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TURKEY

A lecture delivered by
Professor Walter L. Wright, Jr.

at the Naval War College
February 23, 1949

Gentlemen, it is a great pleasure to have the person who introduces you as a lecturer not only state the text on which you are to speak but also the conclusion at which you are going to arrive. This is not entirely astonishing to me because I am aware that the Straits of the Bosphorous and the Dardanelles have been household words in the Navy Department ever since 1800, when Admiral Bainbridge very unwillingly sailed the *Washington* up through those straits and passed the batteries on the Dardanelles.

To carry you back for a moment to the days of sail (which I understand is not always unwelcome to sailors), Bainbridge was ordered by the Dey of Algiers to take a special emissary to his overlord, the Sultan of Turkey. The Dey threatened to blow the *Washington* out of the sea with his shore batteries if Bainbridge refused. He therefore started under duress flying the Algerian flag, but as soon as he got out of range of the batteries he sent a sailor up the mast and took the flag down, and thereafter he sailed under the Stars and Stripes. When he got to the entrance of the Dardanelles, where there were great forts on either side, he knew that a strange and unknown flag would be fired upon. He wasn't going to strike the American flag so he had to find a solution. The solution was this: he headed straight in toward the anchorage near one of these forts, and as he

The late Professor Wright spent many years in the Near East as an instructor in the American University of Beirut, Syria, and as President of the American College for Girls and Robert College, both in Istanbul, Turkey.

The Naval War College takes this opportunity of expressing its deep regret at the death of Professor Wright. May 16th, 1949.

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went in he began furling sail and firing a salute. Of course the salute was fired with black powder and there was plenty of smoke. As soon as he had a good smoke screen in the air, he began unfurling sail, and the first thing the Turkish artillerymen on shore knew, the *Washington* under full sail was emerging from her cloud of smoke, already out of range of their guns, which were in fixed emplacements and couldn't be shifted as the ship moved. So, to American sailors, these are familiar waters—the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmara, and the Bosphorous. You don't need, therefore, to be told a great deal about the general strategic importance of Turkey, which is the possessor of these narrow seas, these straits leading from the Black Sea into the Aegean.

There has been a good deal of talk since 1939 to the effect that these straits have lost their importance; that the range of air bombardment is such that the Aegean Sea in itself is a sufficiently narrow area to make the use of naval forces in any great number impossible, and there is, of course, a good deal of truth in this statement. Certainly the Aegean Sea, which is nowhere more than two hundred miles wide, offers very little opportunity for maneuver when you can get an air force out there any hour of the day. On the other hand, the crucial point within this narrow area has simply been lengthened by the addition of air force and the possibility of air attack. The tightest point in the long narrow passage is still the straits leading from the Black Sea to the Marmara and into the Aegean.

I suppose that it's appropriate to mention one major strategic point which I will refer to later. From the point of view of those who are most concerned with the straits, their major importance formerly was that behind the straits lay a body of water large enough for the training of a massive fleet, which might, if the straits were opened to it, emerge fully prepared for battle in

the Mediterranean or even in the Atlantic. That was the basic consideration, undoubtedly, in British naval thinking in the nineteenth century. I think it's still true. It's still true, but it is also true that, in order to have this facility, a power which might build such a fleet (which might be at the present time the Soviet Union) would have to possess far more territory than merely the straits themselves. It would be necessary for that power to possess at least the coasts of Asiatic Turkey, because only in that way could it provide the necessary air cover for its ships going from the Aegean to the Eastern Mediterranean. Some of these points will come up again later so I shall not unduly stress them at the present moment.

