from the individual states to this end. After the encouragement of the individual states, the Turkish-Pakistani Pact was signed as an initial stage of the Middle Eastern alliance. Then, the negotiations between Turkey and Iraq began and ultimately the Baghdad Pact was signed between the two states.

The attitudes of the great powers towards the Baghdad Pact were different. The United States did not join the Pact despite the heavy pressure on it by the states in the region although it played a role of sponsorship. Despite the economic and military support, it stayed behind the scenes for reasons which were vital to its interests. The United Kingdom, on the other hand, played a mediator role and supported the Pact. More importantly, it was the first signatory after Turkey and Iraq. The basic reason for the involvement of the United Kingdom was not to lose its leadership role or give up its interests and privileges in the region. The reaction of

the Soviet Union was negative, but it did not put pressure on the Pact countries. With the establishment of cordial relations between the Soviet Union, Egypt and Syria; the Soviet Union became an integral part of Middle Eastern politics.

The impact of the Baghdad Pact process on the regional states was different. Turkey and Iraq sought to lead the region and to extend their alliance to the other Arab states. However, although they were allies, suspicion and hatred poisoned their relations. Pakistan and Iran joined the Pact later in return for the guarantee of United States economic and military aid.

Egypt, which claimed the leadership of the Arab world as a neutralist state, reacted harshly to the Pact and Pact members, especially Iraq and Turkey as its rivals in the Middle East for leadership. Syria was initially favorable to the Pact, but after the change of its government, the attitude of this state shifted dramatically and it began to act with Egypt. Saudi Arabia, which was an important actor in regional politics, was against the Pact because it did not address the issue of the Israeli threat against the whole Arab world. These three states signed the Egyptian-Syrian-Saudi Pact right after the Baghdad Pact to bolster the economic and military cooperation in the Arab world. Later, the Pact dissolved due to their internal problems. Again, suspicion, hatred and clash of interests poisoned the Pact members. The smaller states in the region, Lebanon and Jordan, hesitated to take either of the two sides. Their cardinal priority was the preservation of the so-called "Arab Unity," which did not exist at any time in the Arab world, and the Arab League, which was the medium of discussion between the Arab states, against the common enemy, Israel. These two states tried to play the role of mediators especially between Iraq and Egypt throughout the whole process. Moreover, they sought to accomplish their own

economic and military development. Despite the pressure on these states from both sides, they did not join any of the Pacts from the beginning to the end.

The Baghdad Pact coincided with the crises in the Middle East and as a result it lost the power that, had been ascribed to it, especially after the withdrawal of Iraq right after the coup d'état in 1958. The Pact members continued their efforts to cooperate and with the change of the name and the status of the Pact, it continued to exist as CENTO until the late 1970s.

It can be concluded that the Baghdad Pact bolstered the split the Arab world. Nevertheless, the basic reason for it was the rivalry of interests, even for the smaller states in the region. The great powers sought to lead these states, but they used their economic and military needs as leverage to maximize their interests. Therefore, it can be concluded that the Baghdad Pact process, which ended with the crises that will be discussed in the next chapter in detail, influenced regional politics and, in return, was influenced by the dynamics of the regional politics, which were different from those of the Cold War.

CHAPTER 5

THE CRISES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND TURKEY 1954-1960

The second half of the 1950s witnessed several successive crises in the Middle East. The Arab-Israeli tension, which stemmed from the establishment of the Israeli state in 1948, intensified, and after the Suez Canal Crisis in 1956 turned into a war between Egypt and Israel. The United Kingdom and France supported Israel in its attack on Egypt despite the opposition of the United States and the Soviet Union. Moreover, the Turkish-Syrian border dispute erupted in 1957 and drew the attention of the states in the Middle East and the Great Powers. In 1958, Lebanon and Jordan Crises appeared and the Iraqi regime was toppled by a coup d'état which resulted in the assassination of the Crown Prince and the Prime Minister of Iraq. As a result of these crises, the regimes of the states in the region changed and the dynamics of the politics in the region altered.

These years coincided with the domestic political, economic and social crises in Turkey. Especially after the 1957 elections, these crises got worse and the Democrat Party period ended with the coup d'état in 1960. In the second half of the 1950s, while the Democrat Party government concentrated on domestic politics, it did not ignore the developments in the Middle East. The border dispute with Syria was directly related to Turkey, so it could not avoid being involved in this crisis. In the other crises mentioned above, although Turkey was a secondary actor, it was still involved in the development.

The position and policy of Turkey regarding the developments in the Middle East in the second half of the 1950s should be analyzed in order to complement the analysis of Turkey's Middle East policy in the 1950s. The analysis will be

chronological and Turkey's role will be discussed after the summary of the development of each crisis except the one with Syria because Turkey was directly a part of the crisis and it requires a comprehensive analysis.

The first main development in the late 1950s was the Suez Canal Crisis.

The Suez Canal Crisis, Arab-Israeli War and Turkey (1956)⁵¹⁸

The Suez Canal Crisis erupted with a declaration of the Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser on 26 July 1956 over the radio in Alexandria. Nasser announced that he had signed a presidential decree that had nationalized the Suez Canal Company.⁵¹⁹ During his declaration, the Egyptian officials were taking over

⁵¹⁸ Selected literature on Suez Crisis and the Arab-Israeli War: Vladislav M. Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), p.130; Jon D.Glassman, *Arms for the Arabs: The Soviet Union and War in the Middle East* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), pp.7-22; McNamara, pp.41-92; Gaddis, 171-174; Golan, *Soviet Policies in the Middle East: From World War II to Gorbachev*, pp.47-54 and *Superpower Cooperation in the Middle East*, p.127; Smolansky, pp.34-58; Lenczowski, pp.528-536; Judge and Langdon, pp.110-113; Westad, *The Global Cold War*, pp.125-126; Goldschmidt, p.255, 301-302; Friedman, pp.258-260; Kamrawa, pp.97-99; Grogin, pp.189-200; Shlaim, pp.28-31; Robins, p.26; Fawcett, pp.222-223; Sorenson, pp.25-26; McMahon, pp.66-69; Little, pp.58-59, 172-181; Sander, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri 1947-1964*, pp.145-155; Fırat and Kürkçüoğlu, pp.627-629; Bağcı, pp.79-84; Merih, pp.178-186; Gönübol and Ülman, pp.277-285; Sever, *The Compliant Ally? Turkey and the West in the Middle East 1954-58*, p.80; Sever, *Soğuk Savaş Kuşatmasında Türkiye Batı ve Ortadoğu 1945-1958*, pp.157-180; Karpaz, *Türk Dış Politikası Tarihi*, p.206; Uslu, pp.128-129.

⁵¹⁹ The history of the Suez Canal Company in FRUS: "Arrangements made by the Egyptian government with French engineer Ferdinand de Lessups during the nineteenth century provided the legal basis for the Company's existence as an Egyptian joint stock company. The original concession for the construction and operation of the Suez Maritime Canal, dated November 30, 1854; and signed by the Viceroy of Egypt, Mohammed Said Pasha, authorized de Lessups to form a financing company for the construction and the operation of the Suez Canal. The definitive concession, signed by the Viceroy of Egypt on January 5, 1856 (which superseded the Concession of 1854) authorized the establishment, in the form of a corporation, of the Universal Company of the Suez maritime Canal, listed the company's obligations and concessions conferred upon it, authorized the cutting of the Canal and provided that 15 percent of the profits would revert to the Egyptian government. Article 16 of the definitive concession fixed the life of the company at 99 years "counting from the completion of the work and the opening of the maritime canal to large vessels." At the expiration of that period, the Egyptian government could either resume possession of the canal with fair value compensation paid to the company or it could extend the company concession for successive periods of 99 years with an increase in the percent of levy. The Canal was eventually opened to traffic in 1869, which set the concession's expiration date

the administration and management of the Company. An autonomous Egyptian agency under the Egyptian Ministry of Commerce, rather than an international body, would “operate the canal, stipulate all employees under penalty of imprisonment, continue to charge their duties and compensate the shareholders of the company.” Nasser heavily criticized the imperialistic efforts which had threatened the independence of Egypt and also criticized the refusal of the United States and the United Kingdom to finance the Aswan High Dam. He announced that the revenue of the Canal’s nationalization would be used to finance to build the High Dam without the financial support of the West especially the United States.⁵²⁰ The rejection of the financial support for the construction of the Aswan High Dam by the Allies can be regarded one of the reasons for the development of Soviet-Egyptian relations in the following period.

The nationalization of the Suez Canal Company and the control of the Canal by an autonomous Egyptian authority caused responses from France and the United Kingdom. With the extension of the influence of the United States in the region after the Second World War and, especially in the 1950s, these two former imperial powers in the Middle East sought to protect their interests. The Suez Crisis meant the

for 1968. A subsequent convention between the Egyptian government and the Suez Canal Company, signed by the Viceroy of Egypt Ismail Pasha and de Lessups on February 22, 1866 and sanctioned by the Imperial Firman on March 19, 1866, incorporated the 1854 and 1856 concessions by reference, delineated the relationship between the Egyptian government and the Company and established Egyptian jurisdiction over the Company and the Egyptian nationality of the Company. As for the Canal itself, the Constantinople Convention of 1888 as well as the definitive concession affirmed its international character. The definitive concession guaranteed that the Canal and its ports “shall be open forever, as neutral passages, to every merchant vessel crossing from one sea to the other.” Infringements of that guarantee, the desire to regulate the passage of warships and other historical circumstances, caused the governments of United Kingdom, Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Russia, Spain and Turkey (Egypt being legally part of the Ottoman Empire) to sign a convention of Constantinople on October 29, 1888 respecting the free navigation of the Suez Maritime Canal. Article 1 of that convention provided: “The Suez Maritime Canal shall always be free and open, in time of war as in time of peace, to every vessel of commerce or of war, without distinction of flag. The Canal shall never be subject to the exercise of the right of blockade.”” FRUS 1955-57. v.16. i.8., pp.2-3.

⁵²⁰ FRUS 1955-57. v.16. i.8., p.1.

loss of the Western control of the region, more specifically, the control of the oil resources that were vital to the interests of the Western Europe. The French minister of foreign affairs, Christian Pineau, met with the United States' ambassador in Paris on 27 July 1956 and expressed the views of the French government upon the seizure of the Suez Canal. According to the minister of foreign affairs, it was necessary to react as strongly and harshly as possible to prevent Nasser to keep the control of the Canal. Unless the necessary reaction had been shown, all the pipelines in the region would have been seized and nationalized. Ultimately, the Western Europe might have been totally dependent on the "goodwill of the Arab states," which was unacceptable for the Western European states. Therefore, as Pineau said, France and the United Kingdom were jointly preparing military plans including the reoccupation of the Suez Canal. Accordingly, the reoccupation of the Canal Zone would not be too difficult for France and the United Kingdom because the Soviet Union was regarded as unprepared to protect and defend Egypt in such a move.⁵²¹

Like the French government, the United Kingdom government was in favor of a military intervention into the Suez Canal to restore the order. In a telegram sent from the United Kingdom's prime minister to the United States' president on 27 July 1956 such an action was proposed:

This morning I have reviewed the whole position with my Cabinet colleagues and Chiefs of Staff. We are all agreed that we cannot afford to allow Nasser to seize control of the canal in this way, in defiance of international agreements...The immediate threat is to the oil pipelines to Western Europe a great part of which flows through the Canal... It is however, the outlook for the longer term which is more threatening. The Canal is an international asset and facility, which is vital to the free world... The first step must be for you and us and France to exchange views, align our policies and concert together how we can best bring the maximum pressure to bear on the Egyptian government.⁵²²

⁵²¹ Telegram from the Embassy in France to the Department of State. July 27, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.16.i.8., pp.7-9.

⁵²² Telegram from Prime Minister Eden to President Eisenhower. July 27, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.16.i.8., pp.9-11.

Despite the precipitous and harsh proposals of France and the United Kingdom regarding the Suez Canal, the position of the United States was cautious. It sought to persuade its Allies to act more calmly. The president of the United States was not in favor of such a military move because the developments regarding the Canal did not require such moves and the world opinion was important to legitimize such an action. However, the crisis in the Canal Zone would not be legitimate in the eyes of the Arab states and the world opinion.⁵²³

Upon the differences in the positions and the proposals of the Allies, the representatives of the United States, United Kingdom, and France met in London between 29 July and 2 August 1956 to harmonize their policies and to determine their joint course of action. Several tripartite and informal bipartite meetings took place in this period between them.⁵²⁴

During the London meetings between the representatives of the Allies, president Eisenhower replied to a telegram from the United Kingdom's prime minister Eden on 31 July 1956. Eisenhower's telegram reflected the position of the United States regarding the Suez Canal Crisis. He agreed on the seriousness of the developments, whereas his proposal for the means and policies to handle the problem was different. He was in favor of solving the problem through diplomatic channels and said the use of force and military occupation might be the eventual way to protect the international rights. The Canal Zone was valuable to the United States and the "free world." The first step was to convene a conference among the signatories of the Convention of 1888 and the other maritime nations to put pressure

⁵²³ Memorandum of a Conversation with the President, White House, Washington. July 28, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.16.i.8., pp.26-27.

⁵²⁴ FRUS 1955-57. v.16.i.8., p.34.

on the Egyptian government to continue the “efficient” use of the Canal Zone in the future.⁵²⁵

In other words, as Eisenhower suggested, before considering such a proposal of military action, diplomatic ways should be exhausted. He stated that such a conference should have had an “educational effect” for the all states to provide a solution in such a difficult situation. Accordingly, the public opinion and the US Congress were not ready for the US military intervention in the Canal Zone. Finally, he underlined the dynamics that would play a role in the US policy regarding the crisis:

As you realize employment of United States forces is possible only through positive action on the part of the Congress, which is now adjourned but can be reconvened on my call for special reasons. If those reasons should involve the issue of employing United States military strength abroad, there would have to be a showing that every peaceful means of resolving the difficulty had previously been exhausted. Without such a showing, there would be a reaction that could very seriously affect our peoples’ feeling toward our Western Allies.⁵²⁶

In line with the opinions and the proposals of the US president, the meeting of the representatives of the Allies decided the meeting of an international conference in London on 16 August 1956, including all the signatories of the Convention of 1888 and the maritime nations. The Allies agreed on the principles and proposals which would be discussed. They agreed that during the Conference, an international authority for the Suez Canal should be established:

To take over the operation of the Canal, to ensure its efficient functioning as a free, open and secure international waterway in accordance with the principles of the Suez Canal Convention of 1888, to arrange for the payment of fair compensation to the Suez Canal Company, to ensure to Egypt an

⁵²⁵ Letter from President Eisenhower to Prime Minister Eden. July 31, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.16.i.8., pp.69-71.

⁵²⁶ *ibid.*

equitable return which will take into account all legitimate Egyptian rights and interests.⁵²⁷

If the efforts to agree with the Company or Egypt had failed, the matter would have been referred to an Arbitral Commission. The commission would have three members, which would be appointed by the International Court of Justice.

More importantly, the constituent organs of the International Authority, which had been designed by the Allies before the Conference, would be “a Council of Administration the members of which would be nominated by the powers chiefly interested in navigation and sea-borne trade through the Canal, the necessary technical, working and administrative organs.”⁵²⁸ The powers of the International Authority would include “the carrying out of all necessary works, the determination of the tolls, dues and other charges on a just and equitable basis, all questions of finance, general powers of administration and control.”⁵²⁹

These proposals reflected the efforts of the Allies to internationalize the matter to provide and regain their interests regarding the Canal Zone as opposed to the Egyptian efforts to nationalize the matter and to maximize its interests. After the preparations of the Allies had been completed, the London Conference met between 16 and 23 August 1956 to realize the decisions that had been made in the preparation period.⁵³⁰ Twenty-four nations were invited to the Conference by the United Kingdom and, except for Egypt and Greece, the others participated.⁵³¹ Nevertheless,

⁵²⁷ Circular Telegram from the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic Missions. August 5, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.16. i.8., pp.144-146.

⁵²⁸ *ibid.*

⁵²⁹ *ibid.*

⁵³⁰ The Turkish delegation in the London Conference: The Secretary General of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Muharrem Nuri Birgi, the Turkish Ambassador in the United Kingdom Suat Hayri Ürgüplü, diplomats Orhan Eralp and Şefik Fenmen and professor Seha Meray. *Zafer*, 14 August 1956.

⁵³¹ The twenty-two nations which sent representatives to the Conference were Australia, Ceylon, Denmark, Ethiopia, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, India, Indonesia,

on behalf of the Egyptian government, the chief of the Political Cabinet, Ali Sabri, was in London between 19 and 22 August 1956 as an unofficial observer to influence other delegations especially, those from Asia to provide support to Egypt.⁵³²

On 21 August 1956, the proposals that were determined by the Allies, but mainly the United States, were discussed and several amendments were made to the draft proposal. The one proposed by the Pakistani representative on behalf of Ethiopia, Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan was the main alternative. The text of the proposal of the four states was revised and circulated to the other delegations.

The original text should be given in full to see the positions and solutions of the four states and the United States regarding the Suez Canal Crisis⁵³³:

The governments approving this Statement, being participants in the London Conference on the Suez Canal:

Concerned by the grave situation regarding the Suez Canal,
Seeking a Peaceful solution in conformity with the purposes and the principles of the UN and,
Recognizing that an adequate solution must, on the one hand, respect the sovereign rights of Egypt, including its rights to just and fair compensation for the use of the Canal, and, on the other hand, safeguard the Suez Canal as an international water way accordance with the Suez Canal Convention of October 29, 1888.

Assuming for the purposes of this statement that just and fair compensation will be paid to the Universal Company of the Suez Maritime Canal, and that the necessary arrangements for such compensation including a provision for arbitration in the event of disagreement, will be covered by the final settlement contemplated below.

Join in this expression of their views: They affirm that, as stated in the Preamble of the Convention of 1888, there should be established “a definite system destined to guarantee at all times and for all the powers, the free use of the Suez Maritime Canal.” *Such a system which would be established with due regard to the sovereign rights of Egypt*, should assure:

Efficient and dependable operation, maintenance and development of the Canal as a free, open and secure international waterway in accordance with the principles of the Convention of 1888.

Iran, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, and the United States.

⁵³² FRUS 1955-57. v.16. i.8., p.212.

⁵³³ The italics were the amendments to the United States’ proposal by the four states.

Insulation of the operation of the Canal from the influence of the politics of any nation.

Respect for the sovereignty of Egypt.

A return to Egypt for the use of the Suez Canal which will be fair and equitable and increasing with enlargements of its capacity and greater use. Canal tolls as low as is consistent with the foregoing requirements. Payment to the Universal Suez Canal Company of such sums as may be found its due by way of fair compensation.

To achieve these results on a permanent and reliable basis there should be established *by a convention to be negotiated with Egypt*.

Institutional arrangements for cooperation between Egypt and other interested nations in the operation, maintenance and development of the canal and for harmonizing and safeguarding their respective interests in the Canal.

To this end, operating, maintaining and developing the Canal and enlarging it so as to increase the volume of traffic in the interest of the world trade and of Egypt, would be the responsibility of a Suez Canal board. Egypt would grant this Board all rights and facilities appropriate to its functioning as here outlined. *The status of the Board would be defined in the above-mentioned convention.* The members of the Board, in addition to Egypt, would be other States chosen in a manner to be agreed upon from among the States parties to the Convention with due regard to use, pattern of trade and geographical distribution: the composition of the Board to be such as to assure that its responsibilities would be discharged solely with a view to achieving the best possible operating results without political motivation in favor of, or in prejudice against, any user of the Canal. The Board would make periodic reports to the UN.

An Arbitral Commission to settle any disputes as to the equitable return to Egypt or other matters arising in the operation of the Canal. Effective sanctions for any violation of the Convention by any party to it, or any other nation, including provisions for treating any use or threat of force to interfere with the use or operation of the Canal as a threat to the peace and a violation of the purposes and the principles of the UN Charter.⁵³⁴

The amended text was approved by the United States and was referred as the Five-Nation Proposals. The amendments made by the four states and their commitment to the United States' proposals satisfied the United States government. Accordingly, as the US secretary of state said, the proposal became "not just a Western program, but one with Asian and African support."⁵³⁵ The proposal provided the support of the eighteen countries out of twenty-two except, the Soviet Union,

⁵³⁴ FRUS 1955-57. v.16. i.8., pp.250-252.

⁵³⁵ Telegram from the Secretary of State to the President. August 21, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.16. i.8., pp.253-254.

India, Indonesia and Ceylon, which had not been anticipated by the United States and called as an “impressive” result.⁵³⁶

After the discussion and the approval of the Five-Nation Proposals, the Five-Nation Committee, which was also called the Suez Committee of Australia, Ethiopia, Iran, Sweden and the United States, was established with which the Australian Prime Minister, Menzies, as Chairman. Although Turkey was in the group of states which made amendments to the United States’ proposals, it did not participate in the Suez Committee.

The mission of the Suez Committee was “to approach the Government of Egypt, to explain its purposes and objectives, and to find out if Egypt would agree to negotiate a Convention on the basis thereof.” The further developments would be determined in light of the Egyptian approach to the proposals and the Suez Committee. After the conference, the Suez Committee remained in London to prepare for its task. The recommendation of Dulles, the head of the United States’ delegation, to approach to Nasser via the Egyptian ambassador in London was accepted on 24 August 1956. The head of the Suez Committee, Menzies, delivered the request to meet Nasser on behalf of the eighteen powers at the Conference to the Egyptian ambassador. The Egyptian president accepted to meet with the Committee in Cairo, and the Suez Committee visited Cairo between 3 and 9 September 1956.⁵³⁷

After the meeting of the Suez Committee with the Egyptian president Nasser, the president declared his decisions on 9 September 1956. Nasser reiterated “his government’s right to nationalize the Suez Canal Company, Egypt’s commitment to adhere to the Convention of 1888 guaranteeing freedom of passage through the Canal, and Egypt’s readiness to give full and equitable compensation to shareholders

⁵³⁶ Telegram from the Secretary of State to the President. August 21, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.16. i.8., pp.253-254.

⁵³⁷ FRUS 1955-57. v.16. i.8., pp.284-285.

of the Company.”⁵³⁸ He also stated that “a crisis atmosphere had been created by threats to use force, mobilization of troops, and other hostile measures.”⁵³⁹

On the other hand, he was ready to negotiate a peaceful solution in which the Egyptian rights of sovereignty and ownership were respected, the freedom of passage through the Canal was protected and “dependable and efficient” operation and development of the Canal were provided. Nevertheless, the proposals of the Suez Committee were found to be on grounds that unacceptable they would undermine the objectives to reach a peaceful and satisfactory solution of the crisis.⁵⁴⁰ The Suez Committee was disbanded after the negotiations with the Egyptian President in Cairo.

After the failure of the Suez Committee’s efforts to persuade the Egyptian government to reach a peaceful settlement on the Suez Canal Crisis on the basis of the Five-Nation Proposals, the Second London Conference met on 19-21 September 1956. The eighteen states which had supported the Five-Nation Proposals at the first conference were invited to the second one and they all sent their representatives.⁵⁴¹

The agenda of the Second London Conference was to consider the situation and the developments since the First Conference and to discuss the course of action after the rejection of the proposals by the Egyptian President Nasser. The participants declared their regret upon the rejection of their proposals of the Five-Nation Committee to the Egyptian government. On the other hand, they insisted upon the fact that these proposals still provided a fair basis for a peaceful settlement of the crisis by taking the interests of both the participant states and Egypt into consideration. More importantly, during the Second London Conference, it was

⁵³⁸ FRUS 1955-57. v.16. i.8., pp.441-443.

⁵³⁹ *ibid.*

⁵⁴⁰ *ibid.*

⁵⁴¹ FRUS 1955-57. v.16. i.8., p.516.

decided to establish a “Suez Canal Users Association” to take the necessary measures and to implement policies to provide “the final or provisional” solution of the problem. The members of the Association would be the states that participated to the Second Suez Conference, including Turkey, as well as the states which would subscribe to the Declaration and the possibly adhering states which would meet the criteria to participate.⁵⁴²

The objectives of the Suez Canal Users Association would be:

To facilitate any steps which may lead to a final or provisional solution of the Suez Canal problem and to assist the members in the exercise of their rights as users of the Suez Canal in consonance with the 1888 Convention with due regard for the rights of Egypt, to promote safe, orderly, efficient and economical transit of the Canal by vessels of any member nation desiring to avail themselves of the facilities of SCUA and to seek the cooperation of the competent Egyptian authorities for this purpose, to extend its facilities to vessels of non-member nations which desires to use them, to receive, hold and disburse the revenues accruing from dues and other sums which any user of the Canal may pay to SCUA without prejudice to existing rights pending a final settlement, to consider and report to members regarding any significant developments affecting the use or non-use of the Canal, to assist in dealing with any practical problems arising from the failure of the Suez Canal adequately to serve its customary and intended purpose and to study forthwith means that may render it feasible to reduce dependence on the Canal, to facilitate the execution of any provisional solution of the Suez problem that may be adopted by the United Nations.⁵⁴³

The Association was to be established as soon as possible when these delegations contacted their governments. Upon the decision of the participants of the conference, the governments of the United Kingdom and France informed the United Nations Security Council. The government of Egypt also contacted the Security

⁵⁴² Statement Issued by the Second Suez Canal Conference at London. September 21, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.16.i.8., pp.556-557.

⁵⁴³ Declaration Issued by the Second Suez Canal Conference at London. September 21, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.16.i.8., pp.557-558.

Council upon this move. Shortly, the conference delivered the issue of the solution of the Suez Canal Crisis to the United Nations.⁵⁴⁴

Nevertheless, the United Kingdom and France were not satisfied with the results of the Second London Conference. The issue was tried to be settled through diplomatic channels although these two states were in favor of harsh measures including a military intervention to Egypt. The United States, on the other hand, prevented them from military intervention,⁵⁴⁵ as mentioned before. Despite the diplomatic efforts to settle the Suez Crisis in a peaceful way, the deterioration of the Arab-Israeli tension and the Israeli attacks to the Arab territories paved the way to the war in the Middle East and the opportunity the United Kingdom and France were waiting for came through Israel.

Israel wanted to take the advantage of the Suez Crisis and began raids to the neighboring Arab states in return for their attacks to the Israeli territory. At the meeting of the National Security Council on 20 September 1956 the acting director of the CIA, Cabell, commented that the Israeli raids represented the Israeli doctrine of “prompt reprisal” in order to prevent the Arab states from attacking Israel. However, as Cabell argued, Israel was not expected to attack the Arab states at the time.⁵⁴⁶

The acting secretary Hoover stated that:

There were two major forces which tend to maintain the unity of the Arab states. The first of these was the threat of aggression from Great Britain and France, the second was the threat posed by Israel. If these two threats were not present, centrifugal forces would tend to have the upper hand in the Arab states. Accordingly, if the United States succeeds in checking the threat of aggression against the Arab states from the British and the French, as well as from Israel, we can be relatively optimistic as to the results. At the moment

⁵⁴⁴ Statement Issued by the Second Suez Canal Conference at London. September 21, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.16.i.8., pp.556-557.

⁵⁴⁵ Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State, Washington. September 22, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.16. i.8., pp.560-562.

⁵⁴⁶ FRUS 1955-57. v.16. i.8., p.539.

we are putting all possible pressure on the Israelis to restrain them. Nevertheless, we are not too optimistic that the Israelis will not continue their present tactics or otherwise take advantage of the grave Suez Canal situation.⁵⁴⁷

The efforts to the peaceful settlement of the Suez Canal Crisis and the increase of the Arab-Israeli tension continued at the same time. Between the end of September and the end of October 1956, the diplomatic efforts continued to solve the Suez Canal Crisis.⁵⁴⁸ In this period, the mission of Turkey, which was one of the participants of the Suez Conferences and the Five-Nation Proposals, was to influence Pakistan and the other Baghdad Pact members regarding the Canal Crisis.^{549,550} All the efforts to settle the Suez Crisis peacefully failed and the Arab-Israeli War that followed the Crisis changed the agenda of Middle East politics.

On 29 October 1956, the Israeli Army attacked the Egyptian territory. The spokesman of the Israeli Army made the following announcement:

Units of Israeli defense forces have penetrated and attacked Fedayeen bases in the Kuntilla and Ras el Naqeb area and have taken up positions west of Nahel road junction towards the Suez Canal. This operation was necessitated by the continuous Egyptian military attacks on citizens and on Israel land and sea communications, the purpose of which was to cause destruction and to deprive the people of Israel of the possibility of peaceful existence.⁵⁵¹

As mentioned before, the Israeli forces began attacking the Arab states during the Suez Canal Crisis and the Second Suez Conference. The United States expected that Israel would expand its military moves. Upon the Israeli attack to Egypt, the

⁵⁴⁷ FRUS 1955-57. v.16. i.8., p.539.

⁵⁴⁸ For more details see FRUS 1955-57. v.16. i.8., pp.560-785.

⁵⁴⁹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. September 26, 1956. FO 371. 119147. JE 14211-1951.

⁵⁵⁰ The major role that Turkey was expected to play during the Suez Canal Crisis was to secure the flow of the Middle Eastern oil to the Western Europe through a new pipeline including Iran and Turkey. However, the proposed pipeline project did not realize. It will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6: "Turkey's Economic and Military Relations in the Middle East."

⁵⁵¹ Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State, Washington. October 29, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.16.i.9. Footnote 3., p.825. See also Kamrawa, p.97.

United States approached cautiously and the main suspicion of the United States was the position of the United Kingdom and France: “Will they act in the UN calling upon the Israelis to withdraw?”⁵⁵²

On the contrary, the Allies acted jointly with Israel on its attack on Egypt. All the three invaders had reasons to attack Egypt and topple Nasser. For Israel, its main enemy and threat was Egypt, which had been strengthened militarily with arms from the Soviet Union under the Arms Deal with Czechoslovakia in 1955. In addition, the Suez Crisis became a tool for Israel to legitimize the attack on Egypt. The United Kingdom and France were acted jointly with the Israel because they thought Nasser had to be tamed after the Suez Canal Crisis, and that the Liberation Movement that was led by Nasser had to be terminated before it spread to other parts of the world.⁵⁵³

After the Israeli attack on Egypt, the United Nations Security Council declared the following resolution:

Noting the report on the outbreak of hostilities between Israel and (the Arab state concerned),
Expressing its grave concern regarding the effect of this renewal of fighting upon the maintenance of international peace and security in the area;
Determines that a breach of the peace has occurred,
Calls for the immediate cessation of hostilities,
Calls upon Israel immediately to withdraw its armed forces behind the established armistice lines,
Calls upon all members to render prompt assistance to the United Nations in the execution of this resolution and to refrain from giving any military, economic and financial assistance to Israel,
Requests the Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization to keep the Security Council informed on the compliance given this resolution and to make whatever recommendations he deems appropriate respecting further action by the United Nations to assist in the implementation of this resolution.”⁵⁵⁴

⁵⁵² Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State, Washington. October 29, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.16.i.9., Footnote 4., p.825.

⁵⁵³ Kamrawa, p.97. See also Grogin, pp.191-196, Shlaim, 28-31, Friedman, pp.258-260.

⁵⁵⁴ FRUS 1955-57. v.16.i.9., p.831.

The Israeli prime minister, Ben Gurion, explained the logic and the reasons for the attack on Egypt in a telegram to the US president Eisenhower on the same day:

With the Iraqi troops poised in great numbers on the Iraq-Jordan frontier, with the creation of the joint command of Egypt, Syria and Jordan, with the decisive increase of Egyptian influence in Jordan, and with the renewal of incursions into Israel territory by Egyptian gangs, my government would be failing in its essential duty if it were not to take all necessary measures to ensure that the declared Arab aim of eliminating Israel by force should not come about. My Government has appealed to the people of Israel to combine alertness with calm. I feel confident that with your vast military experience you appreciate to the full the crucial danger in which we find ourselves.⁵⁵⁵

However, the United States was not in favor of an Arab-Israeli War and the involvement of the United Kingdom's and French forces in the occupation of Egyptian territory and the Suez Canal compelled the United States to take the necessary measures. Thus, the United States took responsibility for implementing the United Nations' Resolution for a possible cease-fire to end the attack and hostility. The preparations were made by the United States. Turkey was included in the plans. At the meeting of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on 30 October 1956 it was agreed that a memorandum would be sent to the Turkish government to authorize "to station a US air task group at Adana, in order to be prepared to assist in carrying out any directives which may be issued by the United Nations."⁵⁵⁶

However, the context of the request from the Turkish government remained a matter of discussion. In a meeting of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on 5 November 1956 Admiral Redford, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said that:

We must have authority for such use in the case of need. The approach to the Turks would not be a request for immediate deployment, but the JCS considers that we must have standby authority in order to be in a position

⁵⁵⁵ Telegram from Prime Minister Ben Gurion to President Eisenhower. October 29, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.16.i.9., pp.843-844.

⁵⁵⁶ Memorandum from the Secretary of the Joint Chief of Staff to the Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff. October 30, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.16. i.9., p.864.

to act quickly in case of need. The request would cover two objectives. Authority would be requested on a contingent basis for: The right to station Air Force units at the Adana Base, to be there for use in any operations which might be undertaken in connection with the situation in the Middle East... We would approach the Turks on the basis that any operations we would undertake would be under a United Nations directive.⁵⁵⁷

After this proposal, Admiral Redford asked the opinions of the staff regarding the proposal to the Turkish government and its possible reaction. Mr. Wilkins stated that “the Turkish stand on the recent developments in the Middle East is still unclear.”⁵⁵⁸

Mr. MacArthur said that in order to provide the support and approval of the Turkish government, the United States’ plans should be explained clearly. With such an open-ended request, it would be difficult to expect the support of the Turkish government. On the other hand, if these plans were shared with the Turkish government, there might have been a serious leak and there would be an impression that the United States was planning and preparing for military moves in the region.⁵⁵⁹

Mr. Gray asked the possibility of approaching the Turkish government through general exploratory conversations without getting into the details of the future plans of the United States. Mr. Wilkins suggested that the United States’ plans could be integrated to those of the United Nations regarding the air lift operations and the approach to the Turkish government would be to persuade them to act accordingly with the plans and actions of the United Nations.⁵⁶⁰

However, the developments following this meeting made the request from the Turkish government unnecessary. On 5 November 1956 the Israeli, United Kingdom’s and French governments replied the messages of the United Nations

⁵⁵⁷ Memorandum of Conversation, Department of State, Washington. November 5, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.16. i.9., p.998-1000.

⁵⁵⁸ *ibid.*

⁵⁵⁹ *ibid.*

⁵⁶⁰ *ibid.*

Secretary General, Hammarskjöld, dated on 4 November to end the military actions. Israel asked for the clarification of the intentions of Egypt in its response.⁵⁶¹

The United Kingdom and France came up with the demand that Israel and Egypt should accept “the interposition of a United Nations force between belligerents” in order to comply cease-fire. The United Kingdom and France explained that the mediation of the international force to prevent the hostilities was necessary. Moreover, such mediation was vital to secure the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from Egypt and to provide the security of the Suez Canal traffic and the settlement of disputes in the area.⁵⁶²

On the same day, the Israeli and Egyptian governments sent additional messages to the United Nations’ Secretary General. Egypt accepted the General Assembly Resolution that “provided for the establishment of a United Nations force.” Israel stated that its demands for the clarification of the intentions of Egypt would not set back the attempts for cease-fire. After a short time, the Israeli government sent a message to Hammarskjöld and stated that starting from 6 November Israel would accept the cease-fire unconditionally and beginning from 5 November, all fighting between Israeli and Egyptian land, sea, and air forces terminated.⁵⁶³

On the same day, the United Nations Security Council met upon the request of the Soviet Union to discuss the “noncompliance by the United Kingdom, France, and Israel with the decision of the emergency special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations on 2 November 1956. The Soviet Union demanded

⁵⁶¹ FRUS 1955-57. v.16.i.9., pp.1010-1011.

⁵⁶² *ibid.*

⁵⁶³ *ibid.*

that the immediate steps should be taken against the aforementioned states. However, the demand was rejected.⁵⁶⁴

While these developments were happening regarding the Arab-Israeli War between Israel, Egypt, the United Kingdom, and France; the Baghdad Pact powers were working to put pressure on the United Kingdom, the remaining Pact power, to accept the peace proposals as soon as possible. The message was sent through the United Kingdom's ambassador in Tehran, as follows:

The governments of Iran, Iraq, Pakistan and Turkey most earnestly recommend that the government of the UK give the most serious consideration to the proposals...It is hoped that these recommendations will be received by the Government of the UK in the same spirit in which they have been offered and that the government of the UK would, in addition to the cease-fire proposal, the acceptance of which has already been communicated through HM Ambassador in Tehran, proceed expeditiously to accept the remaining recommendations. The four governments consider that only in this way will it be possible to restore peace, confidence and stability in the Middle East.⁵⁶⁵

In addition to the message to the United Kingdom government, the Four-Baghdad Pact Powers announced a joint communiqué about the situation in the Middle East and the Arab-Israeli War. With this communiqué,

They condemned the aggression committed by Israel, in launching an attack on Egypt with the intention of occupying Egyptian territory and considered that Israel troops must be withdrawn immediately to the armistice line and all Egyptian prisoners taken by Israel be released... They decided to call upon the Governments of the United Kingdom and France to stop hostilities, withdraw their forces from Egyptian territory and fully observe and respect sovereignty, integrity and independence of Egypt... With a view to ensuring lasting peace in the area, the four Powers emphasized the urgent necessity of solving once and for all the Palestine dispute between the Arab countries and Israel and considered the United Nations resolution of 1947 as a basis for negotiating a settlement... the four Powers expressed their considered view that the Suez Canal dispute should

⁵⁶⁴ FRUS 1955-57. v.16.i.9., pp.1010-1011.

⁵⁶⁵ Telegram from the British Embassy in Tehran to Foreign Office. November 8, 1956. FO 371. 121793. VR 1091-767.

be settled through negotiations with Egypt under the auspices of the United Nations which should inter alia ensure free passage through the Suez Canal with full respect for Egyptian sovereignty.⁵⁶⁶

Upon the acceptance of the cease-fire by all parties, the Pact powers declared that they welcomed the decision and expressed their hope that the implementation of the Resolution of the United Nations General Assembly would take place as soon as possible.⁵⁶⁷

The Arab-Israeli War ended with the acceptance of the United Nations' Resolution by the parties. During the Suez Canal Crisis and the Arab-Israeli War, the desire of Turkey was similar to that of the United States: to solve the disputes through diplomatic channels. During both crises Turkey tried to play the role of a mediator. However, its reaction to Israel during the Arab-Israeli War was harsher than its reaction to the United Kingdom and France. Turkey withdrew its ambassador from Tel Aviv and the relations between Turkey and Israel were conducted by the chargé d'affaires. Turkey, however, did not cut the ties with Israel, which was its major ally in the Middle East. The reaction of Turkey to Israel could be interpreted as an effort to calm down the Arab reaction to Turkey's pro-Western and mediator policy during the Suez Canal Crisis and the Arab-Israeli War.⁵⁶⁸

When Turkey's role in the Five-Nation Proposals during the Suez Conference and the declaration with the Pact powers during the Arab-Israeli War are taken into consideration, the policy and attitude of Turkey can be seen clearly. However, there were some deviations in the Turkish political circles regarding these crises. For example, the ideas of the Turkish ambassador in Moscow reflect these differences:

⁵⁶⁶ Telegram from the British Embassy in Tehran to Foreign Office. November 8, 1956. FO 371. 121793. VR 1091-766.

⁵⁶⁷ *ibid.*

⁵⁶⁸ Fırat and Kürkçüoğlu, p.629. See also Ülman and Gönübol, pp.284-285; Bağcı, p.82.

In conversation with Military Attache today Turkish Ambassador made following points: He personally believed Anglo-French initiative in Egypt benefited Turkey but it stopped prematurely. Having failed to secure Mediterranean base in Egypt, Russia is building up base in Syria which threatens Turkey and our Middle East position rather than Israel only. Lack of radar screen in South East Turkey allows aircraft to fly in undetected and other war material can pass as merchandise.⁵⁶⁹

Despite personal views like this, the position of the Turkish government during these crises can be regarded as having been cautious and conciliatory. However, Turkey was unable to avoid getting involved into the developments in the crisis with Syria, which deteriorated the relations between the two countries, especially in 1957. Before getting into the details of the Turkish-Syrian Crisis, the positions of the opposition in the parliament and the press should be considered towards the policy of the Turkish government during the Suez Canal Crisis and the Arab-Israeli War.

The Suez Canal Crisis and the Arab-Israeli War in the Turkish Parliament and Press

The developments during the Suez Canal Crisis and the following Arab-Israeli War, and the Democrat Party's policy during these developments were discussed in the parliament. The representative of the Freedom Party, which had been established by the MPs who left Democrat Party in 1955, Turan Güneş, stated that Turkey should have played a more active conciliatory role during the Suez Canal Crisis. The government had failed. Regarding the Arab-Israeli War, Güneş criticized the government policy because it was not clear. Moreover, Turkey did not support the efforts of the United States to end the war as was needed. Although the Democrat

⁵⁶⁹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Moscow to Foreign Office. November 13, 1956. FO 371. 124022. RK 1071-2.

Party government tried to compensate for this inaction later on, it failed.⁵⁷⁰ The compensation efforts of Turkey can be regarded as the Declaration of the Baghdad Pact members and the withdrawal of the Turkish ambassador in Telaviv.

The approach of the RPP, however, was different. The representative of the party, Turgut Göle, argued that the only role that Turkey should have played during these crises was to help the United States, the United Kingdom, and the United Nations. Turkey should have avoided getting involved in these conflicts and hostilities.⁵⁷¹

In the parliament, the policies of the Democrat Party during these crises were evaluated by the opposition parties in different ways. The representative of FP criticized the government's policy. On the other hand, the representative of the RPP did not explicitly criticize, but suggested that Turkey should have acted cautiously and stayed out of the conflicts in the region.

These developments were also followed by the press. *Zafer*, as the organ of the DP, supported the policy of the government.

Son Posta supported the policy of the government and criticized the states which "caused" crises in the region. Selim Ragıp Emeç heavily criticized states

⁵⁷⁰ "Türkiye'nin bu meselenin hallinde arabulucu rolü oynayamaması tenkide şayandır... İngiltere, Fransa ve İsrail'in Birleşmiş Milletler Anayasasına aykırı olarak girişmiş oldukları silahlı tecavüze gelince... Türkiye'nin bu tecavüz hareketi karşısındaki vaziyeti, daha ilk anda çok sarıh olmalıydı. Halbuki, bu hareketin aleyhinde bulunmak ve gereken tedbirleri almak maksadıyla harekete geçen büyük dost ve müttefikimiz Birleşik Amerika'nın teşebbüsü ile, Güvenlik Konseyinin fevkalade toplantıya çağırılmış olduğu Birleşmiş Milletler Genel Kurulunun ruznamesine Türk delegasyonu müstenkif rey vermiştir. Bu hareket, maalesef, sonra bunu telafi için yapılanlara rağmen, bütüin Ortadoğu'da aleyhimize tepkiler doğurmuştur..."

Republic of Turkey. *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*. term 10, session 46, vol.17, 25 February 1957, pp.808-809.

⁵⁷¹ "Ortadoğu Meselesi bizi tabiatıyla yakından alakadar etmektedir. Bizim bu hususta Birleşmiş Milletlerin ve müttefik bulunduğumuz Amerika ve İngiltere gibi Büyük devletlerin hal çarelerini kolaylaştırmaktan ileri bir vaziyet almaktan sakınmamız lazımdır kanaatindeyiz..."

Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, term 10, session 46, vol.17, 25 February 1957, p.810.

which “caused” crises and conflicts in the region to the disadvantage of Turkey. In an article, “The New Source of Trouble: Suez” (*Yeni Çıbanbaşı: Süveyş*), he criticized the Egyptian government which had nationalized the Suez Canal Company and Emeç called this action a violation of the international law.⁵⁷² In relation to the Suez Crisis, Emeç analyzed the Arab-Israeli War and criticized the United Nations for not having been able to prevent the war and provide the solution of the crisis via diplomatic means. According to him, the participation of the United Kingdom and French forces with the Israeli ones that had attacked Egypt should have solely aimed to persuade the “stubborn” Nasser. The war might have ignited the “Third World War.” In the same article, he criticized Israel for having exploited the crisis to reach its own ends by occupying Egyptian soil.⁵⁷³

In the same newspaper, Refik Erol wrote an article titled “The Events in the Middle East,” (*Ortadoğu Davaları*) and argued that the tension between the Arab states and particularly Egypt and Israel might have caused uneasiness in the region. The tension in the region was limited in scope, but the major reasons for the tension were the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union, and the rivalry for oil, rather than the conflicts between the Arab states and Israel. On the other hand,

⁵⁷² “Orta Şark’ın umumi durumu bakımından son derece mühim sayılabilecek bir hadise ile karşı karşıya gelinmiş bulunmaktadır. Bu hadise, bugünkü Mısır hükümetinin Süveyş kanalı şirketinin mallarına ve hizmetlerine el koyması gibi Milletlerarası mukavelelere aykırı vahim bir harekettir...”

Son Posta, 28 July 1956.

⁵⁷³ “Mısır ve Arap devletleri ile İsrail arasındaki ihtilafın vukuu üzerinden aylar, hatta Yıllar geçtiği halde, Birleşmiş Milletler teşkilatı bu meselenin halli uğrunda dişe dokunur ciddi bir faaliyet göstermemiştir. Bu, bir isteksizlik mi idi? Yoksa imkansızlık mı?... Bugün için mühim olan Kanal ihtilafının genişlememesi ve İngiliz deklarasyonunun gereğince müdahalenin iki tarafı ayırmaya matuf ve fazla dik kafalılık eden Abdünnasır’ın bir miktar kulağını çekmeye inhisar eden tenbihi bir muameleden ibaret kalmasıdır. Aksi takdirde ve şayet, bugünkü şekliyle, Ortadoğu hadiseleri bir başlangıç sayılmıyorsa, Üçüncü Cihan harbinin patlaması işten bile değildir... Burada dikkat edilmesi lazım gelen nokta İsrail devletinin hareketidir. Bu Devlet daha evvel Irak kuvvetlerinin Ürdün’e girmelerini meşru sebep sayacağını bildirmişti. Bu kuvvetler hudutta kaldılar. Buna rağmen İsrail kısa bir intizardan sonra Mısıra taarruz etti. Demek ki bugünkü durumu kendi menfaatleri bakımından müsait addetti...”

Son Posta, 2 November 1956.

Turkey, with its farsighted and realistic foreign policy, had initiated the Baghdad Pact to provide stability to the region. According to Erol, the recent developments in the Middle East had proved Turkey's Middle East policy to be successful.⁵⁷⁴

Like *Zafer* and *Son Posta*, *Cumhuriyet* supported the government's policy during these crises. During the Suez Canal Crisis, Ömer Sami Coşar wrote an article titled "Will Suez Be Occupied?" (*Süveyş İşgal Mi Edilecek?*) and stated that the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company by the Egyptian government had created a new, serious situation. If the Egyptian government had confined itself to the nationalization of the Canal, the crisis would have been settled through diplomatic negotiations. However, under those serious circumstances, it would be difficult to find such a basis. Coşar stated that Nasser would not play such a critical role.⁵⁷⁵

Similarly, Coşar supported the policy of the Turkish delegation during the London Conferences. Turkey had respected the national rights of Egypt and had not opposed to the nationalization of the Suez Canal Company as the Western powers had. On the other hand, Turkey had sought to find a midway between the West and

⁵⁷⁴ "Arap memleketleri ve bilhassa Mısır ile İsrail arasında hüküm süren devamlı gerginlik, Ortadoğu politikasında kaygılandırıcı yeni gelişmelere yol hazırlamaktadır. Görünürde, dar çerçeveli bir anlaşmazlık konusu karşısında bulunuyoruz. Araplarla İsraililer henüz bir barış düzenine kavuşmamışlardır. Aradaki uçurumlar o kadar büyüktür. Fakat asıl Ortadoğu davası bu görünen gerginliğin çok daha ötelerindedir... Türkiye gerçekçi ve uzak görüşlü dış politikasıyla ilk yapıcı adımı atmış ve Bağdat paktının temel taşı koymuştur. Son zamanların politika gelişmeleri tuttuğumuz yolun doğruluğunu göstermektedir...." *Son Posta*, 5 November 1956.

⁵⁷⁵ "Süveyş Kanal kumpanyası ile tesislerinin Mısır Cumhurbaşkanı tarafından devletleştirilmesi, İkinci Cihan Harbi'nden bu yana siyasi ve askeri sarsıntılardan yakasını kurtaramamış olan Ortadoğu'da yeni ve çok ciddi bir durum yaratmıştır... Mısır idarecileri Süveyş Kanalı'nı devletleştirmekle iktifa ederlerse müzakere yolu ile bir anlaşma zemini bulunabilecek, silaha lüzum kalmayacaktır. Fakat bu gergin hava içinde böyle müzakerelere zemin hazırlamak dahi son derece güç olacak bilhassa Mısır'ın büyük ustalıklı hareket etmesi lazım gelecektir. Mısırlı albay bunu başarabilecek mi yoksa baraj işinde olduğu gibi gene rotayı şaşırıp karaya mı vuracak?..."*Cumhuriyet*, 30 July 1956.

Egypt. Therefore, the cautious and mediator role of Turkey had been appropriate during the London Conferences.⁵⁷⁶

On the other hand, the writers in the newspapers and journals closer to the opposition approached the developments differently. Rather than the policies of the government, they focused on and evaluated the developments.

During the Suez Canal Crisis and the London Conferences, Esmer wrote articles in *Ulus* in which he mainly argued that the London Conferences had been a failure for Western diplomacy. The results of the conference had been clear at the beginning. He criticized the Soviet Union and the Soviet attitude during the crisis and the conferences and he said that Egypt might have established closer relations with the Soviet Union against the West.⁵⁷⁷

The position of *Akis* was similar to that of *Ulus*. During the Suez Canal Crisis, the journal criticized the Egyptian government. It was stated that the Canal regime was under threat as a result of the nationalization of the Canal. After the

⁵⁷⁶ “Zaman zaman tehlikeli safhalar arzetmiş olan Süveyş meselesini ele alan Londra Konferansı pek yakında kapanacaktır. Evvelki gün bazı yabancı radyolar Konferansta Türkiyeyi temsil eden heyet başkanının, Birleşik Amerika Dış İşleri Bakanı Dulles tarafından ileri sürülen planı desteklediğini bildirmişlerdi. Yalnız Türk heyeti başkanının sözlerinin çok acele tefsir edildiğini şimdi görüyoruz... Öyle anlaşılıyor ki Türkiye Cumhuriyeti hükümetinin temsilcisi, bu konferansta ortaya atılan iki ayrı görüşü bağdaştırmaya çalışmaktadır. Türkiye evvela prensip itibarıyla Mısır’ın millileştirme kararını tasdik etmekte ve diğer bazı Batılı devletler gibi buna karşı cephe almamaktadır... Türkiye’nin bugün Mısır’ın Süveyş meselesinde meşru haklarını çiğneyecek bir anlaşma altına imza atması beklenemez. Bu sebeptendir ki Türkiye delegasyonu, Amerikan tekliflerinin ileride yeni görüşmeler için müzakere mevzuu olarak ele alınmasını, bu telkinlerin göz önünde bulundurulmasını talep etmekle iktifa eylemiştir...”

Cumhuriyet, 19 August 1956.

⁵⁷⁷ “Londra konferansının batı diplomasisi için bir başarı olduğu iddia edilemez. Böyle bir neticeye varılacağı daha konferans toplanmazdan önce belli idi. Sovyet Rusya, her çeşit anlaşmaya varılmasına engel olmayı dış politikasına hedef almıştır. Ruslar bulanık suda balık avlarlar... Londra Konferansından sonra da Süveyş meselesi müzmin ve uzun sürececek bir dava olarak kalma istidadındadır. Batılılarla yeni bir mücadeleye girişecek olan Mısır’ın bu arada daha çok Rusya’ya kaymasından da korkulur.”

Ulus, 26 Ağustos 1956.

nationalization of the Canal and the Nasser's control on it, the situation had become much more serious.⁵⁷⁸

During these crises, *Forum* had a conflictual stance; on the one hand, it supported Arab nationalism. On the other, it strongly criticized Nasser, who was recognized as the leader of Arab nationalism. During the Suez Canal Crisis, *Forum* stated that Nasser, as a dictator, sought to increase his own prestige for political reasons. All of his arguments to nationalize the Suez Canal were lies and he endangered the foreign investments in the developing countries like Egypt. Therefore, the West should have responded severely to the reaction of Nasser.⁵⁷⁹

Consequently, the press closely followed the events during the Suez Canal Crisis and the Arab-Israeli War. However, evaluation of the events was somewhat different. The press closer to the government focused on the government's policies and supported them. On the contrary, the press closer to opposition focused on the developments and criticized the actors that were involved in these crises.

⁵⁷⁸ “*Süveyş Kanal Kumpanyasının 26 Temmuz’da Mısır tarafından devletleştirilmesinden sonra serbest geçiş rejimi tehlikeye düşmüştür. Ekonomilerinin en geniş kısımlarını Süveyş Kanalı’ndan geçen gemilerin taşıdığı Ortadoğu akaryakıtlarına dayayan İngiltere ve Fransa’nın bu iddiasındaki aşırı endişe ve telaş payları bir yana bırakılsa bile, Kanalın yalnız Nasır’ın hakimiyet ve kontrolü altına geçmesinden sonra durumun eskisi kadar içi açıcı ve güven verici olmadığına şüphe yoktur. Dünya siyaset semasında beliren anlaşmazlık bulutları ancak şu günlerde Kahire’de yapılmakta olan görüşmeler sonunda dağılacak veya koyulaşacaktır...*”

Akis, 8 September 1956.

⁵⁷⁹ “*Birleşik Amerika ve İngiltere, Asvan Barajının inşasına iştiraki şimdilik reddederken bu reddi münhasıran iktisadi sebeplere dayandırmışlardı. Nasır’ın cevabı ise tamamen politik planda olup her diktatör gibi demagojik prestij mülahazalarıyla, Arap halk efkârı önünde şahsi durumunu kurtarmak ve Batı’nın itibarına bir darbe vurmak maksadını gütmüştür. Kahire Diktatörünün bu kararını haklı göstermek için ileri sürdüğü bütün deliller sathidir hatta yalandır... İktisadi bakımdan Mısır’ın bu hareketinin neticeleri çok ağır olabilir. Gerçekten, Mısır da diğer bütün geri kalmış memleketler gibi kalkınması için Milletlerarası sermaye hareketlerinin huzur ve emniyet içerisinde cereyan etmesinden ancak müstefit olabilir. Yabancı şirketlere ait tesislerin devletleştirilmesi hele imtiyaz mukavelelerinde tesbit edilmiş olan müddetlere riayet edilmemesi, bu memleketlerden, kalkınmaları için lüzumlu olan Yabancı Sermayeyi kaçtıracaktır... Kanaatimizce Batı’nın Mısırlı Albay’ın bu hareketini cevapsız bırakmaması muhakkak ki lüzumludur...*”

Forum, 15 August 1956.

Turkey's policy and attitude during these two crises have been analyzed so far. In the Suez Canal Crisis and the Arab-Israeli War, Turkey was a secondary actor and was able to avoid being directly involved in the conflicts. However, the crisis that erupted in 1957 with Syria did not allow Turkey to stay out of the conflict.

The Turkish-Syrian Crisis (1957)⁵⁸⁰

The Turkish-Syrian Crisis is one of the most important developments that the Democrat Party government was involved in the Middle East in the 1950s. There are different approaches towards the crisis in the literature most of which have been critical of the Democrat Party government. For example, Gönlübol and Ülman argue that the Syrian Crisis was an eruption of the rivalry between the two superpowers in the Middle East. The basic concern was the Soviet efforts to infiltrate the Middle East and to expand communism in return for the efforts of the United States to prevent the Soviet Union from establishing a base in Syria and the Middle East. Therefore, Turkey was the major state which was preoccupied with the Soviet expansion in Syria because of the long frontier with the latter. The possibility of the establishment of a communist rule in Syria was the main concern of Turkey and the crisis could be explained by the security.⁵⁸¹

Sander and Sever have similar approaches to the Turkish-Syrian Crisis. Sander argues that the Soviet-Syrian rapprochement and the Soviet economic and military aid disturbed the decision makers in Turkey. However, the economic crises

⁵⁸⁰ Selected literature on Turkish-Syrian Crisis: Arda Baş, "1957 Suriye Krizi ve Türkiye", *History Studies*, v.4 (2012), pp.89-109; McNamara, pp.93-113; Lenczowski, p.344; Smolansky, pp.59-75; Kreutz, p.14; Robins, p.26; Bağcı, pp.90-98; Sander, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri 1947-1964*, pp.155-165; Sever, *The Compliant Ally? Turkey and the West in the Middle East 1954-58*, pp.81-83; Sever, *Soğuk Savaş Kuşatmasında Türkiye, Batı ve Ortadoğu 1945-1958*, pp.181-204; Gönlübol and Ülman, pp.290-300; Merih, 188-191; Fırat and Kürkçüoğlu, pp.629-632; Karpas, *Türk Dış Politikası Tarihi*, p.207-208; Uslu, pp.129-131.

⁵⁸¹ Gönlübol and Ülman, pp.298-299.

in Turkey and the United States' indifference to provide financial aid to Turkey caused the Turkish government's exploitation and exaggeration of the developments to its ends. The political and economic support of the United States was necessary for the Democrat Party government before the 1957 elections. After the electoral success and the declaration of the Eisenhower Doctrine, the Turkish-Syrian Crisis ended.⁵⁸²

Sever is also critical of the Democrat Party's policy during the crisis. She argues that the Democrat Party government's harsh reaction to the Soviet-Syrian rapprochement might have caused the crisis. The government's security concerns might have been right, but the reaction should not have been the massing of troops near the frontier. As a result, the Soviet Union and Syria seized a chance to make propaganda against Turkey's "aggressive actions," although there was no sign of such an aggressive policy and action against Syria. Such a harsh reaction and strategy caused the crisis in the hottest years of the Cold War, especially in the Middle East. Therefore, Sever argues, the Democrat Party government acted contrary to its interests in the region.⁵⁸³

In the light of these different approaches in the literature, the Turkish-Syrian Crisis will be discussed in detail. Therefore, the developments before the crisis, during the crisis and the impacts of the crisis on the regional politics will be analyzed separately to provide more analytical results regarding the Turkish-Syrian Crisis and to understand and question the arguments mentioned before.

The Background of the Crisis

The crisis between Turkey and Syria had deep roots and stemmed from the economic and military support of the Soviet Union to Syria after the regime change

⁵⁸² Sander, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri 1947-1964*, pp.164-165.

⁵⁸³ Sever, *Soğuk Savaş Kuşatmasında Türkiye, Batı ve Ortadoğu 1945-1958*, p.203.

at this country in 1954.⁵⁸⁴ The perception of the Soviet threat by Turkey widened with the penetration of the Soviet Union to the Middle East through Syria. In the memorandum which was sent to the United States' officials, Turkey's uneasiness can be seen clearly: Turkey was disturbed by the Soviet actions in her southern neighbor. More importantly, the military weakness of Iran as a Baghdad Pact member was a great impediment on the establishment of a solid defense system in the Middle East. In addition, the Soviet overflights, which were claimed by the Turkish officials, were also a matter that was considered by Turkey and, in return, Turkey wanted to urge the Soviet Union regarding these flights. Nevertheless, Turkey's air force potential was not strong to make this warning effective so that the United States should support Turkish stance towards the Soviet Union. Besides the United States, the United Kingdom was informed by Turkey of these threats and the need for support.⁵⁸⁵

Turkey's main fear was to be isolated and circled by the Soviet Union through its penetration to Syria and possibly to Iran in the long run. For the United States, the possible Soviet threat to Iran was a result of the failure of the United States to provide military support to this state. The United States' officials thought that unless the United States joined the Baghdad Pact, the problem of the Iranian defense could be solved through bilateral agreements. The disturbance of Turkey regarding Syria was perceived by the United States as an invitation to have an influence on the change of government in this country. The United States was preparing plans to solve this problem. Lastly, the Soviet overflights could be detected

⁵⁸⁴ The regime change in Syria has been discussed in detail in Chapter 2 under the topic "Syria".

⁵⁸⁵ Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs (Rountree) to the Counselor of the Department of State (MacArthur). November 19, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.24. i.13., pp.702-704.

through better aircraft detection facilities and radar systems in Turkey. Thus, the United States' military aid program would be accelerated to Turkey.⁵⁸⁶

After the formation of the new government in Syria, which was closer to the Soviet Union, the uneasiness among the neighbors of this state increased. The Leftists in Syria became more influential. They arrested some conservative members of the parliament and they did not hesitate to use force in order to intimidate the opposition. Moreover, the Soviet material and technical personnel were delivered and there were some exaggerated reports on the scope and quantity of the Soviet support. These reports and rumors, in addition to the facts mentioned above, disturbed Turkey. Interestingly, Turkey would have been expected to intervene in Syria if the situation in this state had become chaotic, which would pose a threat to the security of Turkey. Accordingly, Israel and Iraq, especially the latter, were supposed to intervene in Syria by the officials of the United States. However, the Iraqi intervention was more difficult because of the weak position of the Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Said in his country.⁵⁸⁷

Regarding the Syrian situation, Turkey was on the spot. The United States' ambassador in Ankara sent a message to the Turkish government which estimated the possible dangers in Syria. However, the United States was interested in learning more about what the Turkish government had in mind regarding Syria. In the same message, the developments in Syria were also evaluated. It was stated that the reports regarding the Soviet presence in Syria with military personnel, military equipment

⁵⁸⁶ Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs (Rountree) to the Counselor of the Department of State (MacArthur). November 19, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.24. i.13., pp.702-704.

⁵⁸⁷ Memorandum of Discussion at the 305th Meeting of the National Security Council. November 30, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.13. i.13., p.606. For the details of the Soviet-Syrian rapprochement and the reaction of the United States see Baş, pp.97-98; Lenczowski, p.344; Smolansky, 64-66; Robins, p.26; Sever, *The Compliant Ally? Turkey and the West in the Middle East 1954-58*, p.81; Firat and Kürkcüoğlu, p.630.

particularly aircraft, exaggerated the actual situation. Despite these reports, there was a serious problem in Syria which needed to be considered. The presence of the Soviet military elements in Syria and the tendency of the Syrian government to approach the Soviet Union for support were of great concern. Therefore, the United States agreed with Turkey on the possible threat in Syria and it explored the ways to improve the air defense capabilities of Turkey and solve the problem of Turkey's susceptibility to the outside threats especially from its northern and southern neighbors. Furthermore, the United States began to take the necessary measures to strengthen the front for the defense of Turkey in case of an armed attack under the NATO.⁵⁸⁸

Another development which also affected the Turkish-Syrian relations, as the Soviet penetration in this country, was the smuggling taking place on the border of the two states. The Turkish government prepared a plan to prevent smuggling on the Syrian border. The main feature of the plan was:

The establishment of a security zone of varying width along the whole line of the Turco-Syrian frontier. This zone would vary from 12.5 to 25 km in depth and no one living within it would be allowed to hold stocks of merchandise beyond those considered necessary for their own maintenance. In addition, a no man's land would be established of 500 ms in depth from the frontier. The whole population would be moved out of this zone and their possessions expropriated. This area would also be mined.⁵⁸⁹

However, there were a lot of Syrian people living in this area who would have to be moved out and the Turkish government was afraid that the Syrian government would do the same to the Turkish citizens in the Syrian territory. A no man's land was one part of the plan. In addition, Turkey planned a road along the whole frontier

⁵⁸⁸ Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Turkey. December 10, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.24.i.13., pp.704-706.

⁵⁸⁹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. February 5, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-2.

to control the border. Some parts of the road had been completed and opened before that time.⁵⁹⁰

There was news of some people who had been caught in the act of smuggling. Their goods were also seized by the Turkish officials. Shortly, the smuggling along the Turkish-Syrian front was another problem that worsened the relations between the two states. More importantly, the Turkish government believed that the Syrian government supported the act of smuggling and the smugglers.⁵⁹¹

In the meantime, while these events were taking place, a new crisis between the two states appeared: the concentration of troops on the Turkish-Syrian frontier by Turkey and the Syrian protest against these concentrations in May 1957. The United Kingdom's ambassador in Ankara asked the secretary general of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs to confirm these accusations. The Secretary general rejected these claims. At the same time, the secretary general of the Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs asked the Turkish chargé d'affaires in Damascus about the military moves on the Turkish-Syrian border. The charge replied that he had no detailed information, but he guessed that the troops were there for exercise because the months of April and May were the time for troop exercises for the Turkish Army.⁵⁹²

Another official from the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs stated that the troop concentrations on the border were made at the request of the United States. The Jordanian ambassador in Ankara argued that the troop movements were made by the Turkish government "with the approval" of the United States' government. While the foreign diplomats sought to understand the developments on the border, the precise

⁵⁹⁰ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. February 5, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-2.

⁵⁹¹ *ibid.*

⁵⁹² Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. May 10, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-4.

explanation came from the Commander of the Second Army, who was responsible for the Syrian border, and he stated that the concentrations had taken place upon the recent events in Jordan.⁵⁹³

The explanation of the Commander was not satisfactory because the following events showed that the basic concern of the troop movements on the border was directly Syria. The Turkish government tried to establish a buffer zone between Syria and itself against a possible threat. It was understood that the disturbance of the Turkish government led it to take measures. However, there was no evidence that Turkey would have intervened in Syria if a crisis had taken place.

The United Kingdom's ambassador in Ankara made a conversation with the secretary general of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Esenbel, upon the developments on 17 May 1957. The secretary general said that the Syrian government was anxious about the troop concentrations on the frontier. The Syrian Minister of Foreign Affairs had asked the Turkish Minister, Kural, during his visit to Damascus that why these movements had been happening. The Minister replied that they were "normal seasonal exercises." The Syrian Minister of Foreign Affairs added that Turkey should have made a statement on the subject to calm Syria. The secretary general said that the government did not intend to make a statement on the subject.⁵⁹⁴

The Turkish, Iraqi and Jordanian officials met to discuss the Syrian developments in August 1957. The Turkish Prime Minister informed the United States government about the meeting. The Turkish military officers told the United States government that "Turkey's concern was not only for the Soviet threat from the north, but also for the ominous stock-piling of Soviet material in Syria which

⁵⁹³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. May 10, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-4.

⁵⁹⁴ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. May 21, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-5.

produced a situation tailor-made for a two-pronged attack on Turkey by Soviet forces.”⁵⁹⁵

In the meeting with the Iraqi officials, the Turkish Prime Minister found the Iraqis much concerned about Syria. The Iraqis were in favor of calming down the situation between Turkey and Syria. However, they were in agreement that the measures needed to be taken to ameliorate the tension between the two states. The Turkish Prime Minister stated that “unless USA takes definite position and decisions, nothing can be done. Up to now USA has been very cautious, very diplomatic-she has been bound by diplomatic forms and theory.”⁵⁹⁶

It should be kept in mind that this was the policy of the United States during the 1950s: staying behind the scenes. The Prime Minister continued that despite the declaration of the Eisenhower Doctrine, which had been supposed to guarantee the independence of the Middle Eastern states, the Communist infiltration in Syria could not be prevented. Syria became a Soviet satellite. The United States had to do something as soon as possible to stop these developments and to prevent the Soviet Union from settling at the center of the Middle East between Turkey, Iraq, Jordan and other countries. He added that the developments in Syria could cause a domino effect in the Middle East. More importantly, dealing with Syria would mean dealing with the Soviet Union and Turkey could not afford to do that alone. She needed the support of the United States and, thus, the Turkish government was awaiting solid decisions from the United States in order to take necessary measures.⁵⁹⁷

⁵⁹⁵ Daily Top Secret Summary. August 19, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.13.i.13., p.638.

⁵⁹⁶ Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State. August 21, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.13. i.13., pp.642-644.

⁵⁹⁷ *ibid.*

The United States' secretary of state replied to the message of the Turkish prime minister and stated that the deep concern of the neighbors of Syria regarding the recent developments was justified.⁵⁹⁸

The US ambassador in Ankara was assigned to discuss the matter with the Turkish officials as well as the officials of the other Middle East states such as Iraq and Jordan to learn their views, estimates and suggestions on how to deal with the problem. In these conversations, the position of the United States would be reiterated: the United States was supporting the principles of the United Nations and it was opposed to a military intervention in any country which did not provoke.⁵⁹⁹

More importantly, the United States was aware of the possible dangers of the Syrian situation because Syria was under heavy influence of the Soviet Union and, furthermore, it had received large amounts of military equipment which were above its needs for self-defense. Therefore, the United States would support the neighbors of Syria against any aggression. The economic and military assistance to the Middle Eastern states to resist the communist threat was the logic of the Eisenhower Doctrine. If any of these states had become a victim of an attack by a country under the control of Soviet Communism and requested any aid, the United States would come to their assistance.⁶⁰⁰

On 25 August 1957, the United States' consul general met with president Bayar, prime minister Menderes and other officials from the Turkish government. The Turkish officials were not optimistic about the possibility that the Iraqi and Jordanian officials could solve the Syrian problem decisively. In the evening of the same day, the Consul General met with the Turkish and Iraqi officials, i.e., the Iraqi

⁵⁹⁸ Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Turkey. August 23, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.13. i.13., p.650.

⁵⁹⁹ *ibid.*

⁶⁰⁰ *ibid.*

King, crown prince, minister of defense and chief-of-staff. He expressed the views of the United States regarding the Syrian problem. He reiterated that the Syrian situation was critical and the United States was ready to support Turkey, Iraq, and other Arab states in their attempts to solve the problem as it was expressed by the United States government. The Consul General re-emphasized that any action should be consistent with the principles of the United Nations.⁶⁰¹

In return, the Iraqi Crown Prince stated that he was preparing to persuade King Saud personally that Iraq had no territorial or political ambitions in Syria. He requested that the United States bring him and King Saud together, but the consul general said that he should use his own channels to communicate with the King. The crown prince put emphasis on the fact that the Syrian problem was so serious that he wanted to begin contacts and planning as soon as possible after he had returned Iraq on 26 August 1957. Consul general commented that the position of the Iraqi crown prince convinced the Turkish Prime Minister that Iraq was sincere about taking action to solve the Syrian problem.⁶⁰²

After the meeting of the Turkish, Iraqi and Jordanian officials in Istanbul and the messages which were sent to the United States government, the Turkish prime minister had a meeting with the United States' consul general in Istanbul in which he explained his impressions about the meeting. The prime minister stated that:

Although Lebanon not represented in Istanbul meeting he was keeping close touch Lebanese government and convinced Lebanon was equally concerned. Istanbul meetings had discussed wide range of possible moves to counter communization Syria including diplomatic activities, possibility utilizing Syrian leaders in exile, assessment of military strengths of Iraq, Jordan and Syria. There possibility para-military action might be required in case unbearable provocation. Arab conferees were hopeful that they could secure at least moral support other non-communist Arab states

⁶⁰¹ Telegram from the Consulate General in Istanbul to the Department of State. August 26, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.13. i.13., p.658.

⁶⁰² *ibid.*

against Syria becoming Soviet satellite.⁶⁰³

Jordan's King Hussein contacted the Saudi King and the leaders of Libya, Tunisia and Morocco, whereas none of them replied during the meeting. On the contrary, the Egyptian President Nasser was not contacted. Some Iraqis suggested that it might have been desirable to approach Nasser to benefit from the idea of the Arab Unity, whereas King Hussein stated that it would be useless. The possible attitudes of the Soviet Union, Egypt, and Israel also were discussed in these meetings. Upon the question of the consul general about the Turkey's role in the Syrian Crisis, the Turkish prime minister stated that Arab participants had suggested that the initiative should come from the Arabs first and Turkey should enter the scene at a later stage, if necessary.⁶⁰⁴

While the officials of the United States were holding talks with the officials of Turkey, Iraq, and Jordan regarding the developments in Syria, the Israeli officials contacted the United States and the United Kingdom governments. The conversation between the Israeli charge d'affaires in Turkey and the United Kingdom's ambassador is worth mentioning. On 27 August 1957, the Israeli charge d'affaires met with the United Kingdom's ambassador in Istanbul and asked about the course of action which had been supposed to be implemented by the United States, the United Kingdom and Turkey regarding Syria. The charge said that he had been ordered by his government to ask about the policy because the Israeli government was very anxious about the developments in Syria. Turkey had been a source of information regarding the Arab world in the past, but they had not been able to acquire any feedback. The ambassador replied, saying the Allies were aware of the

⁶⁰³ Telegram from the Consulate General in Istanbul to the Department of State. August 26, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.13. i.13., pp.656-657.

⁶⁰⁴ *ibid.*

shock that the recent events in Syria caused in the Arab world and they sought to minimize the impacts of the events.⁶⁰⁵

More importantly, the ambassador emphasized the importance of the Israeli policy. “Israel’s lying low and doing nothing” enabled the Arab world to focus on Syria. In return, the charge stated that “His country was desperately anxious to help in any way possible.” He personally feared that the Allies had done a mistake by implementing a soft policy towards Syria. However, some solid action was needed.” He underlined the role of the Egyptian President related to the Syrian developments and argued that he was working to make Syria communist which was a “Soviet trap.” Accordingly, “Nasser was under orders to show concern and to play the West along for a couple of months or so. In fact he would do nothing to combat Russian penetration, though he would be full of plausible promises.”⁶⁰⁶

The Israeli chargé did not come up with alternative solutions to terminate the Syrian problem. According to the United Kingdom’s ambassador, the chargé stated that his views were only for a friendly warning. In the same vein, the West should not trust Nasser to do anything regarding Syria and there would be no action against the Communists by him.” He reiterated that these all were his personal views and he was aware that they all were prejudiced. Moreover, he had no concrete evidence to prove his arguments. Nevertheless, he stated that he was convinced he was right and his government shared his views and fears regarding the developments in Syria.⁶⁰⁷ Shortly, as Turkey, Israel was in favor of doing something regarding Syria and it was working to persuade the United States and the United Kingdom to take action before it would be late.

⁶⁰⁵ Telegram from the British Embassy Residence in Istanbul to Foreign Office. August 30, 1957. FO 371. 128225. VY 1015-141.

⁶⁰⁶ *ibid.*

⁶⁰⁷ *ibid.*

In the meantime, Turkey and Iraq continued their efforts to take action and secure the support of the United States as had been agreed during the Istanbul talks. Both governments declared the United States that it was vital for the United States' military advisors or commission to be sent to the area "to give advice from strategic and tactical point of view and to assist and make recommendation re needs for arms." The United States' Consul General in Istanbul told the Iraqi Crown Prince that until Iraq decided the course of action, it would be useless to send military advisors to the area.⁶⁰⁸

While the contacts between the United States, Turkish and Iraqi officials regarding the military needs and the course of action regarding Syria, a statement of the Syrian Chargé d'affaires in Ankara was published on the newspaper *Ulus* on 3 September 1957. In his statement, the Syrian Charge said that "his government's policy was neutral." The statements that Syria was becoming Communist were not justified. Syria had not accepted any aid to which any conditions had been attached as it had been the case with American aid. His government would not do the same, either. He added that:

The Soviet loan to Syria would be paid off in twenty years at 2.5% interest, and it was untrue that Soviet aid would place Syria under Soviet influence and lead to the spread of Communism in the country. In obtaining arms from the Soviet Union Syria was not trying to compete with a strong nation like Turkey, but to strengthen herself against Israel.⁶⁰⁹

In other words, although the United States, the United Kingdom, Turkey and Iraq were afraid of Syria's becoming communist through the economic and military aid from the Soviet Union in the long run, the Syrian government and its representative in Ankara were working to prove that they had not lost their

⁶⁰⁸ Telegram from the Consulate General in Istanbul to the Department of State. September 2/3, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.13. i.13., p.672.

⁶⁰⁹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. September 6, 1957. FO 371. 128226. VY 1015-182.

independence as the result of the aid from the Soviet Union, and that their basic concern was not Turkey, but Israel.

Nevertheless, these statements did not assuage the parties which were interested in the developments in Syria and they did not give up their attempts to take measures regarding Syria. The secret contacts between the United States and Turkey continued. The United States took the Syrian situation more seriously and shared its course of action not only with Turkey, but also with Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon. The United States government concluded that Syria had become or would become shortly “a base for military and subversive activities in the Near East designed to destroy the independence of those countries and to subject them to Soviet Communist domination.” If Syria took on an aggressive policy with the support of the Soviet Union, the United States would decide that the need for individual or collective self-defense existed, which would have been consistent with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter and Article 1 of the NATO treaty. Thus, the necessary measures would be taken in such case.⁶¹⁰

For the United States, Turkey was not to act individually rather than “the reinforcement of the Arab defensive action.” Moreover, if the Muslim neighbors of Syria felt threatened by Syrian aggression and requested the economic and military assistance from the United States, the latter would help these countries. By the same token, “if Turkey should feel compelled to react to armed provocations which implied a serious threat to its own national integrity and independence or if Turkey should come to the aid of Syria’s Arab neighbors engaged in hostilities with Syria,” the United States would support Turkey in the United Nations. In case of an attack by the Sino-Soviet bloc against Turkey, the United States would come to the help of

⁶¹⁰ Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Turkey. September 10, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.13. i.13., pp.691-693.

Turkey.⁶¹¹ It can be argued that the United States did not want a struggle between Syria and Turkey although the crisis between the two countries deepened throughout the autumn of 1957.

Upon the request by the Turkish and Iraqi governments for military advisors from the United States, on 11 September 1957; the Department of State informed the embassies in Ankara and Baghdad that the Chief of the Joint US Military Mission for Aid to Turkey, Major General Armistead Mead and, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Joint Middle East Planning Committee, Major General Verdi Barnes, would be sent to these states. On 17 September 1957, two military officers arrived in Ankara and Baghdad, respectively to give them the necessary support.⁶¹²

While these preparations were being made and the precautions taken, the diplomatic maneuvers between Turkey and Syria continued. The Syrian minister of foreign affairs held an interview in Istanbul on his way to the United Nations General Assembly in New York on 20 September 1957 in which he stated that:

There ought to be no tension in the relations between Turkey and Syria because they were neighbors; and if they were left alone, relations between them would return to normal at once. Syria was trying to restore relations to normal and remain outside the cold war. There was nothing in the Middle East to threaten world peace if only the Middle East states were left alone, and Syria's policy was to keep out of all blocs... Turkey was arming herself too, but this did not make Syria apprehensive. The Syrian Government had heard that Turkey was concentrating troops on the Turkish/Syrian frontier; this had been discussed with the Turkish Minister at Damascus, but there had been no exchange of Notes.⁶¹³

After the appointment of the new Syrian chargé d'affaires to Turkey, similar statements were made by him. In a press conference, the new chargé stated that his

⁶¹¹ Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Turkey. September 10, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.13. i.13., pp.691-693.

⁶¹² FRUS 1955-57. v.13. i.13., pp.700-701.

⁶¹³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. September 27, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-10.

duty was to work for the amelioration of the relations between Turkey and Syria. He said that:

Our only desire is to see the existence of good relations between the two countries who are united by ties of religion, history and tradition... the only country from which Syria expects an attack is Israel. We have no anxieties about any other country... Syria obtained arms where she could, but she has not imported a regime together with the arms. The arms we have imported are just about enough to equip armed forces numbering 1,500,000, whilst Israel has imported a sufficient quantity of arms for 20,000,000. It is patent that we have no purpose other than defence.⁶¹⁴

The chargé also rejected the claims that there were Soviet bases and technicians in Syria and the Syrian government was dominated by the Communists. He concluded his conference by saying that: "We are simply neutral. No-one in power at present is a communist. The difference between nationalism and communism must be appreciated. Today, perhaps nationalism is communism."⁶¹⁵

Despite the statements of the Syrian officials, the tension between Syria and Turkey did not decrease. The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs justified the press reports that the Syrian government had given a note to the Turkish Chargé d'affaires on 9 October 1957, which had protested against "frontier incidents, violation of Syrian airspace by Turkish aeroplanes and Turkish troop concentrations near the Syrian frontier."⁶¹⁶

The Ministry regarded the frontier incidents as more of the usual clashes with the smugglers, as had happened on 7 October 1957. The Ministry believed that the reason for the Syrian note was:

Merely to repair the omission pointed out in the Turkish Prime Minister's reply to Bulganin's message on the Middle East, i.e., that the Russians had protested the alleged Turkish threat to Syria, but that the Syrians had not. The same motive was attributed to circulation of the Syrian letter at the

⁶¹⁴ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. October 4, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-11.

⁶¹⁵ *ibid.*

⁶¹⁶ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. October 12, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-12.

UN on the same subject.⁶¹⁷

The Peak of the Crisis

The Syrian and Soviet accusations, which claimed that Turkish troop concentrations on the border was meant to topple the Syrian regime with the United States' support, continued in September and October 1957. The tension between Turkey and Syria increased and the relations between the two states deteriorated.

On 10 September 1957, the Soviet prime minister Nikolai Bulganin sent a letter to the Turkish prime minister in which he accused Turkey of preparing an attack to Syria with the support of the United States. In his reply, Menderes rejected the accusations and stated that the Soviet Union was exploiting Syria for its own policy. With these letters, the Soviet Union became a part of the crisis. On 16 October 1957, the secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, Nikita Khrushchev, verbally attacked United States' secretary Dulles in an interview with the *New York Times* and accused Dulles of provoking Turkey to attack Syria. In return, the United States' Department of State denied these accusations.⁶¹⁸

Dulles stated in a press conference on 16 October 1957, that if the Soviet Union attacked Turkey, the United States would come to the assistance of Turkey. The declarations between the United States and the Soviet Union, on the one hand, and Turkey and Syria, on the other, continued and they were accompanied by military and diplomatic actions.⁶¹⁹

On 21 September 1957, a Soviet naval squadron visited Latakia, a Syrian port and, in return, on 5 October 1957, a missile carrier of the United States, Canberra,

⁶¹⁷ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. October 12, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-12.

⁶¹⁸ FRUS 1955-57.v.24.i.13.,p.734.

⁶¹⁹ *ibid.*

and some vessels of the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean visited Izmir. On 13 October 1957, the Syrian and Egyptian governments declared that troops had been deployed in Latakia to support the Syrian defense.⁶²⁰

On 16 October 1957, the Syrian Minister of Foreign Affairs applied to the United Nations to bring the matter onto the agenda of the General Assembly. Regarding the crisis, the General Assembly met between 22 and 30 October 1957. At the end, the decision was to take no action. Turkey and Syria accepted the decision of the General Assembly. The discussions in the General Assembly are important to understanding the diplomatic maneuvers regarding the Turkish-Syrian Crisis.

The Meeting of the United Nations' General Assembly

The Syrian Minister of Foreign Affairs applied to the United Nations' Secretary General for the inscription of an item to the agenda about the Turkish-Syrian Crisis on 16 October 1957. The United States was in favor of the inscription of an item, but in the first instance, it needed to be discussed in the Security Council before the General Assembly because the Security Council was the suitable organ to take matters of international peace and security into consideration.⁶²¹

After the application to the United Nations Secretary General, the Syrian delegation in New York released a memorandum explaining the Turkish-Syrian Crisis. This long memorandum is worth discussing here. The Syrian delegation stated that:

Far more than a year now, foreign actions affecting Syria and endangering its security and independence, as well as general peace, have been continuing. These actions have been increased and intensified during the last two months, and more so during the last two weeks. At present there exists an actual military threat to Syria, resulting from the heavy, unprecedented and

⁶²⁰ FRUS 1955-57.v.24.i.13.,p.734.

⁶²¹ Telegram from New York to Foreign Office. October 16, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-13.

unwarranted concentration of Turkish troops, up to several divisions, in close proximity to the Syrian-Turkish border. These troops are being constantly reinforced. They are now massed mainly in a small sector, and have taken a disposition which presages imminent attack. The Turkish troops have apparently been given a slogan, "To Aleppo" which they now publicly repeat. Acts of provocative nature have been happening. Foreign military airplanes have recurrently flown over Syrian territory near the Turkish border and at the Syrian coast, thus violating Syrian air space. Armed raids from Turkey into Syrian territory, clashes and shooting on the border and similar actions have become frequent. The military pressures on Syria and threats to its security are connected with other actions, such as interference in the affairs of Syria to sway its policy or overthrow its Government. Foreign activities of that nature have been going on. One of them was discovered and those implicated in it were turned over to the courts of justice, convicted and condemned... Some of the accused in these attempts were able to escape justice. They have somehow gathered in Turkey... A few days ago substantial amounts of hidden arms were discovered. They had been smuggled into Syria and were intended for use in violent action prepared against Syria and its Government... It is evident that the security and independence of Syria are being endangered. The present situation has indeed reached the point whereby measures by the United Nations, in fulfilment of its Charter, are necessary... the Syrian government through diplomatic channels repeatedly called upon the member states concerned to end their activities against the security of Syria and general peace. Unfortunately, no fruitful results were realized... In the circumstances, the Syrian delegation feels it necessary that the General Assembly deal urgently with the proposed item, and takes such measures as called for by the Charter of the United Nations. The Syrian delegation deems it appropriate that a commission be set up by the General Assembly to investigate the situation on the Syrian-Turkish border and report to the Assembly. An impartial and international investigation of that nature would surely help to lay the facts before the United Nations.⁶²²

The Syrian request from the General Assembly was welcomed by the United States because it was of the opinion that an investigation commission could help to decrease the tension and to clarify who was threatening peace in the area. The United Kingdom was also in favor of such a commission, stating that it hoped that the General Committee would convene as soon as possible to introduce the item onto the agenda of the General Assembly. However, the priority of the United Kingdom was the settlement of the dispute through a regional initiative.⁶²³

⁶²² Telegram from New York to Foreign Office. October 16, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-15.

⁶²³ Telegram from New York to Foreign Office. October 16, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-17.

Upon the application of the Syrian government, the diplomatic contacts and maneuvers regarding the Turkish-Syrian Crisis intensified before and during the General Assembly meeting. The United Nations secretary general, Hammarskjöld, met the Egyptian minister of foreign affairs, Fawzi, and the Egyptian Minister explained to him the position of Egypt on the discussion of the Turkish-Syrian Crisis in the General Assembly. As was reported by the United Kingdom's Delegation in the United Nations, Fawzi stated that the Egyptians had tried very hard to persuade the Syrians not to proceed because such a broad discussion of the debate between the two countries would make it "embarrassing" for the whole Arab world. In return, the Syrians had replied the Egyptians that "for domestic reasons" the United Nations had to be involved to the debate; otherwise, the situation in Syria would deteriorate.⁶²⁴

As was reported by the United Kingdom's Delegation in the United Nations, the Secretary General, Hammarskjöld, thought that the Egyptian efforts to convince Syria were significant and would help to deal with the crisis as quietly as possible. After the conversation with the Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs on 16 October 1957, the secretary general met with the Syrian minister of foreign affairs to learn their objective. As was stated in the same report, the Syrian minister stated that "their idea was to produce a détente and get something out of the United Nations which would calm the situation."⁶²⁵

Hammarskjöld replied the Syrian Minister in the sense that if their objective was to calm down the situation, "quiet and patient work behind the scenes" was necessary before and after the meeting of the General Assembly. He added that the issue has been procedurally a matter for the Security Council, whereas he believed that this would "dramatize" the situation. Therefore, the issue should be inscribed

⁶²⁴ Telegram from New York to Foreign Office. October 16, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-18.

