

A quest for security or identity?

Turkey towards NATO membership: The construction of the Turkish-American alliance in a Cold War perspective (1945-1952)



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Abstract

Turkey, after a long period of neutrality, became integrated into the Western hemisphere between 1945 and 1952, which made it one of the most significant periods in recent Turkish history. After threats of the Soviet Union in the Turkish Straits, Turkey received American aid via the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan. In 1952, after an intensive lobby and joining the Korean War, Turkey became a NATO member. It is widely debated whether this shift was based on realist motives, enhancing its security in the early Cold War, or on ideological motives, based on its desire to obtain the Western identity. In this research, the Turkish foreign policy perspective is supported by the American foreign policy perspective and developments in Turkish national politics, which gives new insights into Turkey's motives. By examining primary sources from the United States Department of State, supplemented with articles from the Turkish journal *Foreign Policy/Dış Politika* and secondary literature, this study answers the question which strategies Turkey employed to become a NATO member and whether the Turkish strategies and arguments were based upon realist or ideological motives.

Key words: Turkish foreign policy, Turkish-American relations, Cold War, NATO.

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Chapter 1. Developing a Turkish-American relationship (1945 - mid-1948).....	13
The question of the Turkish Straits.....	14
The proclamation of the Truman Doctrine	22
The lobby for Marshall help	27
Sub-conclusion	31
Chapter 2. The Turkish campaign for an American security guarantee (mid-1948 - mid-1950).....	32
First steps towards NATO membership	33
Exclusion from the Atlantic Alliance	37
Associate membership of NATO	43
Sub-conclusion	45
Chapter 3. Becoming a NATO member (mid-1950 – 1952).....	46
A Turkish Brigade to Korea	47
The Korean War efforts started bearing fruit	50
Sub-conclusion	58
Conclusion.....	60
Bibliography	64
Literature	64
Primary sources.....	68

Front page image:

The Turkish brigade in the Korean War.

Source: ROK Drop, Korea from North to South, 'Heroes from the Korean War: General Tahsin Yazıcı', <http://www.rokdrop.net/2015/09/heroes-of-the-korean-war-general-tahsin-yazici/> (10 December 2018).

Introduction

By virtue of its geography, Turkey has often been described as a bridge between Europe and Asia.¹ Because Turkey is perceived as both Western and Islamic, European and Asian, democratic and authoritarian, it is said to incorporate contradictory features of both Western and Eastern civilizations.² Turkey's national identity and foreign policy are closely tied together.³ So, like its identity, Turkish foreign policy can be characterized by several and often competing currents. Bordering the Balkans, Middle Eastern countries and Russia, its geostrategic position makes Turkey an important element in the balance of power in Europe as well as in the Middle East.⁴

The academic debate stretches from whether Turkey aims to present itself as the leader of its neighboring Islamic countries, whether it focuses on enhancing its relations with former Ottoman countries, or whether it intends to be the leader of the Turkic countries like Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan.⁵ Moreover, Turkey is engaging with Russia by, for example, purchasing advanced weapon systems. It is also following China into Africa.⁶ As a result of these various fixations in Turkish foreign policy, Turkey's relationship with the West has been increasingly questioned. This is reflected in the Turkish position in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Currently, there is substantial debate about Turkey's role within NATO and Turkey's

¹ Nicholas Danforth, 'Ideology and Pragmatism in Turkish Foreign Policy: From Atatürk to the AKP', *Turkish Policy Quarterly* 7 (2003) 3, 83-95, 84.

² Samuel P. Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilizations?', *Foreign Affairs* 73 (1993) 42-43; Danforth, 'Ideology and Pragmatism in Turkish Foreign Policy', 84.

³ Hakan M. Yavuz, 'Turkish identity and foreign policy in flux: The rise of neo-Ottomanism', *Critical Middle Eastern Studies* 7 (1998) 12, 19-41, 19.

⁴ Ü. Haluk Bayülken, 'Turkey and the United Nations', *Foreign Policy/Dış Politika* 1 (1971) 3, 95.

⁵ Danforth, 'Ideology and Pragmatism in Turkish Foreign Policy', 93; Seçkin Köstem, 'When can idea entrepreneurs influence foreign policy? Explaining the Rise of the "Turkic World" in Turkish Foreign Policy', *Foreign Policy Analysis* 13 (2017) 722-740 731; Alexander Murinson, 'The strategic depth doctrine of Turkish foreign policy', *Middle Eastern Studies* 42 (2006) 6, 945-964, 947; Hakan M. Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey* (New York 2003); Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilizations?', 42.