The country, Turkey, with which I'm dealing this morning is by present day count a small country. It has approximately the same area as the two American states of California and Montana. The area is about two hundred and ninety four thousand square miles, and those two states are a little bit larger than that. It has very much the same topography. If you look at the map, you'll realize that all of the coast of Turkey is mountainous, that the entire peninsula is surrounded by a wall of mountains, and on the seaward side of those mountains there are a certain number of plains, for the most part small plains, and in many cases very badly connected with the interior of the country. Only one of the major sea-coasts of Turkey has any good ports in it. On the entire northern coast, on the Black Sea, there is not one single port which could accommodate a naval vessel of any importance whatsoever. There is a great dearth even of beaches which could be used for beach landings. The northern coastal range of mountains starting with Mount Olympus, which rises to a height of eighty four hundred feet, continues to rise in height all the way along, up to the Caucasus peaks, thirteen to fourteen thousand feet high. Of course the final high point of the country is Mt. Ararat which is approximately seventeen thousand feet in height.

From Istanbul, in the Bosphorus, down to the southwestern corner of the peninsula you have a great succession of very fine natural ports. There is only one *developed* port (and when I say developed, I use the word with reservation) and that is the partially developed port of Izmir, formerly called Smyrna.

On the southern coast again you have a mountain range running right along the shore, and no developed ports whatever until you get down to Alexandretta (which the Turks call Iskenderun) in the extreme south corner—the southern extension of Turkey.

Now you realize from looking at the map that the mass of the population is in the Aegean river valleys which are very fertile. This is the region of Smyrna figs and Smyrna raisins. There is also a thick population along the Black Sea coast, in spite of the fact that there is only a small amount of arable ground. That is because this region is the only region in Turkey which has a very heavy rainfall. In the extreme eastern part of the Black Sea coast you have a rainfall such as you have in Sitka, Alaska—extremely heavy rainfall with rain practically every day.

The communications from the coasts to the interior of Turkey are, by modern reckoning, very poor at every point, but the best communications that do exist are rail communications and we have these running in from the port of Alexandretta, then through the Cilician plain and through the great Taurus mountain range up into the central plateau. Between Mersin on the Cilician coast and Smyrna there is no railway reaching the sea. Between Smyrna and Istanbul, there is no other railway connecting a port with the interior. Along the Black Sea coast there are two railways running from the coast inland. One starts at Zonguldak, which is the area in which Turkish coal is produced. Here is a very sizeable coal

field, with a very adequate quality of bituminous coal. The railway runs from there up to the capital of the country, high on the interior plateau at Ankara. A second railway starting from Samsun, the great tobacco port on the Black Sea, connects with the internal system of railways which form a sort of very loose net around practically the whole country.

You realize, then, that this peninsula, surrounded by mountains on every side, with narrow coastal plains, with few communications with the interior, with very few ports of any consequence, is not what you would call exactly an attractive place on which one could land forces in the face of opposition. Nevertheless, unattractive as it is, it's an area which must be studied. It must be studied, basically because of the position which it occupies in the world. Turkey is a finger pointing westward. It lies at the point where Asia and Europe meet; it lies surrounded by seas; it has as central a location in the geography of the world as any country you could mention. It's not marginal, it isn't merely on the edge of the Asiatic continent. It is the link which joins the Asiatic continent to Europe which is, itself, nothing more than a peninsula of the vast mass of Asia.

You know your maps, I'm sure, as well as I, so it's hardly appropriate for me to enlarge too much on this fact. But I think it's well to call your attention to the increase in the importance of this territory as a result of modern developments in warfare. As I pictured it to you, it is obviously a sort of a natural fortress. Not only is it surrounded by mountains, but it is large enough to have within that wall of mountains plenty of room for the building of airfields—for the servicing of armies. In other words, it is a big enough fortress to serve as a base of operations in any direction—and the directions which are attractive are very obvious.