⁶²⁵ *ibid.*

and sent to a Special Political Committee which would be directly responsible to the General Assembly.⁶²⁶

While these developments were happening in New York, rumors and claims of a possible Turkish attack to Syria continued. Jordan's King Hussein told the United States and United Kingdom ambassadors in Amman that the Jordanian government had been informed by the Syrian government that "Turkey was planning to attack to Syria in the near future with infantry divisions and air support."⁶²⁷

He added that these claims not be true, but such a possible action by Turkey might complicate the things and cause the Arabs to act with Syria. The United States' ambassador replied that these claims and rumors were "doubtless part of the present Syrian propaganda offensive and that Syria would be unwise to cry wolf too often." The United Kingdom's ambassador added that "it was unlikely that Turkey would attack Syria in the middle of the Turkish General Election Campaign."⁶²⁸

Before the conversation with the ambassadors, the King had seen the Turkish ambassador and asked about the claims. The Turkish ambassador, Dikerdem, had replied that although the Turkish government had been worried about the developments in Syria, Turkey had no aggressive plans and intentions regarding Syria."^{629,630}

⁶²⁶ Telegram from New York to Foreign Office. October 16, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-18.

⁶²⁷ Telegram from the British Embassy in Amman to Foreign Office. October 16, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-19.

⁶²⁸ *ibid.*

⁶²⁹ *ibid.*

⁶³⁰ The Turkish Ambassador in Amman, Dikerdem, conveyed his conversation with the Jordanian King as the following: "The Political Committee of the Arab League decided that the Arab States should have acted jointly against the threat of Turkey upon Syria. On October 15, 1957; the Syrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kollas, received the Ambassadors of the United States, the Soviet Union and Iraq and claimed that Turkey was massing troops near the Syrian frontier. On the following day, the Jordanian King, who had just returned from Europe, received the Ambassadors of the United States, the United Kingdom and me separately and expressed their anxiety over Turkey's military concentration near the Syrian frontier. My discussion with Hussein was interesting. Actually, the Jordanian King was

In line with the Jordanian position, the Iraqi position seemed to be pro-Syrian in case of an attack from Turkey on this country. The Iraqi ambassador in the United Kingdom stated that if there had been anything in Syria, Iraq would have fought with Syria in order to fulfill its obligations in the Arab League, regardless of the fact that whether Syria was right or not. He added that the United Kingdom should use its influence to calm down the United States and Turkey.⁶³¹

On 17 October 1957; the day after the release of the Syrian declaration, the Turkish government released a counter declaration. In this statement, the military dispositions near the Syrian border were called “normal security measures” in time of tension in the Middle East and the accusations and comments by the Syrian government were regarded as interference in Turkish sovereignty. More importantly, the Turkish government denied the facts that the military airplanes had crossed the Syrian frontier and Turkish troops had fired across the frontier. However, the possibility of border incidents that stemmed from usual smuggling trade from Syria into Turkey was not excluded.⁶³²

Before the General Assembly meeting, it was unlikely Turkish-Syrian crisis would cool down. However, despite several rumors and claims, an armed attack by

happy because of Turkey's pressure on Syria rather than anxious, whereas he should have acted accordingly with the decision of the Arab League. Our discussion was friendly. The King was expecting that I would justify Turkey's military concentrations near the frontier. On the contrary, I had learnt from the Turkish officials before I returned to Amman that the tension between us and Syria were not so serious that it would cause a military intervention. The Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Esenbel told me, when I visited him to take instructions before having returned to Amman, that: “There will not be a military intervention, you can turn back to your mission comfortably”. Esenbel knew the situation and the developments well. Therefore, the tension between Turkey and Syria did not go beyond a political manoeuvre. As a result, I told the King that Turkey had no aggressive intentions to her neighbors. Maybe, Hussein got disappointed at that time.” Dikerdem, p.110.

⁶³¹ October 16, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-27.

⁶³² Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. October 17, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-21.

Turkey to Syria was not likely, either. The United Kingdom's ambassador in Ankara evaluated the possibility of such an attack:

I have no reason to believe that Turkey intends to attack Syria in the near future and in any case, I am certain that they would take no such action at any time without specific American approval.⁶³³

When the United States opposition to such a military attack was considered, it can be argued that all the parties in the crisis were exaggerating the events. The United Kingdom's ambassador in Bahrain reported the perception of the Arab states of the crisis to the Foreign Office and his statements were an example of the "anomaly" regarding the Turkish-Syrian Crisis. He stated that almost all the Arabs believed that the United Kingdom, the United States and Turkey were exaggerating the Syrian-Soviet relations and Syria's falling under Communist influence and the danger of this development to the Middle East. He added that they believed the Soviet Union had helped Syria as a result of its anti-Israeli position. The ambassador said that:

Our reactions are criticized partly because they imply that an Arab State is not free to do what it likes and partly because our views are thought to be influenced by the support of the Israelis. In case there is anything more than propaganda in Syrian-Turkish exchanges, I feel bound to state the view that any action against Syria taken or condoned by us or our allies would cause grave danger to our interest in the Gulf, particularly in Kuwait.⁶³⁴

In order to play the mediatory role, the United States decided to accept the inscription of the Syrian request and its discussion in a plenary session of the General Assembly. The United Kingdom acted accordingly, despite the opinion that the item had been inscribed by Syria and supported by the Soviet Union for propaganda purposes. The United Kingdom delegation in New York also stated that the normal course of action would be to discuss the issue in the Security Council because it was

⁶³³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. October 17, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-22.

⁶³⁴ Telegram from the British Embassy in Bahrain to Foreign Office. October 17, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-24.

related to security and international peace. However, the United Kingdom accepted the discussion of the Turkish-Syrian Crisis in the General Assembly despite these reservations. In the meantime, the Turkish government declared that it would not be ready until the following Wednesday for the discussion of the issue.⁶³⁵

After the acceptance of the discussion of the issue in the General Assembly, diplomatic preparations began. According to a memorandum of conversation in the Department of State, the secretary of state expressed that:

We should avoid a resolution of a nature which would put Turkey on the spot. We did not want to be put in the position of appearing to support a move against our staunchest Middle East ally. The Turks might counter the Syrian complaint with their own request for an investigating commission to report on the Russian build-up along the Turkish-Soviet border. Any resolution of this kind would certainly be rejected by the USSR and would give Turkey a precedent for similar action with respect to any resolution calling for an investigation in Turkey.⁶³⁶

Upon this decision, the United States government contacted the Turkish government to determine the tactics and the strategy before the discussion in the General Assembly. The telegram from the Department of State to the United States Embassy in Turkey on 18 October 1957 shows the policy and strategy of the United States:

We desire closest collaboration with Turkish government and Turkish delegation New York on this issue. We believe we should make every effort to turn this matter to our advantage and to point up the threat to independence of Syria arising from indirect Soviet aggression and to security of ME arising from pile-up of Soviet arms in Syria... Debate will of course give opportunity make clear that charges of aggressive intent made against Turkey, and allegations that US attempting to foment war against Syria, are entirely unfounded...We have in mind introduction of resolution whereby Assembly, after discussion, would decide to refer Syrian complaint to SC with request that Council determine scope of investigation which should be made. Assembly may, however, insist on see King itself to direct

⁶³⁵ Telegram from New York to Foreign Office. October 18, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-25.

⁶³⁶ Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State. October 18, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.13. i.13., pp.720-722. During the Syrian Crisis there were Soviet military moves on the Turkish-Soviet frontier. These military moves could be interpreted as a means to put pressure on Turkey during the Syrian Crisis.

the investigation. We would like urgently to receive views of Turkish Government regarding desirability of an investigating committee being despatched to area. If such a body were to go forward we would hope it might be composed of non-permanent members of SC. Although Syrian complaint calls for a UN group to investigate situation on Syrian-Turkish border, we are considering whether it would not be desirable for such group to be authorized also to investigate armaments situation in Syria and situations on Soviet-Turkish and Turkish-Bulgarian borders with particular reference to possible military movements. Soviets and Bulgars would probably not accept investigating group. You should emphasize to Turks that these views are entirely preliminary that we have not yet had an opportunity for full consultation with other delegations and that we have reached no final determination with regard to procedure. We would welcome urgent and continuing consultation with Turks.⁶³⁷

Through the close cooperation with the Turkish government, the United States tried to prevent any resolution against Turkey regarding the Turkish-Syrian Crisis. The expectations of the United States government regarding the Turkish attitude and position about the discussion in the General Assembly were justified. In a conversation with the United Kingdom's ambassador in Ankara, the secretary general of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Esenbel, stated that the Arab stance and support to the Syrian regime had become clear with the Jordanian King's statement, which was mentioned before. He did not blame the Jordanian King, but it was impossible to expect any action against Syria in the General Assembly from the Arab states. Then, he stated why Turkey was opposed to a Commission of Investigation, which would limit Turkish government's ability to act if it had been necessary. Moreover, the Egyptian support of the Syrian troops in Latakia was uncertain for Turkey. He thought that Egypt might try to save Syria from falling under the control and influence of the Soviet Union. As a result of this uncertainty, the Turkish government did not make any public comment regarding this

⁶³⁷ Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Turkey. October 18, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.13. i.13., pp.723-724.

development. More importantly, he said he believed that Egypt had not moved like this without the knowledge of the Soviet Union.⁶³⁸

On the other hand, despite the opposition to a special Commission of Investigation, the Turkish government was not opposed to the discussion of the Syrian situation in the General Assembly. If such a Commission had been necessary, it would have covered the frontier areas of the other countries such as the Soviet Union and Bulgaria as well as Turkey and Syria.⁶³⁹

In consistency with the strategy of the United States, the tactic of the United Kingdom was to turn the issue into an advantage. According to the United Kingdom's officials, the objective of the Soviet Union in the General Assembly would be to accuse Turkey of being supported by the West against the Arabs, who were supported by the Soviet Union. Thus, the main objective of the Allies would be "to represent the West as the friend of both Turkey and the Arabs, and Russia as a troublemaker in the area."⁶⁴⁰

Before the General Assembly discussion, the United States and the United Kingdom determined their strategy and policy. It was vital for them to harmonize their positions with that of the Turkish government. The United States' delegation in New York was assigned to speak to the Turkish delegation as soon as possible. It was to urge the Turkish delegate "not to commit himself in his speech today to the acceptance of a Commission of Investigation especially of one with the terms of reference suggested by the Syrians." For the United Kingdom, the harmonization of the strategies of the Allies and Turkey was urgent not only to support Turkey in the

⁶³⁸ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. October 18, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-28.

⁶³⁹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. October 18, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-30.

⁶⁴⁰ Telegram from New York to Foreign Office. October 19, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-18.

discussion, but also not to set dangerous precedents of such action in the United Nations in the future.⁶⁴¹

The United States government continued to urge the Turkish government not to take any action in the General Assembly that could be exploited by Syria or the Soviet Union as propaganda. A telegram from the Department of State to the embassy in Turkey on 20 October 1957 stated that the United States was aware that to what extent Syria was under Soviet influence. Moreover, it was argued that the Arab states were uneasy about the developments in Syria, but for political reasons they did not make their concerns public. Therefore, in order to refrain from possible anti-Turkish propaganda, the Turkish government needed to be careful in the General Assembly debate. More importantly, the Turkish government needed to try to minimize the incidents on its southern border and control the deployment and actions of its troops in the region not to become a target of assaults in the General Assembly debate.⁶⁴²

The objective of the United Kingdom was similar to that of the United States. The United Kingdom's ambassador in Baghdad sent a telegram to the Foreign Office and made some evaluations regarding the General Assembly discussion. He stated that:

It would be particularly unfortunate if the result were that all Arab States voted with Russia while we ourselves, the Americans and the Turks voted on the other side. The Iraqi Minister in Damascus, who is here, is apparently taking the line that the Russians have succeeded in working the Syrians up into a state of nerves, and that the latter now genuinely feel the need to be assured against Turkish attack. There is considerable feeling here that Syria is entitled to receive such an assurance. It can be assumed that the Iraq Government will be most anxious to avoid having to choose between a vote for Syria or Turkey. I fear that if it came to a choice the Iraq government, or their delegation in New York, might, despite their dislike of lining up with

⁶⁴¹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Washington to Foreign Office. October 19, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-37.

⁶⁴² Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Turkey. October 20, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.24. i.13., pp.738-739.

the Russians, vote with Syria unless they could maintain that Syria had received the necessary assurances against attack. The danger of this would be increased if the Saudi representative, Shukairy, was supporting the demand for a Commission of enquiry.⁶⁴³

The need of the Arab states for assurances about a Turkish attack on Syria can be seen in the message of the Iraqi Prime Minister to the United Kingdom Foreign Office:

Iraq which has cordial and neighborly bonds with its friend and neighbor, Turkey, is sure that Turkey has no hostile intentions or designs against sister Syria in whose continued security and stability Iraq is interested as well as in the safeguarding of her integrity and independence.⁶⁴⁴

While these diplomatic maneuvers and contacts with the Arab states were taking place, the Saudi King came up with the idea that he should mediate between Turkey and Syria. The United States took this effort as encouraging. The Turkish government accepted the offer of the Saudi King while Syria remained uncertain. The United States evaluated the Syrian calmness and stated that if Syria refused the offer, its position with the Arab delegations would be problematic. If it accepted, there would remain no ground for their insistence on the General Assembly to take a drastic action regarding the crisis. Upon this development, the United States expected that Turkey would insist on the postponement of the debate until the General Elections in Turkey took place. The timing of the Saudi initiative was appreciated by the United States and it was very helpful to decrease the tension between the two states.⁶⁴⁵

Upon the initiative of the Saudi King, the Turkish minister of foreign affairs, Zorlu, went to Riyadh to meet the King. The assistant secretary general of the

⁶⁴³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. October 20, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-39.

⁶⁴⁴ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. October 21, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-35.

⁶⁴⁵ Telegram from the British Embassy in Washington to Foreign Office. October 21, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-41.

Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that the Saudi King's mediation offer had not been acceptable for the Turkish government because of the Syrian attitude. However, the government wanted to hear the offer of the Saudi King, and the initiative was well timed before the General Assembly meeting.⁶⁴⁶

King Saud met with Zorlu on 24 October 1957 and they had a long conversation on Turkish-Syrian relations and King Saud's offer to mediate. Zorlu reiterated that Turkey was in favor of the protection of the independence, territorial integrity, and freedom of Syria as the Turkish prime minister stated in his declaration on the same day. More importantly, he added that Turkey had no interest in pursuing an aggressive policy towards its neighbors. Accordingly, Turkey showed its good intention by accepting the mediation offer of the Saudi King, who recognized this gesture of good will. The King and the Turkish minister of foreign affairs agreed on the collaboration of Turkey and the Saudi Arabia to come up with a solution to the crisis. The King also stated that he would be in close contact with the Turkish president and the prime minister. In addition, he expressed his hope that his efforts would bring a solution to the problem and calm down the tension between the two states.⁶⁴⁷ Nevertheless, the mediation efforts of the Saudi King failed.

The Turkish government intensified its contacts with the United Kingdom and the United States before the General Assembly discussion. The Turkish government declared to the United Kingdom that Turkey expected that the former would stand loyally to its obligations to Turkey within NATO. The United Kingdom government assured Turkey to act accordingly. Nevertheless, although the United Kingdom as well as the United States were committed to its NATO obligations, they

⁶⁴⁶ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. October 21, 1957. FO 371. 128242. VY 10344-42.

⁶⁴⁷ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. October 26, 1957. FO 371. 128243. VY 10344-70.

would not ask the NATO to make a public declaration regarding the Turkish-Syrian Crisis.^{648,649}

The Turkish government was also in close contact with the United States. For the Turkish government, the threat in Syria was greater than ever before and it needed to be watched carefully. The Turkish government declared to the United States that Turkey would not move without consulting the United States. Moreover, it requested that the United States consult with Turkey decide on the tactics for handling the Syrian-Soviet attacks in the General Assembly.⁶⁵⁰

The United States' ambassador commented that Turkey believed that Syria was acting under the guidance and the influence of the Soviet Union. He stated that in his conversation with Menderes and Zorlu, he understood that the Turkish government had realized that the Turkish-Syrian Crisis was of great concern for the Arab States. More importantly, he expected that Turkey would not act in a way that the "enemies of Turkey" could exploit in the General Assembly. He added that, for Menderes, Turkey was interested in the positions of the Arab states, and for Menderes, the visit of Zorlu to Riyadh was a good indicator of getting closer to

⁶⁴⁸ Telegram from Foreign Office to the British Embassy in Ankara. October 22, 1957. FO 371. 128243. VY 10344-60.

⁶⁴⁹ In those days, the forthcoming General Elections in Turkey was also a matter of discussion between the officials of the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom's ambassador in Ankara reported to the Foreign Office that he thought that it was very likely that the Democrat Party would win the elections. Even if the Republican People's Party had won the elections, it would not have been likely that it would adopt a pro-Israel policy. On the other hand, if the Freedom Party had won the majority in the parliament or enough seats to influence the Republican People's Party, things might have been different because, as the ambassador argued, the Freedom Party was slightly pro-Israel. However, such a possibility was the "most unlikely" regarding the results of the elections. Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. October 23, 1957. FO 371. 128243. VY 10344-43B.

⁶⁵⁰ Telegram from the Embassy in Ankara to the Department of State. October 23, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.24. i.13., pp.739-741.

Arabs. The Saudi offer of mediation was important and Turkey would try to use it in the General Assembly on Syrian charges.⁶⁵¹

The General Assembly discussion began on 22 October 1957. The Turkish government sent Sarper, the former head of the Turkish delegation in the United Nations General Assembly, to assist ambassador Esen, the head of the delegation at that time. In a conversation with the US assistant secretary of state, Rountree, the Turkish ambassador in Washington, Ürgüplü, stated that there had been a confusion and lack of coordination among the supporters of Turkey in the first day of the General Assembly discussion while the neutralists and supporters of Syria were close to the Soviet delegation. More importantly, the delay of the discussion had resulted in meetings between the Syrians and Saudis, thus, Turkey lost “the advantage of King Saud’s embarrassment over Syria’s refusal to mediate.”⁶⁵²

Ürgüplü said that the delegations of Turkey and the Allies needed to work more closely. Rountree explained Ürgüplü why the United States had focused on the Saudi offer of mediation in the first day of the discussions. There were two reasons of the United States action:

In the first place, it was consonant with the Secretary’s position that this was a regional problem; this had prompted him to defer his plan to put in a resolution that would refer the matter to the Security Council and call for an investigation that would be broad enough to include the activities of the USSR. Within this context it was logical to accept the Saudi offer... The second general consideration was the forthcoming Turkish elections. Because of the preoccupation of top Turkish officials with the election, it was felt that it would be better to defer any debate on this subject until they were over.^{653,654}

⁶⁵¹ Telegram from the Embassy in Ankara to the Department of State. October 23, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.24. i.13., pp.739-741.

⁶⁵² Memorandum of a Conversation between the Turkish Ambassador (Ürgüplü) and the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs (Rountree), Department of State. October 23, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.24. i.13., pp.741-743.

⁶⁵³ *ibid.*

⁶⁵⁴ While the diplomatic efforts were taking place in the United Nations, the military power of Turkey and Syria were also taken into consideration by the Allies. The United Kingdom Ambassador in Amman informed his government regarding the deployment of Turkish and

During the discussions in the General Assembly, the United States and the United Kingdom delegations were in close consultation, as had happened before the discussions. The Allies agreed on a resolution that would call the Secretary General to investigate the Turkish-Syrian Crisis. However, the timing of this action in the United Nations needed to be calculated well. Moreover, the positions and the attitudes of the Arab states needed to be taken into consideration. The United States was not in favor of acting prematurely by preparing a resolution to make King Saud's offer of mediation null-and-void. On the other hand, the mediation offer should not be counted heavily if the Arabs had given up their support of it. Syria needed to be prevented from preparing a resolution which would be unacceptable.⁶⁵⁵

In this conversation, the United States was informed by the United Kingdom that the Arab delegations had met on 24 October 1957, and agreed, except for Egypt, that Syria should accept the mediation offer of King Saud. Regarding the solution of the crisis in the General Assembly, the United States and the United Kingdom jointly decided that the Saudi King's mediation was acceptable, and there needed to be an alternative solution. Regarding this alternative, there was a difference between the Allies. The United Kingdom was in favor of a "fairly strong resolution, and then under pressure yield to modifications." Thus, a kind of a Commission of Investigation might be accepted.⁶⁵⁶

Syrian troops as the following: The Turkish troops: Dörtyol (one armoured division), İskenderun (one infantry division), Gaziantep (one infantry division), East of Gaziantep (one infantry division) deployed near frontier. Syrian troops: Homs (one infantry brigade), Deirezzor (one infantry brigade), North and West of Aleppo (estimated one battalion plus some artillery probably from Deirezzor brigade) deployed near frontier. Telegram from the British Embassy in Amman to Foreign Office. October 23, 1957. FO 371. 128243. VY 10344-73.

⁶⁵⁵ Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State. October 25, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.13. i.13., pp.730-731.

⁶⁵⁶ *ibid.*

On the other hand, the United States was opposed to a Commission which could investigate Turkey alone. The US secretary of state said:

We have sensitive installations in Turkey in connection with our NATO commitments, and it would be impossible to permit a committee of neutralist to inspect those installations unless the committee was also permitted to visit military installations in Russia.⁶⁵⁷

During the discussions in the General Assembly, the bilateral conversations between the officials of Turkey and Syria continued. The Turkish minister in Damascus met with the secretary general of the Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 23 October 1957. The Secretary General stated that there had not been any serious issue between Turkey and Syria. The only problem was the concentration of the Turkish troops near the frontier of which the Syrian government had been naturally afraid. However, the Secretary General added that he had heard that some of these troops had been withdrawn to the north. The Secretary General kept on saying that Turkey and Syria could not solve their problem through an international forum such as the United Nations' General Assembly or through the mediation of King Saud as happened in Riyadh. Accordingly, the discussion in the General Assembly could be stopped.⁶⁵⁸

After the conversation, the Turkish Minister commented that "the Syrian government seemed to be alarmed at the position in which they now found themselves, and would like to find a way out; they were under strong Russian pressure to continue the attempt to create an atmosphere of crisis."⁶⁵⁹

Despite the efforts to reduce the tension between Turkey and Syria through bilateral talks between the two states and the discussions in the United Nations

⁶⁵⁷ Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State. October 25, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.13. i.13., pp.730-731.

⁶⁵⁸ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. October 24, 1957. FO 371. 128243. VY 10344-64A.

⁶⁵⁹ *ibid.*

General Assembly, rumors continued to circulate. One such rumor was interesting enough to mention here. The United Kingdom ambassador in Beirut sent a telegram to the Foreign Office and mentioned a “story” of one of his Egyptian friends.

According to this story:

The proposal was for Syria to suddenly retake her adjacent territory including Alexandretta from Turkey. Russia was then to intervene to stop the fighting and put it before UN. UN would be induced to accept the fait-accompli and agree to re-transfer to Syria. Syria, however, was slow to act and Turkey got wise to the intention and took the necessary precautions, so Russia lost the opportunity of again showing herself as friend of the Arabs and resorted to the accusation that the Turks were preparing to invade Syria in the hope of gaining something from the Schermozzle... Nasser is very disturbed about the increasing Russian influence in Syria for it will take the lead out of Nasser's hands – hence his sending of troops to create a precedent and at the same time to re-inflate himself in the eyes of the Arabs.⁶⁶⁰

The United Kingdom's ambassador commented on this claim and only said:

“Interesting – If true.” This claim did not seem logical or possible, whereas it is a very good indicator of the extent of the suspicion, rumors, claims and propaganda tools that were used during the Turkish-Syrian crisis as well as throughout the 1950s.

Another interesting development during the General Assembly discussions was the Greek representative's speech on 29 October 1957. The United Kingdom's delegation reported that the Greek representative, Stratos, made a speech in the plenary session and stated that: “The Syrian complaint was being drowned and he would vote for a Commission of Investigation or any other proposal which was acceptable to Syria.”⁶⁶¹

It can be argued that the speech of the Greek representative was understandable when the tension in Turkish-Greek relations, which stemmed especially from the Cyprus issue, is considered. Therefore, this speech disturbed the

⁶⁶⁰ Telegram from the British Embassy in Beirut to Foreign Office. October 27, 1957. FO 371. 128244. VY 10344-90.

⁶⁶¹ Telegram from New York to Foreign Office. October 29, 1957. FO 371. 128244. VY 10344-79.

Turkish delegation and they, with the Italian delegation, spoke to the United Kingdom's delegation to take action with the Greek government. However, the permanent representative of Greece in the General Assembly acted in a way that he was opposed to the action that Stratos had wanted to take.⁶⁶²

After the Turkish-Syrian crisis peaked and these developments happened, the United Nations' General Assembly made its decision and the crisis entered into the process of settlement.

The Settlement of the Crisis

By the end of October, the Turkish-Syrian Crisis had begun to calm down. The statements of Nikita Khrushchev at a reception in the Turkish Embassy in Moscow on 29 October 1957 had given the signs of the settlement of the crisis. Khrushchev stated that: "He who wants war, let him fight alone. But anyway, why talk about war? There will be no war." This statement was taken by the Allies as a significant step towards the settlement. In other words, like the United States and the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union rejected the idea and possibility of a war between Turkey and Syria.⁶⁶³

On 30 October 1957, the discussion ended abruptly. The appeal of the Indonesian representative, who suggested "neither resolution should be pressed," was accepted even by the Syrians. The Indonesian representative praised the mediation efforts of the Saudi King. The Syrian representative agreed "not to press the Syrian resolution at this stage and pointed out that the item would remain on the agenda." The Turkish delegation accepted the Indonesian representative's suggestion. The

⁶⁶² Telegram from New York to Foreign Office. October 29, 1957. FO 371. 128244. VY 10344-79.

⁶⁶³ Telegram from New York to Foreign Office. October 30, 1957. FO 371. 128244. VY 10344-85B.

Turkish delegate, Sarper, reminded that Turkey had drawn the attention of the Assembly to the situation in Syria. He added that the situation still existed, and the General Assembly discussions had informed the world about the reasons for the tension in the area. Lastly, he said, Turkey was ready to cooperate with King Saud, whose mediation offer was still valid.⁶⁶⁴

The General Assembly discussions ended without a resolution regarding the Turkish-Syrian Crisis. However, after these discussions, the crisis entered into a process of gradual settlement.

The Syrian government, however, continued to use the crisis with Turkey in its domestic politics. The United Kingdom's ambassador in Beirut reported that: "The Syrian government have done nothing to reduce the atmosphere of crisis in the country and it has been made clear that Syria's complaint to the United Nations is merely in suspense." The ambassador also reported the developments in Syria following the General Assembly discussions:

The Syrian press has continued to report incidents on the Syro-Turkish frontier involving troops unidentified aircraft... A Syrian spokesman said: world public opinion had been made aware that Turkey's attitude constituted a danger to world peace. Turkey had been obliged to reaffirm its peaceful intentions before the General Assembly of the United Nations. Syria had been supported by a large number of the members of the United Nations, which indicated that she would not be alone in the event of aggression. The arab countries were unanimous in support of Syria. Syria was able to prevent a vote on the Western resolution by renouncing its own resolution... The Syrian complaint remains in suspense and the subject could be re-opened if necessary.⁶⁶⁵

As the Syrian spokesman, the Syrian minister of information, Akil, continued statements regarding Turkey. Akil said that "Turkey had had aggressive intentions towards Syria. Though the United States had succeeded in ranging a majority of

⁶⁶⁴ Telegram from New York to Foreign Office. November 2, 1957. FO 371. 128244. VY 10344-85D.

⁶⁶⁵ Telegram from the British Embassy in Beirut to Foreign Office. November 7, 1957. FO 371. 128232. VY 1015-352.

United Nations members against Syria, Turkey had been compelled to back down.”⁶⁶⁶

As Akil, the acting minister of foreign affairs, Kallas, spoke in the same vein. He argued that there was still a threat of Turkish aggression against Syria and until the Turkish forces withdrew from the Turkish-Syrian border and until the Turkish government gave up declarations against the Syrian government, the tension would not totally disappear. More importantly, the minister said that the rejection of the Commission of Investigation by Turkey and the Allies confirmed that the accusations of Syria towards Turkey were “well-founded.” Syria would take all the necessary measures against a possible threat from Turkey.⁶⁶⁷

The United Kingdom’s ambassador also reported that as the press reports and the declarations of the Syrian officials, the Damascus Defense Week contributed to the crisis atmosphere. The Syrian president Quwatli addressed the Syrian people and stated that “he was convinced that no usurper would ever conquer the Syrian people and that Syria had no aggressive intentions towards anyone; but, if Syria were attacked, she would not be alone, her frontiers stretched to all the Arab countries.”⁶⁶⁸

Like the Syrian president, the Syrian chief-of-general-staff made a provocative speech to the Syrian people in the Damascus Defense Week and he said:

Danger is imminent, the situation is critical and the enemy is at our gates. Let us prepare to crush him and strengthen ourselves as much as possible. Our motto must be “They shall not pass.” Death to the invaders whom we shall never fear, even if we see the devil fighting in their ranks.⁶⁶⁹

Despite the settlement efforts in the General Assembly, the Syrian government continued to exploit the Turkish-Syrian crisis in domestic politics.

⁶⁶⁶ Telegram from the British Embassy in Beirut to Foreign Office. November 7, 1957. FO 371. 128232. VY 1015-352.

⁶⁶⁷ *ibid.*

⁶⁶⁸ *ibid.*

⁶⁶⁹ *ibid.*

After the General Assembly discussions, the Syrian attempts to internationalize the Turkish-Syrian crisis continued as well as their efforts to use this matter in their domestic politics. The Syrian government asked the United Nations' Secretary General, Hammarskjöld, "to circulate a new letter of complaint about violations of the Syrian air space, raids by the Turkish soldiers into Syrian territory and the abduction of the Syrian civilians by the Turkish authorities."⁶⁷⁰

The Secretary General replied saying that they should not try to bring the crisis to the United Nations. More importantly, such efforts might have been in vain because the Soviet Union, which had been the main supporter of Syria, had lost its interest in the Turkish-Syrian crisis. Rather, Syria should contact directly with Turkey to find a solution to the problem between the two states.⁶⁷¹

In the meantime, the United States' ambassador in Ankara suggested to the Turkish prime minister that it was the appropriate time to withdraw the forces near the Syrian frontier as soon as possible and to terminate the maneuvers there. The Turkish prime minister agreed.⁶⁷²

In the meantime, a telegram, which was sent by the United Kingdom's ambassador in Ankara to Foreign Office, stated that the Turkish government was acting as if the troop movements near the Syrian border had been done with the approval of the United States and United Kingdom governments. The ambassador said that:

This of course is not true, so far as I am concerned since the Turks have never given me any really detailed information about their troop dispositions and I certainly have not been instructed to tell them that Her Majesty's Government's approve of them. I suppose however that Her Majesty's Government's approval, if it was ever given, could have been conveyed

⁶⁷⁰ Telegram from New York to Foreign Office. November 7, 1957. FO 371. 128244. VY 10344-85H.

⁶⁷¹ *ibid.*

⁶⁷² Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. November 14, 1957. FO 371. 128233. VY 1015-355.

to the Turks by some other means than through the Embassy here.⁶⁷³

In the following period, both sides continued their efforts to increase the tension although there were some efforts to develop relations. While the Turkish government was in favor of terminating the military movements near the border, the Syrian government decided to contact its counterpart directly. It can be argued that the United Nations' secretary general's advice on the issue to the Syrian government played a role in this decision. The Syrian government accepted to enter into informal contacts with the Turkish government if Turkey was favorable to that. They gave up their insistence on a Commission of Investigation under any circumstances. In addition, they gave up demanding the Secretary General to visit the area to find a solution. The Secretary General commented that the Syrian government was seeking to get the issue out off the agenda because they had become aware that the General Assembly had already lost its interest regarding the Turkish-Syrian crisis.⁶⁷⁴

Although the parties involved in the issue began to work to decrease the tension, the Syrian press continued to report the incidents on the border from time to time. *Saut-el Arab*, a prestigious and widespread newspaper in the Arab world, reported fighting between Turkish and Syrian soldiers. The Damascus correspondent of a Beirut newspaper stated that "the Syrian authorities were aware that the Turkish government had been constructing underground airfields along the whole length of the Syrian border." In some Syrian newspapers, the Ankara visit of the Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Said was evaluated as a new and significant step against Syria. More importantly, the newspaper *Al-rai-Al-Aam* argued that the Turkish threat against

⁶⁷³ November 15, 1957. FO 371. 128244. VY 10344-89.

⁶⁷⁴ Telegram from New York to Foreign Office. November 16, 1957. FO 371. 128244. VY 10344-85L.

Syria had postponed the union of Syria and Egypt. However, the threat had disappeared so that there was no reason to wait for the union.⁶⁷⁵

Despite the continuation of bilateral declarations between Turkey and Syria, as the Turkish Prime Minister's speech in the NATO meeting and the Syrian response to it, the Allies were not in favor of involvement in the issue. The United States government instructed the chargé d'affaires in Damascus to send a note to the Syrian government on 26 December 1957 which stated that:

Although the Syrian note contains a number of charges regarding Turkey which we consider to be entirely unfounded, we do not wish to engage in a detailed discussion with the Syrian Government of a matter which concerns a third sovereign state. Prime Minister Menderes is entitled to express himself freely in Paris or elsewhere. We recall that Syrian charges against Turkey were discussed and found to be without justification in the United Nations General Assembly, and we continue to be confident that the Government of Turkey does not harbor aggressive intentions against Syria. We have noted the affirmation of the Syrian Foreign Ministry that there is no foreign base in Syria and that no such base will be permitted to be established.⁶⁷⁶

Such a reply could be regarded as the United States' policy to avoid dignifying the accusations of the Syrian government and their efforts to keep the issue alive, which might have served the Soviet interests.

Upon the aforementioned speech of the Turkish Prime Minister in the NATO meeting on 16 December 1957, in which he was critical of Syria, the Syrian government released a declaration on 19 December 1957, which was worth mentioning here. In the declaration, the Syrian government stated that:

The government of Syria hoped, following discussion of its complaint in the UN General Assembly over Turkish troop massing, that Turkey would alter its aggressive intentions and plans against Syria and work for the elimination of the atmosphere of tension which prevailed in the Middle East as a result of the policy which Turkey pursued and which aimed at interference in Syria's internal affairs... The speech of Turkish Prime

⁶⁷⁵ Telegram from the British Embassy in Beirut to Foreign Office. December 12, 1957. FO 371. 128233. VY 1015-367.

⁶⁷⁶ Telegram from the United States Delegation. December 26, 1957. FO 371. 134392. VY 10344-2.

Minister Menderes at the NATO meeting on December 16 in Paris constituted a new indication of the continuation of the Turkish government's campaign of aggressive distortion against Syria. Menderes used the meeting as a stage for the reiteration of falsehoods and allegations which the Turkish government uses to mislead opinion... He considered developments in Syria very serious, menacing Turkey and the status of Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia. Menderes added that the Russia continues to build bases and to establish positions in Syria, which makes the Syrian problem of direct concern to NATO... the contents of the Menderes speech on this matter constitute mere fabrication and are unfounded. Syria proved this during the deliberations on its last complaint to the UN General Assembly. The draft resolution which Syria advanced requesting the delegation of an international commission to investigate the situation along the Turko-Syrian border was tacit evidence of Syria's good intentions... The Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs affirms to the Mission that there is not in Syria any foreign base and it will not permit the existence of such a base, most eager to pursue a policy of positive neutrality in compliance with the principles embraced at the Bandung Conference... The allegation of the Turkish Prime Minister, Menderes, that the situation in Syria constitutes a danger to Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Lebanon is inconsistent with the facts and with the statement released by these countries... The Ministry of Foreign Affairs hoped that its government would realize the real aggressive and exploitative motives behind this Turkish policy and rest assured that Syria is concerned over its independence and freedom and over the maintenance of peace and security in the Middle East.⁶⁷⁷

These mutual accusations and declarations took place in the following period.

Upon the claims in the Syrian press, which said that seven Turkish airplanes had flown over Syrian on 27 February 1958 and large numbers of Turkish troops, tanks and motorized vehicles were massed near the Akçakale station on the Turkish-Syrian frontier, the Turkish government denied all these accusations and claims.⁶⁷⁸

In addition, as the United Kingdom's ambassador reported, the Turkish press continued to release reports, most of which were "unfounded." The press releases argued that the Turkish-Syrian frontier had been closed. However, the ambassador said that the Turkish frontier authorities had tightened control of the traffic across the

⁶⁷⁷ Telegram from the United States Delegation. December 26, 1957. FO 371. 134392. VY 10344-2.

⁶⁷⁸ March 10, 1958. FO 371. 134392. VY 10344-5.

frontier in order to prevent smuggling which had been chronic on the border. The decision had been taken without consulting the government.⁶⁷⁹

Besides the press reports which were issued to increase the tension between the two states, the claims and rumors continued to spread abroad. The United Kingdom's ambassador in Beirut reported to the Foreign Office that the Lebanese president Chamoun said that he had had no official views about the intentions of the Turkish government. However, the ambassador stated that the president's behavior had given him the impression that Turkey intended to intervene in Syria.⁶⁸⁰

Upon this report, the United Kingdom's Foreign Office asked the United Kingdom's ambassador in Washington to contact the United States officials and to report on the views of the United Kingdom's ambassador in Beirut:

You will have seen from Beirut telegram to Foreign Office that there are further rumors that the Turks are contemplating intervening in Syria. You may like to mention this in the course of your talks with the Americans with a view to finding out what are their considered views about the desirability or otherwise of Turkish intervention and whether or not they feel that anything should be said to the Turkish government on the subject at the present time.⁶⁸¹

Despite all these rumors, claims and declarations, the Turkish-Syrian crisis did not turn into an armed struggle and the tension between the two states ultimately decreased. An analysis of the events has been given. Before concluding all these events, the position of the domestic actors, particularly the opposition in the parliament, should be discussed.

⁶⁷⁹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. July 10, 1958. FO 371. 134392. VY 10344-7.

⁶⁸⁰ Telegram from the British Embassy in Beirut to Foreign Office. July 18, 1958. FO 371. 134392. VY 10344-8.

⁶⁸¹ Telegram from Foreign Office to the British Embassy in Washington. July 18, 1958. FO 371. 134392. VY 10344-8.

The Turkish-Syrian Crisis in the Turkish Parliament and Press

The policy of the Turkish government in the Turkish-Syrian Crisis was strongly criticized by RPP representative, Necati İlter, during the discussions of the 1958 budget. İlter stated that:

As will be remembered, Turkey pursued a military buildup and maneuvers in the previous autumn. The Prime Minister talked about the threats. In the atmosphere of the general elections, such a threat might have been useful. However, we did not know the source of the threat. Later on, the Russian threats began. These threats enabled the Russians to gain Syrian sympathy. In the West, the opinion is as follows: Moscow succeeded at convincing the Arabs that the Turkish attack on Syria had been prevented with the efforts of Kremlin. It would be easy to persuade the Arabs that the withdrawal of the Turkish troops was a result of the threats of Marshal Bulganin. The government regretted the military concentrations and began to wait for a mediator. Upon the offer of King Saud, the government wanted to benefit from this. However, the efforts of Egypt and Russia prevented these efforts and the Minister of Foreign Affairs went to Riyadh meaninglessly. It was certain that these saddened us.⁶⁸²

In addition, İlter heavily criticized the Middle East policy of the Democrat Party in general. He stated that the government had argued that it was aware of the developments in the Middle East. However, it had not acted accordingly because the Middle East was an area of the rivalry and struggle between the great powers. Therefore, the smaller states could not pursue independent policies. İlter also criticized Turkey's aggressive policy towards Syria. In addition, Turkey had pursued

⁶⁸² “Hatırlanacağı gibi Sonbaharda manevra adı ile Suriye hududunda tahşidat yaptık. Başbakan seçimler sırasında tehlikelerden bahsediyordu. Bir seçim havası için bu tehlikenin belki yardımı olurdu. Ama tehlike nereden ve nasıl geliyor; onu anlamıyorduk. Sonra Rus tehditleri başladı. Bu tehditler Suriye’de Ruslara çok sempati kazandırdı. Batı’daki mütalaa şudur: “Moskova Ekim ayında Türkiye tarafından Suriye’ye yapılacak taarruzun, ancak Kremlin’in Türkiye’ye yaptığı ihtarlarla önlendiğine Arap efkarını inandırmaya muvaffak olmuştur. Şimdi de Türk kıtalarının huduttan geri çekilmesinin Mareşal Bulganin’in son tehditleri neticesinde elde edildiğine inandırmak kolay olacaktır.” Biz de tahşidatın ve tehdidin ardından pişman olmuştuk. Dört gözle bir aracı bekliyorduk. Kral Suud hizmet teklif edince, hemen istifadeye şitabettik. Fakat bu da Mısır ve Rusya’nın tesiriyle suya düşmüş ve Hariciye Vekilimiz Suudi Arabistan’a beyhude bir seyahat yapmıştır. Bundan acı duyduğumuza şüphe yoktur...”

Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, term 11, session 46, vol.2, 25 February 1958., pp.630-631.

a policy that might have sacrificed Israel for the extension of the scope of the Baghdad Pact.

In the light of all these developments, he stated, the Middle East policy of the DP could not be regarded as successful. The Baghdad Pact should not be extended in scope and function, and the solution of the problems in the region should be left to the United Nations rather than the Baghdad Pact. The Baghdad Pact should not be forced because the conflicts in the Middle East were beyond its scope and power. On the other hand, the Arabs had supported Nasser as their leader and Turkey's leadership mission had failed. Therefore, the government should abandon its expectations and "dreams" in the region and should pursue more realistic policies.⁶⁸³

⁶⁸³ "Biz zaman zaman Ortadoğu'yu iyi tanıdığımızı, orada uzun hayatımız olduğunu söyleriz. Ama Ortadoğu'yu tanıyanlar bu türlü bir siyaset takip etmemeli idiler. Ortadoğu strateji bakımından büyük devlerin mücadele sahasıdır. Bu sahada küçük ve orta devletlerin müessir bir politika takip etmelerine maddeten imkan yoktur. Son NATO toplantısında daha da ileri gittik. Sovyet Rusya'nın Suriye'yi ele geçirdiğini ve Suriye'nin komünist olduğunu ileri sürdük. Fakat şimdi Mısır ve Suriye Birleşik Arap Devleti'ni kurduktan sonra, komünist denilen Suriye'de komünist partisi lağvedilmiş ve komünistlik kanun dışı sayılmıştır. Yine NATO'da Nuri Said Paşa planı diye meşhur olan bir planın müdafii olduk ve Bağdat Paktı namına İsrail'in kurban edilmesini NATO'dan istedik. Fakat Kıbrıs meselesinin BM'de müzakereleri sırasında İslam ve Arap devletleri arasında Mısır ve Irak'ın takındığı tavrı gördük.... Şimdi bu müşahadelerin Demokrat Parti'nin Ortadoğu politikasını tasvibe imkan vermediği tabiidir. Ortadoğu'da görülen iki Arap Birliği arasındaki mücadele geniş ihtimallere kapı açmıştır; durum nezaket kesbetmiştir. Bu sebeple Bağdat Paktı'nın maksadından dışarı taşmaması şimdi daha da ehemmiyet kazanmıştır. Ortadoğu meselelerinin halli ve bu bölgenin korunması BM'ye bırakılmalı ve Bağdat paktı zorlanmamalıdır...Beğenelim ya da beğenmeyelim Arap alemi kendine bir lider seçmiştir. Öyle ki Nasır'ın portreleri Nuri Said Irak'ında bile her tarafı istila etmiştir. Menderes hükümetleri ise bu durumdan ve inkışaflardan habersiz gibi birtakım hayaller peşinde koşmuştur: Bağdat paktı'nı kurmak için Arap Birliği'nde bulunan Irak'ı ikna etmiş olmakla övünmüş ve başbakan Bağdat Paktı'nın TBMM'de kabulü sırasında, Arap Halkının hükümetlerinde ayrı düşüncede olduğunu iddia ederek diğer Arap devletlerinin de pakta iltihaklarının beklendiğini söylemişti... Fakat bu kanaat gerçekleşmedi. Çünkü yanlıştı, gerçekleşemezdi. Ama Menderes hükümetleri gerçekleştirmek için çok çırpındı. Tehditlere, baskılara kadar gitti. Bu maksada Hükümet kendini o derece kaptırdı ki, yavaş yavaş Bağdat Paktı'nın hedefi unutuldu.... Sonra tehdit ve baskılar netice vermeyince, Arap birliği'nin hadimi tavrını da bunlara ekliyorduk... Halbuki Ortadoğu meseleleri, şüphesiz Bağdat Paktı potansiyeli ile hallolunacak meseleler değildi. "

Republic of Turkey. *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*. term 11, session 46, vol.2, 25 February 1958, pp.620-621, 629.