⁶ *BBC News*, 'Turkey signs deal to get Russian S-400 air defense missiles', 12 September 2017 <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-41237812> (2 October 2018); Mehmet Özan, 'Turkey's rising role in Africa', *Turkish Policy Quarterly* 9 (2010) 4, 93-105, 103.

relations with the United States (US). Many NATO members, including the US, put the alliance with Turkey into question.⁷

In order to decipher the true nature of Turkey's relation with the West – specifically with the US – this research goes back to a period when Turkey, after a long period of neutrality between the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923 and the end of the Second World War, changed its foreign policy in a radical manner. After 1945, Turkey became increasingly integrated into the Western world system. Integration occurred not only on an economic level, but also in the fields of foreign policy and defense. During the initial years of the Cold War, Turkey and the United States started to become important political, economic and military allies, especially within the framework of NATO. This resulted in Turkey becoming a member in 1952.⁸ However, the foundation of the Turkish alliance with the US – whether it was inspired by realist or ideological motives – is a subject of continuing controversy.

In this framework, it is relevant to address the concepts of realism and ideology. In realism, states are seen as the main actors and global politics is about the shifting balance of power between those states. Since the global arena is arguably anarchic, there is a security dilemma, which implies that if one state becomes more secure, the other becomes automatically less secure.⁹ Therefore, smaller states – like Turkey in the period after the Second World War – strive to defend their sovereignty. They create relations and conditions that allow them to survive and develop in peace and security.¹⁰ An important element of realism is the idea that states pursue their national interests in order to ensure their security. In neorealism, the definition of national interest is quite broad. It not only includes military, but also economic and territorial interests. The level of capability a state possesses vis-à-vis others either holds back or enables that state to pursue such interests.¹¹

⁷ Şuhnaz Yılmaz, 'Turkey's quest for NATO membership: the institutionalization of the Turkish-American alliance', *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 12 (2012) 4, 481-495, 482.

⁸ Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey, a Modern History* (London/New York 2017) 237.

⁹ William C. Wohlforth, 'Realism', in: Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations* (New York 2010) 131-149, 133.

¹⁰ Yohanan Cohen, *Small nations in times of crisis and confrontation* (Albany 1989).

¹¹ Wohlforth, 'Realism', 141-142.

Ideology is another factor that plays a role in international relations. Ideology has the power to shape a country's foreign policy. With regard to establishing alliances with other countries, the moderate constructivist Michael Barnett argues that countries with similar identities often have a shared construction of threat. Consequently, he argues, identity is a formative element in considering who is a legitimate ally and who is not. From this point of view, identity provides a better explanation than the security dilemma to understand which countries are desirable alliance partners.¹² The importance of identity is related to political ideology. From a Turkish foreign and domestic policy perspective, the Kemalist ideology played a major role. Kemalism is the founding ideology of the Republic of Turkey that was implemented by its founder, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881-1938). Many studies have been conducted about Atatürk's vision for this modernization ideology.¹³ The predominant argument is that he aspired for Turkey to become a democratic, secular and nationalist constitutional republic while developing a state-controlled national economy and politics free from foreign domination.¹⁴ Atatürk's aim was to transform Turkey into a European state because he believed there was only one real type of civilization – the Western model.¹⁵ In the words of a former diplomat and director of policy planning at the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the 'West for Turkey is not only a location on [the] map, not only a partnership, not only an Alliance. West is a Philosophy'.¹⁶

In the historiography, a debate can be detected surrounding whether realist or ideological motives influenced Turkish foreign and domestic policies after 1945. On the one hand, many authors focus on the realist notion that Turkey aimed to enhance its relations with the West for self-interested reasons such as security and economy. These authors argue that Turkish leaders aimed to become a NATO member to ensure the survival of the Turkish Republic. In order to achieve credibility

¹² Michael N. Barnett, *Dialogues in Arab Politics: Negotiations in Regional Order* (New York 1998) 6, 401.

¹³ Andrew Mango, *Atatürk: The Biography of the Founder of Modern Turkey* (New York, 2002); Şükrü Hanioglu, *Atatürk: An Intellectual Biography* (Princeton 2011); Ali Kazancıgil and Ergun Özbudun (eds), *Atatürk; Founder of a Modern State* (London 1981); John Vander Lippe, *The politics of Turkish democracy: İsmet İnönü and the formation of the multi-party system* (Albany 2005).

¹⁴ Vander Lippe, *The politics of Turkish democracy*, 16, 19.

¹⁵ Bayülken, 'Turkey and the United Nations', 96.

¹⁶ Halit Güvener, 'Turkey's relation with the West', *Foreign Policy/Dış Politika* 9 (1981) 1-2, 19.

in the West, Turkey made a transition to a more democratic multiparty system. On the other hand, it is argued that gaining NATO membership was directed at fulfilling Atatürk's vision of Kemalism and thus at gaining Western identity. It remains a point of contention whether it was realism or Kemalism, or perhaps a combination of both factors that influenced Turkish motives to become a member of NATO.