Let me look at it first of all from the Kremlin; it is very

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obvious that one of the most important things we have to do is use our imagination and put ourselves in the position of the people with whom we may have violent disagreements. From the point of view of the Kremlin, here is this potentially great fortress, lying about two hundred miles from Russian territory across the Black Sea. Not just any Russian territory, but the industrial heart of Russia, built around the Donets coal basin. That two to three hundred miles is no distance at all from the point of view of modern bombing, as you are very well aware. Not only is that a very vulnerable part of Russia which would be in danger of attack if Turkey were in unfriendly hands, but, no further away from Turkish territory and on the western shore of the Caspian Sea is the greatest of the existing Russian oil fields, the great Baku oil field. It isn't producing what it did a few years ago, but, so far as we know, it is still the major producing oil field of Russia. These are very vital objectives, and I think it is very apparent, therefore, why the Soviet Union is anxious to make sure that Turkey is not being used as the base for an attack, nor in a position to be used as a base for an attack, on the Soviet Union. And, pushing that just a little bit further, it is also clear why it would be a great advantage to Russia if Turkey were in Russia's possession, a satellite state, or under Russian domination. Because, just as bombing planes could operate from Turkish territory, just as navies could operate through the straits into the Black Sea (as they did in the Crimean War—the one case in modern times in which Russia was successfully invaded)—by the same token, this fortress, being just as defensible from the south and east as it is from the north and west, could be the base for large scale air, land, and sea operations.

It's a bit farther from Turkey to the Persian Gulf and its great reservoir of oil (at least 40% of the world's known oil supply is in that area) but it's not beyond effective bombing range

of Turkish territory. The Mosul oil field is practically in sight of the Turkish frontier (I must say, within sight of a highly mountainous area with very little land on which airfields could be built, but nevertheless within easy range of other areas from which air attacks might be mounted).

The possession, then, of this territory by either of two opposing world powers (the Soviet Union or the United States) would be a peril to the other. And I think it's only fair to follow our imagination a little further and say that the policies of the United States with respect to Turkey must be governed to a considerable degree by the foreseeable reactions to this or that move which we can expect the Russians to have. Consequently you are brought to this conclusion: if the United States embarked on a policy of the kind of imperialism which we called "old fashioned," and undertook, through annoyance with the inefficiency of the native inhabitants or for some other reason, to take over and operate Turkey, all Russian statesmen and strategists would have a completely legitimate feeling that we were threatening their security. Therefore, it is obviously appropriate that we should make every effort, while maintaining our security in this area, not to push our policy to the point where the Soviet planners and strategists would have legitimate grounds to feel that we were aiming a dagger at their heart (an expression which they would no doubt come to use).

I'm happy to say that, up to the present time, the policy which the United States has followed with respect to Turkey has been along the lines which I have just explained. The policy of the United States has been to form what is, in effect, an informal alliance with Turkey. It is an alliance which doesn't require that we send military forces to this or that point, under this or that contingency, but an alliance in the sense that we are confident of Turkey's

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being on our side in any dispute between ourselves and the Soviet Union. Therefore it is to our interest to have this small country in a position to defend itself against attack which might come from the Soviet Union. Consequently, the couple of hundred million dollars of aid to Turkey which the United States is paying, is being used to build up the defensive strength of the Turkish Republic. Some of it is being used for longer range, and some for shorter range purposes.

One of the most long range is the appropriation which is being spent on the improvement of Turkish road communications and transportation. There, our representatives have been able to persuade the Turkish government to spend the ten million dollars appropriated almost entirely for road making machinery; whereas the Turkish government itself, from its own local resources, is providing the labor and the material necessary for the construction of a system of highways. This program will not make Turkey a country like Rhode Island or Connecticut from the point of view of roads, but will represent several hundred percent improvement in the existing situation.

So our relations with Turkey amount, at the present time, to an informal alliance. Now, if Turkey is an ally, it's very fair to ask, "What kind of an ally?" I'll give you an example of what I mean. In 1914, Russia had an ally in Serbia, and the adventurous policy which was followed by the Serbian government led to a world war in which the Russian empire was destroyed. We, in our relations with Turkey, are in a somewhat similar position: here is a small nation which is our ally; what kind of an ally? If that ally follows an adventurous policy, the first thing we know we are going to find ourselves involved in its quarrels with its neighbors—quarrels which may not be of any particular interest to us, just as it was of no immediate importance to the Russian government in 1914 to have the Archduke of Austria assassinated in Sarajevo.