In the press, *Zafer* supported the policy of the government during the Turkish-Syrian Crisis. In *Son Posta*, Selim Ragıp Emeç criticized the Syrian government and supported Turkey's reaction to Syria. He stated that the developments in Syria had caused uneasiness in its neighbors because Syria had been systematically rendered a communist base. The communists in Syria had kept strategic positions in Syria during the presidency of Quwatli. The communist actions would enable the communists to influence the other neighboring states. Therefore, the reaction that the other states in the region should do as Turkey had done.⁶⁸⁴ It can be argued that during the crises, *Son Posta* had a stance which was supportive of the government policies and critical of the states which were perceived as the reason of the conflicts and crises. Regarding the Middle East, these states were mainly Egypt and Syria.

In *Cumhuriyet*, the policy of the government during the Syrian crisis was evaluated by Ömer Sami Coşar as passive and disinterested. He criticized the Syrian complaints about and accusations against Turkey and the Syrian application to the United Nations. He argued that Turkey had not been responsible for the crisis, but the policy of the government had resulted in the continuation of Syrian accusations before the United Nations. He felt the Turkish government should have taken the necessary measures against Syria diplomatically.⁶⁸⁵

⁶⁸⁴ “Suriye’nin durumu, bu memleketin komşusu ve Ortaşark’ın kaderi ile yakından alakalı bulunan bütün memleketleri ciddi surette tasalandırmakta devam etmektedir. Bu memleketleri kuşkulandıran ve endişeye salan hadise, Suriyede perde arkasında rol alıp vaziyeti öteden beri bu örtülü mevziden idare eden kimselerin birdenbire yüzlerindeki maskeyi atıp meydana çıkmalarıdır... Filvaki Şükrü Elkuvvetlinin Başkanlığı zamanındadır ki komünistler Suriye’deki bütün kilit noktalarına ve ordunun bünyesine nüfuz etmiş ve bütün bunlara hiçbir kanun dışı hareket yapılmıyormuş gibi tamamen normal bir şekil verilerek icra olunmuştur... Bu demektir ki diğer Arap memleketlerine hulul etmek için Suriye’nin faal bir komünist üssü haline getirilmesi zamanının geldiğine karar verilmiştir.... Mukabil reaksiyonun da bütün şiddetiyle bizzat Arap memleketlerinden gelmesi icap eder...” *Son Posta*, 28 August 1957.

⁶⁸⁵ “Ortadoğu ve bilhassa Suriye ile alakalı son gelişmeler, Şam idarecilerinin hududda bazı hadiseler çıkarmak niyetinde bulduklarını göstermişti. Onlar bu niyetle sessizce hazırlanırken öte yandan da bizi ikide bir müteceviz diye damgalamaya yelteniyor, Moskova da bu propagandayı elinden geldiği kadar desteklemeye çalışıyordu. İşte bu tahrikler

In an article in *Ulus* on the crisis, Ahmet Şükrü Esmer stated that the main threat against Syria did not stem from Turkey, but from inside. The support of the Soviet Union to Syria aimed to protect the pro-Soviet Syrians rather than the Syrian territory against Turkey. Therefore, the Syrian application to the United Nations and the accusations against Turkey were groundless and the crisis was artificial.⁶⁸⁶

During these crises, the position of *Ulus*, which was expressed by Esmer, can be regarded as an analysis of the events rather than the policies of the government. In addition, the articles aimed to support the government against outside threats.

The anti-Communist and anti-Nasserist position of the journal *Akis* became explicit during the crisis between Syria and Turkey. The Soviet policy and warnings against Turkey were criticized. However, the reality of the Arab nationalism was emphasized and the developments were called “bizarre” because of the sudden eruption and the settlement of the crisis between the two states.⁶⁸⁷

karşısında gösterdiğimiz gecikmeler ve gevşekliliktir ki, tahrikçileri cesaretlendirmiş ve Şam hükümeti bizi Birleşmiş Milletler önünde suçlu olarak çıkarmaya kalkışmış, resmen müracaatta bulunmuştur. Unutmayalım! Günlerden beri dünya, Türkiye’yi Suriye hududunda kasden hadise çıkarmış bir memleket olarak biliyor. Şimdi de BM önünde bu iftiralara devam edeceklerdir...”

Cumhuriyet, 10 October 1957.

⁶⁸⁶ “Suriye Türkiye’den korkar görünüyor. Birleşmiş Milletlere başvuruyor. Arap Devletlerine şikayet ediyor. Suudi Arabistan yardım vaadediyor ve hatta Amerika’dan yardım almaya kalkıyor. Moskova tehditler savuruyor. Tecavüz karşısında kayıtsız kalamayacağını ve çıkacak harbin mevzii olmayacağını ilan ediyor. Hakikat şudur ki Rusya’nın korumayı düşündüğü hiçbir zaman tecavüze uğramayacak olan Suriye toprakları değil, kendisine taraftar olan Suriye politikacıları zümresidir. Rusya bu politika zümresinin iktidarını sağlamlaştırmak düşüncesiyledir ki Suriye’yi silahlamaktadır. Tehlikede olan Suriye değil Suriye’deki Rusya taraftarı politikacılarıdır. Fakat bunlar için tehlike Türkiye’den veya başka dış kaynaktan değil Suriye’nin içinden geliyor...”

Ulus, 16 October 1957.

⁶⁸⁷ “Son zamanlarda batılı Devlet şeflerine şahsi mektuplar göndermeyi pek seven Rusya’nın M.Bulganin’inden geçen hafta sonunda Başbakan Menderes de bir ikaz mektubu alıyordu. Amerikalılar Suriye hükümetini devirmeyi kafalarına koymuşlardı. Bu arzuya alet olan Türkiye Suriye hududuna asker yığıyordu. Rusya böyle bir duruma seyirci kalamazdı.... Geçen hafta Suriye meseleleri etrafında Batı memleketlerinde yaratılan fırtına birdenbire son buluyordu... Türkiye’de aynı yolu tuttu. Bu haftanın başında Suriye Dışişleri Bakanı Salah Bittar Türk hükümetinin Suriye’ye hücum etmeyeceği konusunda teminat verdiğini açıklıyordu. Türk silahlı kuvvetleri Suriye hududuna toplanmış bile olsa, bu teminattan sonra Suriye’nin buna aldırmaz etmediğini söylüyordu... Suriye etrafında kopan fırtına böylece teskin

During and after the Syrian crisis, two articles which were written by Hamdi Avcıoğlu and Doğan Avcıoğlu were published in the journal, which criticized the Middle East policy of the government and analyzed the developments in the region.

Hamdi Avcıoğlu, in “The New Climate in the Middle East” (*Ortadoğu’da Yeni Hava*) stated that the government should take some lessons from the Syrian crisis. The Baghdad Pact was not a means for the solution of crises in the Middle East and the government should have realized the fact that Turkey was outside the Arab world. Even Turkey’s closest ally in the region, Iraq, was much closer to Syria than Turkey and its position in support of Syria proved the Iraqi policy. On the other hand, Saudi Arabia, the closest ally of the United States in the region, was against military pacts in the region. Therefore, Turkey’s attempts for leadership in the Middle East would be in vain under these circumstances. The Arabs could solve their conflicts and problems only themselves and only if Turkey did not intervene in the internal affairs of the Arab world, would its prestige increase.⁶⁸⁸

edilmiş oluyordu. Son derece zayıf sanılan Arap memleketlerinin tesanüd hissi şimdilik Suriye’yi kurtarıyordu... Arap Milliyetçiliği bir gerçektir. Zorla değil ancak anlayışla yola getirilebilirdi. Amerika yavaş yavaş bu hakikati görmeye başlıyordu. Fakat hala gerçeklere gözlerini kapamakta ısrar eden hükümetler eksik değildi.”

Akis, 21 September 1957.

⁶⁸⁸ *“Ortadoğu’yu kurtaracak hal çaresinin Bağdat Paketi’nden geçtiğine hala iman eden Cumhuriyet hükümetinin Suriye hadiselerinden alacağı dersler vardır: Arap Kralları ve Devlet adamları Boğaziçi sahillerini doldursalar bile Türkiye Arap dünyasının dışında kalmaktadır. En yakın dostumuz Irak bile aralarındaki muazzam geçimsizliğe rağmen Suriye’ye Türkiye’den daha çok yakındır... Amerika’nın halen Ortadoğu’da fikirlerine en çok kıymet verdiği dostu Kral Suud, Arap dünyasının meselelerini bizzat kendilerinin halletmelerine taraftardır. Türkiye’nin ve diğer herhangi Arap olmayan bir memleketin katıldığı askeri paktların aleyhindedir. Bu şartlar altında Türkiye’nin Arap dünyası içinde aktif bir rol oynamaya çalışması müsbet bir netice vermeyecektir... O halde ne yapmalı? Askeri paktlar sayesinde bu bölgede bir rol oynamaya çalışmak beyhudedir. Bağdat Paketi’ni genişletmek yolunda İngiltere ve Türkiye’nin yaptığı teşebbüsler hiçbir netice vermemiştir. Arap dünyası Batının anlayışlı davranması sayesinde kendi iç meselelerini bizzat halledecektir. Amerika bile yavaş yavaş bu gerçeği anlayarak nötralizme bağlı bir Arap birliği fikrini hoş karşılamaktadır. Türkiye’nin kraldan çok kralcı olması için hiçbir sebep mevcut değildir. Ortadoğu’nun iç siyaset meselelerine aktörlerden biri olarak karışmayan Türkiye’nin prestiji çabucak artacaktır...”*

Akis, 21 September 1957.

Doğan Avcıoğlu, in an article titled “Us and the Arabs” (*Araplar ve Biz*) took a similar position and criticized the government. He argued that despite the compliments to the Arab leaders, Turkey’s efforts to be involved in the Middle East politics had not borne fruit. On the contrary, the hostility toward Turkey in the region had increased. Even the only ally in the region, Iraq, had supported Syria during the crisis with Turkey and had not supported the transfer of the Middle Eastern oil to Europe across Turkey. The policy and devotion of the Democrat Party did not reach its goals. In this way, the friendship of Israel had been sacrificed. Consequently, Turkey had to rearrange its Middle East policy and it was expected that the Allies would support Turkey.⁶⁸⁹

During the Syrian Crisis, the reaction of *Forum* was moderate. It criticized the policy of the government. It stated that the government should not have prepared military maneuvers near the Syrian border because Syria was sensitive regarding

⁶⁸⁹ “Cumhuriyet hükümeti Ortadoğu meseleleriyle altı yıldır aktif bir şekilde ilgilenmektedir. Gizli diplomasiye sıkı sıkıya bağlı kalmamıza rağmen ikide bir memleketimize gelip giden Arap sultanları ve Devlet adamları sayesinde bu ilginin müşahhas delillerine sık sık şahit olmaktayız... Çok güzel... Fakat acaba altı yıllık gayretin semeresi ne oldu? 1951 sonbaharında Mısır’a verilen notayla başlayan bu Ortadoğu siyaseti acaba ne netice verdi? Bu sorunun cevabı hiç de parlak değildir. Arap Devlet adamlarına ve krallarına gösterilen aşırı iltifata rağmen Arap dünyasında Türk düşmanlığı gittikçe gelişmektedir... Haydi diyelim bu memleketlerle (Ürdün, Mısır, vb.) aramızda bir dostluk anlaşması yoktur. Fakat Ortadoğu’daki yegane resmi dostumuz İraka ne buyrulur? Bağdat Paktı üyesi Irak’ın Türkiye’ye karşı Suriyenin himayesini üzerine almasına ne mana vermeil? Türkiye’nin Suriye’ye hücum edeceği dedikoduları ortalıkta dolaşırken, resmi dostun Suriye’nin yanında çarpışacağını ilan etmesine ne demeli? Müttefik olmayan bir memleketi korumak için müttefikleriyle çarpışmaya hazır olduğunu söyleyen nev-i şahsına münhasır bir müttefik acaba nerede görülmüştür? Petrol borularının Türkiye’den geçmesine aleyhtar memleketlerin başında Irak gelmektedir. Musul petrolünü Türkiye’ye akıtmak şöyle dursun İran petrolünün bir kısmının İskenderuna sevki hususunda Türkiye ve İran’ın vardığı prensip anlaşmasını bile baltalamaya çalışmaktadır... İşte altı yıllık gayretten sonra Ortadoğu’da elde edilen tek dostluk böyle acayip bir dostluktur. Ve bu acayip dostluğa nail olmak için Cumhuriyet Hükümeti şimdiye kadar hiçbir fedakarlıktan kaçınmamıştır... Irak’ın hatırı olsun diye Ortadoğu’da hakikaten dost olduğumuz tek memleket İsrail’den ortada hiçbir sebep yokken sefirimiz geri çekilmiştir. İktisadi bakımdan da bizim için son derece avantajlı olan Türk-İsrail dostluğu sırf Irak’ı memnun etmek için feda edilmiştir... Arap memleketleriyle olan münasebetlerimizi yeniden tanzim etmenin zamanı gelmiştir. Batılı dostlarımız da bu zarureti herhalde anlayacaklardır.”
Akis, 23 November 1957.

such developments and the leaders in Syria felt that they had been betrayed by the West as a result of the establishment of the Israeli state. More importantly, *Forum* argued that the Syrian Crisis, which had erupted just before the 1957 elections could be evaluated as a tool to consolidate the support behind the government.⁶⁹⁰

During the Turkish-Syrian Crisis the press closely followed and evaluated the developments and the government's policy. The newspapers closer to the government supported the government's policy and criticized the Syria and its supporters. The newspapers and journals closer to the opposition criticized both the government's policy and other actors of the crisis.

Concluding Remarks

Before the tension in Turkish-Syrian relations in the summer of 1957, several incidents, i.e., smuggling and fighting near the frontier, had happened. Moreover, the regime in Syria, which was neutralist and closer to the Soviet Union, and the

⁶⁹⁰ “*Hükümetin bir hafta evvel Suriye olaylarına dair iç ve dış amme efkarına hitaben yayınladığı beyanat, hudutlarımız civarında bazı önemli olayların cereyan etmekte olduğunu hatırlatan bir vesile teşkil etti... Hükümetin bu ikazı hiç şüphesiz yerinde bir hareket idi. Fakat bu ikaz yanında amme efkarımız bazı şüphe ve endişelere kapılma temayülü gösteriyordu. Madem en evvel bizi ve aynı zamanda hür dünyayı tehdit eden bazı hadiseler yakınlarımızda cereyan ediyor, hükümet hangi mülahazalarla silahlı kuvvetlerimizin en mes’ul mevkilerde bulunan komutanlarını namzet göstermek için istifa ettiriyordu?... Mamefih bir ihtiyat tedbiri olarak askeri sahada hazırlıklı bulunma ile 19. asırda büyük devletler tarafından kullanılan hududa asker yağma, askeri birlik hareketleri ile komşular üzerinde baskı yapmaya kalkma arasında büyük farklar vardır. Sonuncu usuller 20. asrın ortasında hemen herkes tarafından terkedilmiştir. Suriye'nin diğer bütün Arap alemleri ile birlikte derin bir bünye huzursuzluğu geçirdiği, bunun dış alemle münasebetlerine esaslı bir şekilde tesir ettiği malumdur. Komşularımızla ve bilhassa Araplarla münasebetlerimizde, muhataplarımızın dertlerini, endişelerini, tasavvur ve ümitlerini iyice anlamadan birtakım teşebbüslere girişmemiz milli menfaatlerimiz için zararlı neticeler verir. Suriye İsrail meselesi dolayısıyla kendini Batı tarafından ihanete uğramış bir milletin cüz'ü olarak göremekte ve bunun neticesinde daha çok fevri reaksiyonlar göstermektedir... Hükümetin seçim hazırlıkları esnasında; Suriye olaylarını birden ortaya atması bazı spekülasyonların doğmasına da sebep olmuştur. Başka memleketlerde diktatörlerin yaptığı gibi dış tehlikenin mevcudiyetinin öne sürülmesi, içerideki baskıyı artırma ve devam ettirmenin bir bahanesi olarak kullanılmıştır. Diğer taraftan dış tehlikenin mevcudiyetinin hatırlatılması, halkın hükümet etrafında mütesanet bulunmasını temin yolunda bir teşebbüs olarak da mütalaa edilebilir...”*

Forum, 1 October 1957.

perception of the Democrat Party government of this regime as a threat both for the Middle East and Turkey, exaggerated the developments and deteriorated the relations between the two states. The troop concentrations and the military maneuvers near the Syrian frontier in the spring and summer of 1957 and the declarations of the Turkish officials, which were critical of the Syrian regime, urged the Syrian government and the relations between Turkey and Syria entered into a process of crisis that continued until mid-1958.

The Allies and the Soviet Union became parts of the issue, but they all were against an armed struggle between the two countries. Upon the Syrian request of the United Nations General Assembly discussion, all the parties regarding the debate acquired the tools to make propaganda against each other. The General Assembly discussions did not come up with concrete results and no resolution was passed regarding the Turkish-Syrian crisis and the incidents near the frontier. In the following period, the Allies and the Soviet Union lost their interests in the issue and Turkey and Syria remained alone. The tension began to decrease, whereas the rumors, claims and declarations not only in Turkey and Syria, especially the press reports and comments, but also in the region continued to exist. Despite all these, the intervention that was expected from Turkey did not take place. It is not easy to argue that Turkey had really such an intention. Accordingly, it is not easy to answer the following question: "What if the United States allowed Turkey to take such an action?"

Consequently, the crisis between the two states did not go beyond the threat of armed struggle and deterrence. On the other hand, the only concrete result that can be derived from the debate was that all the parties, especially Turkey and Syria, exploited the issue to reach their goals in their domestic politics. The crisis coincided

with the General Elections of 1957 in Turkey. It can be argued that the Democrat Party, as a representative of the Republican People's Party stated later on, used the threat of war to solidify the support behind it although the results of the elections would not be satisfactory for the Democrat Party. On the Syrian side, the crisis enabled the Syrian government to control the internal politics and solidify the support of the Syrian people as well as the support of the Arab World. The Syrian government used the issue as a propaganda tool.

The Turkish-Syrian crisis witnessed the competition between the superpowers to show their good intentions towards the Arab world. The United States tried hard to calm down the issue as a mediator. On the contrary, the Soviet Union increased pressure and tension in the Arab world through using the crisis as a propaganda tool.

All in all, the crisis ended without serious outcomes, but remained a conflictual event that happened in the years of crises in the Middle East in the 1950s. As the Turkish-Syrian crisis, the United Arab Republic was one of the developments that had an impact in the Middle East politics in the late 1950s.

The United Arab Republic (UAR) and Turkey (1958)⁶⁹¹

The unification of Syria and Egypt was one of the significant developments in the late 1950s. The unification was realized in 1958, but the idea of such a union went back to the conclusion of a military pact between the two states in October 1955. Syria declared its enthusiasm for such a union. The Syrian parliament and the press took the issue seriously. On the other hand, Egyptian president Nasser sought to consolidate his power and the support for him in Syria and did not hurry to establish the union. On 17 November 1957, a joint resolution by the Syrian and

⁶⁹¹ Selected literature on the United Arab Republic: McNamara, pp.115-128; Lenczowski, pp.344-345, 537-549; Smolansky, pp.76-82; Golan, p.54; Goldschmidt, p.305; Gönlübol and Ülman, p.300; Firat and Kürkçüoğlu, p.631.

Egyptian parliaments was adopted which paved the way for the United Arab Republic. The political struggle accelerated the sequence of events because the Socialist and anti-Communist wing of the Syrian government wanted to take the support of Nasser in order to eliminate the Communists in the government. Therefore, the unification of Syria and Egypt was supposed to enable them to this end. In January 1958, the pro-Communist Syrian Chief-of-General-Staff Bizri and the Socialist Syrian Minister of Foreign Affairs Bitar visited Cairo separately to meet with the Egyptian president to discuss the domestic politics of Syria and the Syrian-Egyptian Union. The United States' sources of information indicated that Nasser behaved rudely to Bizri, whereas he agreed with Bitar on the principles and process of the Syrian-Egyptian unification in the near future.⁶⁹²

According to United States' sources, the Egyptian president had agreed with Bitar and the socialists on the fact that the unification would take place within six months following January 1957. The unified state would include: "one President (Nasser) residing in Cairo; one parliament; one Party (thus eliminating overt Communist Party activity); one army; and one diplomatic service."⁶⁹³

The unification of the economies of the two states was much more difficult, thus, it would be delayed to be discussed more broadly. Nasser insisted to provide his terms not only in theory, but also in practice. More importantly, he sought to take the control of the Syrian Army and to decrease the power of the Communist Party and pro-Soviet politicians.⁶⁹⁴

The durability of such a union was considered as uncertain because these states were "non-contiguous" for the United States because of their different

⁶⁹² Memorandum from the Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs to the Acting Secretary of State. January 25, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.13.i.9., pp.409-411.

⁶⁹³ *ibid.*

⁶⁹⁴ *ibid.*

traditions and cultures. More importantly, the United States' officials stated that the implementation of such a union would be much more difficult than it had been estimated by the leaders of these states.⁶⁹⁵

The United States made an analysis of a possible union between Syria and Egypt. The short and long term interests of the United States regarding the union were not identical. In the short run, the union might have served the interests of the United States because the consolidation of the Egyptian President's position in Syria might have curbed the influence of the Communist Party and the Communists. However, in the long run, the union might have enabled Nasser to distort the direction of Syria and remove the chance of Syrian rapprochement with Iraq. This might have resulted in the domination of Nasser in the Arab world. Furthermore, the Egyptian-Syrian Union might have deteriorated the relations of these states with Israel and the other Arab states, especially Jordan. On the other hand, the Saudi Arabia, which had traditionally been in efforts to influence Syria, was opposed to the extension of Nasser's hegemony. Iraq might have not welcomed the union, either. The union would enable Nasser's sphere of influence to its frontier and, more importantly, Iraq would lose the opportunity to take Syria into his own sphere of influence. According to the United States' officials, Turkey might have not looked the unification favorably.⁶⁹⁶ Shortly, despite the benefits of the Syrian-Egyptian union in the short run, it was expected to come up with problems not only for the interests of the United States, but also of the states in the Middle East.

Despite the relatively negative stance, the United States refrained from taking action against the union. Moreover, it worked to convince the Baghdad Pact Powers

⁶⁹⁵ Memorandum from the Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs to the Acting Secretary of State. January 25, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.13.i.9., pp.409-411.

⁶⁹⁶ *ibid.*

not to publicly condemn the union. The United States was in favor of waiting for the decisions and actions of the Arab states to act. The Iraqi government should contact the other Arab governments and the United States would act accordingly.⁶⁹⁷

The idea of the United Arab Republic was declared on 1 February 1958. The union came into existence after plebiscites in both Syria and Egypt on 21 February 1958. The Egyptian President Nasser was elected president of the United Arab Republic. After his election as the president, Syria and Egypt ceased to exist as separate international entities. Later on, Yemen, which had closer relations with the Soviet Union, joined the United Arab Republic on 8 March 1958. However, Yemen did not lose its international status as a sovereign state. The relation between the UAR and Yemen can be regarded as a confederation in which both entities mainly cooperated militarily.⁶⁹⁸

While these developments were happening, the United States was in close contact with Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia, which were deeply concerned with the creation of the union. The United States declared to these governments that it would be ready to cooperate with them to take a joint action.⁶⁹⁹ However, the Arab states could not afford to take such an action and these governments recognized the United Arab Republic in a short time.

In the meantime, the Federal Arab Union between Iraq and Jordan was established on 14 February 1958, which could be perceived as a reaction to the United Arab Republic between Egypt and Syria. The Federal Arab Union was open

⁶⁹⁷ Telegram from the Delegation at the Baghdad Pact Council Meeting to the Department of State. January 29, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.13.i.9., p.412.

⁶⁹⁸ Background Paper from the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs (Rountree) to the Under Secretary of State (Herter). March 4, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.12.i.13., pp.798-799. See also *Cumhuriyet*, 9 March 1958.

⁶⁹⁹ Memorandum from the Secretary of State to the President. February 8, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.13.i.9., pp.421-422. See also Lenczowski, pp.345, 537-538; Smolansky, p.79; Goldschmidt, p.305.

to the participation of the other Arab states. The King of Iraq became the head of the Union and the capital of the Union shifted between Baghdad and Amman every six months. A common parliament and cabinet were to be established in addition to the individual parliaments and cabinets of the two states.⁷⁰⁰ Turkey welcomed the Iraqi-Jordanian Union because Iraq did not leave the Baghdad Pact. The union between Iraq and Jordan endured until the coup d'état in Iraq in July 1958.⁷⁰¹

After the positions and policies of the Arab States and the Baghdad Pact members had become explicit, the United States government decided to recognize the United Arab Republic. According to the United States' officials, refraining from recognition would be "politically disadvantageous" and the United States had to establish "correct relations with UAR from outset."⁷⁰²

After the establishment and recognition of the United Arab Republic by the states including Turkey, the Turkish ambassador in Cairo met with president Nasser in May 1958. In this meeting, the Turkish ambassador told that the Turkish government was willing to establish friendly relations between Turkey and the United Arab Republic as Nasser had mentioned in an interview that he also had been willing to do so. Moreover, the Turkish government was satisfied with the president's intentions and efforts to eliminate Communism in Syria. In return, the Turkish government instructed the media to end the aggressive broadcasts about the United Arab Republic. The Turkish ambassador told the president that the Turkish

⁷⁰⁰ Lenczowski, p.288.

⁷⁰¹ *Zafer*, 15-19 February 1958, *Son Posta*, 15-18 February 1958, *Cumhuriyet*, 15-18 February 1958, *Ulus*, 15 February 1958.

⁷⁰² Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Iraq. February 21, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.13.i.9., pp.430-431.

government had been concerned about smuggling along the Turkish-Syrian border.⁷⁰³

In reply to these statements, the president Nasser repeated his willingness for friendly relations between Turkey and the United Arab Republic. He also stated that problematic relations between 1955 and 1958 had stemmed from “misunderstandings.” Therefore, he promised to give the necessary orders to prevent smuggling on the Turkish-Syrian border and he would try hard to develop trade relations between Turkey and the United Arab Republic.⁷⁰⁴

Consequently, the rapprochement between Syria and Egypt bore fruits in 1958 and the United Arab Republic was established under Nasser. The establishment of the union was a development that had impact on the Middle East politics. Initially, the United States and the Arab States, like Turkey, seemed opposed to the union, whereas, later on, they all recognized the new state. Turkey conducted close relations with the union. However, the union remained in the shadow of internal crises in the Middle East, i.e., the coup d'état in Iraq, the Lebanon and Jordan Crises in 1958. Ultimately, the United Arab Republic ceased to exist in 1961.

The United Arab Republic in the Turkish Parliament and Press

The establishment of the United Arab Republic and the Federal Arab Union were closely followed and evaluated by the opposition in the Parliament and the press.

The representative of the RPP, Necati İltir, evaluated the developments regarding these two unions. He stated that the unification of Egypt and Syria could be regarded as a response to the Baghdad Pact in the region and it would be a source

⁷⁰³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. May 2, 1958. FO 371. 131338. JE 10344-1. See also Gönlübol and Ülman, p.300; Fırat and Kürkçüoğlu, p.631.

⁷⁰⁴ *ibid.*

of uneasiness. The communists in Syria would be outlawed in the United Arab Republic because communism had been outlawed in Egypt before. On the other hand, the establishment of the Federal Arab Union would cause sympathy in Turkey. However, the two unions might have caused different outcomes. Therefore, the situation in the region would be more sensitive. As a result, the Baghdad Pact should not extend its scope, and the conflicts and problems in the region should be solved by the United Nations.⁷⁰⁵ In brief, İlder suggested that Turkey should approach and act cautiously towards the establishment of the new unions in the Middle East. It can be argued that the recognition of both newly established states by the government was consistent with the position of the opposition in the Parliament.

Zafer and *Son Posta* published news on the United Arab Republic and the Federal Arab Union rather than taking positions on these developments.⁷⁰⁶

In *Cumhuriyet*, Ömer Sami Coşar wrote articles on the United Arab Republic and the Federal Arab Union. His position was more favorable to the Federal Arab Union because he saw the unification of Iraq and Jordan as bringing an element of stability to the region. The United Arab Republic, however, bolstered the split in the Arab world, in which the ties had already been weak. Turkey should support the

⁷⁰⁵ “Muhterem arkadaşlar, Mısır’la Suriye’nin Birleşik Arap Cumhuriyetini kurlmaları Bağdad Paktına tesirli bir cevap ve Orta-Doğu’da yeni bir heyecan unsuru olmuştur. Bilhassa Suriye bakımından, böyle bir kararın saikleri, ciddiyetle mütalaa olunmak lazımdır. Suriye siyaset adamlarının bu birleşmeye rıza ve muvafakatleri kolay bir karar değildir. Şimdi ne olacak? Mısır’da komünist Partisi kanun dışıdır. Suriye’de böyle bir parti vardır. Ve bizim “komünist oldu” dediğimiz Suriye’de bu parti, diğerleriyle beraber lağvolunmuştur. Komünist faaliyeti, Mısır’da olduğu gibi, kanun dışı edilecektir. Türkiye’nin müttefiki Irak’la Ürdün arasında kurulan federasyonu sempati ile karşılması pek tabiidir. Ancak iki Arap birliği arasındaki mücadelenin geniş ihtimallere kapı açtığına da şüphe yoktur. Bu sebeple durum diine nazaran bugün daha da nezaket kesbetmiştir. Durumun bu inkişafı, Bağdat Paktının maksadı içinde kalması lüzumunu daha da artırmıştır. Bu sebeple Ortadoğu’daki derin ihtilafların hallini Birleşmiş Milletlere ve korunmasını onun gücüne bırakmakta isabet olduğu fikrindeyiz.”

Republic of Turkey. *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*. term 11, session 46, vol.2, 25 February 1958, pp.632-633.

⁷⁰⁶ *Son Posta*, 18 November 1957-22 March 1958

Federal Arab Union. However, the Union might cause the disintegration of the only Arab member of the Baghdad Pact, Iraq, from the Pact in the long run.⁷⁰⁷

In *Ulus*, Ahmet Şükrü Esmer's position towards the United Arab Republic can be regarded as cautious. He argued that the union would lead to the "annexation" of Syria by Egypt. The regime would be dictatorship and Nasser would be the president and the prime minister of the newly united state. Although the new state was open to the participation of other states, the regime of the new state as a republic would set an impediment on the joining of other states, which were Kingdoms rather than republics, and this would cause a split in the Arab Union.⁷⁰⁸ It can be argued that the article of Esmer implied criticism of Nasser and the establishment of the United Arab Republic like that of Coşar in *Cumhuriyet*.

About the United Arab Republic, an article was published on *Akis* in which it was stated that the United Arab Republic had to be recognized and it should be given a chance because it was a reflection of Arab nationalism and the will of the Arab

⁷⁰⁷ "Irak ve Ürdün'ün birleşmesi uzun zamandanberi isteniliyordu... Şimdi ise, Kahire ile Şam arasında başlayan işbirliği, Amman ile Bağdatı kendi aralarında bu birliği tahakkuk ettirme yoluna sokmuştur. Mısır-Suriye Birliği, görüldüğü gibi, Arap memleketleri arasındaki tesanüdü sağlamak şöyle dursun, esasen az olan bağları da koparmıştır. Bugün Irak ile Ürdünün tek bir devlet haline gelmek hususundaki arzuları, Kahire-Şam mihverinin kurulmasından duydukları endişeden doğmuştur... Diğer taraftan bu yeni (Arap federasyonu) tasarısı karşısında Suudi Arabistan nasıl bir tavır takınacaktır? Kral Suud, Mısır-Suriye birliğinden olduğu kadar, Haşimi tahtlarının ve memleketlerinin de birleştirilmelerinden memnun kalmayacaktır... Türkiye'nin Irak-Ürdün birliğini memnuniyetle karşılayacağından şüphe yoktur. Böyle bir birlik muhakkak ki Ortadoğu'da bir istikrar unsure olabilecektir. Yalnız bu birliğin, Bağdat Paktını tek Arap azasından etmesi pahasına vücut bulması, müspet bir gelişmenin hızını keser."
Cumhuriyet, 13 February 1958.

⁷⁰⁸ "Şartları henüz bilinmemekle beraber, birleşme hakikatte Suriye'nin Mısır tarafından ilhakı demektir. Suriye Mısır'ın rejimine uyacak yani siyasi partiler ilga edilerek diktatörlük kabul edilecektir. Abdunhasır yeni devletin Başkanı ve Başbakanı oluyor... Birleşik Arap Cumhuriyeti, diğer Arap devletlerine de birliğe katılmaları için kapıyı açık bırakmaktadır.... Fakat birliğin Cumhuriyet olan kendi adı Arap devletlerinden çoğunu buna katılmaktan alıkoymaktadır... Bu şartlar altında tam ve şamil bir Arap Birliği'ni bu yeni gelişme kolaylaştırmamış hatta zorlaştırmışa benziyor. Eğer rejimleri mutlaka Cumhuriyet olmasını icabettiren bir birlik yerine bir federasyonun kurulmasına gidilseydi belki de birlik daha kolay gerçekleşebilirdi..."
Ulus, 4 February 1958.

people. It was emphasized that the older methods of encouraging the old Kingdoms with arms and money had to be abandoned and the West had realized that.⁷⁰⁹

Therefore, the position of *Akis* to the United Arab Republic was positive and supportive as opposed to *Ulus* and *Cumhuriyet*.

Like *Akis*, the United Arab Republic was welcomed by *Forum* and the union was perceived as a reflection of Arab nationalism. *Forum* proposed that the government should change its policy and cooperate with Arab nationalists rather than “Nuri Said Pashas” and should try to persuade its Western Allies to do the same regarding Arab nationalist movement.^{710,711}

⁷⁰⁹ “Demokratik veya antidemokratik yeni birlik hakikaten Arap kütlelerinin arzularına cevap veriyordu. Birleşik cumhuriyetin batının aleyhine dönmesine mani olmak lazımdı. Kuvvete ve dolara dayanan eski metodlar bir netice vermemişti. Birliğin şimdiden Rusların oyuncağı olduğunu ilan etmek, herhalde batının menfaatlerini korumanın en iyi şekli değildi. Sallanan tahtları, silah ve dolar yardımıyla kurtarmak kısa vadeli endişeler için istikbalin tehlikeye atılması demektir. Ne söylenirse söylesin bugün tek bir Arap millet teşkil etmek arzusu son derece kuvvetliydi. Bunu, Kahire radyosunun eseri saymak hafiflik olacaktı. Bu ideali hoşla gitsin gitmesin Kahire temsil ediyordu. O halde Batı için takip edilecek yol açıktı: Yeni birlik anlayışla karşılanmalıydı. Arap birliğini Rusya’nın bir oyuncağı olmaktan kurtarmak ve hayati petrol kaynaklarını kaybetmemek için başka çare yoktu. Tahtlarını kurtarmak telaşı içinde birleşmeye çalışan sultanları cesaretlendirmek soğuk harbi şiddetlendirmekten başka netice vermeyecekti... Yeni Birliğe gelişme şansı verilmeliydi...” *Akis*, 13 February 1958.

⁷¹⁰ “Mısır’la Suriye’nin Birleşik Arap Cumhuriyeti namı altında ittifak etmeleri, Türkiye’de gerek iktidar gerek muhalefet tarafından prensip itibariyle müsait karşılanmıştır. Gerçekten, kendi varlığını milliyetçi bir cereyandan alan Türkiye Cumhuriyeti’nin Arap Milliyetçiliğinin bütün Arap memleketlerinde büyük ve samimi bir yankı uyandırdığını sandığımız bir hareketini esasında kötü karşılaması mümkün olamazdı... Yeni Birleşik Cumhuriyetin kurulmasını Mısır idarecilerinin eski kanaatlerinden ayrılarak desteklemelerinin bir sebebinin de bu suretle Suriye’de aşırı telakki ettikleri Sovyet sızmalarını önleyebileceklerini ummuş olmaları zikredilmektedir... Bu haberler doğruysa, Türkiye’nin milliyetçilik davalarını halleden Arap dünyasının İsrail bahsinde bile daha soğukkanlı olmaya başlayabileceğini düşünerek, bu dünya içerisinde hakiki muhatap ve dostlarını Nuri Sait Paşa’lardan gayri kimselerde aramaya koyulması ve Batılı müttefiklerini de aynı şeyi yapmaya iknaya çalışması elzem olmaktadır.” *Forum*, 15 February 1958.

⁷¹¹ “Mısır-Suriye Birliği’nden sonra iki Haşimi Kralının idaresindeki Ürdün ile Irak da birleştiler. Bugün bütün dünyanın uğraştığı en mühim mesele bu birliklerden hangisinin istikbalde yaşamaya muvaffak olacağıdır. Bizim bu soruya vereceğimiz cevap gayet kesindir. Mısır-Suriye birliğinin temsil ettiği cereyan Arap kütleleri içinde hakiki ve samimi duygularla karşılanmış diğeri ise hakiki bir milliyetçilik cereyanının meyvesi olmaktan ziyade şahsi birtakım menfaatlerin korunma tedbiri olarak görülmüştür. Bu itibarla Irak ve Ürdün bugünkü idarecilerinin elinde kaldıkça Arap Konfederasyonunun yaşama kudretini haiz olabileceğini biz sanmıyoruz...” *Forum*, 1 March 1958.

The positions of the newspapers and journals can be regarded as supportive of the government, except some reservations of the writers in *Cumhuriyet* and *Ulus* towards the United Arab Republic, when DP's recognition of the two newly established states is taken into consideration.

The Iraqi Coup d'état and Turkey (1958)⁷¹²

In Iraq, the complexity of the population, which was discussed in detail in Chapter 2, as well as the socio-economic disparities in the country, caused domestic tensions. However, Nuri Said did not aim to realize social and economic reforms in the country; but rather, continued to base his power on the minority of landowners and other such loyalist groups. Ultimately, the rise of resentment and hostility, instigated by Nasserist reform-minded nationalists, and the repressive measures of the Iraqi government brought an end to the Iraqi regime when military officers, consisting of a group of colonels and brigadiers led a coup on 14 July 1958. The military junta controlled the capital city of Baghdad and the military installations, and formed a new government.⁷¹³

Upon the developments in Iraq, the United States president, Eisenhower, met with his foreign policy and national security advisors on the same day. In this meeting, the director of the CIA, Allen Dulles, stated that “according to reports

⁷¹² Selected literature on the coup d'état in Iraq: Gaddis, p.175; Lenczowski, pp.286-290; Smolansky, pp.102-108; Golan, p.54; Robins, pp.26-27; Shlaim, pp.32-33; Little, pp.200-202; Sander, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri 1947-1964*, pp.165-166; Bağcı, pp.99-101; Fırat and Kürkçüoğlu, pp.632-633; Gönlübol and Ülman, pp.300-303; Merih, pp.192-195; Sever, *The Compliant Ally? Turkey and the West in the Middle East 1954-58*, pp.83-85; Sever, *Soğuk Savaş Kuşatmasında Türkiye, Batı ve Ortadoğu 1945-1958*, pp.209-216; Karpat, *Türk Dış Politikası Tarihi*, pp.208-209; Uslu, pp.131-133.

⁷¹³ FRUS 1958-60. v.12.i.9., p.307. See also Cleveland, p.318; Lenczowski, pp.277-283; Friedman, pp.302-303; Sorenson, p.214; Mesut Özcan, “Irak: Ortadoğu'nun Etnik ve Kültürel Minyatürü” in *Değişen Toplumlar Değişmeyen Siyaset*, ed.Fulya Atacan (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2004), pp.157-180.

received thus far, the crown prince has been killed, and perhaps Nuri also. The King's situation is unknown. A Leftist government has taken over.”⁷¹⁴

The secretary of state, John F. Dulles commented that the situation of the Iraqi forces outside of Baghdad was uncertain. Surprisingly, he mentioned possibility of a Turkish intervention in Iraq. However, there was no concrete indication of this action and the meeting continued with the discussions on the United States' policy in the following period. The secretary of state said that he was not certain about the United States policy regarding Iraq and the control of Iraq was United Kingdom's responsibility. Eisenhower stated that “we must act, or get out of the Middle East entirely.”⁷¹⁵

The military coup shocked the world, but especially the Baghdad Pact powers that had been waiting for the Iraqi King and the prime minister in Istanbul for a Baghdad Pact meeting. In the following period, the Iraqi coup d'état had serious impacts on domestic politics in Turkey.⁷¹⁶

The Muslim Baghdad Pact members were to meet in Istanbul on 14 July 1958, to discuss the events in Lebanon, which will be discussed below, and other related problems. The Iranian Shah, the Pakistani president, and the Iraqi and Turkish

⁷¹⁴ FRUS 1958-60. v.12.i.9., pp.307-308.

⁷¹⁵ *ibid.*

⁷¹⁶ In the literature on the Democrat Party period, it is commonly argued that the coup d'état in Iraq had serious impacts on the Democrat Party government and the relations between the government and the opposition, especially RPP. The declarations of the opposition after the coup d'état in Iraq, mainly RPP, which repeatedly pointed out the possibility of a revolution (*ihtilal*) in Turkey disturbed the Democrat Party government and it began to approach all possible sources of a revolution with suspicion and to implement tougher policies towards the opposition in the parliament and in the society not to face the same fate with those in Iraq. However, the Democrat Party period ended with a military coup on 27 May 1960. For the details of the impacts of the Iraqi coup d'état on Democrat Party and its relations with the opposition see Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, *Menderes'in Dramı* (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2007), pp.271-279; Cem Eroğul, *Demokrat Parti: Tarihi ve İdeolojisi* (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 1998), pp.222-227; Şerif Demir, *Düello: Menderes ve İnönü* (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2011), pp.167-174; Sever, *The Compliant Ally? Turkey and the West in the Middle East 1954-58*, p.83. See also Ümit Özdağ, *Menderes Döneminde Ordu-Siyaset İlişkileri ve 27 Mayıs İhtilali* (İstanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 2004) for the details of the developments in the army regarding the coup d'état in Turkey in 1960.

prime ministers were supposed to attend. The meeting was moved to Ankara. Upon the developments in Iraq, the United States and the United Kingdom began to wait for an appeal from the Baghdad Pact members to take the necessary measures to save the Baghdad Pact and to prevent the possible threat which indicated in the events in Lebanon and Iraq. More importantly, Turkey was expected to take action. However, the major impediment was seen as the possible resentment that such an action might have caused in the region and, as the Director of the CIA Dulles commented, “they are unlikely to move without guarantees from the USA.”⁷¹⁷

The United Kingdom’s ambassador in Washington followed a similar line. In a later telegram, he stated that “the Americans were extremely reluctant to use any argument with the Turks suggesting that fear of Russian intervention was the reason for refraining from action in Iraq.” According to him, there were two reasons for the United States policy: “it would be contrary to the whole deterrent policy to admit this, and also that anything of this kind said to the Turks would, owing to Turkish insecurity, certainly leak back to the Russians.” More importantly, he stated that “the Americans are confident that Turkey will not take any action in Iraq on their own without promises of United States support.”⁷¹⁸

Despite this confidence, however, the United States wanted to know the Turkish plans and estimates regarding the situation in Iraq. It was aware that there was no organized opposition against the new regime in Iraq. Therefore, if Turkey had intervened in Iraq, it would have been likely that it would be opposed and resisted by the Iraqi population and the military forces. Furthermore, the nature of the Turkish-Iraqi frontier was another impediment on such an action. Ultimately, the United

⁷¹⁷ Briefing Notes by Director of Central Intelligence Dulles. July 14, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.12.i.9., pp.308-311. See also Fırat and Kürkçüoğlu, p.632; Sander, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri 1947-1964*, p.166.