The broader issue of Turkey in the build up towards its NATO membership in the period between 1945 and 1952 has been extensively discussed from various perspectives. In this historiography, American foreign policy, Turkish foreign policy and Turkish domestic developments are discussed. Firstly, contributions focus on American foreign policy towards Turkey by taking a realist perspective. By drawing on American governmental files, historian Melvyn Leffler addresses the United States' foreign policy towards Turkey in the period after the Second World War. He discusses the American strategic interests in Turkey, in which the containment of Communism played a major role.¹⁷ Political scientist Hakan Yılmaz also studies American documents. He argues that security was the principle motive behind the American interest in Turkey. Safeguarding Turkey's security would cause benefits for the economies, politics and cultures of the whole Mediterranean and Near Eastern region.¹⁸ In addition to Leffler and Yılmaz, many articles and studies were written about the Truman Doctrine, which was aimed at supporting Turkey militarily and

¹⁷ Melvyn P. Leffler, 'Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War: The United States, Turkey, and the NATO. 1945-1952', *The Journal of American History* 71 (1985) 4, 807-825.

The containment of Communism was an essential ingredient of American foreign policy from 1947 onwards. Deputy Chief of Mission of the American Embassy in Moscow George Kennan formulated the original strategy of containment in his so-called "Long Telegram" in February 1946. In this telegram, he outlined his view on the Soviet Union. The telegram quickly became 'the most plausible explanation for Soviet behavior, past and future.' The telegram attracted so much attention because there was a growing understanding in Washington that the strategy that was used so far – *quid pro quo* – had not worked. The containment strategy differed from the past strategy in a couple of ways. First, there would be no more efforts made to cover up disagreements with the Soviet Union; second, the practice of making concessions with the Soviets should be halted, which implicated that all future targets of Soviet expansion should be defended by the US; third, to make this possible, the US should improve its military strength and consider giving military and economic aid to its allies; fourth, this would imply that negotiations with the Soviet Union would continue, but only to enshrine the American position and to acquire further allies. The policy of containment was implemented by the administration of President Truman by the means of the Truman Doctrine in 1947, in which Washington broadened its responsibilities to Greece in Turkey to a worldwide commitment to prevent the expansion of territory and influence of the Soviet Union. Source: John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War* (New York 2005).

¹⁸ Hakan Yılmaz, 'American Perspectives on Turkey: An Evaluation of the Declassified U.S. Documents between 1947 and 1960', *New Perspectives in Turkey* 25 (2001) 77-101, 3.

economically.¹⁹ For the same reasons, Marshall aid to Turkey was established.²⁰ According to these studies, the primary initiative to aid Turkey was at the side of the US. Following this argument, the Truman Doctrine can be seen as a building block for other American policies of containment to protect Turkey from Communism, like the Marshall Plan and membership of NATO.²¹

Secondly, there are studies that focus on the Turkish foreign policy perspective. It is generally known that, in contrast to the Truman Doctrine, it was Turkey that pressed for NATO admission for reasons that ranged from defense to identity politics.²² Many authors take a realist perspective. Political scientist Mustafa Aydın argues that Turkish foreign policy shifted to complete dependence on the West after 1945, which can primarily be regarded as a political decision within the Cold War framework.²³ Others state that this shift was unavoidable, as Turkey was fully dependent on US aid.²⁴ Most authors agree that Turkey's participation in the Korean War in 1950 directly resulted in NATO membership. International relations theorist Cameron Brown demonstrates that Turkey was eager to join the Korean War for self-interested reasons, since an alliance with the US would lead to a guarantee against the Soviet threat and would provide further financial and military aid.²⁵ Other scholars focus on ideology. Although Turkologist Erik Jan Zürcher agrees that Turkey had political motivations to join the Korean War, he explains Turkey's shift to the West as an ideological move to achieve Western identity.²⁶ Political scientists Pınar Bilgin and Eylem Yılmaz align closely with Zürcher. They argue that the Turkish decision to support the United Nations (UN) effort in Korea was not 'merely a military operation, but also a "cultural process of collective identity

¹⁹ Yılmaz, 'Turkey's quest for NATO membership', 486; Elizabeth Edwards Spalding, 'The Truman Doctrine', in: Daniel S. Margolies (eds), *A Companion to Harry S. Truman* (Malden 2012) 327-346, 338.

²⁰ E. Ray Canterbury, *Harry S. Truman: the economics of a populist President* (New Jersey 2013) 155.

²¹ Spalding, 'The Truman Doctrine', 338.

²² Stephanie Trombley Averill, 'Truman and NATO', in: Daniel S. Margolies (eds), *A Companion to Harry S. Truman* (Malden 2012) 410-427, 421; George Crews McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East connection, how the Truman doctrine and Turkey's NATO entry contained the Soviets* (Basingstoke 1990) 72.

²³ Mustafa Aydın, 'Determinants of Turkish foreign policy: changing patterns and conjunctures during the Cold War', *Middle Eastern Studies* 36 (2000) 1, 103-139, 105.

²⁴ William Hale, *Turkish foreign policy, 1774-2000* (London/Portland 2002) 137.

²⁵ Cameron S. Brown, 'The one coalition they craved to join: Turkey in the Korean War', *Review of International Studies* 34 (2008) 1, 89-108.