I'm merely bringing this out to show you how dangerous the small ally can be to the greater ally. As far as Turkey is concerned, the most important fact in this connection is that the men who are ruling Turkey at the present time are ruling that small country with the wisdom which they acquired in the process of losing a large empire. The statesmen of Turkey are not peasants; they are not newcomers on the scene of international politics; they, as they would put it themselves, are "well cooked". They know their business: they know what works in international politics; and they know what doesn't work. They are very well aware that the worst thing they could do, granted the informal nature of their alliance with the United States, would be to stir up unnecessary friction with their neighbors (particularly with the Soviet Union). In our own country, with our foreign policy dependent upon public opinion—not just on the decisions of a few people in positions of high command—we might be faced by the question "Will we save this small ally from its own mistakes; will we go to war in a cause for which we have very little sympathy?" Well, you and I know what the answer would be. Under those circumstances, the United States wouldn't go to war; the American people are not that kind of warmongers. They've been accused of it from the other side of the Atlantic and the Urals, but they are not that kind of war makers. Fortunately the men who are operating the Turkish state are fully aware of this, and they are determined to follow a policy with respect to their greater and smaller neighbors which is one hundred percent "correct" in the diplomatic sense. They are not going to start any unnecessary rows.

What are the aims and policies, the resources and population of the Turks? They believe, rightly or wrongly, that they have a country capable of supporting a much larger population than is at present in Turkey, and at a much higher standard of living than they now enjoy. They want peace for survival, peace for develop-

ment of their resources. I've used the word development, and I think it should be defined a little more closely. What kind of development, what kind of ideals, do these people have before them, of the society into which they want to develop? What kind of nation do they want to be? A decision was reached by them twenty-five years ago. At that time they chose between the society sponsored by Russia and the sort of society which Western Europe and the United States represented. During the intervening years they have consistently maintained the same point of view. What they want, as a people, is to become a nation like the highly developed nations of Western Europe or like the United States. They have no territorial ambitions at the present time. They don't want to take any land from their neighbors. They want to live, to survive in peace, to develop their resources, to work out the many problems with which they are faced internally and become a nation as much like this country as they are able to become.

We are, to a certain extent, responsible for their having this point of view. I hope that, since I was president of the American colleges in Turkey, I may be allowed to do a little advertising for a moment. The existence of American schools and colleges, paid for by Americans (first by missionary-minded Americans and later by the simple humanitarian type of benefactor and philanthropist) has had a good deal to do with persuading the Turkish people that they want to live the way Americans and British and Western Europeans live.

Well, I've spoken again and again of the people. There are about eighteen million people living in Turkey, and all of them haven't been Turks. They have at present in their country, a number of minorities. The one which is large enough to be significant, amounting to a million and a half people out of the eighteen million, is the Kurdish minority. The Kurd tribesmen speak a language

related to Persian. Each tribe has been an independent nation ever since the beginning of history. They live in the territory extending from a point near Alexandretta out to the Russian frontier. They comprise about one million and a half people, living mostly in the mountains. No previous Turkish government, in fact no government of any kind, had ever subdued these people. Their mountains were so rugged, and so high, and so miserably poor, that it wasn't worth the investment in money and lives necessary to subdue these people. The Turkish Republic, however, has subdued them, that is, all of those who live within Turkey . There are considerable groups, half a million or more, living in Iran and Iraq. But those living in Turkey are completely subjected at the present time. They are not only subjected, but the Turks, with that wisdom which they learned from losing an empire, having subdued them in the military sense, having occupied every valley and every hamlet in the whole country with considerable cost of life, then said to the Kurds, "Now you are licked, you are Turks." It is the same policy, in general, which the British government followed in dealing with the Boers in South Africa, but proving in Turkey much more effective than any one had thought possible.

I travelled through that entire country last summer; talked with hundreds of people in the region, and I came away with the impression that the one big minority problem of Turkey is licked and that within a few years there won't be any people in Turkey who consider themselves Kurds. The young men are all going into the military service and they like it. They come back proud of their service ribbons. They come back with the title of Sergeant, which they wear throughout life. They tell the people in the mountain villages in which the governments have forced them to settle, "We are smarter than the Turks are; we should all go out into Western Turkey and make our fortunes and then come back here and live happily." They have come to think of themselves as members of the Turkish community.