⁷¹⁸ Telegram from the British Embassy in Washington to Foreign Office. July 19, 1958. FO 371. 134212. VQ10344-2.

States government decided that until they had learned the plans of Turkey and the absence of the opposition in Iraq, it would be premature to encourage Turkey to take any action in Iraq.⁷¹⁹

Not only the United States and the United Kingdom, but also the Shah of Iran and the president of Pakistan, were preoccupied with the Turkish intervention in Iraq. According to the United States ambassador in Iran, the Shah and the president argued that Turkey should not intervene in Iraq. The strategy of the Shah was as follows:

Iran could work with the local tribes, including the Kurds, to try to win them over to our side, at same time Jordan and Turkey should simultaneously be carrying out similar psychological offensive in other parts Iraq. If and when situation was ripe, Jordan, having been built up militarily in interim, should make military attack without Western participation.⁷²⁰

While these estimations and plans were being made, the secretary of state, Dulles, urged president Eisenhower to recognize the new Iraqi government as quickly as possible:

Although the United States deplored the brutality of the coup, the new regime had quickly restored order, was in full control of the country, and apparently faced no opposition. The new Iraqi officials had privately asserted that they wished to continue close friendly relations as well as economic cooperation, particularly in oil matters with the West... officials of Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey indicated their understanding of the advisability of US recognition, without delay so as to be in the best position to protect United States interests in Iraq and exert constructive influence upon the new regime. Lebanon and Jordan expressed similar appreciation privately. Other Arab states, such as Saudi Arabia and Tunisia, had already extended recognition.⁷²¹

Upon the statements of the secretary of state, Eisenhower approved the United States' recognition of the new Iraqi regime.⁷²²

⁷¹⁹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Washington to Foreign Office. July 19, 1958. FO 371. 134212. VQ10344-2.

⁷²⁰ Telegram from the Embassy in Iran to the Department of State. July 20, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.12.i.10., pp.576-578.

⁷²¹ FRUS 1958-60. v.12.i.9., p.334. See also Fırat and Kürkçüoğlu, p.632, Ülman and Gönlübol, pp.301-303.

⁷²² *ibid.*

Although the new Iraqi regime was recognized by the West and the states in the Middle East, including Turkey, the rumors and claims about a possible Turkish intervention in Iraq continued. The report of the United Kingdom High Commissioner in Karachi is worth mentioning here. The Commissioner stated that in his talk with the Pakistani President, the latter argued that the Turkish prime minister had come up with the suggestion that “Turkey should invade Iraq with four divisions which could be made available at short notice.” Upon this suggestion, as the Pakistani president argued, he was horrified and, later on, he had been to persuade Menderes that such an action would be foolish.⁷²³ This story seems exaggerated when the sequence of events is considered. However, it is important to understand the scope of scenarios about a Turkish intervention in Iraq, as had happened in the Turkish-Syrian crisis.

The United Kingdom’s ambassador in Ankara evaluated the possibility of a Turkish intervention from a different point of view. He stated that:

If there appeared to be a real danger of the emergence of a Kurdish satellite state or if Iraq were to join the UAR, a new situation might arise. The idea of an independent Kurdistan, whatever its political alignment, is of course anathema to the Turks and equally they would be unlikely to allow the predominantly Turkish provinces of Northern Iraq to become part of the UAR without reacting in some way. In these circumstances, I think it possible that the Turks would revert to the idea of direct intervention in Iraq, perhaps in conjunction with the Iranians. But they would still be very unlikely to act without assurances of American support. It is possible that they might consider partitioning what it is now Northern Iraq between Turkey and Iran, taking the (Turkish and oil bearing) provinces of Mosul and Kirkuk for themselves and leaving the (Kurdish) provinces to Iran. Incidentally, M. Zorlu said to the Prime Minister on August 10 that for Turkey one of the main problems in Iraq was the big Turkish community in the North. Complaints had been made by the Turkish government about one or two incidents involving this Turkish community, to which a friendly reply had been received, but the situation was still disquieting.⁷²⁴

⁷²³ Telegram from the UK High Commission in Karachi to Foreign Office. August 5, 1958. FO 371. 134212. VQ10344-4.

⁷²⁴ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. August 13, 1958. FO 371. 134212. VQ 10344-3.

These developments and the statements kept the expectation of a Turkish intervention in Iraq alive, but such an action did not take place. In the following period, the Turkish government focused on two interrelated developments regarding Iraq: the status of the communists and communism in Iraq and the Kurdish problem, which was part of the relations between Turkey and Iraq. At the same time, both the Turkish and Iraqi governments sought to develop their relations.

The ambassador of the new Iraqi regime in Ankara informed the press on 12 November 1958 that the talks between the two governments would take place in order to reach an agreement and to develop the relations between the two states. To this end, the Iraqi government would visit Ankara as soon as possible. Moreover, he stated that “his government is to discuss with Turkey, Iran and Pakistan its attitude towards the Baghdad Pact and the role Iraq is to play in the problems of the Middle East.”^{725,726} However, such a visit did not take place.

On the other hand, the Turkish government had to re-formulate its policy towards Iraq. In a conversation with the United Kingdom’s ambassador in Ankara on 2 December 1958, the secretary general of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Esenbel, informed the ambassador that the Turkish government had decided to close the Turkish consulate in Kirkuk and had begun arrangements to do that as soon as possible. However, the consulate would be reopened in the following period. Moreover, the Secretary General mentioned that the Turkish ambassador in Baghdad had reported that the Soviet Union had delivered arms to the Iraqis at Basra and there had been secret talks between the Soviet Union and the Iraqis in Baghdad.⁷²⁷

⁷²⁵ Extract from a news in “Al-Hayat”. November 12, 1958. FO 371. 133085. EQ 10344-8.

⁷²⁶ It should be reminded that the Iraqi government would withdraw from the Baghdad Pact in the following period as it was discussed in detail under the title “the Baghdad Pact and Iraq” in this study.

⁷²⁷ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. December 5, 1958. FO 371. 133085. EQ 10344-7.

More importantly, the secretary general and his deputy, Kunalp, mentioned the talks between the Turkish president and the Iranian Shah. In these talks, the Shah stated the difficulties with the new Iraqi regime, whereas he seemed to accept that the alternatives would be worse, although the Qasim regime had not been satisfactory. The ambassador asked the secretary general the likelihood of a visit of the Iraqi government to Ankara. In reply, the Secretary General denied this possibility, although he said he believed that the new Iraqi regime sought to establish friendly relations with Turkey.⁷²⁸

Like Turkey, the other states in the Middle East, i.e., Israel and Jordan in particular and Iran to a lesser degree, and the United Kingdom, did not consider the situation in Iraq as serious as the United States. The Middle Eastern neighbors of Iraq believed that the Qasim regime would protect Iraq against the Communists despite the efforts of Nasser to undermine this possibility. According to a report prepared in the United States' Department of State, Turkey might have gone to assist Iraq in case of an intervention from Nasser.⁷²⁹

In addition, according to an estimate by the CIA, most governments in the area as well as some circles in the United Kingdom did not take the developments in Iraq seriously and they believed that Qasim would provide "a useful counterpoise" to Nasser. However, in time, these beliefs began to disappear with the rise of the "Communist threat" in Iraq. Most of these governments began to reconsider their policies towards Iraq except Israel and Jordan. The individual Arab states could not have an impact on the Iraqi regime except the United Arab Republic. It was difficult to provide a joint action among the Arab states although it was necessary. More

⁷²⁸ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. December 5, 1958. FO 371. 133085. EQ 10344-7.

⁷²⁹ Paper Prepared in the Department of State. April 15, 1959. FRUS 1958-60. v.12.i.9., pp.414-422.

importantly, Turkey and Iran had limited capabilities, especially militarily, to influence the situation.⁷³⁰

The hopes on the Iraqi government to provide security and order in the country and to control the communists failed in the short run. As a memorandum of the discussion at the meeting of the National Security Council shows, the unrest and disorder continued, especially on the Iranian and Syrian borders as well as the Turkish one. The Iraqi government believed that the tribes along the borders were being supported by Turkey and Syria. On the other hand, communists kept up consolidating their strength especially in the economic field. Upon the rise of the Communists and the events on the Turkish-Iraqi border, the attitude of Turkey toward Iraq changed and Turkey sought to consult the United States regarding the issue.⁷³¹

Besides the regime problem and the communist danger, the incidents near the Turkish-Iraqi frontier and the situation of the Iraqi Turks in the Northern Iraq were the problems which negatively influenced the relations between the two states. The Qasim regime's policy towards the Iraqi Turks and the invitation of Qasim of Mullah Mustafa to Iraq, which was regarded as an indicator of the establishment of an independent Kurdistan, caused resentment and unrest in Turkey. After Barzani's coming to Iraq, several clashes between Turks and Kurds occurred. An article was published in *Cumhuriyet* by a correspondent, Nizamettin Neftçi, who had returned from Iraq in December 1958. He gave details about the clashes between Turks and Kurds in Kirkuk and stated that:

⁷³⁰ Special National Intelligence Estimate. April 28, 1959. FRUS 1958-60. v.12.i.9., pp.442-443.

⁷³¹ Memorandum of Conversation at the 404th Meeting of the National Security Council. April 30, 1959. FRUS 1958-60. v.12.i.9.,pp.443-445.

Until recent years, there has not been news about the Iraqi Turks in the Turkish press. The Turks, who have been left to their fate in the last forty years, survived despite the pressure on and indifference to them. As the result of the Kirkuk events between 24 and 28 October, they drew the attention of the press in Turkey. The clashes after Barzani's visit to the Kurdish provinces in 24 October are the results of the policies of the last twenty years. This date can be regarded as a beginning because today the Iraqi Turks might well now be in a very dangerous position. In the political structure of today's Iraq, the future of the Iraqi Turks does not seem bright. In a possible turmoil which might erupt in the future, they might be the target. The danger of massacre should never be underestimated. But we hope and wait for that the Iraqi authorities will take the necessary measures to protect them.⁷³²

The extent of the threat against the Iraqi Turks could not be known, however, as the events in the following period showed, there were several clashes and incidents between the Turks and Kurds in the region.

Articles of the Turkish papers on 13 January 1959, which were based on the news on Cairo and Beirut radios, reported that serious clashes had taken place between Turks and Kurds in Kirkuk. The violence had begun and spread. Some people had been killed and curfew had been imposed. It was claimed that the Army Commander in the region had assured the Turks in the area that the necessary measures would be taken to prevent the communist Kurds from carrying out further incidents.⁷³³

⁷³² "Son yıllara kadar Irak Türklerinden bahseden yazılara Türk basınında pek az rastlanırdı...Kırk yıldan beri kendi hallerine terkedilen Irak Türkleri, gördükleri çeşitli baskılara ve karşılaştıkları ilgisizliklere rağmen, varlıklarını korumuşlar, nihayet 24-28 Ekim Kerkük olayları dolayısıyla bütün Türk basınının gereken ilgisini ilk defa olarak üzerlerine toplamışlardır. Barzaninin Kürt muntakalarını ziyaretinden dönüşü tarihi olan 24 ekimde geçen olaylar, son yirmi sene içinde Kuzey Irak'ta takip edilmiş olan politikanın bir sonucudur. Bu tarihi bir başlangıç olarak da kabul edebiliriz. Çünkü bugünden sonra Kerküklüler başta olmak üzere bütün Irak Türkleri yeni ve çok tehlikeli bir devrenin eşiğine basmış oluyorlar... Irak'ın bugünkü siyasi yapısı içinde Türklerin istikbali, nereden bakılırsa bakılsın, parlak bir manzara arzetmiyor. Yarın çıkması muhtemel herhangi bir kargaşalıkta, çeşitli Türk düşmanı cereyanların ilk hedefi Irak Türkleri olacaktır. Söylemeğe dilim varmıyor ama, topluca bir katliam ihtimali hiçbir zaman gözden uzak tutulmamalıdır... Bütün bu hakikatlere rağmen, bugünkü Irak idarecilerinin on bir asırdan beri, o vatanın sahibi olan Irak Türklerini, koruyacak tedbirleri alacağını gene de umuyor ve bekliyoruz." *Cumhuriyet*, 20 December 1958.

⁷³³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. January 16, 1959. FO 371. 140682. EB 1821-4.

Upon these incidents and struggles, hundred tribesmen from Iraq had entered into Hakkari in Turkey from the frontier. This development was reported by the BBC European Service. The deputy secretary general of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs justified the report. The Deputy Secretary General also stated that “there were at present between 200 and 300 males accompanied by women and children, but that the immigration across the frontier continued.”⁷³⁴ The Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs made “off-the-record statements to foreign correspondents” and confirmed the developments. More importantly, the Minister clarified that the Kurdish refugees were opponents of Mullah Mustafa Barzani’s tribe, whereas it could not be justified that to which tribe they belonged.⁷³⁵

While these developments were happening, the secretary general of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that the struggles among the Kurds in Iraq were largely inter-tribal matters. The right course of action for Turkey and Iran was to prevent its turning into an international issue. He recommended to the Turkish Ministers discuss the question with the Iranian Shah during their visit and warned him to be cautious and keep on his efforts to persuade the Iraqi government that there had been no “Iranian intrigues” regarding the developments along the frontier.⁷³⁶

The problems and struggles that were happening between the Kurdish tribes and between the Turks and the Kurds in Kirkuk were discussed at a meeting of the Baghdad Pact ambassadors in June 1959. It was agreed that “unrest in Kurdistan was against all interests, and would only benefit Communists.” The Turkish and Iranian

⁷³⁴ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. April 29, 1959. FO 371. 140682. EB 1821-26.

⁷³⁵ *ibid.*

⁷³⁶ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. June 3, 1959. FO 371. 140682. EB 1821-30A.

ambassadors stated that the policy of their governments was “to restrict refugees to smallest number, subject to humanitarian considerations.”⁷³⁷

The issue was also discussed at the Restricted Session for Political Discussion of the CENTO deputies Meeting on 3 September 1959. The Turkish representative informed his counterparts that there was a counter movement of the Iraqi Kurds, who had crossed into Turkey before, to their provinces. By the second half of August 1959, 830 people had returned and the process continued. The Turkish representative also mentioned the status of Turkish-Iraqi relations. He stated that:

There were at present two Iraqi delegations in Ankara: first, the Commercial Group, led by Kasim’s brother negotiating for the purchase of 20,000 tons of wheat seed; and secondly a Cultural Delegation carrying on conversations under the Cultural Agreement negotiated before the revolution and still in force. At the same time Kasim appeared to have taken serious action with those responsible for the Kirkuk Rebellion. All this pointed out to the conclusion that the Iraqi government was still continuing its efforts to normalize relations with Turkey and the Turkish government regarded this as a factor justifying their lenient policy.⁷³⁸

Despite these efforts to develop relations between Iraq and Turkey, in a special national intelligence estimate, it was stated that “Turkey’s attitude toward the Qasim regime, heretofore rather tolerant and hopeful, would almost certainly change rapidly if Turkish leaders came to believe that Communist ascendancy were imminent.”⁷³⁹

To sum up, the coup d’état in Iraq had an impact on Middle East politics: the Iraqi regime friendly to the West was toppled. A Turkish intervention was expected by some circles in the West and the Middle East, although this did not take place. However, the new Iraqi regime was recognized and normalized the relations with the

⁷³⁷ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. June 11, 1959. FO 371. 140683. EB 1821-36.

⁷³⁸ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. September 5, 1959. FO 371. 140683. B1821-49.

⁷³⁹ Special National Intelligence Estimate. December 15, 1959. FRUS 1958-60. v.12.i.9., pp.496-500.

new regime were sought. The basic concerns of the Turkish government regarding Iraq were the status of the Communists in the new regime and the status of Kurds and the Turks in northern Iraq. Several incidents and clashes happened not only between the Iraqi Turks and the Kurds, but also between Kurdish tribes. As a result, hundreds of refugees fled to Turkey as well as Iran and Syria. However, in time, the clashes and problems calmed down and the relations between the two states normalized despite the claims and rumors of a Turkish intervention in this process.

The Lebanon and Jordan Crises and Turkey (1958)⁷⁴⁰

In 1958, crises broke out in Lebanon and Jordan which mainly stemmed from the political unrest and civil war in those countries. In Lebanon, the domestic unrest between the Muslims and Maronites deteriorated and the elections in 1957, in which Chamoun and the Maronites won a two-thirds majority in the parliament, were believed to have been manipulated and this instigated the crisis. Demands for by the Muslims of Lebanon began to arise. The Muslims demanded more authority in the government on the basis that they were the majority in the country. The Lebanese Muslims were pro-Nasser, while the supporters of Chamoun, the Maronites, were pro-Western. Therefore, Chamoun had to satisfy these two communities to keep them together. However, the unrest in society, which has been analyzed in Chapter 2, resulted in his fall in 1958.⁷⁴¹

⁷⁴⁰ Selected literature on the Lebanon and Jordan Crises: Gaddis, p.175; Lenczowski, pp.366-372, 487-488; Goldschmidt, pp.305-306; Robins, p.27; Shlaim, p.33; Sander, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri 1947-1964*, pp.166-167; Sever, *Soğuk Savaş Kuşatmasında Türkiye, Batı ve Ortadoğu 1945-1958*, pp.217-244; Bağcı, pp.99-101; Merih, pp.195-199; Fırat and Kürkçüoğlu, pp.633-635; Gönübol and Ülman, pp.303-305.

⁷⁴¹ Cleveland, pp.326-327. See also Lenczowski, pp.366-368; Sorenson, pp.293-294; Mansfield, p.259; Fulya Atacan, "Küçük Ülke Büyük Sorunlar: Lübnan" in *Değişen Toplumlar Değişmeyen Siyaset: Ortadoğu*, ed.Fulya Atacan (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2004), pp.285-310.

Before the eruption of the events in the summer of 1958, the United States' Joint-Chiefs-of-Staff sent a memorandum to the secretary of defense on 8 January 1958 in which he drew attention to the role of leftist, pro-Egyptian and radical nationalists who had been supported probably by Egypt and Syria in this domestic political and social unrest between the Muslims and the Maronite Christians in Lebanon. In the same memorandum, he recommended that provide military equipment, i.e., armored cars, anti-aircraft guns and tanks, to be provided to the Lebanese Army.⁷⁴²

In addition to the military support to Lebanon, the possibility of intervention by the United States and the United Kingdom was also considered. It was argued that Jordan and Iraq were willing to support Lebanon if the Allies decided to intervene militarily. Moreover, it was obvious that the United Arab Republic had been providing arms to the partisans who were against the regime in Lebanon especially since the defeat of the Druzes by the Lebanese Army. The United States' ambassador in Cairo was instructed to tell Nasser that the United States was aware the involvement of the United Arab Republic into the events in Lebanon and the United States would have supported Lebanon militarily, if necessary. Furthermore, it was stated that the United States assumed that the support of the United Arab Republic was not from the government, and Nasser should stop the involvement of the United Arab Republic in the Lebanese crisis. In the same report, the position of Turkey was also discussed and it was stated that "Turkey has not been cut in any way because they are very leaky in security matters but the state department feels that they will help Lebanese if fighting begin."⁷⁴³

⁷⁴² Telegram from the Embassy in Lebanon to the Department of State. January 9, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.11.i.8. Footnote 4., p.2. See also Lenczowski, p.368.

⁷⁴³ Memorandum for the Record of the State-Joint Chiefs of Staff Meeting, Pentagon. May 16, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.11.i.8., pp.58-59.

In line with the possibility of an Allied intervention to Lebanon, the plans and strategies regarding such an intervention were also prepared. On 16 May, Admiral James Holloway, the commander in chief of the United States' Specified Command for the Middle East, sent the chief of naval operations, Admiral Burke, an outline plan for a joint Allied military operation to Lebanon in support of the Lebanese government. Holloway emphasized that the intervention plan was prepared in coordination with the United Kingdom's Joint-Chiefs-of-Staff and they approved. The plan was named "Blue Bat." The main aim of the plan was "to support or if necessary to reestablish the authority of the Lebanese government." The secondary aim was:

To protect US and British nationals and the national interests. The concept of operation was limited to Lebanon and the use of the minimum force necessary to reestablish effective control over the country by the Lebanese government. The initial objective of the operation was the Beirut area.⁷⁴⁴

While these preparations were being made at the headquarters of the United States and the United Kingdom military forces, the position of the Lebanese government and the president Chamoun worsened, and Lebanon entered a state of civil war in June 1958. The Christian half of the country also had withdrawn its support from the President. The Commander-in-Chief of the Lebanese Army, General Chebab, did not call on the army to support the President. For the United States' officials there were two reasons for this: "partly because he fears a split between Christian and Moslem elements of the Army, partly because he probably has ambitious of his own for the Presidency."⁷⁴⁵

The reports of a possible military coup to remove Chamoun and substitute Chebab proved the second possibility. It was stated that the president could not resist

⁷⁴⁴ FRUS 1958-60. v.11.i.8., p.60.

⁷⁴⁵ Special National Intelligence Estimate. June 14, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.11.i.8., pp.120-122. See also Lenczowski, p.369, Goldschmidt, p.306.

much longer without the support of the army and even with its support. Under these circumstances, the Lebanese president might have called for the intervention of the Allies in the short run with the approval of the cabinet to do so. However, the Parliamentary support was hard to secure. The request most probably would not have had political or popular support, whether or not Chebab supported it. However, he did not seem to support such a request from the Allies. Regarding the Middle East states, Iraq and Jordan was supposed to approve the United States' intervention in Lebanon despite the possibility of a popular opposition at home. The positions of the governments of Turkey, Pakistan, and Iran were supposed to be favorable and, more importantly, Turkey was supposed to offer assistance if the Cyprus situation, which preoccupied the agenda of the Turkish foreign policy in the late 1950s, had permitted.⁷⁴⁶

The developments in Lebanon were evaluated in June 1958 by the United States and it was stated that:

Lebanon was now the main target of this "infernal" work. It was not so strong as to be beyond the possibility of being disintegrated under the combined fury of Nasserism and Communism. It was small, relatively isolated, weak militarily, divided in itself, and unprotected by treaties except for the Charter of the United Nations. The forces opposing Lebanon could easily destroy it. It was a wonder, Dr.Malik said, that Lebanon already had resisted for thirty-five days... However, if they were not to lose the battle, they needed psychological, material and military help beyond their own means. If it should become necessary for Lebanon to ask for the introduction of foreign forces to assist it, this would be a decision with implications in the Arab world of great and lasting importance... Dr.Malik emphasized the importance of Iraq and Jordan joining in assistance to Lebanon... There should be careful synchronization of efforts between Lebanon, the United States, the United Kingdom and Turkey to persuade Iraq and Jordan to come in.⁷⁴⁷

In the meantime, Chamoun commented on the developments and a possible intervention of the Allies. He stated that he would not request the United States'

⁷⁴⁶ Special National Intelligence Estimate. June 14, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.11.i.8., pp.120-122. See also Lenczowski, p.369, Goldschmidt, p.306.

⁷⁴⁷ Memorandum of a Conversation. June 15, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.11.i.8., pp.130-132.

intervention “unless the knife is at my throat.” Under these circumstances, the United States’ intervention would be “logical and responsive to a truly emergency need.” Chamoun added that his position was “paradoxical” because he resisted calling for help from the United States to intervene despite the pressure of the other Arab leaders to persuade him to do so. The governments of Iraq, Jordan, Turkey and Iran had advised him to request the Allies, especially the United States, for immediate military assistance.⁷⁴⁸

Although the plans of a military intervention in Lebanon had already been prepared and there was a demand for such an action, the United States hesitated to implement its plan. In a memorandum of conversation, it was stated that the basic reason for that was not to “give rise to an intensified anti-Western feeling on which Nasser later could capitalize”. Moreover, it might cause an unfortunate situation for Lebanon because a government which could survive through foreign military assistance could not resist and survive once the military troops withdrew. If Lebanon, however, “the most independent and pro-Western of the Arab states” had requested help and had been refused, the impact of this decision would be “great not only in the neighboring Arab area but also in peripheral states such as Libya, Sudan, Turkey, Iraq and Iran.” The last three states insisted a military intervention in Lebanon. It was added that if Nasser and his “Soviet backers” had gained a victory in Lebanon, the countries, which were the neighbors of the Soviet Union and Egypt, would be shaken and the long term impact would be. More importantly, Turkey and Iraq might launch fighting, if it were necessary, by their own action, which would drive the United States to come in.⁷⁴⁹

⁷⁴⁸ Telegram from the Embassy in Lebanon to the Department of State. June 20, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.11.i.8., pp.160-162.

⁷⁴⁹ Memorandum of Conversation, Department of State. July 7, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.11.i.8., pp.200-201.

Shortly, an initiative by Turkey or Iraq was designed as a tool to legitimize the intervention of the Allies in Lebanon. However, there was no indication that Turkey had any intention to launch a military intervention in Lebanon.

Nevertheless, in the same vein, the reports regarding the possibility of a Turkish or Iraqi intervention in Lebanon continued. The United States' ambassador in Beirut, McClintock, reported that the Commandant of the Lebanese Gendarmerie, Colonel Zouein, had told him that "Chamoun intended to use the possibility of intervention by Turkey and Iraq as his last cartridge." Colonel Zouein said that Chamoun was the "man of Nuri Pasha." McClintock noted that he had justified from other sources that for the Turkish Government, Chamoun was an "indispensable man" in Lebanon. He also stated that "he would not be surprised if Chamoun asked for military support from the Moslem powers of the Baghdad Pact."⁷⁵⁰

Despite these rumors, it was not easy to argue that Turkey intended to intervene in Lebanon, as it had been discussed during the Syrian and Iraqi Crises. Ultimately the Allies had to take action and intervened in Lebanon.

Before the intervention of the United States, there were divergences between the requests of Chamoun from the Allies. He demanded military intervention from the United Kingdom's chargé d'affaires and French ambassador in Beirut within a twenty-four hour on 14 July 1958. He requested from the United States' ambassador that the military intervention should take place within forty-eight hours. More importantly, to the United Kingdom's chargé d'affaires, he stated that if the allied intervention did not take place, he would request help from the Soviet Union and the

⁷⁵⁰ Telegram from the Embassy in Lebanon to the Department of State. July 10, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.11.i.8.Footnote 2., pp.204-205.

United Arab Republic. The United Kingdom's chargé called this an "ultimatum," while the United States' Ambassador took this as a "contemptuous statement."⁷⁵¹

In the meantime, while the Lebanese request for military intervention continued to be discussed, the heads of the Baghdad Pact member states, i.e., the Turkish president, the Iranian shah and the Pakistani resident, who were present in Turkey for the meeting of the Baghdad Pact members, sent a message to United States president Eisenhower on 15 July 1958. In the message they jointly stated that:

Bloody events which have taken place in Baghdad have, no doubt, greatly distressed the free world. The legitimate head of state and the Government of Iraq, our ally within BP, have been overthrown as result of revolt of some army elements working for foreign powers, namely Egypt and Communist world... Bloody and inhuman acts perpetrated in Baghdad following annexation of Syria and rebellion initiated in Lebanon are clear indication of extent of the aggressive policy pursued by Nasserism acting in unison with Communism... It is again for same reason that, following the Canal incident, US has proclaimed Eisenhower Doctrine which has been gratefully welcomed. Following Syrian events, and uprisings in Lebanon, bloody incidents in Baghdad are now taking place in our region which we believe is being defended against Soviet infiltration and subversive activities by BP on one hand and Eisenhower Doctrine on other. Turkey, Iran and Pakistan, allies of US and aligned with free world, are following events and are intently watching whether Eisenhower Doctrine will operate in this instance or not. For, action taken by US in order to preserve AU and Lebanon's independence and territorial integrity which are at present jeopardized because of above-mentioned subversive activities, will not only indicate a measure of the guarantee of our own defense, in event it should become necessary, but also to such proportionate extent would cause either increase or decrease of audacity of Soviet Union and its partner Nasser. For this reason, Turkey, Iran and Pakistan deem it necessary to state that, following gratifying decision taken by their friend and ally US of the United States, in order safeguard independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon, the implementation of the Eisenhower Doctrine in case of the Iraqi-Jordanian Union's situation is of vital importance for them. At the same time, all three states stand ready to support with all means at their disposal decisions to be taken by the US for preservation of independence and territorial integrity of...Lebanon.⁷⁵²

⁷⁵¹ Telegram from the Embassy in Lebanon to the Department of State. July 14, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.11.i.8., pp.215-216.

⁷⁵² Telegram from the Embassy in Turkey to the Department of State. July 16, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.11.i.8., pp.306-308. See also Sander, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri 1947-1964*, p.167; Bağcı, p.100; Fırat and Kürkçüoğlu, p.633; Gönübol and Ülman, pp.303-304.

Before the United States' intervention in Lebanon, the conditions were ripe. It had already prepared its plans and strategies as discussed above, and upon Chamoun's request, the operation was launched on 15 July 1958 to restore order and save the post of the Lebanese President.⁷⁵³ The US military forces remained in Lebanon until 25 October 1958. Chamoun kept his office until September 1958, but he was removed by Fuad Chebab, the former Lebanese Chief-of-General-Staff, in the elections of September 1958. The Lebanese Crisis came to an end after these developments.

While these developments were taking place in Lebanon, the situation in Jordan was also critical. In the late 1950s, the King faced the domestic opposition from the Nasserites, Baathists, and Communists, which ended its collaboration with Egypt and the Nasserites. Therefore, King Hussein had to leave his anti-Western position and get into closer cooperation with the West. After the domestic unrest in the late 1950s, King Hussein suppressed the opposition by the suspension of the constitution and the declaration of Martial Law. Moreover, he provided economic and military support of the United States.⁷⁵⁴

However, the political and social situation deteriorated in July 1958 and King Hussein was attacked on 17 July 1958, but he survived. In addition, there was an oil crisis in the country because Jordan could not get its supplies from Iraq and, as a result, oil shortage appeared. In a conversation with the president, the secretary of state, Dulles, asked whether the United States should press King Hussein to call the United Kingdom to intervene. However, the director of the CIA, Allen Dulles, stated that the United States should not do so. The secretary of state was in the opinion that the United States should provide air logistical support in case of United Kingdom's

⁷⁵³ Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History*, p.175. See also Lenczowski, pp.371-372.

⁷⁵⁴ Mansfield, p.259.

intervention in Jordan. On the other hand, the President Eisenhower thought that Turkey and Iran should be strengthened, but the United States should not send troops further than Lebanon.⁷⁵⁵

Upon the deterioration of the situation in Jordan, the United Kingdom intervened militarily in this state in mid-July 1958 to restore order and to support the Hashemite King Hussein, who had strong ties with the United Kingdom.

After this, the United States' ambassador in Jordan met with the Jordanian King and the prime minister. Before the King's participation in the conversation, the prime minister, Rifai, stated that "more than anything else King disappointed his request additional United States-British troops has not been given favorable consideration."⁷⁵⁶

The ambassador replied to him as follows:

I could not accept as valid any inference that my government had not fulfilled its commitments... seven and a half million dollars turned over to HKJ during last two days, five and a half million of which will be used to meet army payroll July 25. Plus additional five million dollars to finance emergency POL import and wheat and fodder shipments totalling 20,000 tons.⁷⁵⁷

The ambassador added that, Rifai agreed, but he reiterated that "Hussein had asked for United States troops and he had not received them." The ambassador replied that the United Kingdom had already provided troops to Jordan. Nevertheless, the prime minister stated that psychologically it would be much better to have US troops as well as the UK troops in Jordan.⁷⁵⁸

However, the UK support enabled the Jordanian King to control and calm down the situation in his country.

⁷⁵⁵ Memorandum of a Conference with the President, White House. July 16, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.11.i.8., pp.308-310. See also Lenczowski, p.487.

⁷⁵⁶ Telegram from the Embassy in Jordan to the Department of State. July 22, 1958. FRUS 1958-60. v.11.i.8., pp.363-364.

⁷⁵⁷ *ibid.*

⁷⁵⁸ *ibid.*

The Turkish position during the crisis in Jordan was supportive of the Jordanian King. As the United Kingdom's ambassador in Amman reported, the Turkish ambassador in Amman, Dikerdem, had been instructed by the Turkish President to inform the Jordanian King of Turkey's support of him and his government. Turkey was not in favor of a government change, but the ambassador did not talk about this. The Turkish ambassador told his United Kingdom colleague that what Turkish government strongly supported was supposed to be the view of the United Kingdom: "Jordan's independence could and should be protected."⁷⁵⁹

Consequently, the Lebanon and Jordan crises came to an end with the intervention of the United States and United Kingdom to these countries. Both interventions took place upon the requests of the Kings of these two states and it can be argued that the Iraqi coup d'état and the killing of the Iraqi crown prince and the prime minister accelerated this process. In order to avoid such a fate, the two Kings did pursue such a course of action. Turkey, however, followed the two processes closely and supported the interventions, but it did not get involved actively despite rumors of a Turkish intervention, particularly in Lebanon, was discussed and circulated in foreign diplomatic circles. The major contribution of Turkey to these interventions was to give permission to the United States' forces to utilize the İncirlik base at Adana during the intervention in Lebanon.⁷⁶⁰

⁷⁵⁹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Amman to Foreign Office. November 3, 1958. FO 371. 134020. VJ 10344-1. See also Gönlübol and Ülman, p.304.

⁷⁶⁰ *Son Posta*, 17 July 1958, *Cumhuriyet*, 17 July 1958. See also Robins, p.27; Sander, *Türk-Amerikan İlişkileri 1947-1964*, pp.166-168; Bağcı, p.100; Fırat and Kürkçüoğlu, p.633-634; Gönlübol and Ülman, pp.303-304.

The Iraqi Coup d'état, Lebanon and Jordan Crises
in the Turkish Parliament and Press

The coup d'état in Iraq and the crises in Lebanon and Jordan in 1958 were followed closely and discussed in the parliament and the press.

The policy of the Turkish government during the coup d'état in Iraq was criticized strongly by the main opposition party, the RPP, in the Parliament. In a session on 21 August 1958, the leader of the party, İnönü, stated that the successive news about the possibility of a Turkish intervention into Iraq had been very harmful. In all countries, it was stated that such an intervention would invite more serious military actions. In addition, it had been stated that Turkey would cause such a serious action. In addition, İnönü stated, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs continued to challenge. It was claimed by the United States' press that the United States was trying hard to convince Turkey to give up such an intervention. Such news began on 20 July 1958 and continued during the following three days. A similar report was made on 27 July 1958 even after the discussion of the issue in the Grand National Assembly. According to this news, the great powers were seeking to dissuade Turkey from the intervention. During the crisis, the declarations of the Minister of Foreign Affairs about sending volunteers to Iraq were also disturbing. The explanation of the Minister upon these declarations, in which he stated that these declarations were not official but a part of discussion regarding the issue, was also harmful.⁷⁶¹

⁷⁶¹“Şimdi Irak meselesi üzerinde fikirlerimi söyleyeceğim. Bağdat ihtilalinin artık geçmiş olan kendi içindeki safhasına dokunmayacağım. Yalnız belirtmeye mecburuz ki, bizim askeri müdahalemiz ihtimali üzerinde ardı arkası kesilmeyen haberler çok zararlı olmuştur. Irak'a bir askeri müdahalenin mutlaka daha büyük askeri hareketleri davet edeceği her memlekette söyleniyordu. Buna da Türkiye'nin sebeb olabileceğini, yine de her memleket gördüğünü söylüyordu. Bizim Hariciye Vekilimiz bu esnada meydan okumakta devam ediyordu. Amerika hariciyesinin Türkleri seferden alıkoymak için son derece çalıştığı Amerika'nın en büyük gazeteleri tarafından ısrarla ve günlerce söylenmiştir. 20 Temmuzda neşriyata başlandı...

It can be argued that although such an intervention did not take place, the news in the foreign papers and the declarations and statements of the decision makers disturbed the leader of the main opposition party in the parliament.

The policy of the Turkish government after the coup d'état in Iraq became a matter of discussion during the budget discussions in February 1959. The representative of the RPP, Kasım Gülek, evaluated the developments in Iraq, including the status of the Iraqi Turks, and said that it was not suitable to call the developments in Iraq "bloody events supported from abroad". The aggressive stance of the Turkish government towards the new regime in Iraq at the very beginning had been criticized throughout the world. The government had not foreseen the fact that the rulers of Iraq had already lost the support behind them. Gülek added that the importance of Iraq lay not only in its geographical location, but also oil. There were many states around which aspired to the oil in Iraq. More importantly, there were many Turks in Iraq. It was obvious that these people were not protected by the new regime as they had not been by the old one. Gülek concluded his statements saying that he requested the Minister of Foreign Affairs to take care of the Turks in Iraq.⁷⁶²

Hatta Büyük Millet Meclisi'nde bu mesele konuşulduktan sonra 27 Temmuzda dahi neşriyat olmuştur. Neşriyata göre Türkiye'nin yalnız başına Irak'a karşı bir askeri harekate girişmesinin doğru olmadığını Türklere anlatmak için büyük devletler mütemadi gayretler sarf etmişlerdir. Buhranlar esnasında Hariciye Vekilimizin gönüllü göndermek hususunda son derece zararlı beyanı olmuştur. Bunun daha garibi Hariciye Vekilimiz bu beyanını tashih etmek için yeni bir beyan yapmış ve bunun resmi beyanat değil bir hasbihalden ibaret olduğunu ve fikirlerinin, hakikatin anlaşılması için falan içtimada, falan tarihte söylenmiş olan sözlerinin tetkik edilmesi lazım geldiğini ileri sürmüştür... Eğer tezkibedilmek isteniyorsa yalnız gönüllü göndermek hususunda aslı yoktur demek, bütün şüpheleri izaleye کافی idi."

Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, term 11, session 87, vol.4, 21 August 1958., pp.843-844.

⁷⁶² "Irak'taki ihtilali zamanında göremek bir istihbarat hatası mıdır, değil midir, bunun üzerinde mütalaa yürütecek değilim. Irak ihtilali Ortadoğu'da çok mühim bir hadisedir. Hiç değişmez zannedilen, oranın en mühim unsurları zannedilen birtakım insanların halkın muhabbetini kaybetmiş olduğunu önceden görmek belki yerinde olurdu. Bu, bütün civar Orta-Şark memleketleri için takibedilmekte olan bir hadise olmuştur. İlk günde Irak hadiseleri olurolmaz ne olduğu anlaşılmadan bunları; "Dışarıdan ilham almış vahşet hareketleri" diye hatta ağır cümlelerle suçlandırmak yerinde olmamıştır. İlk günlerde Irak

Statements by İnönü and the representatives of the RPP show the feeling of disturbance with Turkey's involvement in the Middle Eastern conflicts. After the coup d'état in Iraq and crises in Lebanon and Jordan, on 25 February 1960, İnönü stated that the Arabs were internally and externally in conflict. Turkey had welcomed the independence of the Arab states and had no bad intentions toward them. He stated that he and his party desired the development of relations with the neighboring Arab states. Moreover, Turkey should not interfere with the conflicts between the Arab states. In return, the Arab states should respect the rights and interests of Turkey. In case of the avoidance of the conflicts between the Arabs, Turkey could lead the beginning of a new era in the Middle East.⁷⁶³ Shortly, it can be argued that İnönü was against the efforts of the Democrat Party to be actively involved in the developments in the Middle East in 1958 because he stated that Turkey had nothing to gain from being part of the developments and crises within or among the states in

hadiselerinin henüz ne olduğu anlaşılmeden Türkiye'nin Irak'a karşı biraz sinirli davranmış olması dünya basınında çok tefsirlere yol açmıştır... Irak'ın önemi, coğrafi mevkii kadar, petrol durumundandır. Irak'taki petrole gözünü dikmiş civarda birçok memleketler vardır... Irak'ta hayli sayıda ırkdaşımız vardır. Bu ırkdaşlarımızın eski Irak rejiminde de layık oldukları derecede himaye görmediklerine ittifak etmişizdir. Bunun birçok akislerini oralardan duymaktayız. Dışişleri Bakanımızdan rica ediyorum, Irak'taki bu ırkdaşlarımızla yakından ilgilensinler."

Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, term 11, session 48, vol.7, 28 February 1959., pp.1362-1363.

⁷⁶³ "Arap alemleri siyasi ve içtimai hayatında inkişaf ve münakaşa halindedir. Yeniden bazı memleketlerin istiklallerine kavuşmalarını ancak sevinçle karşıladık. Arap aleminin hiçbir köşesinde dostluktan başka bir arzumuzun bulunmadığı kırk seneden beri cereyan eden hadiselerle sabit olmak lazımgelir. Kendi kaderlerini tayin devresinde bulunan Arap memleketlerinin bizim iyi yürekli dileklerimizden amin olmalarını isteriz. Doğrudan doğruya komşumuz olan Arap memleketleri ile münasebetlerimizin emniyet havası taşımasını ciddi şekilde arzuluyoruz. Bizim Arap aleminde beklediğimiz ise şudur: Kendi aralarındaki münakaşalara biz elimizden geldiği kadar karışmamaya çalışacağız. Bizim bu halimizi onların anlayışla karşılamaları lazımdır. Biz, CHP olarak Araplar arasındaki münakaşalara Türkiye'nin karışmamasını daima iltizam etmişizdir. Arap alemleri de Türkiye'nin dünya ile münasebetlerini Türkiye'nin hakları ve menfaatleri çerçevesi içinde görmeye alışmalıdır. Birçok lüzumsuz anlaşmazlıklardan milletlerimizi bu suretle korumuş olur, Ortadoğu'da yeni bir devre açabiliriz..."

Republic of Turkey. *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*. term 11, session 47, vol.12, 25 February 1960, p.498.

the region.⁷⁶⁴ Therefore, Turkey had to reformulate its foreign policy according to its own interests.⁷⁶⁵

In the press, the successive crises in 1958 were broadly discussed. In *Son Posta*, the successive developments that followed the coup d'état in Iraq in July 1958, i.e., the United States' intervention in Lebanon and the United Kingdom's intervention in Jordan also were analyzed by Selim Ragıp Emeç. He stated that the bloody events in Iraq had caused grievance in the civilized world. The aim of these developments was to cause unrest and instability in the Middle East and they were directed from outside. As a result, the United States and the United Kingdom had intervened in Lebanon and Jordan to prevent the expansion of instability and unrest. Moreover, the declaration of the Turkish, Iranian and Pakistani presidents had clarified the views of these states.⁷⁶⁶ The position of *Son Posta* can be regarded supportive of the interventions of the Allies and the government's support to them.

Like *Son Posta*, the position of *Cumhuriyet* was critical of the elements which caused "unrest" in the Middle East and supportive of the intervention of the Allies and Turkey's support to them. Upon the coup d'état in Iraq, Ömer Sami Coşar stated

⁷⁶⁴ Metin Toker, *Demokrasimizin İsmet Paşalı Yılları 1954-1957* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1990), p.220.

⁷⁶⁵ Republic of Turkey. *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*. term 11, session 87, vol.4, 21 August 1958, p.844 and Republic of Turkey. *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*. term 11, session 47, vol.12, 25 February 1960, p.498.