²⁶ Zürcher, *Turkey*, 237-238.

formation”²⁷. Political scientist Şuhnaz Yılmaz states that it was a longstanding Turkish desire to be recognized as equals by the West. She argues that NATO membership was not the final goal, but rather an important step towards a more equal relationship.²⁸

Lastly, authors refer to developments in Turkish domestic politics that influenced foreign relations. The establishment of the multiparty system by the second Turkish President, İsmet İnönü (1884-1973), is seen as an important factor in Turkish internal affairs that affected foreign relations.²⁹ William Hale and Sina Akşin argue that this was primarily because democratization led to greater credibility in the West.³⁰ This went hand in hand with major pressure from the United States calling for the opening of the Turkish economy to market forces.³¹ Historian Barın Kayaoğlu states the opposite, arguing that bringing Turkey into NATO was not the motivation driving İnönü, but rather his determination to fulfill Atatürk’s legacy to make Turkey a true democracy.³² Moreover, it is useful to draw upon arguments made by political scientist Andrew Moravcsik. He writes about former European dictatorships that aimed to become a member of the European Convention of Human Rights because this helped to combat domestic threats from the totalitarian right and left, and thereby protected domestic democracy.³³ The first free elections of 1950 signified an important turning point, as they were won by the Western-focused Democrat Party.³⁴ Nevertheless, Turkey’s relations with the US remained uneasy and ‘saturated with deep suspicion’.³⁵ This, however, did not prevent the

²⁷ Pinar Bilgin, ‘The ‘Peculiarity’ of Turkey’s Position of EU-NATO Military/Security Cooperation: A Rejoinder to Missirolì’, *Security Dialogue* 34 (2003) 3, 345-349; Eylem Yılmaz, and Pinar Bilgin, ‘Constructing Turkey’s “western” identity during the Cold War. Discourses of the intellectuals of statecraft’, *International Journal* (2005-2006) 39-59, 46.

²⁸ Yılmaz, ‘Turkey’s quest for NATO membership’, 492.

²⁹ Vander Lippe, *The politics of Turkish democracy*, 6.

³⁰ Hale, *Turkish foreign policy*, 110; Sina Akşin, *Turkey, from Empire to Revolutionary Republic* (New York 2007) 243; Feroz Ahmad, *The making of modern Turkey* (1994), 102.

³¹ Ahmad, *The making of modern Turkey*, 103.

³² Barın Kayaoğlu, ‘Cold War in the Aegean: Strategic imperatives, Democratic rhetoric: The United States and Turkey 1945-52’, *Cold War History* 9 (2009) 3, 321-345, 323.

³³ Andrew Moravcsik, ‘The Origins of Human Rights Regimes: Democratic Delegation in Postwar Europe’, *International Organization* 54 (2000) 2, 217-252, 237.

³⁴ Henry J. Barkey, ‘Turkey and the Great Powers’, in: Celia Kerslake, Kerem Öktem and Philip Robins (eds), *Turkey’s engagement with modernity: conflict and change in the twentieth century* (Basingstoke 2010) 239-257, 244.

³⁵ *Ibidem*.

impact these changes in domestic policy had on Turkey's relations with the West, and with the United States in particular.

The development of the Turkish alliance with the US in the period between the end of the Second World War in 1945 and 1952, the year in which Turkey acquired NATO membership, is an interesting subject of study due to the debate about the Turkish motives to join this alliance. Therefore, this research addresses the question which strategies Turkey employed to become a NATO member and whether the Turkish strategies and arguments were based upon realist or ideological motives. Analyzing the Turkish approach in relation to domestic developments in Turkey gives new insight into Turkey's motives to become more integrated into the West. In this research, the Turkish foreign policy perspective is supported by the American foreign policy perspective and developments in Turkish national politics, as displayed in sources from the United States Department of State. This gives a more comprehensive view on the Turkish motivations to become a NATO member than most contributions to the academic debate, as many of them approach the matter from one perspective only.

In order to answer the research question, the period between 1945 and 1952 is divided into three sub-periods. The first sub-period encompasses the years well before the establishment of NATO, between 1945 and mid-1948. In the context of the changing geopolitical environment of the developing Cold War, Turkey made strong efforts to achieve American support. After Turkey requested diplomatic assistance during the Turkish-Soviet crisis over the Turkish Straits in 1945 and 1946, the American President Harry S. Truman (1884-1972) issued the Truman Doctrine in 1947 and the Marshall Plan in 1948 that were both partially directed towards Turkey.³⁶ These three events were formative in the establishment of the early relationship between Turkey and the US and show the Turkish eagerness to become a part of the Western hemisphere. In this timeframe, Turkey saw a transition from a one-party to a multiparty system, and redefined its position towards neutralism that also aided the Turkish objective. The second sub-period comprises the years between mid-1948 and mid-1950. This period is characterized by an intensive

³⁶ Aydın, 'Determinants of Turkish foreign policy', 110.