There are other minorities; one consists of Greek-speaking people, about one hundred thousand, all of whom live near or in the city of Istanbul or Constantinople. An Armenian-speaking minority live in the same area, and the eighty thousand or more Jews in the country are scattered through a few of the larger cities. The Greeks, who are not noted for their love of Turks, nevertheless regard conditions in Turkey today (and quite rightly so) as much superior to conditions in Greece at the present moment. They are not making any effort to leave, or making any trouble in Turkey.

The Armenians are in an extremely difficult position. They are not regarded as first-class citizens (any more than the Greeks or Jews are) in this Moslem country, but there is not much they can do about it, so they are adjusting themselves to a position somewhat like that which the Negroes occupy in the United States. A good many Armenians were encouraged by the Soviet government to leave Turkey, to leave Syria, even the United States, and go to the Soviet Republic of Armenia. I was up there in that region last summer (I don't mean on the Russian side of it but on the Turkish side) and I saw what was happening. A good many of these Armenians who have gone there as settlers in the Soviet-Armenian republic, flee from that country; they flee to Turkey for safety and security. If any of you know of the relations between Turks and Armenians, you'll realize that the last place you would expect an Armenian to go, seeking security, is Turkey. That, perhaps, will give you some idea of how terrible conditions are within Soviet-Armenia.

I'll take a moment to tell you what these people say—these refugees. They say that on arrival at Batumi, on the Black Sea coast, they are immediately sent to labor camps. The younger children are separated and are sent to special schools; families are broken up. The older people, whom the Soviet-Communists don't

expect to be able to convert to whole-hearted Communism, are sent to labor camps where they get a full ration only if they do a full days work (and a full ration consists of bread and cabbage soup). In the various shifts around the country, all their goods were stolen from them. Several boasted, when they came into Turkey, that they were wearing suits which they had stolen from the Russian guards. Those who can do a good day's work get a full ration; those who can't, get a half ration, and they die of starvation before long. A good many, who have enough ambition and energy left, try to escape, and they escape into Turkey. When they come to the frontier they find in most places a barbed wire fence to hold them in, and sentry boxes one hundred to one hundred and fifty meters apart with sentries who shoot anyone crossing the frontier. But, as is usually the case in these authoritarian regimes, the authorities can't trust their subordinates. And so another organization, other than the sentries, rakes the soil between these sentry posts every morning; rakes it so that it's smooth; then if they find any foot prints there, they shoot the sentries. Now the refugees who do get out, get out through that as well as all the other controls inside the country. That gives you some idea of what conditions must be like behind the frontier for these immigrants.

I've spoken of the minority populations in Turkey. What about the politics of Turkey? Now politics is the business of power *internally*, within the country. What is the situation? Up until two and one half years ago, Turkey was ruled by one party, a monolithic party. It was ruled this way: the President of the Republic was also President of the Party. As President of the Party, he chose all the party's candidates for parliament. The members of parliament, whom he had chosen, elected him President. That's what you might call a complete circle; perhaps not a vicious one, but nevertheless it's a complete circle. It was hard to distinguish

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between the Ministry of the Interior, which controls the police, and the officials of the party. The local governor in a province was appointed by the central government in Istanbul, not elected. Usually the local governor was also head of the local party organization.

Two and one half years ago, Turkey was not as yet an informal ally of the United States. Turkey had the idea of becoming a Western country—Western in politics as well as in economy and society. But the people who were in charge of the government were not in a hurry to make any moves which would result in the loss of their jobs. They realized the status of General Franco in his relations with the United States, and of a few other countries with which alliance could not be contracted by the United States government because of the bad press which they enjoyed as a result of their having a fascist or semi-fascist type of regime. When the President of Turkey and his advisers realized the situation, they decided to move, more rapidly than they had planned, in the direction of a genuine democratic system. And consequently you had the emergence of a new party, the second party. This had been tried a couple of times in the past, but the results had not been happy for the people who tried it. This time the new party was founded under the leadership of a former Prime Minister, with the obvious approval and consent of the President of the Republic. Shortly thereafter, there was a general election. In that election the new party won only about sixty members of the parliament, whereas the old established party won over three hundred members. The opposition party claimed that the elections were finagled—that there was all kinds of skull-duggery practiced. From what I was able to discover in talking to a great many people last summer, in the big coastal cities, where there were plenty of foreign observers around, the elections were absolutely honest. As you went away from the coast, and left the foreign