⁷⁶⁶ "Bağdat Paktı mensubu devletlerin en yüksek seviyede olmak üzere memleketimizde yapmaya karar verdikleri toplantı arifesinde, pakt mensubu devletlerden Irak'ta patlayan ve ilham ve talimatını dışarıdan aldığı aşikar olan kanlı hareket bütün medeni alemi derin bir teessüre boğmuştur. Hedefi Orta Şarkı karıştırmak ve bu suretle bu mıntıkadaki Irak, Ürdün, Lübnan gibi bağımsızlıklarını muhafaza etmekte ısrar eden Arap devletlerini kendisine rametmek olan hareketin ele başlarının vicdanları titreten kanlı davranışlarıdır ki başta Amerika olmak üzere NATO devletlerini ve bu teşekkülün içinde mevki almış bulunan Bağdat paktı üyelerini sarıh bir surette vaziyet almaya sevk etmiştir. Bu cümleden olarak Amerika, Lübnan'ın isteğiyle bu memlekete asker sevk etmiş; bu vaziyete müvazi olarak, Ürdün'ün talebi üzerine de İngiltere eski müttefikine yardım elini uzatmıştır. Bu arada İstanbul ve Ankara'da devamlı toplantılar yapan Bağdat Paktı üyesi Cumhuriyet Türkiyesi başkanıyla İran ve Pakistan Devlet reisleri nazik vaziyetin gerektirdiği hassasiyetle durumu gözden geçirmiş ve yayınladıkları tebliğle görüşlerini hiçbir iltibasa mahal bırakmayacak bir vuzuh ile ortaya koymuşlardır..."
Son Posta, 19 July 1958.

that the events in that country would bring significant consequences related to Turkey. The coup d'état was against the Baghdad Pact and the West and to the advantage of Nasser. The new regime in Iraq sent a telegram to Cairo and recognized the United Arab Republic. Therefore, the new regime might have cut its ties with the Baghdad Pact.⁷⁶⁷

Similarly, he approved of the intervention of the United States in Lebanon and stated that upon the demand of the "legitimate" government of Lebanon to the United States for military help, the United States had sent troops to that country. He argued that as the Korean War had brought an end to the Soviet threat in the Far East. He wished that the intervention in Lebanon would have the same effect in the Middle East.⁷⁶⁸

Although Coşar supported the policies of the government and the United States, which had been harmonious during these crises, he was against the possibility of Turkish intervention in Iraq and suggested the recognition of the new Iraqi regime by Turkey because of the public support behind the new regime in Iraq.⁷⁶⁹

⁷⁶⁷ "Bağdat Paktının tek Arab azası Irak'ta dün vukua gelen hükümet darbesinin, Türkiye'nin hemen güneyinde çok mühim gelişmelere yol açacağı muhakkaktır. Evvela şuna işaret edelim ki, bu hükümet darbesi tam manasıyla Bağdat Paktı ve Batı aleyhinde, Nasır lehindedir. Kral Faysalı, Prens Abdülillah'ı ve Nuri Saidi tasfiye edip Cumhuriyet rejimini tesis edenlerin ilk icraatı, Kahire'ye bir telgraf yollamak ve BAC'ni tanıdıklarını ilan etmek olmuştur. Bundan anlaşılıyor ki, Bağdat Paktı'nın tek Arab azası bu paktla alakasını kesme yolundadır..."

Cumhuriyet, 15 July 1958.

⁷⁶⁸ "Birleşik Amerika Cumhurbaşkanı nihayet dün Ortadoğu hadiselerine doğrudan doğruya müdahalede bulunmak lüzumunu hissetmiş ve 5000 silahendazını Lübnan sahillerine çıkarmıştır. Haftalardan beri Yabancı tahriklerle karışmış bulunan Lübnan'ın idarecileri bilhassa Irak'ta patlak veren isyan karşısında hemen Washington'a başvurmuşlar ve böyle bir silahlı yardıma ihtiyaçları olduğunu bildirmişlerdi. İşte Lübnan'ın meşru hükümetinin bu talebine karşı Başkan Eisenhower bir askeri birliği oraya sevk etmiştir....Kore harbi Sovyetlerin sistemli mevzii tecavüz politikalarına bir müddet için son vermişti.... Kore'deki müdahalenin Uzakdoğu bölgesinde oynadığı rolü, şimdi de Lübnan'a yapılan müdahale Ortadoğu bölgesinde oynayabilecek midir? Bunun böyle olmasını temenni ederiz..."

Cumhuriyet, 16 July 1958.

⁷⁶⁹ "Son günlerde çok ciddi günler yaşamış olan Ortadoğu bölgesinde durum yavaş yavaş tavazzuh etmektedir. Evvela Irak'taki yeni rejimin, ilk günlerde tahmin edildiği gibi hemen yıkılacak kadar zayıf olmadığı anlaşılmıştır. Bağdad' daki yeni hükümet kendisine geniş

On the contrary, the press close to the opposition, mainly the RPP, strongly criticized the Democrat Party's Middle East policy in general and its policy during the crises in particular.

After the coup d'état in Iraq, Ecevit wrote an article in *Ulus* titled "The Bankrupt Policy" (*İflas Eden Politika*) and argued that the developments in Iraq were not surprising. The West and Turkey had pursued wrong policies in the Middle East and the government had not considered the warnings on the developments in the Middle East. Ecevit stated that it became clear that the Baghdad Pact would continue without Iraq. The new regime in Iraq approached the United Arab Republic and it should be expected that there would be a federation between Iraq and the United Arab Republic.⁷⁷⁰ Ecevit's expectations were not realized, whereas the importance of the article was that the Middle East policy of the government began to be explicitly and harshly criticized.

Similarly, the United States' intervention in Lebanon was criticized.

According to Ecevit, the United States' intervention did not ameliorate the situation rather it would deepen the resentment and hostility of the Arabs against the West.

The possibility of establishing a "mandate" type of administrations in these Arab

tarafıtar bulmuştur. Bu vaziyette memleketin meşru hükümeti sıfatını da almıştır. Bu durum karşısında Irak'a dışarıdan kuvvet sevk etmek veya gönüllü yollamak imkansızdır. Düne kadar takip edilen hatalı siyaset Bağdat'taki ihtilale sebep olmuş, yeni bir idare ortaya çıkmıştır. Diplomasi kaidelerine uygun olarak, bundan evvelki hadiseler ne olursa olsun, bu yeni rejimin tanınmasına doğru gidilecektir..."

Cumhuriyet, 23 July 1958.

⁷⁷⁰ "Irak'ta olan olması beklenenden başka birşey değildir. Ancak bazı Batılı hükümetler, o arada Türkiye'deki Demokrat Parti iktidarı yıllarca kendilerini aldatmış, gerçeklere gözlerini kapatmışlardır. Irak'taki durumu ve genel olarak Arap dünyasındaki gelişmeleri tarafsız bir gözle inceleyenlerin uyarışlarına önem vermemişlerdir. Bu uyarışları ya saflığa ya kötü niyete yormuşlardır. Şimdi Irak'taki rejim değişikliğinden sonra Bağdat Paktı'nın artık Bağdat'sız kalacağı anlaşılmaktadır. Yeni kurulan Irak Cumhuriyeti'nin, BAC'ne yaklaşacağı, hükümet darbesi yapılır yapılmaz açığa vurulmuştur. Bu yanaşmanın ölçüsü elbette şimdiden kestirilemez. Ama Irak Cumhuriyeti'nin çok geçmeden Nasır idaresindeki BAC'ne katılmasını ya da iki devletin federal bir birlik kurmalarını beklemek gerekir..."
Ulus, 16 July 1958.

states might have caused the Arabs to make a choice between the West and the East. Most probably the Arabs would choose the East under these circumstances.⁷⁷¹

Like *Ulus*, the journal *Akis* was critical of the developments and the government's policy. The main criticisms of the government's Middle East policy came from Metin Toker in early 1958 and right after the Iraqi and Lebanese Crises. In his article "The Baghdad Pact without Baghdad" (*Bağdatsız Bağdat Paktı*), Toker stated that Iraq was about to leave the Pact and the Turkish government should be prepared for such a development. The government should be much more "realistic" than before and should recognize the reality of Arab nationalism. He argued that the Soviet Union had been more successful than the United States and its Allies to conceive the realities of the Arab world. Therefore, the Middle East had become open to the influence of the Soviet Union much more than before. The Turkish government needed to consider the possibility of Iraq's abandonment of the Pact because there had been no common interest of the Pact powers which might have prevented it from doing so.⁷⁷²

⁷⁷¹ "Diyelim ki Lübnan'a çıkarılan ve belki daha da çıkarılacak Amerikan kuvvetleri bu memlekette duruma hakim oldu ve Lübnan Halkının istemediği bir idareye zorla iş başında kalma imkanını sağladı... Sonra ne olacak?... Elbette Amerikan kuvvetlerinin Lübnan kıyılarına ayak basmasından itibaren Araplardaki Batı düşmanlığı artmaya başlamıştır. Hele böyle tedbirler daha genişletilip, bu tedbirlerin sağlayabileceği geçici sonuçları idame edebilmek, kökleştirebilmek umuduyla Arap topraklarında sömürge idarelerini andırır idareler ya da himaye veya vesayet altında yerli tahtlar ve hükümetler kurulursa, Ortadoğu Arapları arasında Batı düşmanlığı bir daha kolay kolay silinemeyecek kadar derinleşecektir... Ve bu durumda Arap milliyetçileri hiç şüphe yok ki Batı ile Doğu arasında bir seçme yapma zorunluluğunu her zamankinden daha büyük bir şiddetle duyacak ve elbette doğuyu yani Komünist blokunu seçeceklerdir...." *Ulus*, 17 July 1958.

⁷⁷² "Bağdat Paktı'nın Bağdatsız kalmak üzere bulunduğu bir devreye giriyoruz. Eğer diplomasi hadiselerine doğru teşhis koymak ve istikbal için ona göre hazırlık yapmak sanatı ise gittikçe kuvvetlenen böyle bir ihtimali açıkça gözler önüne sermek lazımdır. Sayın başbakanın Irak'ın Bağdat Paktı'ndan ayrılacağı yolundaki neşriyatı bu paktı zayıf düşürmek ve zayıf göstermek maksadına atfetmesi insafa pek az sığar. Aksine, Bağdat Paktnı kuvvetlendirmek ve kuvvetli göstermek arzusu aşikar çevreler bu paktın bir gün Bağdatsız kalabileceği ihtimalini cesaretle derpiş etmişlerdir... Dış politika tedvir edilirken aruzları hakikat yerine almak, insanı evvela hatalı teşhislere, oradan da hatalı hükümlere götürür. Ortadoğu'da cereyan eden son hadiselerle realist bir gözle bakmaya ihtiyacımız vardır... Ortadoğu'da bir Araplık şuurunun mevcudiyetini kabul etmek mutlaka lazımdır. Bir

In another article, Toker analyzed the developments in the Middle East and Turkey's policy. He stated that the Middle East policy of the government had failed because the government had not considered the realities in the region. The leaders in the region had been competing with each other and they had been seeking allies with which to reach their goals. The Turkish government should be aware of this and should not become involved in the struggles in the Arab world. Nobody in the Arab world would be preoccupied with the problems of Turkey. As a result, Turkey should be more objective regarding the developments in the region.⁷⁷³

It can be argued that the position of *Akis* and Metin Toker were deeply influenced by the opinions of İnönü, his father-in-law: "to act realistically and not to be engaged in and not to be a part of struggles and conflicts in the region" which was discussed above.

Toker's article on the United States' intervention in Lebanon was another indicator of his position towards the Middle East policy of the government. Toker argued that the intervention was not legitimate. Moreover, the United States'

zamanlar Batı için bir nevi kapalı av sahası sayılan bu bölgede Sovyetlerin başarıyla kuş vurmaları, Kremlin'in realiteleri kavramakta bilhassa Washington'a nazaran daha usta olması neticesidir. Araplık şuurunun tezahürlerini tartışmakta mana yoktur... Bu Araplık şuru, Ortadoğu memleketlerinin bir çoğunu bir noktada batılı memleketlerle eş seviyeye getirmektedir: Umumi efkârın rolü...Bu pakt, fırtınaların tam ortasındadır. Partnerlerin arasında paktların elzem şartı olan menfaat birliği zaten bulunmadığından Bağdat Paktı hiçbir zaman ayakları üzerinde sağlam duramamıştı. Fakat şimdi, Bağdatsız kalmak tehlikesiyle karşı karşıya bulunduğunu teslim etmek zarureti vardır..."

Akis, 22 February 1958.

⁷⁷³ "Türkiye'nin Arap Politikası hayli zaman var ki bir başarı sağlayamıyor... Arap politikamızın büyük kusuru bir takım Ortadoğu realitelerini görmezlikten gelmemizdir. Bu realitelerin başında Arap liderlerinin kendi aralarında bir mücadeleye girişmiş oldukları vakıası vardır. Mücadele eden liderler, tamamilen haklı şekilde, kendilerine yardımcı dokunacak dostlar aramakta, onları kullanmaya çalışmaktadırlar. Mesele, gözü açık tutup bu oyuna gelmemektir. Yoksa Cumhuriyet hükümeti hiçbir Araptan Arap meselelerinden çok Türkiye'nin meseleleriyle alakalanmasını bekleyemez. Bizim menfaatimiz Ortadoğu'daki bu içi çekişmelerin haricinde kalmaktır... Yapılacak şey basittir: Ortadoğu'daki iç mücadeleye karışmayalım, taraf tutmayalım, muvazeneyi hiç olmazsa Amerika kadar muhafaza edebilelim. Türkiye'nin menfaati öyle bir politikadadır... Dikkatli, aynı zamanda alaka duyarak takip edilen bir tarafsızlık, hadiselere daha tepeden bakabilmek! Türkiye için en faydalı Arap Politikası böyle bir politikadır..."

Akis, 10 July 1958.

intervention was in conflict with the principles of justice that the United States had pioneered. Such a move would decrease the United States' prestige in the eyes of the Arab world and it would be a "fiasco." More importantly, the Turkish government should have warned the United States, as an ally who knew the Arab world, rather than having supported its intervention immediately.⁷⁷⁴

In addition to *Ulus* and *Akis*, the necessity of the policy change of the government continued to be emphasized and the criticism of the government's Middle East policy was continued by *Forum* after the coup d'état in Iraq and the United States' military intervention in Lebanon. *Forum* stated that the Middle East policy of the government had been proven wrong with the successive events in Iraq, Lebanon, and Jordan. The DP should have cooperated with the notable figures of Arab nationalism rather than the kings and pashas who had lost the public support and should have persuaded the Allies to do the same. Iraq might have left the Baghdad Pact. The coup in Iraq would negatively influence the prestige of the West in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. Turkey and the Allies should change their policies, but the United States' intervention in Lebanon did not imply such a policy change.⁷⁷⁵

⁷⁷⁴ "Amerikan silahlı birlikleri Lübnan'da harekete geçmiş bulunuyorlar... Amerika'nın hareketi evvela haksızdır...Amerika'nın hareketi ayrıca, şampiyonu bulunduğu adalet ve hakkaniyet kaidelerine de aykırıdır. Birleşmiş Milletler müşahitleri Lübnan hadiselerinin bir iç mesele olduğu yolunda rapor vermişler ve Amerika bu raporu kabul etmiş hatta desteklemiştir. Irak hadiselerinin doğurduğu panik neticesinde Birleşmiş Milletler prensiplerini unutmak Ruslara pek yakışsa bile hür dünyanın liderine, hepimizin samimiyetle inandığımız fikirlerin müdafii bildiğimiz Amerikalılara yakışmıyor... Amerikanın hareketi, bundan başka, Rusların başarıyla flört ettikleri yeni uyanan milletler nezdinde Batı aleminin itibarını ziyadesiyle zedeleyecektir... Amerika'nın hareketi, nihayet, fiyaskoyla neticelenmeye bugünden mahkum bir fevri teşebbüstür... Eğer, müdahale etmeme kararına vardığı büyük memnuniyetle anlaşılan Cumhuriyet Hükümeti büyük müttefikimiz Amerika'ya lüzumsuz ve acele tasvip etme yerine Ortadoğu'da yaşayan insane kütesini iyi tanıyan bir dost olarak bu ikazları yapmış olsaydı daha da basiretli davranmış sayılırdı."

Akis, 19 July 1958.

⁷⁷⁵ "Bu not yazıldığı esnada Bağdat'ta vukubulan hükümet darbesinin kat'i neticesi henüz alınmamıştır. Irak Cumhuriyetini ilan edenler kurdukları yeni hükümeti devam ettirebilecekler midir? Bu noktayı şu anda tesbite imkan yoktur. Ancak, halkın, bilhassa

The necessity of a policy change was also emphasized by Mümtaz Soysal. He stated that, however, the government did not seem to make such a change in its Middle East policy. According to Soysal, as İnönü said, the best policy for Turkey was to differentiate the internal conflicts of the Arab world and the problems between the Arabs and the West from the security of the region against the Soviet threat. Therefore, Turkey should have implemented a policy which aimed to provide the security of the region and Turkey against the Soviet threat rather than being preoccupied with the conflicts and problems in the region.⁷⁷⁶

Consequently, the government's policy which was in harmony with that of the Allies during the successive crises was strongly criticized by the main opposition

Bağdat'ta sömürgecilerin adamı saydığı politikacılara karşı birikmiş hiddetini bizce tasvibi mümkün olmayan bir şiddetle göstermiş olması, Irak Halkının önemli bir kısmının asilerle beraber olduğunu isbat ediyor. Forum, devamlı surette, Irak'taki polis devletinin batı için güvenilir bir dost olmadığını ve Nuri Sait Paşa hükümetinin halk içinde ciddi temeli bulunmadığını yazmış ve battıya ve bu arada Türk hükümetine Arap dünyasında sevilen ve sayılan şahsiyetlerle anlaşma politikasının; Batı'ya körü körüne bağlı fakat milletleri tarafından benimsenmiyen insanları tutma siyasetine tercih edilmesi gerektiğini daima savunmuştur... Şimdi ne olacaktır? Irak muhtemelen Bağdat Pakti'ndan ayrılacaktır... Irak'ın Bağdat Pakti'ndan çıkıp gitmek durumunda oluşundan teessürümüz büyüktür. Bunun Batı'nın Asya, Afrika ve Ortadoğu'daki itibarına büyük bir darbe vurduğu muhakkaktır... Batı devletleri bir politika revizyonuna girişecekler midir? Lübnan'a yapılan Amerikan çıkartması maalesef bu yolda bir işaret olmaktan uzaktır. Her ne kadar Lübnan'a yapılan çıkartma devletler hukukuna göre meşru bir hükümetin talebi üzerine vukubulmuşsa da bu talebi yapan hükümet artık Lübnan'da yeterli prestije sahip değildir. Bu hareketiyle Birleşik Amerika, maalesef, kendisiyle, sömürgeci sayılan İngiltere ve Fransa arasında Arap dünyasında yapılan tefrikin mucip sebeplerini Arap halk oyu nezdinde ortadan kaldırmak yoluna girmiştir... Çıkartmanın Sovyet Rusya'nın Ortadoğu'ya sızmasını hızlandırıp hızlandırmayacağını, olayların gelişmesi neticesinde daha iyi müşahade etmek imkanı bulacağız."

Forum, 15 July 1958.

⁷⁷⁶ "Ortadoğu'daki son hadiselerden sonra Türkiye'nin Ortadoğu siyasetini yeniden gözden geçirmesi gerekmektedir. Gerçi iktidara hakim olduğu anlaşılan zihniyet, bugüne kadar yanlış bir yol izlediğini, alınan tedbirlerin, Ortadoğuda umulduğundan bambaşka sonuçlar verdiğini kabule hemen hazır görünmüyor. Bu durumda Türk hükümetinin Ortadoğu meseleleri görüşünde kendiliğinden bir değişiklik yer alacağını ummak aşırı iyimserlik olur.... Türkiye için en makul hareket tarzı CHP genel başkanı İnönü tarafından özlü bir dille belirtildiği gibi Ortadoğu'daki büyük politika mücadelelerine üçüncü bir unsur olarak karışmaktan kaçınmak ve muhtemel bir Sovyet tecavüzüne karşı Ortadoğu'nun güvenliğini sağlamak meselesini, Arapların kendi iç meselelerinden ve Batılılarla Araplar arasındaki bazı meselelerden mümkün olduğu kadar tecrit ederek, kendi Ortadoğu siyasetini ayarlamak olsa gerekir..."

Forum, 1 August 1958.

party in the parliament and the press which was close to it. These actors were critical of the government's policy and suggested that the government should act more realistically and reconsider its Middle East policy to the advantage of the Arab nationalists.

Concluding Remarks

In the second half of the 1950s, the Middle East witnessed a series of crises, i.e., the Suez Canal Crisis and the Arab-Israeli War, the Turkish-Syrian Crisis, the establishment of the United Arab Republic and the Federal Arab State, and the Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan Crisis. Turkey was involved in these crises directly or indirectly.

After the nationalization of the Suez Canal, the Suez Crisis erupted. The great powers and the states in the region were involved. Conferences in London were convened and diplomatic efforts were made to persuade the Nasser government to reach an agreement. During these diplomatic efforts, Turkey tried to play a mediatory role and pursued a balanced and cautious policy. During the Arab-Israeli War right after the Suez Canal Crisis, Turkey denounced the attack to Egypt by the Israeli, United Kingdom's, and French forces.

During the Turkish-Syrian Crisis, the Syrian government argued that Turkey would attack and invade Syria. Reciprocal accusations and diplomatic attempts came into existence and the crisis ended up with the discussions in the United Nations.

After the establishment of the United Arab Republic and the Federal Arab State, Turkey recognized both states and tried to establish closer relations with both of them.

During the Iraq Crisis, Turkey was expected to intervene in Iraq to restore the old regime although there was no sign of intervention from Turkey. These

expectations were repeated during the Lebanon and Jordan Crises, but such an intervention did not take place. The major support given by Turkey to the West was access to the İncirlik base at Adana by the United States during the intervention in Lebanon.

Consequently, Turkey tried to pursue a cautious and balanced policy during these years of crises and tried to maximize its political interests in the region. In addition, it can be argued that Turkey worked to maximize its economic and military interests in the same period.

The economic and military dynamics of Turkey's Middle East policy in the 1950s will be analyzed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 6

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF TURKEY'S MIDDLE EAST POLICY 1950-1960

The basic motives of the Democrat Party's foreign policy were shaped with the aims to provide the security and territorial integrity of the country and the development of Turkish economy and the modernization of the Turkish army. Therefore, in the 1950s, Turkish foreign policy was closely interrelated with the economy. Keeping the developments discussed in the previous chapters regarding the Middle East in mind, the political economy of the Democrat Party's Middle East policy are analyzed here to provide a comprehensive analysis.

In this chapter, it will be argued that Turkey's Middle East policy was heavily influenced by the economic and military dynamics. Ayşegül Sever writes:

The government's policies in the Middle East increasingly seemed to reflect the state of economic relations between Turkey and the United States, for the government was desperate to have more financial backing. The more financial aid it needed, the more active and interfering were the policies that Turkey pursued. It can therefore be suggested that Turkey's increasingly active fight against the perceived Soviet threat in the area was in part driven by a desire to improve its status as an ally, so as to secure more financial assistance from its Allies, particularly the United States.⁷⁷⁷

The Democrat Party's Middle East policy became more active in the second half of the 1950s. It can be argued that this active policy had two main objectives: to play the role of "leadership" in the region, which had been determined by the United States in the early 1950s; and to play the role of the closest ally of the United States in the region in order to obtain more financial and economic assistance to find a remedy to the economic crisis. Thus, Turkish foreign policy was more pragmatic than it has been supposed in the literature so far. In the same vein, the flexibility that

⁷⁷⁷ Sever, *The Compliant Ally? Turkey and the West in the Middle East 1954-58*, p.86.

the Democrat Party leaders showed in the late 1950s with the approach to the Soviet Union and Nasser's Egypt were indicators of this pragmatic policy.

Before getting into the details of the analysis of the political economy of Turkey's Middle East policy, the developments in Turkish economy in the 1950s will be elaborated.

The Turkish Economy in the 1950s

After the Second World War, Turkey sought to be integrated into the Western bloc in order to provide its security against the Soviet threat. The Soviet Union declared that the Treaty of Friendship and Non-Aggression, which had been signed between the two states in 1925, would not be renewed. Moreover, it demanded territories in north-eastern Turkey and bases on the Straits. As a result, Turkey had to find allies to resist the Soviet pressure.

Although Turkey had not entered the war, the Turkish economy had deteriorated and the Turkish army was insufficient to meet the needs of the country. Therefore, in order to provide security and economic and military development, Turkey decided to be a part of the liberal economy, and Western democratic system. Liberalization trend had begun in the late 1940s through the abandonment of the statist policies of the 1930s. The Truman Doctrine and Marshall Aid helped Turkey, as a medium-sized power in need of economic development, to develop its economy and to be a part of the liberal economy. The tension between the United States and the Soviet Union in the late 1940s played a role in the support given to Turkey by the United States. In the 1950 elections, the Democrat Party came to power and continued this liberalization trend systematically.⁷⁷⁸

⁷⁷⁸ Eroğul, pp.133-136.

As mentioned before, the main goal of the Democrat Party was to provide the security and the economic development of the country. To this end, the credits, grants and foreign investments that were obtained, especially from the United States, played an important role in the trend of economic liberalization and search for these tools to develop the Turkish economy in the 1950s.

President Bayar, prime minister Menderes and minister and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs aimed to provide the necessary foreign financial and economic aid as far as possible to provide Turkey's economic development. Turkey's exports were approximately \$300 million and the imports were approximately \$600 million at that time. In this process of economic development, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs became an influential actor. Thus, the economic and foreign policies of Turkey were harmonized.⁷⁷⁹ Therefore, the maximization of economic interests became a vital and determining factor of foreign policy.

In the early 1950s, particularly after Turkey's membership in NATO was achieved in 1952, the United States provided financial and military aid to Turkey which resulted in an economic "boom" in the country. In addition to foreign financial support, the suitable conditions provided increases in production in agriculture. Turkey's economy was heavily dependent on agricultural production, and the economy continued to develop until 1954. Nevertheless, the peak of the economic development was the beginning of the economic deterioration and the development trend began to slow down in the mid-1950s.

The United Kingdom's ambassador in Ankara informed the Foreign Office about the future developments of the Turkish economy and he emphasized the possibility of an economic downturn as early as 1953:

⁷⁷⁹ Girgin, pp.31-32.

While the past year has again witnessed much progress in all spheres of production and the maintenance of a high rate of capital investment, it has been a disappointment to those who hoped it might give evidence that Turkey was definitely on the way out of those many immediate difficulties or growing pains which have beset her in the last few years. Moreover, this disappointment must for reasons which will appear be ascribed in large measure to faulty government policies for which there was little or no excuse. The position is that the country finds itself in serious balance of payments difficulties from which it will have the greatest difficulty in extricating itself without substantial outside assistance. Foreign exchange liabilities have been incurred which will almost certainly require to be settled by a long term loan... The long term prospects were never brighter.⁷⁸⁰

As the ambassador predicted, the Turkish economy entered into a recession and ultimately a crisis, especially in the second half of the 1950s. The development of the economy stopped and the liberal foreign trade regime came to an end. As a result of the decrease in exports and the foreign investment, the government began to put restrictions on imports to balance the trade and ameliorate the economic situation.⁷⁸¹ With the recession in the economy and the deterioration of the trade balance, Turkey's foreign debts increased. The IMF began to put pressure on the government to control the economy and to curb government spending. The World Bank was not willing to provide financial assistance to Turkey because of the crisis situation. The Democrat Party could not find the necessary support from the Western oriented institutions or its main creditor, the United States.⁷⁸²

Although Turkey sought new credits and grants from the Western bloc countries, especially the United States and the United Kingdom, these states did not give support to Turkey to overcome the crisis. The report from the United Kingdom

⁷⁸⁰ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. May 20, 1953. FO 371. 107561. WK 1105-1. See also The Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. December 4, 1953. FO 371. 107561. WK 1105-3.

⁷⁸¹ Korkut Boratav, *Türkiye İktisat Tarihi 1908-2005* (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2005), p.107. See also, Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, *İkinci Adam 1950-1964* (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2010), pp.231-232; Çağlar Keyder, *Türkiye'de Devlet ve Sınıflar* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2010), p.167.

⁷⁸² Günver, pp.51, 74.

embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office in London in 1956 illustrates the reasons of Turkey's difficulty in finding support from the West:

The economic situation at the end of 1956 was confusing. Though the trade deficit had been reduced, mainly by lower imports, there was little real improvement compared with 1955. Externally, Turkey's situation continued seemingly precarious, with a heavy burden of indebtedness and no likelihood for a number of years to come that exports would be able to pay for all the necessary imports....Turkish commercial debts, which included some £17 million to the United Kingdom, showed no sign of decreasing and there were defaults on payments in respect of major capital projects undertaken by foreign firms.⁷⁸³

In addition to this report, the annual report prepared by the United Kingdom's embassy in Ankara in 1958 and the report prepared by the OEEC on Turkish economy in 1959 emphasized the same facts about the conditions of the Turkish economy.⁷⁸⁴

Under these circumstances, the West forced Turkey to take the necessary measures in the economy in return for new credits and investments in Turkey in the second half of the 1950s. The Democrat Party government resisted these policy impositions, until the stand-by agreement with the IMF in 1958.⁷⁸⁵ In the meantime, Turkey's investment projects were not financed by the West. As Günver argues, the basic problem for Menderes and Zorlu was the lateness of Turkey's industrialization. They proposed that the United States provide financial assistance to realize \$300 million project, but the Americans were not willing to support it. Fatin Rüştü Zorlu, who was mainly responsible for Turkey's economic relations at the time, pushed hard for it. The Turkish ambassador in Washington Suat Hayri Ürgüplü, tried hard,

⁷⁸³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. January 31, 1957. FO 371. 130174. RK1011.

⁷⁸⁴ January 23, 1958. FO 371. 136471. RK 1111-1. Telegram from the British Embassy Residence in Istanbul to Foreign Office. July 10, 1959. FO 371.144755. RK1102-3.

⁷⁸⁵ For the details of the Standby Agreement with the IMF, see Şevket Pamuk, *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyete Küreselleşme, İktisat Politikaları ve Büyüme* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları,2009), p.269. See also Gülten Kazgan, *Tanzimat'tan 21.Yüzyıla Türkiye Ekonomisi* (İstanbul: Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2006), pp.90-91.

too, but failed. As a last resort, prime minister Menderes visited Washington, but also was unable to secure the necessary support. He returned and he got disappointed.⁷⁸⁶

With this failure, the Democrat Party government, particularly, Menderes and Zorlu sought alternatives in the Eastern block and the Middle East, especially by signing clearing agreements and increasing foreign trade, particularly with the countries under Soviet influence.

Before getting into the details of Turkey's economic relations with the Middle East, the rapprochement with the Soviet Union in the economic realm is worth discussing here to reemphasize the flexibility and pragmatism of the Democrat Party government.

Turkey and the Soviet Union began getting closer especially in the last quarter of the Democrat Party government. The development of relations cannot be regarded as having been a change of direction by Turkey from the West, particularly the United States, rather it can be regarded as an effort to find remedies from any source to overcome the economic crisis and to provide economic development.

Turkish-Soviet relations in the economic realm began to develop from 1957 onwards. A delegation of the Turkish Commercial Bank (*Türkiye İş Bankası*) visited the Soviet Union and it was agreed that a glass and a soda factory would be constructed in Turkey with the help of the Soviet Union. It is understood that this was basically a technical assistance and the Soviet Union provided a loan to Turkey to construct these two factories. The Turkish officials had to reassure the West that Turkey was committed to its alliance with the West and that its contacts with the Soviet Union were not a deviation. The Pakistani ambassador in Turkey reported that:

⁷⁸⁶ Günver, p.110.

The Acting Secretary General of the Foreign Office almost repeated the words which have been appearing in the press and justified the trade deal on the ground that the Western countries were doing the same and that Turkey being temporarily short of foreign exchange had to accept help from wherever it may be available... He acknowledged that at the moment unofficial talks are in progress between the Russians and certain state-owned economic organisations in Istanbul exploring the chances of a substantial Soviet loan.⁷⁸⁷

After this agreement, it was rumored that Turkey and the Soviet Union had discussed a kind of economic assistance to Turkey. The Pakistani ambassador said:

In this connection the fantastic figure of \$ 300 million has been rumored and there is no doubt that this is a gross exaggeration. However, the fact remains that irrespective of its size and volume, Soviet loan and assistance is being sought and discussed.⁷⁸⁸

As the economic crisis deepened and the West cut its financial assistance to Turkey, the government sought to obtain some sort of assistance from the Soviet Union. However, these developments disturbed the United States. The discussion between the secretary of state and his special assistant for intelligence shows the perception of the economic rapprochement between Turkey and the Soviet Union by the United States:

Although some officials of the Turkish government have privately professed to see in recent Turkish-Soviet developments a softer policy on the part of Premier Menderes toward the Soviet Union, these developments appear to be superficial tactical shifts designed primarily to increase Turkey's bargaining power with the United States... Short of endangering national security, Turkey will continue to follow tactics which might obtain from its allies a preferential treatment of its problems and requests. However, it is significant that even Turkey, which is historically, ideologically and pragmatically committed to a cold war against the USSR, is willing to take advantage of a relaxation in that conflict in order to increase its manoeuvrability in its relations with the United States. Domestic political considerations are involved because the Menderes administration is committed to an ambitious economic development program. Turkey's need of long-term loans or grants has forced it to broaden its commercial contacts because its previous defaults in payment of credit have limited the availability of foreign exchange. Economic necessity is thus forcing Turkey to accept almost any offer

⁷⁸⁷ Telegram from the Ambassador of Pakistan in Turkey to Foreign Secretary. August 13, 1957. FO 371. 130181. RK 10316-6.

⁷⁸⁸ *ibid.*

that will provide needed capital and equipment.⁷⁸⁹

The amelioration of the relations between Turkey and the Soviet Union, particularly in the economic realm, disturbed the United States and the rest of the Western camp. However, during the Cold War, even the superpowers contacted to each other several times. More importantly, it was the tactic of the smaller states to balance their relations between the two superpowers to maximize their economic and military interests. The Middle East states were no exception neither was Turkey. However, the Democrat Party government tried very hard to obtain economic support and financial assistance from the West to cure the economic crisis and to accomplish economic development until the last minute. As support was not provided by the United States, the Turkish decision makers, particularly Menderes and Zorlu, began to prepare for a visit to the Soviet Union in July 1960. This trip, however, never took place as the coup d'état of May 1960, ended the Democrat Party period.

Günver argues that he insisted on minister of foreign affairs Zorlu developing relations with the Soviet Union. He told Zorlu the following:

We signed an agreement with Czechoslovakia in 1958. In return for their clearing debts to us, we made them finance the Sümerbank and Çanakkale porcelain factories. Although we are indebted to the Western world, the Socialist states are indebted to us. We cannot make imports from the Socialist states. This is the case with the Soviet Union, too. Our great Allies are trading with the Soviet Union in all spheres. Why don't we make Moscow to finance some of our investments? In this way, we can increase our exports and balance our foreign trade. We limit economic cooperation with the Soviet Union and don't let them to control our economy... Therefore, we may urge the Americans and to provide aid. Zorlu considered this idea. He discussed the Prime Minister and they agreed to visit Moscow to make political and economic negotiations. The Americans were informed. They ostensibly did not react. The American ambassador in Ankara informed Zorlu that they were not opposed to the Moscow visit... However, it was understood that the

⁷⁸⁹ Memorandum from the Secretary's Special Assistant for Intelligence (Cumming) to the Secretary of State. August 7, 1957. FRUS 1955-57. v.24.i.13., p.733.

CIA acted immediately. Actually, Washington did not like the Moscow visit.⁷⁹⁰

Prime minister Menderes and the minister of foreign affairs Zorlu did not go to Moscow. However, it is important to look at the preparations for the Moscow visit to emphasize the pragmatism and the flexibility of the decision makers. Without disorienting from the Western camp, the decision makers were unable to adopt a more flexible and pragmatic foreign policy. This was also the case for the economic and military relations with the Middle East states which will be discussed in detail.

Before the analysis of Turkey's economic and military relations with the Middle Eastern states, it will be useful to show the foreign trade regime of Turkey with the capitalist, socialist and Middle East states respectively.

⁷⁹⁰“1958’de Çekoslovaklarla bir anlaşma imzaladık. Clearing hesabından alacaklı olduğumuz meblağ ile taksitlerini ödemek sureti ile Çekoslovakya’ya Sümerbank’ın ve Çanakkale’nin porselen fabrikalarını yaptırdık. Batı dünyasına karşı ticaret dengemizin açık olduğu sırada Sosyalist ülkelerden alacaklı durumdayız. İthal edilecek faydalı mal da bulamıyoruz. Sovyetler Birliği ile de durum aynı... Büyük müttefiklerimiz Sovyetlerle her alanda bizden çok fazla alışveriş yapıyorlar. Biz de niçin bazı yatırım projelerini Moskova’ya finanse ettirmiyoruz. İhracatımızı biraz arttırır, Clearing hesabındaki alacaklı bakiyemizi çoğaltır, taksitleri bu hesaptan öderiz. Bu işbirliğini sınırlı tutar ekonomimizi Ruslara teslim etmeyiz. Hem bir iki önemli proje gerçekleşir. Böylece belki Amerikalıları da harekete geçirir, yardıma teşvik edebiliriz dedim.” Zorlu düşündü başbakanla görüşmüş meseleyi derinleştirmişler. 1960 Temmuzunda Moskova’ya gitmek hem siyasi hem de iktisadi görüşmeler yapmak kararını almışlar... Bu karardan tabiatıyla Amerikalılara haber verildi. Görünüşte normal karşıladılar. Ankara’daki ABD büyükelçisi Moskova ziyaretine bir itirazları olmadığını bir mektupla Zorlu’ya bildirdi... Fakat CIA’nın derhal harekete geçtiği ziyareti önlemeye çalıştığı intibai alındı. Aslında Washington Moskova ziyaretinden hiç mi hiç hoşlanmamıştı.” Günver, p. 133. See also Yavuzalp, p.86; Girgin, p.64; Kunalalp, pp.77-79.

Turkey's Foreign Trade Regime

Table 1. Imports and Exports with the Capitalist States (#000 TL)⁷⁹¹

STATE/YEAR	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
UNITED STATES	196191	135409	131102	169094	201364	311631	240258	341003	245935	345927
UNITED KINGDOM	83144	190313	277087	204417	116998	109250	93575	85749	63315	144189
FRANCE	40030	62621	74638	90887	93879	83727	53794	35719	25304	48285
W.GERMANY	140650	265745	388617	311069	232116	244728	268957	151209	136932	234631
ITALY	37617	78409	111086	105675	64260	50632	73299	102439	93175	93830
NETHERLANDS	23015	30370	58917	53803	27207	22841	15852	13632	14327	39722
BELGIUM	21113	46566	91579	68303	33714	14204	10003	10981	10570	23259
SWEDEN	15213	24861	49598	41016	17350	12182	14583	12933	3711	26673
SWITZERLAND	11164	24002	32564	30725	24318	22263	13805	11491	10205	18880
NORWAY	5430	4523	8444	4642	4237	3240	2963	7302	8870	5378
DENMARK	5750	6431	16075	6107	4393	2063	3041	4506	3278	8700
AUSTRIA	18395	15164	35163	34775	24133	19883	18529	11558	13553	43399
GREECE	1580	4280	7411	70403	85801	28250	15574	13820	4968	5052
TOTAL	599292	888694	1282281	1190916	929770	924894	824233	802342	634143	1037925
TOTAL IMPORTS	799859	1125840	1556575	1491093	1339104	1393384	1140553	1111951	882275	1315950
%	75	78,9	82,3	79,8	69,4	66,3	72,2	72,1	71,8	78,8

STATE/YEAR	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
UNITED STATES	124556	187021	162207	224646	162972	136192	167831	250998	134764	177551
UNITED KINGDOM	104341	73307	66744	76718	65076	65106	65225	89002	45843	95336
FRANCE	31817	57717	145955	50488	28015	62155	45312	65598	52684	46240
W.GERMANY	155899	234305	240686	170144	167375	137584	142092	124955	126702	222908
ITALY	40599	36644	71823	146330	58233	70697	85833	87250	40494	82353
NETHERLANDS	20496	14949	11770	21895	9142	12084	7576	14265	8617	19009
BELGIUM	7275	10817	11025	8743	8389	16213	9318	10372	11851	21084
SWEDEN	21122	19324	21858	14909	11253	5182	17657	8260	3701	3243
SWITZERLAND	8061	9611	11842	11810	23763	12583	19119	28424	11118	20735
NORWAY	2698	2080	3663	3833	3972	2451	3470	3719	8094	1291
DENMARK	15603	6382	11212	15894	11568	7055	2462	4932	11355	12168
AUSTRIA	29751	16949	19975	17784	16313	33550	21007	14693	15503	14886
GREECE	25830	21165	14832	25698	5949	6565	8577	5347	3039	8658
TOTAL	588048	690271	793592	788892	572020	567417	595479	707815	473765	725462
TOTAL EXPORTS	737587	879429	1016158	1108971	937787	877370	853972	966608	692358	990636
%	79,7	78,4	78	71,1	60,9	64,6	69,7	73,2	68,4	73,2

⁷⁹¹ Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, *Dış Ticaret İstatistikleri* (Ankara: Başbakanlık Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, 1959).

Table 2. Imports and Exports with the Socialist States (#000 TL)⁷⁹²

STATE/YEAR	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
SOVIET UNION	0	7	0	0	9563	23204	14610	31381	19359	18460
E.GERMANY	0	0	1543	4117	14951	41160	39003	41552	54824	31249
ROMANIA	425	28	2413	454	10764	22748	13098	4107	3561	4051
CZECHOSLOVAKIA	37378	28535	26358	38323	38402	68227	55532	67332	34238	35108
HUNGARY	15978	21743	20909	20930	19398	35280	16215	16301	13930	10975
BULGARIA	2079	3417	3763	12248	9425	11233	5748	4436	4340	2048
YUGOSLAVIA	1025	4280	7411	70403	85801	28250	15574	13820	4968	5052
POLAND	6935	2005	2729	6389	23431	53895	22218	21538	30154	16839
TOTAL	63820	60015	65126	152864	211735	283997	181998	200467	165374	123782
TOTAL IMPORTS	799859	1125840	1556575	1491093	1339104	1393384	1140553	1111951	882275	1315950
%	7,9	5,3	4,2	10,2	15,8	20,3	15,9	18	18,7	9,4

STATE/YEAR	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
SOVIET UNION	1191	5745	6632	6685	14499	14693	18372	15410	31759	13452
E.GERMANY	7	0	3175	3962	22574	34243	43459	54823	48690	24472
ROMANIA	948	1249	1883	868	17441	11866	7610	4586	4232	1516
CZECHOSLOVAKIA	28329	33635	17085	28483	35769	57868	47519	54437	39625	32820
HUNGARY	10557	19500	20145	21081	13551	26429	18727	13683	10371	18252
BULGARIA	2683	4012	4700	14237	8746	8222	5553	3839	2409	3331
YUGOSLAVIA	2751	2601	41445	54828	46515	28633	8733	14223	6464	10124
POLAND	6786	4917	3052	6639	41794	39081	26459	31021	19593	20860
TOTAL	53252	71659	98117	136783	200889	221035	176432	192022	163143	124827
TOTAL EXPORTS	737587	879429	1016158	1108971	937787	877370	853972	966608	692358	990636
%	7,2	8,1	9,6	12,3	21,4	25,1	20,6	19,8	23,5	12,6

⁷⁹² Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, *Dış Ticaret İstatistikleri* (Ankara: Başbakanlık Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, 1959).