Turkish lobby for NATO membership or another pact entailing an American assurance for protection against possible Soviet aggression and a great deal of hesitance from the American side. This sub-period ends when Turkey managed to become an associate member of NATO in October 1950. Moreover, developments in Turkish domestic politics, particularly the election of the Western-minded Democratic Party in 1950, strengthened the Turkish focus on the West. The third sub-period covers mid-1950 until 1952. In these years, the most important development is the Turkish contribution to the Korean War, as this resulted in NATO membership.³⁷ This research ends at the beginning of 1952 when Turkey reached its ultimate goal: full NATO membership.³⁸

By taking the geopolitical, bilateral and domestic context into account, an effort is made to answer the research question. The body of this research is based on the analysis of primary sources from the US State Department – although no sources from the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs have been used due to the language barrier – which is an advantage as many articles rely on secondary literature when discussing the Turkish perspective.³⁹ Through studying American governmental files, principally documents related to the crisis about the Turkish Straits, the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, antecedents of NATO and the Korean War – as these developments and policies culminated in Turkish NATO membership – the development of the relation between Turkey and the United States in a Cold War context is assessed. These documents consist of memoranda, letters, policy papers and aides-mémoire written by the Presidents or Prime Ministers, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Ambassadors of both countries, and American policy officials responsible for political, military, economic and financial affairs with Turkey. The files give insight into American foreign policy towards Turkey and the nature of the relations between Turkey and the US. Due to the focus on security and identity, the emphasis lies on the diplomatic and consequently the political relations between the two countries. Moreover, these documents provide

³⁷ Zürcher, *Turkey*, 237.

³⁸ It has to be noted that a similar development took place in Greece, as Greece simultaneously obtained Truman aid, associate membership and full membership of NATO. However, as this research focuses on Turkey, these developments only play a minor role in the analysis.

³⁹ For example: Aydın, 'Determinants of Turkish foreign policy'; Bilgin, 'The 'Peculiarity' of Turkey's Position of EU-NATO Military/Security Cooperation'.

information about Turkish foreign policy towards integration in the West and how the American plans were received in Turkey.

However, it has to be noted that because this analysis is made on the basis of American sources, the information available about the opinion of the Turkish government is less extensive and perhaps more colored than the American point of view. Therefore, secondary sources provide more information on developments in Turkish foreign policy, domestic political developments in Turkey and Turkey in the Korean War. For this, articles that were published in the journal *Foreign Policy/Dış Politika* from the Turkish Foreign Policy Institute – Turkey’s first foreign policy think tank that was established in 1974 – have been studied in Ankara, Turkey. It has to be noted that the journal was first published in 1971, which means that the articles were not written during the period this research encompasses. However, as Turkish Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Ambassadors, other officials and academics contributed to the journal, the articles are representative of the Turkish governmental perspective on Turkish-American relations and Turkey’s entry process into NATO.

Chapter 1. Developing a Turkish-American relationship (1945 - mid-1948)

After the Second World War, the world's balance of power changed drastically. The United States and the Soviet Union (USSR) emerged as superpowers while the allies of the US, the United Kingdom and France began demonstrating signs of fatigue due to great losses in the war and their colonies.⁴⁰ The early postwar years saw a transition from a multipolar to a bipolar order and in this transitional period, Turkey played a significant role due to its strategic location. The Soviet threat to Turkey and Greece gave urgency to the American undertaking to support these countries financially and militarily via the Truman Doctrine, and reviving European economies by supplying help in the form of the Marshall plan.⁴¹ These two developments, including American diplomatic support during the crisis of the Turkish Straits, were paramount in the development of the early Turkish-American alliance. Moreover, it encouraged the Turks to press for more support in the fields of economics and security.

Before and during the war, Turkey was able to remain neutral until February 1945, when it entered the war symbolically on the side of the allied forces and could therefore start the postwar period with relatively well functioning domestic institutions and economy. However, as Aydın argues, in this bipolar structure it was not realistic for a small power like Turkey, which was situated in such a geopolitically important area, to maintain a policy of neutrality.⁴² President İsmet İnönü – who took over the presidency of Republican People's Party (RPP) in a one-party political system after the death of Atatürk – quickly came to the conclusion that Turkey's largest problem was facing the increasingly powerful Soviet Union on its own.⁴³ In the postwar period, therefore, realist arguments dominated the debate; all major parties agreed that it was best to depart from interwar neutralism and to increase

⁴⁰ Theodore A. Coulombis, *The United States, Greece and Turkey* (New York 1983) 8.

⁴¹ Baskın Oran (eds), translated by Mustafa Akşin, *Turkish foreign policy, 1919-2006, facts and analyses with documents* (Utah 2010) 287.

⁴² Aydın, 'Determinants of Turkish foreign policy', 106.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, 105.

their focus on the West in order to receive support and secure their territorial integrity and sovereignty.

Although the Soviet threat was the most important factor that pushed Turkey to the Western bloc, there were other reasons that made Turkey choose a Western course. The war had not only proven the superiority of the Western armed forces but also the triumph of democracies, which became of significant influence in the transition to a new, pluralist political system in Turkey in which liberalization was favored.⁴⁴ The first challenge for Turkey, however, was the Soviet threat to the Turkish Straits.