observers behind, there was increasing government police pressure upon people to vote in favor of the party in power. Those of you who have cruised around South American waters are very familiar with the type of proceeding which I am hinting at. The government saw to it, in other words, that there wasn't too much open scuffle, but that it was a good sized majority—in fact a very, very effective majority indeed.

This has been done partly because of the aims of the Turkish government and people, partly because of their desire to have a good press in the United States, in order to make alliance with Turkey possible not only for American soldiers and sailors but for the American man in the street. And they are succeeding; the process is going on, and I suspect that if you had an election tomorrow the opposition party would perhaps not win the election, but it would win a vastly larger number of the parliamentary seats. In Turkish politics, there is no argument on foreign policy. The foreign policy of all parties is identical. It calls for cooperation with the United States and the allies of the United States, and for maintenance against every threat against the independence of the country.

Perhaps I might say a word here as to the morale of the Turkish people. The best illustration I can think of came from the newspaper yesterday. One of the leading writers of Turkey turned communist, was prosecuted and, when he was indicted, he disappeared. He was tried in absentia and condemned to three or four months in prison. (I might say that all known communists in Turkey are lodged permanently at government expense, in prison. There are very few of them; they are not a great burden to the finances.) This man disappeared and nothing was heard of him until the police caught a man who made it his business to spirit people away from Turkey to Bulgaria and vice-versa. When they

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gave the usual third degree treatment to this gentleman, they discovered that he had killed this prominent writer. His story was that the prominent writer had come to him, offered him money to be taken over into Bulgaria. The brigand didn't know who his customer was until he got very close to the frontier, and then he said, "I realized suddenly that this was the wicked communist writer. I may have had some faults in the past but no one can claim that I'm not a patriotic Turk. Under these circumstances what could I do? I couldn't take this man to a foreign country, where he could safely attack the fatherland, so I killed him." Now if the brigands and thieves talk this way, it gives you some idea of the force, of the determination, of these people to maintain themselves as an independent nation. I might say it turned out later, after this gentleman had received some more third degree, that the writer had exhibited a very large roll of paper money which may have had something to do with the murder.

I shall not go on further with this, but I'll ask you to believe that the vast majority of these people, close to one hundred percent, are united, completely united, in foreign policy. The differences between the political parties are domestic differences about the rate at which changes should take place, about the kind of reforms that should be adopted, and so on.

Now let's turn to this question, "What does Turkey expect of its relations with the United States?" First of all they expect to get supplies, and they are getting them. They have bought largely war surplus material and they got it very cheap indeed, at least in the earlier shipments. They want arms for their Army and Navy. Their Army is always going to be more important to them than either their Navy or Air Force, because they do not have the technical facilities, they don't have the industry to support as complicated an instrument as either a navy or an air force.

They can't build ships, they can't build airplanes and they can't even repair them because of their lack of technological development. What they expect of us in navy and air force is minimum weapons; enough to put on a show. Of course the Navy men want bigger and better ships, and they are always asking for them, but they don't really expect to get anything bigger than a light cruiser. They know that they couldn't make any real use of anything except destroyers, submarines, gunboats and that sort of thing.

In the event of war between Turkey and the Soviet Union, the Turks don't expect massive American forces to be sent to their aid. They believe that their Army, which is obviously their strongest and most numerous group, if supplied with weapons and ammunition, and if provided with a moderate amount of air cover, will be able to defend the heart of the country until the Russians are so busy elsewhere that they will be able to stabilize the situation to Turkey's advantage.