Table 3. Imports and Exports with the Middle East States (#000 TL)⁷⁹³

STATE/YEAR	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
IRAQ	1605	589	2695	1396	3034	1854	98	0	4	0
IRAN	12734	13606	226	203	81	706	2040	3253	425	8457
PAKISTAN	7447	4607	1449	635	761	9	323	355	481	2071
ISRAEL	314	2829	5338	25040	40908	34448	12526	26896	9782	24084
EGYPT	2158	3522	1806	329	5788	7094	2291	5445	8835	598
SYRIA	14139	1405	657	211	128	4	648	82	0	20
LIBYA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LEBANON	746	1206	1073	617	1328	2011	272	323	130	151
JORDAN	206	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S.ARABIA	19419	38620	51909	44874	33542	42277	24752	29294	18391	25438
TOTAL	58768	66386	65153	73305	85570	88403	42950	65648	38048	60819
TOTAL IMPORTS	799859	1125840	1556575	1491093	1339104	1393384	1140553	1111951	882275	1315950
%	7,3	5,8	4,1	4,9	6,3	6,3	3,7	5,9	4,3	4,6

STATE/YEAR	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
IRAQ	1306	238	46	7	0	804	1871	11	76	7317
IRAN	54	167	58	26	41	28	0	3119	30	5
PAKISTAN	9	30	37687	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ISRAEL	6614	6193	9306	45469	34003	37180	20942	17315	21076	24924
EGYPT	16145	22488	15075	19708	10059	5072	7739	9063	2697	4398
SYRIA	18631	20175	19316	6948	3261	3792	4944	2080	2713	12216
LIBYA	0	0	0	4	815	888	123	1497	633	1081
LEBANON	8282	17470	7766	18461	7126	4373	4967	4984	8225	38515
JORDAN	182	726	4335	575	252	99	2223	1674	2759	4562
S.ARABIA	79	103	145	351	36	31	23	353	123	8
TOTAL	51302	67590	93734	91549	55593	52267	42832	40096	38332	93026
TOTAL EXPORTS	737587	879429	1016158	1108971	937787	877370	853972	966608	692358	990636
%	6,9	7,6	9,2	8,3	5,9	5,9	5	4,1	5,5	9,3

Taking these figures into consideration, it can be argued that 1954 was a turning point in Turkey's foreign trade. The amount of imports and exports from the capitalist states decreased to some extent to the advantage of the amount of trade with the socialist states until the Western support began to increase after the stand-by agreement in 1958. Thus, it can be argued that Turkey's foreign economic relations

⁷⁹³ Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, *Dış Ticaret İstatistikleri* (Ankara: Başbakanlık Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü, 1959).

were flexible and there was no ideological commitment, particularly in the economic realm. Thus, the decision makers did not hesitate to diversify their options to overcome the crisis and accomplish economic development.

In the realm of Middle East politics, it can be argued that Turkey's economic relations remained relatively stable despite the "crises" after the Baghdad Pact in 1955. More importantly, it should be noted that the main economic partners of Turkey in the region were Israel and Egypt. Israel was the state with which Turkey sought to keep its relations "secret," and Egypt was the state with which Turkey was competing for leadership in the region. On the other hand, Turkey's allies in the region, such as Iran, Iraq, and Pakistan were not major economic partners. This indicates how the Turkish decision makers acted pragmatically in their relations with the Middle East states in the economic realm, too.

In the economic realm, Turkey's trade with the Middle East states did not have a significant impact on the Turkish economy because Turkey's economic relations with the West, particularly the United States, and the socialist states, especially after 1954, were the most significant part of Turkey's foreign trade. Regarding the Middle East, there were three major components of economic relations which will be discussed in detail: the oil and the relations turning around oil, the commercial agreements, and the military relations between Turkey and the smaller states in the region.

First, the oil relations in the region in which Turkey was a part, will be discussed to understand the position of Turkey in oil politics.

Turkey's Economic Relations with the Middle East States in the 1950s

Turkish foreign policy in the 1950s was not independent of its economic and military policies. The interaction between political, economic, and military policies can be seen in Turkey's relations with the Western powers and the Soviet Union.

The Middle East Oil and Turkey

The Oil Law (1954)

In order to encourage foreign investments and accumulation of foreign capital in the country, the Democrat Party government passed two laws: the Law of the Encouragement of Foreign Capital (*Yabancı Sermayeyi Teşvik Kanunu*) and the Oil Law (*Petrol Kanunu*). The Law of the Encouragement of Foreign Capital was passed on 18 January 1954 and had 14 articles. There were some articles that showed how this law provided the means to the foreign investors to act freely in Turkey. For example, Article 1 stated that the foreign investments in the country should be helpful to the economic development of the country and the foreign investors would not be given privileges. According to Article 2, the "capital" included foreign exchange, equipment, license, etc. Articles 3 and 4 enabled foreign investors to transfer or reinvest their capital and their profits after taxation. Article 10 granted all the freedoms and privileges, from which domestic investors benefitted, to foreign investors.⁷⁹⁴

To complement the regulations which would make investments in Turkey profitable and attractive, the Oil Law was passed on 7 March 1954. The Oil Law had 135 Articles and regulated the oil exploration process in Turkey. Article 1 stated that

⁷⁹⁴ Republic of Turkey, *Düstur*, 3rd series, vol.35.

the oil resources were under the control and authority of the state. Article 2 states that the aim of the law was to explore and manage the oil resources in Turkey through private investors as efficiently as possible. The oil law also included articles on the criteria to grant oil exploration rights, the protection of national interests, the taxation of the investors and the export, import and transfer rights of the investors.⁷⁹⁵

After the passage of the Oil Law, the government authorized the Turkish Oil Corporation (*Türk Petrolleri Anonim Ortaklığı*) to geological explorations on 15 April 1954. After the legislation of the Oil Law, the Socony Vacuum Oil Company was the first foreign company authorized for oil exploration. The Royal Dutch Shell Company was next. Before 6 August 1954 six foreign companies were given permission. The Oil Law was amended on 13 May 1955 to grant new privileges not only to foreign investors, but also to national ones. On 29 May 1957 the Oil Law was amended once again to the advantage of the investors.⁷⁹⁶

With this law, the Democrat Party government aimed to be an actor in oil-politics by producing oil and oil products in the country. However, despite these efforts, Turkey remained dependent on foreign oil. During the Suez Canal Crisis, the chance to be a part of oil-politics appeared, but as it will be discussed in detail below, the dynamics of the oil market did not allow Turkey to be a part of oil production as a producer.

The Suez Canal Crisis, Middle Eastern Oil and Turkey

After the nationalization of the Suez Canal on 26 July 1956 by the Nasser government, the United States began planning to take the necessary measures to provide oil to Europe in the event of the termination of the passage of the Middle

⁷⁹⁵ Republic of Turkey, *Düstur*, 3rd series, vol.35.

⁷⁹⁶ Mustafa Albayrak, *Türk Siyasi Tarihinde Demokrat Parti 1946-1960* (Ankara: Phoenix Yayınevi, 2004), pp.325-326.

Eastern oil to Europe. In August 1956, the director of oil and gas in the United States' Department of the Interior, Hugh Stewart, who was the chairman of the Foreign Petroleum Supply Committee, met with the representatives of the oil industry. They agreed to establish a Middle East Emergency Committee which would be composed of the American oil companies. During the Arab-Israeli War which was discussed in detail above, the flow of Middle Eastern oil was interrupted when the Suez Canal was closed on 1 November 1956 upon the sinking of the Egyptian ship Akka in the Canal near Lake Timsah. After the sabotage to the three pumping stations in Syria, the Iraqi pipeline ceased to function on 3 November 1956. The Middle East Emergency Committee was activated again upon these developments on 30 November 1956 to meet the needs of Europe. In February 1957, the US Senate met with the government and industry representatives to plan the flow of oil before and during the Suez Canal Crisis.⁷⁹⁷

During the Suez Canal Crisis, the pipeline project that would start in Iran and pass through Turkey to Europe preoccupied the agenda of the United States and United Kingdom governments and the oil companies operating in the region. At the time of crisis, there were two major pipeline systems in the Middle East that were owned by the oil producing companies: the lines carrying oil from Iraq across Syria to Baniyas and Tripoli in Libya that belonged to the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC), which held the oil producing concessions in northern and southern Iraq. The pipeline from Saudi Arabia through Jordan to Sidon on the Lebanon coast belonged to the Trans-Arabian Pipeline Company. The companies that were responsible for the transfer of the Middle Eastern oil had "secured permission to build the pipelines and conducted all negotiations about such matters as transit payments and production

⁷⁹⁷ FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., pp.315-316.

direct with the governments of the transit countries.”⁷⁹⁸ As a result, the governments with which the oil companies were registered had no standing to intervene in a dispute between the transit government and the company. Therefore, when Syria cut off the flow of the IPC pipeline in 1956 the complexity of the flow of oil through pipelines in the Middle East became clear.⁷⁹⁹

Upon the oil crisis, on 1 August 1956; the Department of State informed the US embassies in Baghdad, Ankara, Tehran, Damascus and Beirut to consult with the governments of the states in which they were located. The plan of action that was prepared by the United States was based on a report of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey. The company’s report stated that:

In the event the Suez Canal is not brought under international control and oil companies are unable to depend upon proper operation, expansion of facilities and reasonable tolls, the company considers it must, in its own interest, proceed immediately to build a pipeline through Iraq and Turkey to Iskanderun. The company stated that agreement with Shell, Anglo-Persian, Gulf and Socony was necessary and, if the US government concurred, it was prepared to consult with them. The Company indicated this project had been under study for some time and has certain purely economic attractions.⁸⁰⁰

Upon the report of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, the US government asked the embassies of the aforementioned states to evaluate the reaction of the states especially Turkey and Iraq. In return, the embassies sent the following replies to the Department of State regarding the issue.⁸⁰¹

⁷⁹⁸ Note by the British Ministry of Power. March 6, 1957. FO 371.127202.UES 1171-45.

⁷⁹⁹ *ibid.*

⁸⁰⁰ Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs (Rountree) to the Acting Secretary of State. August 20, 1956. FRUS 1955-57. v.12.i.8., pp.316-318.

⁸⁰¹ *ibid.*

The United States embassy in Iraq:

The Embassy reports IPC has been thinking along similar lines for some time. It believes the proposed pipeline would be welcomed by the Iraqi government as a means of increasing oil revenues. However, some public protest may be expected from Arab nationalists who still resent Turkish annexation of Alexandretta... The Embassy further thinks that it would be inadvisable to broach this matter now with the Iraqi government. Until the Suez matter is settled, such a proposal intending to minimize reliance upon the Canal would be highly objectionable to Arabs generally and it could be hardly expected that the government of Iraq would publicly support it.

The United States embassy in Turkey:

The Embassy believes that the Turkish government would enthusiastically welcome the pipeline project. The Turks would benefit economically and would enjoy a considerable enhancement of prestige. The increased importance of the Iskenderun area would, in their opinion, make the US more conscious of the need for stability and security in Cyprus. The Embassy emphasizes the importance of presenting the project in a manner which does not link it with Suez Canal developments and pipeline difficulties in Lebanon and Syria, but rather with expanding production of Middle East oil fields.

The United States embassy in Iran:

The Embassy reports a conversation between the Ambassador and the Shah in which the Shah raised the question of such a pipeline which would transverse Iranian and Turkish territory. The Shah considers such a route, while probably more difficult from an engineering standpoint, a more reliable one than a route passing through any one of the Arab countries. It is probable that the Iranian Government would adopt a strong position in favor of construction of a pipeline by-passing Arab territory or at least for an appreciable distance running through Iranian territory.

The United States embassy in Syria:

The Embassy doubts that Syria's attitude towards arrangements with the present pipeline companies would be improved by the early announcement of plans for the proposed pipeline through Iraq and Turkey. The Embassy further states that such an announcement would probably produce hostile reactions in Syria, where memories of Turkish annexation of Alexandretta are still fresh and should be postponed for the time being."

The United States embassy in Lebanon:

The Embassy believes the announcement of the plans for a Turkish pipeline would tend to induce among Lebanese leaders a greater realization of the dangers of their present policy directed against IPC

and Tapline...

The expected positions of the governments that were related to the oil pipeline project were somewhat positive except Syria. However, it should be underlined that despite the alliance between Turkey, Iraq and Iran as a result of the Baghdad Pact, which had been signed in 1955, the stance of particularly the Iraqi government was hesitant because of the possible protests in this country against the pipeline project. Moreover, the position of the Turkish government which welcomed the project was again shaped by domestic policy considerations: the economic priorities and the increase of prestige in the country and abroad. Therefore, it can be argued once again that the domestic politics and priorities played a role in the formulation of foreign policy.

On the other hand, the Syrian position confused the United States and the oil companies in the region. The discussion between the United States' Under Secretary of State and the Director of Standard Oil Company of New Jersey on 20 December 1956 set forth the position of Syria about the proposed pipeline:

The Under Secretary gave Mr. Page a brief review of the efforts the US has made to bring about a resumption of the flow of oil through the IPC pipelines passing through Syria. He expressed some concern at a report the Department had received from Ankara to the effect that the Syrians were interested in employing their own consultants to survey the IPC pipelines and conjectured that the Syrians might be thinking of nationalizing the pipelines. Mr. Page said this interpretation was disturbing, but that it might be possible that the Syrians feared that they will be called upon to pay the cost of repair and wanted an independent appraisal of the extent of damage.⁸⁰²

The policies of the states that were related to the proposed pipeline project were confusing and there was a clash of interests. In other words, all the actors sought to maximize their interests in the pipeline issue. By the same token, the oil

⁸⁰² Memorandum of Conversation, Department of State. December 20, 1956. FRUS 1955-57.v.12.i.8., pp.417-419.

companies which were operating in the region were questioning the feasibility of the pipeline through Turkey. The discussions and studies among the oil companies continued at the same time. The American companies insisted upon the approval and backing of the United States government on the project to protect the interests of the oil companies. The pipeline project was regarded as “practical and easy to construct.” However, the priority of the oil companies was of a “treaty arrangement” which would provide international protection to the project. According to the oil companies, the company that would construct the pipeline should be owned by the United States and it should be registered in the United Kingdom. As a “satisfactory treaty arrangement” was reached, the company would start to construct the pipeline.⁸⁰³

While the feasibility studies were continuing, the diplomatic efforts with the states in the region related to the pipeline project continued, too. The Iraq Petroleum Company was also exploring the pipeline project. The possible hesitation of the Iraqi government and the negative position of the Syrian government were perceived as the impediments on the realization of the project. Moreover, there were some technical problems:

In addition, there are formidable financial and economic obstacles to the large pipeline. If it were to be built before 1961 it would require diversion of large pipe from a UK order for Canada and the diversion of other pipe from projects with a high priority in the Middle East. The smaller pipeline would still encounter political difficulties, but could be completed in a much shorter time and without drawing on scarce resources.⁸⁰⁴

While these discussions and studies continued, the Democrat Party government looked forward to the construction of the pipeline which might cure the economic problems to some extent and increased the prestige of Turkey in the area.

⁸⁰³ Memorandum of Conversation, Department of State. December 20, 1956. FRUS 1955-57.v.12.i.8., pp.417-419.

⁸⁰⁴ January 1957. FO 371.127202.UES 1171-26.

However, the officials and the technicians of the project refrained from encouraging the Turkish government about the realization of the project. By the same token, the foreign officials did not want to give the impression that the oil companies had lost their interest in the pipeline project, either. All in all, the Turkish government was exposed to conflicting and discouraging actions regarding the pipeline project as time passed. The telegram from the United Kingdom's Foreign Office to the embassy in Ankara shows the ambiguity during the discussions of the pipeline project and how the great powers and the oil companies put off the Democrat Party government:

I understand that the Turkish Ambassador in Baghdad has told Sir Gibson that the Turkish PM Menderes would welcome another visit by him in connexion with the pipeline. Sir Gibson gave the Ambassador a noncommittal answer and has suggested that I should ask you to speak to Mr.Menderes in order to ensure that he does not conclude from this that the Company are losing interest. I should accordingly like you to take an early opportunity of assuring Mr.Menderes that the idea of a pipeline is likely to come to life in the near future. It may indeed become a matter of extreme urgency if the situation in Syria does not improve. The Syrian government have hitherto said that they will not permit oil to flow until the Israelis have withdrawn from Egyptian territory. But it remains to be seen whether, if the Israelis do withdraw, the Syrians will even then be prepared to cooperate.⁸⁰⁵

The position of the Syrian government was also taken into consideration in the new pipeline project. Unless the Syrian government let the flow of oil through Syria, the pipeline project would be realized. Therefore, the pipeline through Turkey was supposed to be an "additional, not an alternative" way to transfer the oil of Iraq to the Mediterranean. However, the Turkish government was uneasy about the developments regarding the project because they were not well-informed and had heard rumors in the press. For the Turkish government, the attitude of the Iraqi government was important and it was thought that the Iraqi government did not want a pipeline through Turkey. The Turkish ambassador in Baghdad was instructed by

⁸⁰⁵ Telegram from Foreign Office to the British Embassy in Ankara. February 27, 1957. FO 371.127202.UES 1171-52.

his government to ask the attitude of the Iraqi government and the Iraqi government told him that Iraq was not opposed to a pipeline project through Turkey.⁸⁰⁶

In Iraq, there was no unanimity in the cabinet about the pipeline project through Turkey. The Iraqi officials considered the possibility of the Syrian policy of not allowing the flow of oil indefinitely and in such case, for the Iraqis, the proposed oil pipeline through Turkey would be acceptable. On the other hand, if Syria let the oil flow, some of the Iraqis would be against the pipeline project. The United Kingdom's ambassador in Baghdad states that the basic concern was "not to antagonize the Syrians and the other Arabs and not to make it difficult for Iraq to come together with them in the following period when the conflicts were overcome." Last, he added that he thought that "the Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Said and his supporters will probably be strong to push the project enough if the Company find themselves to be able to finance it."⁸⁰⁷

Besides the countries that were involved in the project, the United States and the United Kingdom were also involved in these discussions. They were aware of the vital importance of the Middle East oil for the interests of the West and agreed that greater guarantees for oil pipeline operations would be desirable. Therefore, the two governments sought to continue to support the oil companies to defend the interests of the latter in the context of the transit arrangements. Moreover, the two governments would provide stability to new pipeline projects and would be in contact with each other, and the transit companies to this end. For the two governments, the oil crisis following the Suez Canal Crisis and the Arab-Israeli War had showed that the producers and consumers of oil were vulnerable to the changing

⁸⁰⁶ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. March 1, 1957. FO 371.127202.UES 1171-52A.

⁸⁰⁷ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. March 1, 1957. FO 371. 127202.UES 1171-70.

conditions and the attitudes of the governments that were controlling the oil routes from the oil fields to the markets were significant. The destruction of the IPC pipeline in Syria and the threat to destroy the trans-Arabian pipeline by Syria made it difficult for the oil companies to give large amounts of capital to extend the oil pipeline if they had not been guaranteed for the security. Consequently, the United States and the United Kingdom took the responsibility for providing the security of the oil fields and the pipelines to meet the needs of the West in the following period.⁸⁰⁸

After the feasibility studies had ended, the principles of the draft pipeline project were determined as the following:

The pipelines would be a trunk system running in the first instance through Iraq and Turkey but it is envisaged that eventually oil from Iran, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia will be fed into it. It might be desirable to start building in northern Iraq proceeding northwards before tackling the southern end. The trunk pipeline system should be built and run by a separate new company to which the oil companies alone would subscribe equity capital. The main bulk of the capital required should be in the form of loans from outside if possible by the International Bank and other such agencies. The nationality of the new company has for the moment been left open. The oil companies considered that the arrangement to be made by the proposed new company should be covered by multilateral or bilateral treaties between the governments concerned. The American company representative had said that they felt the atmosphere in Washington in regard to the conclusion of such a treaty or treaties was now much better than it had been at the time of the negotiations setting up the Iranian Consortium. The Intergovernmental treaties should provide the reference to the ICJ in event of dispute. The companies considered that the parties to these treaties should be the producing country, transit countries and the parent countries of the oil companies concerned. Consuming companies as such should not be included.⁸⁰⁹

There were some technical problems about the construction of the pipeline system. The supply of steel was the major problem and the oil companies began to explore the steel supply. The oil companies agreed that “a pipeline project of this

⁸⁰⁸ Telegram from the British Embassy in Washington to Foreign Office. March 16, 1957. PREM 11-950. See also FRUS 1955-57.v.12.i.8., pp.460-461.

⁸⁰⁹ Telegram from Foreign Office to the British Embassy in Baghdad. March 30, 1957. FO 371. 127203. UES 1171-80.

kind would need much less steel than the construction of equivalent transport capacity in tanker tonnage, if this were possible in terms of ship building capacity.”⁸¹⁰

During these feasibility studies, the expansion of the oil tanker fleet rather than construction of a new pipeline were not discussed, but the solution would be the extension of the tanker fleet in the following period, as will be shown.⁸¹¹

When these negotiations were continuing, an agreement was signed between the Turkish government and the oil companies, i.e., BP, Royal Dutch, Shell, Socony Vacuum and Caltex, for the construction of an oil refinery on 29 March 1957. The new oil refinery would be capable of producing 65,000 bbl a day and would start operating in 1960. The oil companies preferred to build the refinery at Iskenderun rather than the Gulf of Izmit. The United Kingdom’s ambassador in Ankara pointed out that an amendment was necessary to the Oil Law. This amendment was made on 29 May 1957. The financial arrangements between the government and the oil companies enabled the oil companies to use the profit from the refinery in the exploration of oil in Turkey.⁸¹²

After the draft pipeline project appeared, the United Kingdom’s ambassador in Baghdad met with the Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Said. In this conversation, Nuri Said stated that he was in favor of the project principally, but he abstained from the possibility of the Syrian interruption of the oil through Syria as a result of the provocation of the Soviet Union. He proposed that the construction of the pipeline should begin on Turkish side as soon as possible and the part in Iraq should be constructed some time later. The ambassador stated that the anxiety of Nuri Said

⁸¹⁰ Telegram from Foreign Office to the British Embassy in Baghdad. March 30, 1957. FO 371. 127203. UES 1171-80.

⁸¹¹ *ibid.*

⁸¹² Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to the Ministry of Power. April 1, 1957. FO 371. 127203. UES1171-86.

showed that the oil companies would face the resistance of Arab nationalists in Iraq and in the other Arab states. The ambassador commented on the pipeline project after his discussion with the Iraqi Prime Minister:

First, it seems essential to establish that the new project is additional to existing pipelines which will be worked to capacity. It will be obvious that creation of new route through Turkey will be much more expensive than laying additional lines through Syria and if it can be shown that there are any bottlenecks along Syrian route which make it desirable to choose another route, this would be useful. Second, it seems desirable to consider whether there is any parallel action which could be taken to soften the blow for Syria. Bridgman of BP told me yesterday that it had occurred to him that it might be advisable to introduce into the scheme the idea of a link from Basra to the existing Syrian pipeline which would make it possible to pump oil by that route initially from the Basra field but possibly later from Kuwait as a supplement to the flow through Kirkuk and Turkey. He thought that possibly the Iraq government might wish to suggest this as a condition to agreeing to the main project. If this addition is economically sound I agree that it might appeal to the Iraqis and it would help to show them to their neighbors as protectors of Arab interests. There may be other ways in which the oil companies could adjust the proposals in order to avoid creating a nationalist storm and I hope that they will keep this political aspect of the matter very clearly in mind.⁸¹³

Despite these anxieties and reservations regarding the new pipeline through Turkey, the representatives of the oil companies met in London on 18-19 March 1957 to discuss the extension of the Middle Eastern oil by trunk pipeline. During these discussions, a later meeting of the representatives was agreed to be held in May 1957. In the light of the principles in the draft proposal which were discussed above, it has determined that the pipeline project would be constructed as follows:

The most practical plan would be to build a new Middle East pipeline system from the head of the Persian Gulf to an outlet in the Mediterranean in Turkey. One of the trunk pipelines would be completed if possible by 1960 and a second it is hoped by 1962. Their combined capacity would be 1,200,000 bbl a day. The total cost would probably be between £ 300-350 million and something like 900,000 tons of steel would be required. The quantities of Middle East crude oil that it is estimated will have to be moved westwards from the Persian Gulf area by 1960 make

⁸¹³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. April 4, 1957. FO 371. 127203. UES 1171-80E.

it clear that additional pipelines such as now proposed will not be at the expense of the existing pipeline system. Additional pipelines would improve the reliability and flexibility of the entire system of oil transport from the Middle East. The proposed route from Iraq and Turkey is one aspect of this aim of flexibility.⁸¹⁴

After the agreement on the pipeline project, the route of the project and the alternatives became matters of discussion in several circles: Trans-Turkey, Trans-Israel and Trans-Isthmus of Suez. However, as mentioned before, the Trans-Turkey pipeline had been agreed on the meeting of the representatives of the oil companies in London. The United States was in favor of the Trans-Turkey pipeline in order to protect the interests of the American oil companies and it was supposed the project would provide an addition and also an alternative to the oil routes across Syria and Egypt. In addition, Americans thought the new pipeline system” would be in a position to tap the fields of three of the major four Middle East oil producing countries, i.e., Iraq, Iran, Kuwait as well as a new off-shore field in Saudi Arabia.”⁸¹⁵

During the discussions on the preparation and the feasibility of the pipeline project through Turkey, there was a split between the groups that were working on the project about the origin of the pipeline. Some groups, such as Allen-Reynolds, Iranian Oil Syndicate, Constantine-John Brown and an unidentified German oil company, focused on Iran as the starting point of the project. Some others, such as IPC-Texas-California-Gulf and Fiat-Williams groups, focused on Iraq and Kuwait as the countries of origin.⁸¹⁶

While the discussions of the oil companies continued, the diplomatic efforts of the United States and the United Kingdom intensified. The United Kingdom

⁸¹⁴ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. April 17, 1957. FO 371.127202.UES 1171-53G.

⁸¹⁵ Background Paper Prepared in the Department of State. April 19, 1957. FRUS 1955-57.v.12.i.8., pp.515-517.

⁸¹⁶ Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Turkey. March 9, 1957. FRUS 1955-57.v.12.i.8., pp.458-459.

ambassador in Ankara contacted to the secretary general of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Esenbel, to “allay any suspicion” that might have appeared in Turkey as a result of the fact that the oil companies were continuing the plans without informing the governments that were involved in the project, especially the Turkish government. The ambassador added that his meeting with Esenbel was known by the United States’ embassy in Ankara. In return, Esenbel replied that “there had been some complaint that Turkey was being kept in the dark on a matter of great importance to her.”⁸¹⁷

By the same token, the United Kingdom’s ambassador in Baghdad met with the Iraqi Crown Prince and the Prime Minister. The Crown Prince stated that he thought that there was a great degree of support in Iraq, especially of the elder statesmen, for the pipeline from Iraq to Turkey in principle, whereas the proposals and the presentation of the project were of great importance for the Iraqis. In the same vein, prime minister Nuri Said told that Iraq had declined to participate to the Arab Oil Experts’ Conference in Cairo, but Kuwait had participated surprisingly. In that conference, there was a joint attempt by Egypt and Syria to terminate the pipeline through Turkey and there was a risk that Syria might have cut the flow of oil once again if the pipeline project through Turkey had preoccupied it. As a result, Nuri Said stated that he was in favor of a pipeline project through Turkey as a supplement to the pipeline through Syria.⁸¹⁸

Besides the contacts with Turkey and Iraq, the oil companies continued their efforts to develop the projects in order to transport the Middle Eastern oil. The second meeting of the representatives of the oil companies took place at Shell-Mex

⁸¹⁷ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. April 18, 1957. FO 371.127202.UES 1171-53G.

⁸¹⁸ Telegram from the British Embassy in Baghdad to Foreign Office. May 12, 1957. PREM 11-950.

House in London between 13 and 16 May 1957. The representatives of the following companies participated in the meeting: American Independent Oil Company, the Atlantic Refining Company, Compaigne Francaise des Petroles, the Getty Oil Company, the Gulf Oil Corporation, the Hancock Oil Company, the Richfield Oil Corporation, the San Jacinto Petroleum Corporation, the Signal Oil and Gas Company, the Socony Mobil Oil Company, the Standard Oil Company of California, the Standard Oil Company New Jersey, the Standard Oil Company Ohio, the Texas Company, the Tidewater Oil Company, the Royal Dutch/Shell and the BP.⁸¹⁹

During the meeting, the representatives discussed the problems that were related to the pipeline project proposals to extend the transportation of the Middle Eastern oil to Europe. It was decided to establish a “continuing group” to study the technical, financial and legal problems. It was agreed that the representatives would meet from time to time to discuss the results of the studies.⁸²⁰

A telegram from the United Kingdom Foreign Office to the Embassy in Ankara on 16 May 1957 sheds light on the issues that were discussed in the meeting by the oil companies’ representatives: the route and terminal of the newly proposed pipeline had not been decided. The completed project might have included more than one route and terminal. The new system would probably serve as supplementary to other transport facilities and would bring flexibility to the transportation of the Middle Eastern oil. Unless the proposed pipeline project through Turkey had been practicable, the companies might have carried out their exploration for the alternative means.⁸²¹

⁸¹⁹ Telegram from Foreign Office to the British Embassy in Ankara. May 16, 1957. PREM 11-950.

⁸²⁰ *ibid.* See also FRUS 1955-57.v.12.i.8., pp.545-546.

⁸²¹ Telegram from Foreign Office to the British Embassy in Ankara. May 16, 1957. PREM 11-950.

In the meantime, in a telegram that was sent from the United Kingdom's Foreign Office to its embassy in Baghdad, it was stated that:

Apart from this project expanding the pipeline system, the individual companies have under constant study alternative means of increasing transportation... No firm decisions have been made on the project, nor can they be made until the question of satisfactory treaty arrangements between the countries in which the pipeline system is located and the countries of those companies who will provide for the financing of the pipeline is explored and settled... As there is no operating oil company in Turkey the method of conveying further information to the Turkish government is still under consideration by the oil companies.⁸²²

The companies of the United Kingdom, i.e., BP and Shell, were not in favor of contacting to the Turkish government before the ultimate decision was made.

They stressed that the oil companies in Turkey were purely marketers, which were different from the ones in Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. Therefore, apart from technical matters, the Turkish government should be approached by the ambassadors of the United States and the United Kingdom in the last stage.⁸²³ The position of the United Kingdom's Foreign Office regarding this issue was as follows:

Our reasons for suggesting that the treaty question should be mentioned in general terms in Ankara while we do not wish it to be put forward by the companies at this stage in other countries are as follows: We were concerned that if the companies made the initial approach on the subject, it might appear as a veiled ultimatum which would be resented by the governments concerned. We would have greater assurance of the point being made delicately in a diplomatic approach. The suggested approach to the Turkish government goes further in committing the oil companies to build a line than the approaches to other governments. Largely for that reason, it is necessary to qualify the commitment by stressing that the final decision is dependent on the conclusion of satisfactory treaty arrangements. We would not go so far as to say that we considered Turkey already favorably disposed to a treaty.⁸²⁴

Thus, Turkey was excluded from the process of the pipeline project although it was a part of it. As stated, the main reason for this exclusion was based on the fact

⁸²² Telegram from Foreign Office to the British Embassy in Baghdad. May 18, 1957. PREM 11-950.

⁸²³ Telegram from Foreign Office to the Embassy in Washington. May 31, 1957. PREM 11-950.

⁸²⁴ *ibid.*

that Turkey was not producing oil and the oil companies in Turkey were only marketers. As a result, Turkey had to be informed at the last stage when the preparations for the new pipeline were completed. This policy caused resentment and anxiety on the Turkish side. As mentioned before, Turkey welcomed the new pipeline project for the aforementioned reasons, so its exclusion from the process disturbed it.

Accordingly, the Turkish charge d'affaires in the United Kingdom, Halefoğlu, met with the officials to seek information about the pipeline project and the developments. His main anxiety was that a decision might have ultimately been taken to build the line through Syria rather than Turkey if a government had attained power in Syria which would be less hostile to the West than the present one. To allay the uneasiness of the chargé d'affaires, the officials in the United Kingdom told him that the oil companies had not ended their planning and the final decision on the route of the pipeline had not been made. However, the explanations of the officials of the United Kingdom did not allay the concerns of the Turkish chargé and they decided to suggest that the oil companies contact Halefoğlu to persuade him and make some explanations about the pipeline project.⁸²⁵

In the meantime, the United Kingdom decided to approach Turkey, Iraq and the Saudi Arabia simultaneously, Iraq as their priority as the major actor of the pipeline project. Accordingly, the response of the Iraqi government was urgent and it was thought that the possible favorable attitude of the Iraqi government might pave the way to cooperation with the Turkish government on the pipeline project.⁸²⁶

⁸²⁵ Telegram from Foreign Office to the British Embassy in Ankara. May 20, 1957. PREM 11-950.

⁸²⁶ Telegram from the British Embassy in Washington to Foreign Office. June 8, 1957. PREM 11-950.

On the other hand, the Iranians were formulating their own project which would start from the Iranian region of Qum. According to the United Kingdom's ambassador in Iran, the proposals of the oil companies were not attractive to the Iranians. The only thing that might have tempted them to be involved in the project of added means of transport was the possibility of the "additional production of the Iranian Consortium Oil."⁸²⁷

In the meantime, conversations between the Iranian and United Kingdom officials took place. The counselor of the Iranian embassy, Mr. Huveyda, met with the United Kingdom's commercial counselor in July 1957. The Commercial Counselor informed Mr. Huveyda about the Iranian role in the proposed pipeline through Turkey. However, as Mr. Huveyda said that:

With regard to a pipeline from Iran to the Mediterranean through Turkey there had been a few informal talks with the Turks. However there was virtually no progress. The main stumbling block was the opposition in the Majlis to granting the Iranian government the discretionary powers that it wanted to negotiate with foreign companies. He stressed the physical and financial difficulties of building a pipeline from the Qum oilfield through Turkey. There seemed to be no idea as yet where the money might come from, but clearly neither Turkey nor Iran could find the money themselves... The Turks were rather difficult and obstinate to deal with.⁸²⁸

As time passed, the interest in the pipeline through Turkey began to be lost. A memorandum prepared by the United States' Department of Interior in August 1957 shows the change of policy regarding the pipeline project:

Construction of a pipeline from Kirkuk through Turkey to the Mediterranean would be a problem relatively much more simple than the entire pipeline system described in the State Department memorandum. Its functions would be of obvious value to the West, to Iraq and to Turkey... This pipeline would involve basic political problems similar to those of the complete system but would be much more limited in scope... The complete pipeline system would draw on the crude oil reserves at the head of the Persian Gulf as well as those of Northern Iraq and Turkey. In addition

⁸²⁷ Telegram from the British Embassy in Tehran to Foreign Office. June 20, 1957. PREM 11-950.

⁸²⁸ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. July 4, 1957. FO 371. 127210.UES 1171-189.

to the complex political problems, there are other aspects which must be examined in the light of our national security. These include the question of whether undue reliance might be placed on pipelines; the extent to which construction and use of this pipeline might inhibit normal expansion of the tanker fleet; comparative security of the pipeline, the Suez Canal and other tanker routes; costs and economics of the pipeline relative to use of large tankers on alternate routes.... In view of the circumstances, it is suggested that: Consideration be given now to the question of whether support should be given to the Kirkuk-Mediterranean line via Turkey, consideration of the complete system be postponed until the detailed analyses now under way have been completed.⁸²⁹

The loss of interest was understood by the Turkish government and the Turkish representative in the United Kingdom, Halefoğlu, met with the United States' diplomats in the United Kingdom. Halefoğlu stated that the oil companies seemed to have lost their interest in the project. Mr. McGinnis from the United States' Embassy told him that the oil companies were continuing their studies on the project, but at the time there was nothing new to be shared. However, McGinnis shared his view with the officials of the United Kingdom that the oil companies were not as anxious as they were in the previous period and they were not in a hurry to push for the project. The oil companies seemed not to be willing to continue the project of the new pipeline.⁸³⁰

While these developments were taking place abroad, in Turkey, the pro-government newspaper *Zafer* had a headline on 4 September 1957 that said:

Iranian oil would flow through Turkey... preliminary talks between representatives of the Iranian and Turkish governments had taken place and that agreement had been reached in principle on the construction of a pipeline through Turkey, 1,700 km in length and costing US \$450 million. The project would be financed by the governments of Turkey and Iran.⁸³¹

⁸²⁹ Memorandum Prepared in the Department of Interior. August 1957. FRUS 1955-57.v.12.i.8., pp.574-575.

⁸³⁰ August 14, 1957. FO 371. 127211. UES 1171-227.

⁸³¹ “*İran Petrolleri Türkiye Arazisinden Akıtılacak – Türkiye ile İran arasında cereyan eden müzakerelerde, bütün hususlar etrafında prensip anlaşmasına varıldı. Döşenecek boru hattı 1700 kilometre uzunluğunda olacak ve 450 milyon dolar sarfedilecek. Ayrıca Türk-İran müşterek sermayesiyle tasfiyehaneler tesisi hususu derpiş olunan projeler meyanında.*” *Zafer*, 4 September 1957.

However, despite the talks between the Iranians and the Turks, the news on agreement and the finance of the project was an exaggeration. The Iranian and Turkish governments did not reach an agreement because the Iranians were aware that Turkey could not provide such a financial source for the project, thus, the Iranians rejected the Turkish proposal “to participate in the construction of the pipeline and to be part-owners.” Mr.Huveyda stated:

The present intention is to establish a separate Iranian company which will build and operate the pipeline. This company will seek to raise the necessary finance by means of a loan floated on the New York market by an American Corporation... The approval of the US government would be needed for this but he was sure that this would be forthcoming. The Turks had seemed to think that the National Iranian Oil Company would sell the oil to the pipeline company at cost price that the oil would be sold at the world price at the Turkish port and that the two countries would split the profit. The Iranians lost no time in disabusing them of this idea and explained that the profit to be shared consisted of the difference between the cost of transporting the oil by tanker and that pumping it through the pipeline... In the realm of future developments... Iran would be prepared to help Turkey to establish an oil refinery and a petrochemicals industry on a joint ownership basis, Iran supplying the foreign currency and Turkey meeting the local costs... any decision in this sense would obviously be affected by the location of the Anglo-American oil refinery shortly to be built in Turkey.⁸³²

The discussions between the Iranian and Turkish officials regarding the Iranian-Turkish pipeline project, as an alternative to the project of the oil companies, continued in the following period, but these discussions did not come up with the results. In the meantime, the oil companies and the great powers cancelled the pipeline through Turkey project and they found alternative ways to transport the Middle Eastern oil to Europe. Initially, the increase in the oil producing capacity of Iraq was regarded as one of the solutions.

The Iraqi Finance Minister met with the officials of the Iraq Petroleum Company in London and discussed the possibility of the new pipeline capacity for

⁸³² Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. September 6, 1957. FO371. 127211. UES 1171-238.

Iraq in September 1957. The project might have been realized if a pipeline had been constructed to Kuwait, and the Haifa pipeline had been diverted. Regarding the pipeline through Turkey, the Iraqi Minister stated that:

This would be very expensive and would cost nearly 1 billion dollars and would take four years to build... Iraq could not wait so long to get additional capacity. The Secretary stated that the 1 billion dollars figure was high... The Finance Minister indicated he believed this to be the least desirable of the alternatives currently open to Iraq.⁸³³

Like the Iraqi Minister's statements, the United States officials' discussions reveal that the pipeline project through Turkey was abolished in late 1957. The reasons behind this policy change were as follows:

The petroleum industry proposed several months ago to construct a pipeline from the head of the Persian Gulf through Iraq and Turkey to the Mediterranean to facilitate the movement of Persian Gulf petroleum to Western Europe... Within the past few days information has come to the attention of the Department which indicates some petroleum companies now believe that certain developments since last spring reduce the immediate economic need for proceeding at this time with plans to construct a pipeline from the head of the Persian Gulf through Iraq and Turkey to the Mediterranean.⁸³⁴

The developments that enabled the oil companies to give up the pipeline project were as follows:

A smaller increase in demand in Western Europe than had been expected, certain recent decisions by the IPC which reduce the amount of oil for the new pipeline: Decision to increase the capacity of its lines across Syria by 10 million tons (200,000 barrels per day), decision to construct a deep water tanker loading facility in the Persian Gulf off southern Iraq which would increase the movement of oil at that point by 150,000 barrels per day.⁸³⁵

According to the United States' officials, the end of the crisis right after the Suez Canal Issue and the Arab-Israeli War, the high cost of the newly proposed

⁸³³ Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State. September 25, 1957. FRUS 1955-57.v.12.i.8., pp.585-586.

⁸³⁴ Memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs (Rountree) to the Secretary of State. October 9, 1957. FRUS 1955-57.v.12.i.8., pp.617-618.

⁸³⁵ *ibid.*

pipeline and the increase in the Iraqi oil production had resulted in the abolition of the pipeline project.

In the same vein, the United Kingdom's officials explained reasons for the termination of the pipeline project as follows:

Some senior American oil officials in London in recent weeks have been informing Embassy officer that the international oil companies no longer interested going ahead Metline Proposal. Until Turkey-Syrian crisis, Shell only holdout against this point of view but understand Shell now agrees attitude other companies. Main reasons project no longer of interest reported to be as follows: Convinced neither HMG nor USG willing attempt negotiate treaty protection considered essential oil companies, reassessment economic considerations have led conclusion not warranted, some companies never from outset were particularly enthusiastic and have had opportunity these months work over colleagues.⁸³⁶

In addition to the aforementioned reasons cited by the oil companies, the unwillingness of the United States and United Kingdom governments to provide the necessary political and diplomatic support for the project had assured the termination of the project from the beginning.

The termination of the project caused resentment and disappointment in Turkey because the Turkish government had welcomed the project which might have been a remedy to the economic crisis that descended on the country in the late 1950s. Moreover, as mentioned before, the pipeline which would have involved Turkey would have also the increased its prestige in the region. Therefore, the Turkish government did not give up and continued negotiations with the Iranian government to construct a pipeline from the Iranian Qum to "Iskenderun". The talks between the two governments continued in November 1957. However, the Turkish-Iranian negotiations did not bear fruit due to the clash of interests of the two states. The

⁸³⁶ Telegram from the Embassy in the United Kingdom to the Department of State. November 13, 1957. FRUS 1955-57.v.12.i.8., p.656.

telegram from the United States' embassy in the United Kingdom to the Department of State sheds light on the nature of the negotiations between the two delegations:

The main difficulty is in the Petroleum Law and the percentage of the profits which foreign companies are allowed in it. The Turks, we understand, have been trying to get 50% of the profits, but the Iranians are unwilling to go beyond 23,5% until the cost of the project is fully met. Therefore Turkey's share might go up to 50%. There seem however to be general agreement on broad principles and both sides are optimistic. Besides the legal difficulties arising from the Turkish Petroleum Law, which can perhaps be met by altering a particular article by decision of the Council of Ministers, it appears that the other delaying factor is that the Turkish delegation includes representatives of every ministry which could claim to have an interest. The Ministry of Defense representatives in particular were said to be stupid and obstructive.⁸³⁷

Despite the optimistic expectations for the Turkish-Iranian negotiations, the talks were suspended on 22 November 1957. The two delegations did not agree on the resolution of the disputes in Turkey that might have stemmed from the pipeline. The Iranian side was in favor of international arbitration while the Turkish delegation insisted on the resolution of the disputes in accordance with Turkish law. Before the suspension of the negotiations, the head of the Turkish delegation suggested that a joint communiqué should be issued which would say that "the negotiations were adjourned while the two delegations referred back to their governments for instructions." This suggestion was refused by the Iranian delegation, who insisted that they had been given instructions from their government and the Turkish side should reconsider the project. The head of the Iranian delegation told his Turkish counterpart that "the question of international arbitration was of cardinal importance the Persians had learned from their own experience with foreign oil companies." The head of the Iranian delegation added that:

⁸³⁷ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. November 15, 1957. FO 371. 127211. UES1171-238B.