The question of the Turkish Straits

The relationship between Turkey and the Soviet Union had been relatively close between the foundation of the Turkish Republic and the start of the Second World War. Their relations worsened because of the British-French-Turkish alliance of 1939 that provided assistance to Turkey in the case of aggression.⁴⁵ Moreover, as the documents of the US State Department suggest, the Soviets were bothered by Turkish neutralism during the war. As a result, the USSR announced on the 19th of March 1945 that it would not renew the Soviet-Turkish Treaty of Friendship and Neutrality and subsequently demanded that any substitute agreement must provide special privileges for the USSR.⁴⁶ In a conversation with the Turkish Ambassador, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyacheslav Molotov drew up a number of conditions. First, Molotov demanded influence over two provinces in the northeast of Anatolia, Kars and Ardahan.⁴⁷ Second, the USSR requested the revision of the Montreux Convention in order to gain more control over the Black Sea region.⁴⁸ The

⁴⁴ İsmail Soysal, 'The influence of the concept of western civilization on Turkish foreign policy', *Foreign Policy/Dış Politika* 6 (1977) 3-4, 5.

⁴⁵ United States Department of State/Foreign relations of the United States (hereafter referred to as FRUS), Diplomatic Papers, the Near East and Africa, Vol. VIII 1945, 'Turkey', 1219-1311, 1226, telegram March 26, 1945, Ambassador Laurence Steinhardt, Ankara, to Secretary of State Edward Stettinius Jr., Washington.

⁴⁶ FRUS, Diplomatic Papers, the Near East and Africa, Vol. VIII 1945, 'Turkey', 1219-1311, 1220, telegram March 21, 1945, Ambassador Laurence Steinhardt, Ankara, to Secretary of State Edward Stettinius Jr., Washington.

⁴⁷ Kars and Ardahan were Russian between 1878 and 1918. Source: Zürcher, *Turkey*, 210.

⁴⁸ Ibidem.

1936 Montreux Convention gave Turkey control over the Bosphorus Straits, Sea of Marmara and the Dardanelles and regulated the transit of naval warships. The Soviets demanded a revision of the convention as they claimed it necessary to have a permanent military presence in and joint control over the Straits.

According to the Soviets, Montreux needed to be modified in a way that compromised Turkish sovereignty. As the Turks were very keen upon their territorial integrity and sovereignty historically, for example due to the capitulations to European powers in the period of the declining Ottoman Empire, this prospect strongly alarmed the Turkish Government.⁴⁹ The Turkish reaction was sharp and emotional. Şükrü Saracoğlu, the Turkish Prime Minister, argued that the Turkish sovereignty was a matter 'of life and death'.⁵⁰ If the Soviets would make an attempt to infringe on their independence, he articulated 'we shall fight. It may be hopeless or it may be not but we shall fight in any case'.⁵¹ In a conversation with the American Embassy in Moscow, the Turkish Ambassador elaborated that if Turkey 'had accepted these demands, he believed that [Turkey] would soon have been confronted with [a] second step – demands regarding Turkish internal matters designed to bring Turkey "like Poland" under direct Soviet influence'.⁵² This did not indicate, however, that the Turks were not prepared to consider proposals for the modification of Montreux.⁵³ Similarly, a new friendship treaty with the USSR was a

⁴⁹ FRUS, Diplomatic Papers, the Conference of Berlin (the Potsdam Conference), Vol. I 1945, 'Sunday, July 22, 1945', 225-270, 256, minutes of the sixth plenary meeting.

The capitulations were bilateral acts that granted rights and privileges to foreigners in the Ottoman Empire. For example, foreign courts and foreign officers were allowed to minister their own law, which made economic and political abuse by European powers widespread. Atatürk abolished this system.

⁵⁰ FRUS, Diplomatic Papers, the Conference of Berlin (the Potsdam Conference), Vol. II 1945, 'Near Eastern and African Questions', 949-1054, 1035, telegram July 3, 1945, Ambassador Edwin C. Wilson, Ankara, to Secretary of State James Byrnes, Washington.

⁵¹ Ibidem.

⁵² FRUS, Diplomatic Papers, the Conference of Berlin (the Potsdam Conference), Vol. II 1945, 'Near Eastern and African Questions', 949-1054, 1030, telegram June 25, 1945, Ambassador William Averell Harriman, Moscow, to Acting Secretary of State Joseph Grew, Washington.