So if a crisis should arise, the first thing that the Turks would expect of us would be air support. And it's quite obvious that the kind of air support that they would expect, first of all, would be the kind that could be delivered on carriers. Whether or not it's feasible to send carrier aircraft there to operate in the Black Sea or short of the Black Sea, is a technical question which you gentlemen can answer much better than I.

What would we expect from this informal alliance which seems to exist? Turkey, as you see, wants to survive; that's the motive all the way through. What we want, it seems to me, is first of all to keep Turkey out of the hands of the Soviet Union. If Turkey were occupied and held by the Soviets, the entire Eastern Mediterranean would be shut off as far as we are concerned. It would permit attack, both by air and by land, against the great oil-bearing

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territories around the Persian Gulf and, although we could fight a war without that oil, we don't have any allies in Europe who could fight a war without the oil of the Persian Gulf. Therefore, our first point is to keep Turkey within the area that we can do business with and preclude the Russians' taking it over.

More specific, what can we expect the Turks to do in a military way? Again there are technical questions which you'll know better how to answer than I, but obviously it's going to take time; time is going to be an important factor. Can we so prepare the Turks that they could maintain themselves until such time as we could bring forces to the Persian Gulf area (which is the most vital of all these areas as far as I can see), so that we could bring forces there adequate to defend them even if the Turks were wiped out? That's a militarily important question, but evidently we think there is some possibility, militarily, or else we wouldn't be engaged in sending arms to Turkey and in training Turkish officers and men for defense.

Now another point, which I think is a very moot point but one which we should discuss and understand clearly. Although we have an arrangement with Greece, and an informal alliance with Turkey, we have no formal or informal arrangement with Iran. That leaves open the possibility that Iran might be used to outflank Turkey, and a Russian attack might pass down toward the Persian Gulf, first through Iran, and then Iraq to the Persian Gulf. If there were a strong Turkish Army to the West, capable of receiving extensive reinforcements, particularly in air power, I very much doubt that any Russian commanding officer would want to send forces down there within range of Turkish air fields.

Again there is the question: "Would the Turks be prepared to let us use their airfields?" That too depends upon imponderable

factors—the development of relations between the Turks and their neighbors and between the Turks and ourselves. As matters are now moving, I think it is not probable, but very possible, that we would be in a position, through the arms which we have given to Turkey, to make that outflanking movement too risky for the Soviet to undertake.

Well, what are the hopes, what are the fears of the moment? Obviously, from the Turkish point of view, the hope is that if they are involved in a war with Russia, the only nation they fear, it will be a war of a kind which will inevitably involve both Great Britain and the United States. As far as the United States is concerned, we hope that our arming of Turkey will deter the Russians from an attack, and that the contingency against which we are preparing will never arise.

And finally, I think we have to face this question, “How long will the type of arrangements, which we now have, last? Is it just a short-term policy or is it a long-term policy?” Long term policies depend upon community of interests between nations; not sentiments, but common interests. And, as I said earlier, our interest is not to occupy and administer Turkey, but to make Turkey strong enough to occupy and administer herself and prevent any outside power from taking over. We want an independent nation that will add to our security in the Near East. It has to be Turkey, because it is from Turkey that the oil, which is essential to our having any effective allies, can be defended. So with this community of interest which exists, namely, survival of the Turks as an independent nation (that interest being the same for them as for us) I think that there is every prospect of a long duration to the present type of informal alliance.

And I can say this as a final word. Last summer I talked with thousands of Turks, and with dozens of Americans, includ-

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ing the heads of the Naval and Army missions in Turkey, the Ambassadors and many of the Ministers of the Turkish Cabinet. Thus far our people, military and civilian, have been operating with a high degree of good sense and tact and understanding, pushing ahead with their work, obviously not interested in taking over Turkey as a conquered state. They have been doing all this with such success that there is not yet any serious cloud on the horizon as far as Turko-American relations are concerned.

Turkey is important because of its position, because of its morale, because of its point of view. It is important to the United States and the United States is important to Turkey. Our informal alliance is working and is working very well indeed, and I think we have every reason to be satisfied with the present state of affairs.