It should not cost the Persians more to pipe their oil from Qum to Iskenderun than to ship it from the Persian Gulf. Building of a Persian tanker fleet was more attractive than the construction of a pipeline through Turkey as tankers could be switched to serve markets in other parts of the world.⁸³⁸

The United Kingdom's ambassador in Ankara added a comment to his report:

It is clear that the Persian Delegation's patience with the Turks is rapidly being exhausted.⁸³⁹

Like the pipeline projects of the Western oil companies, the Turkish-Iranian negotiations did not end in concrete results. Therefore, the project which could make Turkey a part of Middle East oil politics and could be a remedy to the economic disease in the country, to some extent, ended before it had even begun. The pipeline project was the major economic project that might have served and satisfied Turkey's economic needs and interests regarding the Middle East.

However, despite the failure of the pipeline projects, Turkey's economic relations diversified in the region and the government tried hard to broaden its economic partners in order to improve the economy. The commercial agreements with the states in the region were a part of this approach.

Commercial Agreements with the Middle East States

The Commercial Agreement with Israel (1956)

Ofra Bengio argues that the relations between Turkey and Israel began to develop right after the recognition of Israel by Turkey in 1949. The two countries aimed to keep their relations secret at the very beginning and after private meetings between the authorities, the two states became Allies in the region. Bengio states that the two states signed an agreement in 1958 which could be regarded as significant in

⁸³⁸ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. November 22, 1957. FO371. 127211. UES1171-238C.

⁸³⁹ *ibid.*

the relations between the two states, especially after the so-called “deterioration” of the relations between Turkey and Israel with the withdrawal of the Turkish ambassador in Telaviv in the wake of the Arab-Israeli War in 1956. In this agreement, it was decided that the diplomatic, economic and military relations would be developed. The development of economic relations was emphasized and, as the trade statistics above showed, Israel became the main economic partner of Turkey in the Middle East.⁸⁴⁰

However, before 1958, Turkey and Israel signed a commercial agreement in order to develop economic relations as early as 1950. The commercial agreement, which signed in 1950, was revised in 1956.⁸⁴¹

The agreement seemed not beneficial to the Israeli side. A telegram from the United Kingdom’s ambassador in Ankara to Foreign Office shows how Turkey was in a difficult position to pay its debts:

On May 11, 1956, the Israeli Commercial Secretary told me that under the Turkish-Israeli clearing, Turkey now owes Israel about \$ 3,7 m. He said that in the present state of the Israeli economy, this constituted an appreciable factor of inflation. He added that the Turks did not respect the limit set for “owing” under the clearing. When they had exceeded the limit, Israel was entitled to ask for payment of the excess in dollars.... Their requests were simply ignored. He said that Israel had no use for the available qualities of Turkish cotton and that the prices for Turkish oil cake were too high. Apart from these two commodities, Turkey seemed to have no expertable commodities to offer to Israel. The arrangements under which the export to the bilateral agreement countries of commodities such as cotton and oil cake were limited... The arrangements were too complicated and the prices asked from the bilateral agreement countries were too high. He said he could see no sign of any improvement in future prospects.⁸⁴²

⁸⁴⁰ Ofra Bengio, *The Turkish-Israeli Relationship* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p.33. See also Amikam Nachmani, *Israel, Turkey and Greece* (London: Frank Cass, 1987), pp.61-63.

⁸⁴¹ Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, term 10, session 75, vol.12, 11 June 1956., pp.278-279.

⁸⁴² Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. May 11, 1956. FO 371.124026. RK11353-1.

The impact of Turkey's failure to meet its obligations on Israeli economy cannot be understood from the statements above. In other words, it was not easy to conclude that \$3,7 million debts had an inflationary impact on the Israeli economy unless the Israeli volume of trade and the economy were known. However, it was important and clear to show that Turkey was not able to fulfill its obligations under the clearing agreement with Israel at the time. Upon this failure, Turkish and Israeli officials met in Paris to consolidate Turkey's debts to Israel in late 1958. The conversation between the United Kingdom's ambassador and Israeli chargé d'affaires, Mr. Alon, in Ankara, showed that Turkey and Israel sought alternatives to overcome the problems:

The Turks would like the Israelis to scale down by 30-40% the debt Turkey presently owed to Israel. When Mr. Alon asked what this meant he was told that if Israel could not do this it would be difficult for Turkey to continue to trade with them. In addition, there might be difficulty over applying the new exchange premium to Israel. Mr. Alon told me that he replied coldly to these suggestions and said that if it was a statement of the Turkish government's intentions they should communicate it in a proper way through a note. He has since told me that nothing further has been heard and perhaps the Turks will not pursue the matter. Mr. Alon said that under their bilateral trade agreement Turkey at present owes Israel about 2 million dollars. The figure was higher, but Israel had recently managed to reduce the amount owing by buying some cotton and some low-grade wheat. Israel was disturbed about the present situation since they were not clear where they stood as regards the debt standstill and the devaluation... Israel wanted to be free to buy as much as she could from Turkey in order to be able to export more... My impression is that Turco-Israeli economic relations may be in for a slightly difficult period, but as the Israelis seem desperate for foreign trade they may well come forward with offers to buy Turkish products which is proving difficult to sell, in order to be able to deliver their own products to Turkey in exchange.⁸⁴³

The Turkish and Israeli governments worked to reach an agreement to arrange bilateral trade relations. They provided privileges to each other in trading. In February 1959, Turkey granted import permits to Israel worth \$4 million of Israeli

⁸⁴³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. September 17, 1958. FO 371. 134331. VR 11344-1.

goods. These goods involved “tyres, antibiotics, pencils, chemicals and several electrical products.”⁸⁴⁴

Ultimately, the commercial agreement which had been signed in 1950 and revised in 1956 was replaced by a new trade agreement on 18 March 1960. The new trade agreement stated that:

Revised payment agreements have been made whereby 50% of payments will be on a clearing basis and 50% in convertible exchange. Account will be kept in the two central banks and for each trade transaction half will be put in the bilateral account.⁸⁴⁵

The trade and commercial agreements between Turkey and Israel were signed to find a remedy to the ills of the Turkish economy, particularly in the late 1950s. The two states were “hidden” strategic partners and they cooperated in the economic realm, too. However, Israel was not the only state in the region with which Turkey sought to develop its economic relations especially during the time of economic crisis.

The Commercial Agreement with Iran (1953-1955)

The basis of the trade relations between Turkey and Iran was the sale of Iranian oil and oil products to Turkey in return for the sale of Turkish products, mainly agricultural products, to Iran.

As early as 1953, the Iranian embassy in Ankara approached the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and demanded the removal of import restrictions on Iranian products to Turkey in accordance with the commercial agreements. The Iranian embassy offered to sell as much oil as possible to meet the demands of Turkey. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs contacted to other departments to remove

⁸⁴⁴ February 6, 1959. FO 371. 142349. VL11344-1.

⁸⁴⁵ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. May 20, 1960. FO 371. 151220. VR11344-1.

Iranian complaints and to meet the demands. In the meantime, the United Kingdom demanded the Turkish government “to keep a solid front amongst our friends over oil question and asked that we should be kept informed of developments.”⁸⁴⁶

The approach of Iran to Turkey to sell oil disturbed the United Kingdom because there were several oil companies that had been operating in Turkey. The proposal of Iran to sell oil to Turkey disturbed the United Kingdom and they sought to prevent this transaction. The telegram from the United Kingdom’s embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office indicated the feeling of uneasiness in the Western side:

Mr.Riddle, the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company representative in Istanbul, has also heard of several cases of private businessmen who are actively interesting themselves in the possibility of distributing Persian oil in Turkey. He recently reported a typical proposal to import 80 tons of oil products per day by road in drums or tins. Selling price would be 8 to 10 percent below the selling prices of the existing oil companies. When this proposal was put to him, the Minister of Commerce is reported to have commented that other merchants had approached him to propose similar transactions and that the Persian Ambassador had already asked him whether Turkey would allow Persian oil to be imported and that he had referred this question to the MFA... The legal implications of these proposals are not entirely clear to us, but Mr.Riddle comments that he would certainly not expect the Turkish government to prohibit the import of Persian oil when the US government professes to be unable to do so. They would be quite likely to follow the American lead and leave individuals to form their own judgement whether to buy oil from Persia in the light of the legal issues involved.⁸⁴⁷

However, as can be supposed, the Turkish government rejected the Iranian proposal in 1953 after having considered the political implications of such a transaction during the Anglo-Iranian oil dispute.⁸⁴⁸ On the other hand, the Iranian

⁸⁴⁶ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. January 13, 1953. FO 371. 104617. EP 1533-5.

⁸⁴⁷ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to the Foreign Office. January 13, 1953. FO 371. 104617. EP 1533-10.

⁸⁴⁸ The Anglo-Iranian Oil Dispute erupted upon the nationalization of Iranian oil with the Oil Nationalization Act, which was passed in the Iranian Majlis during the Prime Ministry of Mossadegh. The Act cancelled the rights of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in Iran. The negotiations between the United Kingdom and Iran did not bring result and the United Kingdom applied the International Court of Justice to settle the dispute. During the dispute, the Allies put blockade on the Iranian Oil. Akhtar Adil Razwy, “The Anglo-Iranian Oil

government needed the Turkish market to break the blockade which had been put on Iran during the dispute. The aforementioned telegram continued as follows:

The government would be unlikely to commit themselves openly to buying Persian oil and this would rule out distribution through the Petrol Ofis... The question of payment might offer considerable difficulties. Turkey is of course short of foreign exchange and it is not easy to see what she could usefully offer in considerable quantities as a basis for a barter transaction with Persia... Persia on the other hand may be so determined to break if possible the blockade of her oil exports that she might accept a considerable sacrifice in the form of a price reduction or deferred payment.⁸⁴⁹

Although the Turkish government rejected the Iranian proposal, the Foreign Office asked the United Kingdom's ambassador in Ankara to approach the Turkish government and point out that Turkey should continue to obtain all the oil from the US and UK suppliers. Moreover, "the quantity which might reach Turkey from Persia are likely to be quite insignificant."⁸⁵⁰

In this period, the rumors about the Turkish-Iranian deals to exchange the Iranian oil and Turkish products continued to spread in oil circles. It was claimed that the Iranians approached the Turkish government to sell oil in return for Turkish copper under a barter agreement. Nevertheless, it was argued the United States had asked for assurances from the Turkish government not to reach an agreement with Iran because of the danger of the possibility of the selling of copper by Iran to the Iron Curtain states. The United Kingdom's ambassador in Washington asked if these rumors were true, but they were not verified. However, for the United Kingdom's

Dispute," *Pakistan Horizon*, no.2, June 1953, p.75. See also Steve Marsh, *Anglo-American Relations and Cold War Oil* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003)

⁸⁴⁹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to the Foreign Office. January 13, 1953. FO 371. 104617. EP 1533-10.

⁸⁵⁰ Telegram from Foreign Office to the British Embassy in Ankara. February 4, 1953. FO 371. 104617. EP 1533-5.

officials, the United States was of the opinion that such a transaction was not likely to be realized.⁸⁵¹

Despite the failure of negotiations between Turkey and Iran in 1953, the two countries agreed on a transaction agreement in 1955. The representatives of the Turkish oil companies contacted the Iranian government to transfer 30,000 to 40,000 tons of refined oil products from Iran to Turkey during the Presidential visit that took place in 1955. It was claimed by the United Kingdom embassy in Tehran that:

The Persians are to accept 50% in goods and the remainder in sterling or dollars and the Turks are to bear all transport charges from Khermanshah, the refinery from which the products will come. The transaction can have no commercial attractions for the Persians and it seems unlikely that it would have gone through unless the Shah had personally intervened. A director of the National Iranian Oil Company which appears to be waking up slowly to the implications of the deal, asked the Economic Counsellor yesterday for information regarding the Turks' capacity to pay the £2 million cash involved, the state of the oil companies' finances in Turkey and if the Turkish government still owed them £10 million.⁸⁵²

Consequently, during the initial stage of the economic problems in Turkey, the Turkish government made efforts to broaden its economic relations and, regarding oil, find new sources. Iran was the country with which Turkey negotiated to obtain oil and oil products under a clearing agreement because of its debts to the Western oil companies. The nature of a possible agreement and the impacts on both sides were evaluated by the United Kingdom's ambassador as follows:

Turkey has consistently fallen into arrears under successive payments agreements made with foreign oil companies and at present owes American companies about \$ 40 million and British companies about £ 7 million. Latest Turkish proposal to which the suppliers have not yet replied is that these arrears should be paid within ten years from now payments to start in 1957. At present Turkey is paying cash in advance for oil and petrol imports. Since Turkish government can find

⁸⁵¹ Telegram from the Foreign Office. August 19, 1953. FO 371. 104628. EP 1533-351.

⁸⁵² Telegram from the Embassy in Tehran to Foreign Office. September 26, 1955. FO 371.114852.EP1533-9.

cash for present suppliers they could presumably find cash for Persian suppliers if they wished to do so. But they could not find £ 2 million all at once... Experience of present suppliers suggests that irrespective of the terms of any agreement reached with the Persians, Turkey would soon be in arrears unless the suppliers insist on payment in advance... Proposal to pay for part of Persian oil in goods involves a real risk to the Persians. Turkish authorities tend to promise the same goods to several suppliers with the result that deliveries are often late and when they offer to supply goods at world prices they usually fix a price which is in practice rather above world prices with the result that the other party has to bear an appreciable loss.⁸⁵³

As a result, the negotiations between Turkey and Iran ended up with an agreement on 31 October 1955. Turkey agreed to buy of 35,000 tons of petroleum products per annum for the following three years from the Khermanshah refinery. It would pay in cash and put up a bank guarantee.⁸⁵⁴

The clearing negotiations between Turkey and Iran did not come up with concrete results and the two countries did not sign such agreement. It can be argued that the reasons that were mentioned in the telegram above and the great powers, which were against such a transaction that would bring alternative sources to Turkey, played a role in the failure of the clearing agreement. However, like the Allies, Turkey and Iran were in efforts to broaden their economic relations as well as the political ones.

In the years of crisis, Israel and Iran were not the only countries in the Middle East with which Turkey sought to develop its economic relations. Despite the leadership competition and a rivalry in politics, especially at the propaganda level, rapprochement between Turkey and Egypt took place in the late 1950s. The two countries signed a commercial agreement in 1957.

⁸⁵³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. September 27, 1955. FO 371.114852.EP 1533-10.

⁸⁵⁴ Telegram from the British Embassy in Tehran to Foreign Office. November 1, 1955. FO 371. 114852.EP 1533-12.

The Commercial Agreement with Egypt – 1957

In the late 1950s, the commercial relations between Turkey and Egypt improved. The Turkish minister of commerce visited Cairo with a delegation and represented Turkey at the Cairo Fair on 10-19 July 1957. During the visit, trade talks between the two states took place in order to develop economic relations. The Turkish Minister returned satisfied and stated it was thought that the development of commercial relations between Turkey and Egypt would result in political rapprochement. During and after the visit, there were no criticisms in the press of the two countries against each other. With the agreement that was reached, the commercial credit limit raised from \$900,000 to \$2 million.⁸⁵⁵

The commercial agreement between the two states was not new, but it was modified. The credit ceiling increased and it enabled the two states to trade much more easily. More importantly, it was agreed that the excess over the ceiling would be paid in goods rather than foreign exchange.⁸⁵⁶ The United Kingdom's ambassador in Ankara commented the agreement between the two states as follows:

Turkey has probably gained more from the new arrangement than Egypt. In her present extremely difficult foreign exchange position it is something of an achievement to be able to purchase more from Egypt without having to find foreign exchange. It is likely that the new credit ceiling will be utilized to the maximum by Turkey since certain goods which are assembled in Egypt such as American trucks can be imported as Egyptian produce. Turkey should also be able to obtain from Egypt much needed tyres, as well as certain textiles, including poplin and long staple cotton. The Egyptian purchases from Turkey are mainly tobacco and also some hides.⁸⁵⁷

The commercial agreement between Turkey and Egypt, which was a form of a clearing agreement, was important to show, firstly, the efforts of the Turkish

⁸⁵⁵ Telegram from the Ambassador of Pakistan in Turkey to Foreign Secretary. August 13, 1957. FO 371. 130181. RK 10316-6.

⁸⁵⁶ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. July 24, 1957. FO 371. 130196. RK 11316-1.

⁸⁵⁷ *ibid.*

government to broaden its economic relations to ameliorate the impacts of the economic crisis and, secondly, the priority of interests rather than ideological or commitments in this decade.

In return for the Turkish delegation's visit to Cairo, an Egyptian commercial delegation led by the Egyptian minister of commerce, visited Turkey on 17-23 August 1957. The delegation participated in the opening of the Izmir International Fair on 20 August 1957 although there was not an Egyptian pavilion at the fair that year. The Egyptian minister stated that Egypt would have a pavilion at the fair in the next year. In a telegram from the United Kingdom's embassy to Foreign office, it was stated that the visit was of a "courtesy nature."⁸⁵⁸

Consequently, the commercial relations between Turkey and Egypt developed in the late 1950s as a result of the amelioration of political relations and the decrease of tension between the two states.

Turkey's role in the economics of the Middle East has been analyzed so far. In the second half of the 1950s, Turkey sought to be a part of the Middle East economy in oil matters, particularly during and right after the Suez Canal crisis, and tried to broaden its economic relations with the Middle East states to find a remedy to its economic problems, although they were limited in scope. It can be argued that besides its economic needs, the leadership role that Turkey wanted to play in the region determined Turkey's approach to the Middle Eastern states. In addition to the commercial agreements, the military relations with the smaller states in the Middle East were an indicator of Turkey's approach.

⁸⁵⁸ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. August 27, 1957. FO 371. 130196. RK 11316-2.

Turkey's Military Relations with the Middle East States

The Baghdad Pact was signed in 1955. The pact was welcomed by states such as Iran, Pakistan, and Jordan which sought to develop their relations with the West. The participation of the United Kingdom in the pact in the same year and the United States' support of the pact despite the lack of membership instigated the propaganda of states like Egypt, Syria, and Saudi Arabia. On the other hand, states like Jordan and Lebanon remained hesitant to participate in the pact due to their fear of Egypt, and of a split between Egypt and Iraq as the most powerful Arab states and of Israel, especially for Lebanon, because of the conflicts that they faced as a Jewish state that had been created by the United States.

After 1955, Turkey began to conduct closer relations with the smaller states of the region in order to find possible markets for its products and to persuade these states to join the Baghdad Pact which was supposed to serve Turkey's leadership in the Middle East. To this end, the development of military relations with Libya, Lebanon, Jordan, and Afghanistan became an integral part of the Democrat Party's strategy to integrate these states into the alliance although military support did not bring the expected results.

The Military Relations with Libya

Turkey provided personnel support to the modernization of the Libyan Army. Retired Turkish military officers were employed in the Libyan Ministry of Defense as military advisors upon the personal request of Libyan King in 1954.⁸⁵⁹ The mission of the Turkish officers in the Libyan Ministry of Defense was kept secret,

⁸⁵⁹ December 28, 1953. FO 371. 108705. JT1201-2. See also Orhan Koloğlu, "500 Years in Turkish-Libyan Relations", *SAM Paper*, no.1 (2007), p.261.

but the Western Allies were informed about the developments. The telegram from the United Kingdom's Legation in Tripoli to the Foreign Office indicated the mission of the military cooperation between the two countries:

(My Turkish colleague) went on to say that he hoped to ensure a cooperative attitude on the part of Major General Hafız Betin and four other officers of the Turkish Army who were coming to Libya shortly to join the Libyan Ministry of Defense. He said that there was no question of these people replacing the British Military Mission. He understood the intention was that the General should be a "deputy" Minister of Defense and that the others should be in charge of various sections of that Ministry. The General, whose arm was artillery, was on the retired list of the Turkish Army. The General would continue to draw his pension and the service of the others would count for pension. He did not think that there was any question of their assuming Libyan nationality.⁸⁶⁰

Turkey's military support to Libya was not limited to personnel support. In addition, it sent military equipment to the Libyan army. In December 1954, the Turkish government gifted six 25 pounder field guns to the Libyan Army. They were delivered to the Libyan officials in Tripoli.⁸⁶¹ Turkey continued to provide military supplies to Libya for the modernization of the Libyan army in the following period.

The story of the military supply to Libya in 1957 seems to have been somewhat different. A retired Turkish diplomat, Kemal Girgin, argued that the military supplies which were provided to Libya in 1957 were sent to the Algerian army to be used against France in the Algerian War of Independence that took place between 1954 and 1962. The mission was kept secret and the supplies were sent across the deserts and the mountains to Algeria. More importantly, as Girgin argued, the Turkish prime minister Menderes and the Libyan prime minister Mustafa Bin Halim had agreed on this mission in advance. The military aid to the Algerian army was to be kept secret in order to prevent France from impeding Turkey's membership

⁸⁶⁰ Telegram from the British Legation in Tripoli to the Foreign Office. February 8, 1954. FO 371. 108705. JT1201-12.

⁸⁶¹ Telegram from the British Embassy in Benghazi to the Foreign Office. December 18, 1954. FO 371. 108705. JT1201-43.

to the Common Market. In return for the military aid to Algeria, Turkey abstained during the voting of the Algerian Independence in the United Nations to the advantage of France. Girgin added that despite the efforts to support the Algerian army, it was later understood that the military supplies did not reach to the Algerian army and the Turkey's vote in the United Nations caused the resentment of the Algerians in the following period.⁸⁶²

The Military Relations with Jordan

Besides Libya, Jordan was another state with which Turkey conducted military relations and provided military support in the mid-1950s. In the Grand National Assembly, it was decided to make a gift of three Magister type planes to the Jordan army in January 1955. The report sent by the United Kingdom's ambassador in Ankara to the Foreign Office implies the reason for this decision:

At the end of January a bill to make a gift to Jordan of three light training aircraft was submitted to the National Assembly and passed a fortnight later. The aeroplanes were made in Turkey and are trainers of a cut-down Magister type. Although they are old fashioned, they are still very useful to the Turks and the Air Attaché is unable to suggest any reason why the Turks should be giving them away. It appears likely that there is some political motive. The aircraft may have been intended as a sweetener, but in the event the Jordanian attitude to the Turco-Iraqi pact has been far from satisfactory to the Turks.⁸⁶³

In addition to the efforts to provide military equipment to Jordan to tempt it to participate into the alliance projects, it should be remembered that during the Jordanian crisis, Turkey was expected to intervene militarily to save the Jordanian government, as was discussed in detail before.

⁸⁶² Girgin, pp.41-42. See also Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, term 10, session 72, vol.19, 24 May 1957., pp.318-319.

⁸⁶³ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. February 18, 1955. FO 371. 115649. VJ10344-1.

The Military Relations with Lebanon

In addition to Libya and Jordan, Lebanon was another state on which Turkey intended to put pressure to persuade join the Baghdad Pact through military aid.

In 1955, Turkey offered to make a gift to Lebanon from Turkey of some heavy artillery as he described it. The President explained the history of this by saying that the Turks had a certain number of guns to dispose of in an almost brand new condition which they previously from the United Kingdom. These had now been superseded by American equipment and he had therefore made an offer to the Turks to buy some of them – hoping no doubt that he would get them on the cheap. The Turkish reply was that they would be pleased to make gift to the Lebanon of a number of guns... The president added that he did not intend to do anything about this offer at present because the Turkish riots in Istanbul, Izmir and Ankara had created such a bad impression in Lebanon that this was not a suitable moment for him to accept the gift.⁸⁶⁴

It can be argued that the military support issue with Lebanon had two objectives; first, Turkey worked to influence Lebanon to integrate into the alliance through military support although it became unsuccessful and, second, although Lebanon was a small state in the Middle East, the decision makers could not ignore the internal dynamics while making foreign policy decisions. Moreover, as happened during the Jordanian crisis, the Turkish military intervention in Lebanon was expected, although it was not realized.

The Military Relations with Afghanistan

In the late 1950s, Turkey and Afghanistan agreed to cooperate in the training of the Afghan military officers. The prime minister of Afghanistan, Prince Serdar Mohammed Daud Khan visited Turkey upon the invitation of the Turkish government between 17 and 23 April 1957. During this visit, the Afghan prime

⁸⁶⁴ Telegram from the British Embassy in Beirut to Foreign Office. September 15, 1955. FO 371. 115729. VL10344-8. See also Republic of Turkey, *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi*, term 10, session 78, vol.7, 20 May 1955., pp.414-415.

minister asserted that they were aware of the Soviet threat against them and they needed Turkish help in military training.⁸⁶⁵

The Afghan prime minister added that his government was willing to increase the number of Afghan military students. There were then fifty students in Turkey and he wanted these students to be trained in the Turkish Air Force, mechanized units and the gendarmerie. In return, the Turkish government showed willingness to train more Afghan students at the Turkish military.⁸⁶⁶

The two governments continued their contacts regarding this issue in the following period. Two years later, on 17 July 1959, the Afghan Chief of Staff visited Turkey in order to plan the scope of military training of the Afghan students in Turkey. Before the visit, the Turkish government had hoped to increase the scale of military contacts with Afghanistan, e.g., to increase the number of officers attached to the Turkish army or attended courses in Turkey from 50 to 130, to set up a military academy in Afghanistan with a Turkish staff, and to construct some institutions to give specialized military training. However, the Turkish government had been aware that the realization of the plans depended upon the willingness of the Afghan authorities. More importantly, they were also aware that the financial support of the United States was necessary to carry out these plans.⁸⁶⁷ During the visit of the Afghan Chief of Staff, all these plans were discussed and the Turkish government made their proposals. The Chief of Staff replied that the Afghan government and the army would study these plans.⁸⁶⁸

⁸⁶⁵ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. April 26, 1957. FO 371.129379.DA10344-2.

⁸⁶⁶ Telegram from the British Embassy in Ankara to Foreign Office. May 3, 1957. FO 371.129379. DA10344-3.

⁸⁶⁷ Telegram from the British Consulate in Istanbul to Foreign Office. July 13, 1959. FO 371.143818. DA 10344-1.

⁸⁶⁸ Telegram from the British Consulate in Istanbul to Foreign Office. August 3, 1959. FO 371.143818. DA 10344-2.

After the visit, the Turkish minister of foreign affairs told the United Kingdom's diplomats in Turkey that "their proposals had been accepted in principle, but it did not seem likely that any significant results would be visible in the near future. One of the difficulties was that the Afghan military authorities appeared to have no properly qualified personnel to send Turkey for military training". For the Minister, the establishment of a Staff College in Afghanistan with Turkish officers should be regarded as a long-term development and there might have been no progress until 1960.⁸⁶⁹

To sum up, in the 1950s, Turkey cooperated with Afghanistan in military matters, as happened with the other states in the Middle East and the Afghan students were trained in the military schools in Turkey.

Concluding Remarks

The 1950s witnessed the efforts of the Democrat Party government to be an integral part of the economic relations as well as the political relations in the Middle East, especially in the second half of the decade. It can be argued that the factors that pushed the Democrat Party to act accordingly were twofold: to broaden its economic relations in scope in a time of crisis and to play the role of leadership in the region, particularly through military support to the smaller states in the region.

To this end, there were several developments that determined the context of the government's policy. Oil issue and the oil relations were the basis of Middle East economic relations and Turkey had the chance to be a part of these relations during the Suez Crisis in 1956. When the Suez Canal was nationalized by the Egyptian government and the passage of transit ships were blocked, the great powers and the

⁸⁶⁹ Telegram from the British Consulate in Istanbul to Foreign Office. September 28, 1959. FO 371. 143831. DA 11344-1.

oil companies began to study alternative ways to transfer the Middle Eastern oil to Europe. The pipeline project, which would have included Turkey, was considered and studied. However, as the crisis ended and the oil relations normalized, the pipeline project was dropped. Therefore, the chance for the Democrat Party government to be a part of Middle Eastern oil politics and the chance to find a solution, at least partially, to the economic problems in Turkey disappeared.

Secondly, the government signed bilateral agreements with Israel, Iran, and Egypt to exchange goods without payments, which was a kind of clearing agreement, to meet some of the needs of the country. The commercial agreements, particularly the one with Egypt, showed that the political commitments at the propaganda level were not sufficient to understand the nature of international politics. More importantly, it was also an indicator of the overlapping political and economic policies.

Lastly, the military cooperation with the smaller states in the region, i.e., Libya, Jordan, Lebanon, and Afghanistan showed that Turkey sought to play a leadership role in the region, naturally with the approval of the United States, through military aids to the aforementioned states. More importantly, the Democrat Party government worked to persuade these states to participate into the alliance projects in which Turkey was involved. However, the regional dynamics played a role, which had been analyzed in detail, in the failure of these efforts.

To sum up, even in the 1950s, the hottest years of the Cold War, the political, economic and military interests of the states were inseparable, and despite the propaganda of ideological commitments, even smaller states were seeking to maximize their political, economic, and military needs.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

In the 1950s, the role of Turkey, which was governed by the Democrat Party, in the Middle East was to be a bridge between the Arab world and the West in order to prevent the Soviet expansion or infiltration into the region through the formation of alliances among the regional states, i.e., the Middle East Command, the Turkish-Pakistani Pact, and ultimately the Baghdad Pact. Thus, Turkey was given the role of leadership in this strategy mainly by the United States. For the Democrat Party government, the leadership in the Middle East was the tool to provide security against the Soviet threat, which dated back to the mid-1940s, and more importantly to provide economic and military support from the United States especially in the second half of the 1950s. It can be argued that it was a relationship that was based on mutual interests.

However, Turkey's strong ties with the West did not prevent the decision-makers from acting pragmatically and developing relations with the Soviet Union in the economic realm in the years of economic crises in the second half of the 1950s. In brief, both Allies and Turkey, and the states in the region sought to maximize their political, economic and military interests to the extent possible. As a result, the global and regional dynamics and interests of the individual states, which will be summarized below, determined the results of the strategy of Turkey's leadership in the region.

The Cold War was not simply a clash of ideological commitments of the United States and the Soviet Union or capitalism and communism. It was a struggle between the two world systems with their political, economic, military, and even

cultural dynamics. As the superpowers reached the balance of nuclear weapons, they understood that a nuclear war would endanger the whole world including themselves. Therefore, they tried hard to avoid direct confrontation and to find alternative ways to protect and expand their spheres of influence against the other rather than nuclear confrontation. In this competition, propaganda, spying, and such other tools became the media of international relations. In time, as the United States and the Soviet Union established their spheres of influence in Europe, the Third World became the arena of competition, and especially the Middle East, witnessed the harsh superpower rivalry in the 1950s.

Regarding the Middle East, the main aim of the United States and its Allies were to protect the vital resources of the region, particularly oil, which was crucial for the control of the world and to dominate the Soviet Union in the rivalry. More importantly, the basic concern of the United States was to prevent and contain the Soviet Union from infiltrating the region. Therefore, the United States provided economic and military assistance to the states in the region and tried to bring them together under the umbrella of alliance systems such as the Middle East Command and the Baghdad Pact. In return, during the rule of Khrushchev from 1953 onwards, the Soviet Union worked to expand its sphere of influence and infiltrate the Middle East as a part of the peaceful coexistence policy. On the other hand, the regional dynamics, i.e., the Nasserite Arab nationalism, anti-imperialism, anti-Zionism and intra-Arab rivalry, resulted in the failure of the policies of the United States and its Allies and paved the way of the Soviet infiltration into the region, especially in the second half of the 1950s.

The Middle East states tried to use the superpower rivalry to their advantage and to maximize their political, economic, and military interests. For the regional

Arab states, the major enemy was Israel rather than the Soviet Union and thus, the alliance projects supported by the United States against the Soviet expansion did not make sense for the regional states except the ones who were closer to the United States, such as Turkey and Iraq. The engagement of Turkey and Iraq with the West, in addition to the miscalculations of the Allies regarding the Middle East, caused the failure of the alliance projects and resulted in crises in the late 1950s because some important regional actors such as Egypt and Syria, the forerunners of Arab nationalism who were in close contact with the Soviet Union, and these states were the pioneers of the anti-Western “propaganda.” Egypt also sought to be the leader of the Arab world and the Middle East, a role allocated to Turkey by the United States at the very beginning of the 1950s. Like the global and regional dynamics, the domestic developments also shaped the Middle East politics in the 1950s. For example, the coup of the Free Officers in Egypt in 1952 and the social crises in Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan in 1958 influenced and changed the political structure and dynamics of the region.

Under these problematic and conflictual circumstances, Turkey tried to be actively involved in regional politics and to play the leadership role. In the early 1950s, Turkey’s priority was membership in NATO and she was not interested in the alliance projects at the very beginning. Nevertheless, after membership in NATO had been achieved in 1952, the Middle East Command and Middle East Defense Organization projects became the major foreign policy objectives of Turkey. The United States had formulated those and tried to establish them. Efforts were made to persuade the Middle East states through economic and military aid. Nevertheless, the intra-regional rivalries and conflicts, which had not been considered or taken seriously by the Allies, impeded the Western-imposed military alliances. As

mentioned before, the conflicts and rivalries among the Arab states, the hostility against Israel and the rivalry of leadership between Turkey and Egypt did not allow for the realization of the establishment of such a military alliance in the Middle East. More importantly, the regime change in Egypt in 1952 and Nasser's rising dominance in the Egyptian, and later the Arab politics made such an alliance impossible. Consequently, the Allies changed their strategy and sought to establish an indigenous military alliance in which the axis shifted from Turkey and Egypt to Turkey, Iraq, and Pakistan or shortly the "Northern Tier" from 1954 onwards.

The Turkish-Iraqi Pact or, with its other name, the Baghdad Pact was the ultimate project in the Middle East to set up a defense structure in the 1950s. After the failure of the attempts to establish the Middle East Command and the Middle East Defense Organization, the Northern Tier concept was formulated by United States' secretary John Foster Dulles after his Middle East tour in 1953. The Northern Tier concept involved Turkey, Pakistan, Iraq, and Iran forming an alliance for the defense of the Middle East against the Soviet threat. The divergence of Egypt from the West to a "neutralist" line, especially after the Coup of Free Officers in 1952, although Nasser and the Officers were not anti-Western at the beginning, caused such a policy change. After the encouragement of the individual states, the Turkish-Pakistani Pact was signed as an initial stage of the Middle Eastern alliance. Then, the negotiations between Turkey and Iraq, particularly between Menderes and Nuri Said, who wholeheartedly worked for the signature of the Pact, began and ultimately the Baghdad Pact was signed between the two states.

The attitudes of the great powers toward the Baghdad Pact were different. The United States never joined the Pact despite the heavy pressure on it by the states in the region and the Pact members, whereas it played a role of sponsorship of the

Pact. Despite its economic and military support, the United States stayed behind the scenes due to reasons vital to its interests, i.e., not to be actively involved in the regional rivalries and conflicts, not to be a part of the Arab-Israeli conflict and to protect economic and military interests in the region.

The United Kingdom, on the other hand, played a mediator role and became a member of the Pact. More importantly, it was the first signatory after Turkey and Iraq. The basic reason for the involvement of the United Kingdom was its desire not to lose the leadership role and not to give up its interests and privileges in the region. The reaction of the Soviet Union was negative, but it did not put pressure on the Pact countries except for anti-Pact propaganda. With the development of relations between the Soviet Union, Egypt and Syria, the Soviet Union infiltrated the region through economic and military aid to these countries and became an integral part of Middle East politics in the second half of the 1950s.

The impact of the Baghdad Pact process on the regional states was different. The only commonality of the approaches of the states in the region, except for Egypt and Syria, to join the Pact was their economic and military demands in return for membership to the Pact. Turkey and Iraq were in efforts to lead the region and to extend their alliance to the other Arab states. The prime ministers of both states tried hard to persuade especially the smaller states to join the Pact. Pakistan and Iran joined the Pact later in return for the guarantee of economic and military aid from the United States. Egypt, which was claiming the leadership of the Arab world as a neutralist state, reacted harshly to the Baghdad Pact and Pact members, especially Iraq and Turkey as its rivals in the Middle East for leadership. Syria had been favorable to the Pact at the beginning, but after the change of the Syrian government, the attitude of this state shifted dramatically, and Syria began to act with Egypt as a

“neutralist” state. Saudi Arabia, which was an important actor of the regional politics, was against the Pact because of its ignorance of the Israeli threat against the whole Arab world and its “possible” rivalry with the Hashemite dynasty who ruled Iraq and Jordan. These three states signed the Egyptian-Syrian-Saudi Pact right after and against the Baghdad Pact to develop their economic and military cooperation in the Arab world, but later the Pact dissolved due to its internal problems. Again, suspicion, hatred, and clash of interests poisoned the Pact member states, which also affected the Baghdad Pact members during the negotiations. The smaller states in the region, Lebanon and Jordan, hesitated to take either of the two sides. Their priority was not to take a side between Egypt and Iraq, the preservation of the so-called Arab Unity, which had not existed at any time in the Arab world, and the Arab League, which was the medium of discussion between the Arab states, against the common enemy, Israel. Moreover, they sought to provide their economic and military development. It can be argued that the Baghdad Pact bolstered the split in the Middle East. However, the Baghdad Pact cannot be blamed for such a split because the Middle East and the Arab world were not united and there were several sources of conflict and rivalry in the region. The period beginning with the signing of the Baghdad Pact witnessed a series of crises in which Turkey was involved directly or indirectly.

After the nationalization of the Suez Canal by the Egyptian President Nasser, the Suez Crisis erupted and the great powers and the states in the region were involved. The London Conferences were convened and there were diplomatic efforts to persuade the Nasser government to reach an agreement. In these diplomatic efforts, Turkey tried to play a mediatory role and tried to pursue a balanced and cautious policy which was pro-Western. During the Arab-Israeli War right after the

crisis, Turkey denounced the attack on Egypt by the Israeli, United Kingdom, and French forces. The reaction of Turkey to the Allies was not as harsh as to Israel, and Turkey withdrew its ambassador from Tel Aviv.

The smuggling and the clashes along the Turkish-Syrian border turned into a crisis in the summer of 1957. However, the basic reason for the crisis was the Soviet infiltration through economic and military aid and personnel to Syria. The increase in the role of the Soviet Union and the Communists in Syria alarmed Turkey and the Turkish government massed troops along the border. In return, the Syrian government argued that Turkey would attack and invade Syria. The reactions of both sides could be regarded as having been exaggerated. After reciprocal accusations and diplomatic attempts, the crisis ended up with discussions in the United Nations.

The establishment of the United Arab Republic and the Federal Arab Union showed the polarization in the Middle East, but these developments did not cause trouble for Turkey. It recognized both states and tried to establish closer relations with both of them. Regarding the United Arab Republic, Syria's unification with Egypt and the suppression of communism and the Communists in the country by the president Nasser were welcomed by Turkey.

Last, the social crises in Iraq, Lebanon, and Jordan erupted in 1958 and the Iraqi regime was toppled by a coup d'état. During the coup d'état in Iraq, Turkey was expected to intervene to restore the old regime. Although there was no sign of intervention from Turkey, there were many claims and scenarios about Turkey's intervention. However, Turkey did not intervene and recognized the new regime. Moreover, Turkey sought to develop its relations with the new regime and to solve the problems of the Turkish and Kurdish communities within Iraq. These expectations of a Turkish intervention were repeated during the Lebanon and Jordan

Crises, but such an intervention did not take place. The major support of Turkey to the West was that Turkey allowed the United States to utilize the İncirlik Base at Adana during the intervention in Lebanon. Consequently, Turkey tried to pursue a cautious and balanced policy during these years of crises.

The developments in the Middle East and government's policies were followed closely and discussed by the opposition in the parliament and the press in the 1950s. The developments such as the Middle East Command and the Baghdad Pact were supported and praised by the opposition parties and the press in general. However, as the crises began to erupt in the region, the government's policies began to be criticized by the opposition and the press, which was close to the opposition, mainly the RPP.

The government's policy during the Suez Canal Crisis and the Arab-Israeli War followed the crisis was criticized by the Freedom Party. Regarding these successive developments, the RPP suggested to act more cautiously and not to interfere with the events closely. The press supported the government's policy and criticized the actors who were responsible for these crises. During the Syrian Crisis, the main opposition party, the RPP strongly criticized the government's policy towards Syria and the Middle East policy in general. Moreover, it suggested once again that Turkey should stay out of the conflicts in the region. The press generally supported the government's policy; the main criticism came from journal *Forum*. The establishment of United Arab Republic and the Federal Arab Union were approached cautiously by the opposition and the press. However, the government's policy of recognizing both states was supported.

Last, the successive crises in 1958, i.e. the Iraqi coup d'état, Lebanon and Jordan Crises, were discussed in the parliament and the press. The criticisms of the

RPP were strong against the government during these crises. However, the press was split. The newspapers close to DP supported the intervention of the Allies and Turkey's support to them. On the contrary, the newspapers and journals close to RPP strongly criticized the intervention of the Allies and Turkey's support of them.

The 1950s witnessed the efforts of the Democrat Party government to be an integral part not only of the political relations, but also of the economic and military relations in the Middle East, especially in the second half of the decade. It can be argued that the reasons that pushed the Democrat Party to act accordingly were the following: to broaden its economic relations in time of economic crisis in Turkey, and to play the role of leadership in the region through providing military support to the smaller states in the region and to provide economic and military support from the United States. To this end, there were several developments that determined the government's policy.

The oil issue and the oil relations were the basis of the Middle East economic relations and Turkey had the chance to be a part of these relations during the Suez Crisis in 1956. When the Suez Canal was nationalized by the Egyptian government and the passage of transit ships were blocked, the great powers and the oil companies began to study alternative ways to transfer the Middle Eastern oil to Europe. The pipeline project which would include Turkey was studied, but with the end of the crisis and the normalization of the oil relations, the pipeline project was abandoned. Therefore, the chance for the Democrat Party government to be a part of Middle Eastern oil politics and to find a remedy, at least partially, to the economic problems in Turkey disappeared.

Second, the government signed bilateral agreements with Israel, Iran, and Egypt to exchange goods without payments to meet some of the needs of the country.

The commercial agreements, particularly the one with Egypt, showed that the political commitments at the propaganda level were not satisfactory to analyze and understand the nature of international politics. More importantly, it was also an indicator of the overlapping political and economic policies.

Last, the military cooperation with the smaller states in the region, i.e., Libya, Jordan, Lebanon, and Afghanistan showed that Turkey sought to play a leadership role in the region through military aid to these states. Furthermore, the government made efforts to persuade these states to participate in the alliance projects in which Turkey was involved. However, the regional dynamics played a role in the failure of these efforts.

As some scholars argue, the Middle East witnessed an Arab Cold War in the 1950s. The rise of Nasserite nationalism, anti-imperialism and anti-Zionism determined the fate of the Middle East politics. The competition between not only the superpowers, but also the Western Allies made developments in the region much more complex. Therefore, the states in the region tried to harmonize their domestic and foreign policies to maximize their individual interests, including Turkey.

Consequently, although the DP government sought to harmonize and maximize its political, economic, and military interests through leadership in the Middle East to establish alliances supported mainly by the United States against the Soviet expansion in the region; the complexity of the regional dynamics, i.e., the Nasserite Arab nationalism, anti-Zionism, and anti-imperialism especially against the former colonizers, the United Kingdom, and France; rivalries and the clash of interests between the regional states, for example, the Egypt-Iraq rivalry for leadership and the Saudi-Hashemite rivalry; in addition to the country-specific dynamics of the individual states; that is, economic and military needs, social crises,

resulted in the volatility of Middle East politics. All these factors prevented the DP government from reaching its goals in the region.

Finally, it can be said that the DP government was not an ardent supporter of the United States. It mainly aimed to maximize its interests to the extent possible, and the Middle East became the scene in which to play the role to reach this end especially in the second half of the 1950s. The global and regional dynamics, however, prevented the realization of these aims.

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