⁵³ FRUS, 'Turkey', 1221, telegram March 21, 1945.

possibility if the USSR would not infringe on the sovereignty of Turkey.⁵⁴ Therefore, they proposed the internationalization of the Straits.⁵⁵

Although the US was not a signatory of the Montreux Convention, the Turkish government was aware of the importance of American cooperation in the matter of internationalization of the Straits and for the protection of the Turkish integrity. Therefore, the Turks were very concerned when they noticed a decrease in American interest in Turkey. In his conversation with the Deputy Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African affairs, George V. Allen, the Turkish Ambassador in the US Hüseyin Ragıp Baydur expressed his feelings of disappointment vis-à-vis the US and argued that he even indicated a 'letdown in American support for Turkey'.⁵⁶ In his eyes, this would cause severe dangers for Turkey, as American disinterest in the territorial issues of Turkey would serve as 'a green light to Russia to do whatever she desired'.⁵⁷ This resulted in a request, many more of which would follow in the future. In October 1945, the Turks hinted for some sort of American assurance against Soviet aggression for the first time using realist arguments. The Turkish Ambassador said that if Russia would be allowed to send warships through the Straits, Turkey would desire an American guarantee for its territorial integrity. Although the Americans understood the Turkish position, they were not prepared to give such a guarantee and referred to principles of the United Nations for their defense.⁵⁸

The Americans did not realize that Turkey was already confronted with early signs of the upcoming Cold War. The American stance towards the USSR was still

⁵⁴ FRUS, Diplomatic Papers, the Near East and Africa, Vol. VIII 1945, 'Turkey', 1219-1311, 1224, telegram March 22, 1945, Ambassador Laurence Steinhardt, Ankara, to Secretary of State Edward Stettinius Jr., Washington.

⁵⁵ A few options for internationalization of the Straits were possible: Turkish defense of the Straits while Soviet war ships would be allowed in war and peacetime; complete demilitarization of the Straits under the guarantee of the Great Powers; or international control of the Straits by the establishment of bases by some or all of the Great Powers in that area. Source: FRUS, Diplomatic Papers, the Near East and Africa, Vol. VIII 1945, 'Turkey', 1219-1311, 1238-1239, memorandum August 21, 1945, Assistant Chief of the division of Near Eastern affairs George Lewis Jones, Washington.

⁵⁶ FRUS, Diplomatic Papers, the Near East and Africa, Vol. VIII 1945, 'Turkey', 1219-1311, 1239, memorandum August 24, 1945, Deputy Director of the office of Near Eastern and African affairs George Venable Allen, Washington.

⁵⁷ Ibidem.

⁵⁸ FRUS, Diplomatic Papers, the Near East and Africa, Vol. VIII 1945, 'Turkey', 1219-1311, 1254, memorandum October 15, 1945, Chief of the division of Near Eastern affairs Gordon P. Merriam, Washington.

relatively mild in the months directly after the Second World War and American policymakers did not yet believe that the Soviets intended to use military power to achieve their goals concerning Turkey. Therefore, American officials acknowledged the legitimacy of the Soviet desire to revise the Montreux Convention but opposed the Soviet wish to build bases in the Straits.⁵⁹ The American Ambassador in Turkey, Laurence Steinhardt, did not expect that the USSR wanted to expand its territory at the expense of Turkey, but rather that it desired complete freedom to navigate the Straits 'with every type of vessel in times of war as well as in times of peace'.⁶⁰

In the case of the claims on the Turkish provinces, the United States turned out to be right. Although the Soviets did not renounce the issue, the USSR stopped raising it and its importance faded quickly.⁶¹ The revision of Montreux, however, remained of continuing significance. It was officially recognized at the Potsdam Conference in July 1945 that the Montreux Convention required revision, but no agreement could be reached with respect to the principles on which the revision should be based. President Truman proposed a regime of freedom for the Straits, approved and guaranteed by Britain and the USSR within a UN-framework. Stalin, however, continued to demand the possibility to build bases.⁶² Next to these demands, the Soviet press started an extensive propaganda campaign against Turkey urging the Turkish people to rebel against their own government, which according to Moscow was 'fascist' and 'reactionary'.⁶³ According to the political scientists Metin Tamkoç and Oya Akgönenç Mughisuddin, the psychological penetration had reached such a high level at a certain moment that it caused serious alarm among Turkish political leaders. At the same time, these leaders were observing with increasing unease the taking over of Germany, Poland, Rumania and Hungary by local Communists, assisted in their efforts by the Red Army.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ Leffler, 'Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War', 808-809.

⁶⁰ FRUS, 'Turkey', 1227, telegram March 26, 1945.

⁶¹ Leffler, 'Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War', 809.

⁶² FRUS, Diplomatic Papers, the Conference of Berlin (the Potsdam Conference), Vol. I 1945, 'Tuesday, July 24 1945', 323-380, 372, minutes of the eighth plenary meeting.

⁶³ Metin Tamkoç, 'The impact of the Truman Doctrine on the national security interests of Turkey', *Foreign Policy/Dış Politika* 6 (1977) 3-4, 20-21.

⁶⁴ Oya Akgönenç Mughisuddin, 'Turkish Arab relations 1945-1975', *Foreign Policy/Dış Politika* 1 (1993) 1-2, 118.

Although most American officials agreed that the 'war-weary' USSR had no intentions to attack Turkey, the new American Ambassador in Ankara, hardliner Edwin C. Wilson, followed a different line as he interpreted the Russian behavior as a cover for its real intentions.⁶⁵ It seemed to him that the question of the Straits instead of being an essential matter to the USSR, appeared to be merely a façade that camouflaged the real Soviet objective: domination of Turkey.⁶⁶ In 1946, Wilson gave a more elaborate clarification of his view by arguing that the USSR intended to close the gap in the Soviet security belt from the Baltics to the Black Sea. Moreover, it wanted to put an end to Western influence in Turkey. He acknowledged, however, that the risk for a general war remained small.⁶⁷ This was in line with what the architect of the American containment policy, Deputy Chief of Mission of the American Embassy in Moscow, George Kennan, formulated with regard to Turkey. Kennan stated that the US should have no hope that the Soviets would be satisfied with concessions regarding the Straits. He warned that 'any concessions of this nature will be exploited to utmost in Moscow with the view to [the] elimination of western influence in Turkey and establishment of regime "friendly" to [the] Soviet Union'.⁶⁸

It appeared that the American motives with regard to Turkish sovereignty were not based on the intrinsic wish to maintain Turkish independence; rather, it can be seen as an early manifestation of the domino theory. If the USSR was not halted, Turkey could be the first domino to fall, which would subsequently start a chain reaction of Soviet expansionism. If the USSR was allowed to destroy Turkish independence and set up a friendly regime in the country, nothing would prevent them from ascending to the Persian Gulf and the Suez Canal, and once this occurred

⁶⁵ FRUS, Diplomatic Papers, the Conference of Berlin (the Potsdam Conference), Vol. I 1945, 'Wednesday, July 25', 381-407, 393, memorandum July 25, 1945.

⁶⁶ FRUS, Diplomatic Papers, the Near East and Africa, Vol. VIII 1945, 'Turkey', 1219-1311, 1257, telegram October 23, 1945, Ambassador Edwin C. Wilson, Ankara, to Secretary of State James Byrnes, Washington; FRUS, Diplomatic Papers, the Near East and Africa, Vol. VIII 1945, 'Turkey', 1219-1311, 1249, telegram September 25, 1945, Ambassador Edwin C. Wilson, Ankara, to Secretary of State James Byrnes, Washington.

⁶⁷ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. VII 1946, 'Turkey', 801-923, 819, telegram March 18, 1946, Ambassador Edwin C. Wilson, Ankara, to Secretary of State James Byrnes, Washington.

⁶⁸ FRUS, Diplomatic Papers, the Near East and Africa, Vol. VIII 1945, 'Turkey', 1219-1311, 1251, telegram September 27, 1945, Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union George F. Kennan, Moscow, to Secretary of State James Byrnes, Washington.

'another world conflict becomes inevitable'.⁶⁹ Therefore, the interests of the US became more substantial as the year 1946 progressed. The Turkish determination to defend their country and the observation that 'Turks are tough obstinate people' reassured the American policymakers that the Turks would not give up easily.⁷⁰ They also started to see it as their task to keep this spirit high, as they were doubtful whether 'Turkey will continue to adhere to this determination without assurance or support from the United States'.⁷¹

In August 1946, the Soviets increased their pressure on Turkey with the issuance of a formal diplomatic note. The proposal called for shared Turkish-Russian control over the Straits and the increased naval activity in the Black Sea, which led to much agitation in Ankara and Washington. Although it was not threatening in tone, the note in combination with the disposition of new troops along the Turkish border made the Soviet message more bellicose, especially as a civil war was breaking out in neighboring Greece.⁷² As the former diplomat and Turkish Foreign Minister Haluk Bayülken explained in 1971, Turkey gave a very determined and negative reply and began to prepare itself against a Soviet military intervention after receiving this diplomatic note.⁷³

The US also feared further Soviet expansion in the future, which would endanger essential British petroleum supplies and communication networks.⁷⁴ Anticipating the disintegration of the British Empire, Soviet control over the Balkans and the Middle East would adversely affect American security. The note led to a significant revision of Washington's policy towards the Turkish Republic, which implied that they started to resist Soviet expansionism towards Turkey. The urgent call of Turkish officials for support and their desire for a coordinated response backed the new American policy line.⁷⁵ Acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson

⁶⁹ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. VII 1946, 'Turkey', 801-923, 822, telegram April 2, 1946, Ambassador Edwin C. Wilson, Ankara, to Secretary of State James Byrnes, Washington.

⁷⁰ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. VII 1946, 'Turkey', 801-923, 837, telegram August 12, 1946, Ambassador Edwin C. Wilson, Ankara, to Secretary of State James Byrnes, Washington.

⁷¹ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. VII 1946, 'Turkey', 801-923, 841, telegram August 15, 1946, Acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington, to Secretary of State James Byrnes, Paris.

⁷² Leffler, 'Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War', 810; Feroz Ahmad, *Turkey, The Quest for Identity* (Oxford 2005) 106.

⁷³ Bayülken, 'Turkey and the United Nations', 99.

⁷⁴ Leffler, 'Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War', 811.

⁷⁵ Yılmaz, 'Turkey's quest for NATO Membership', 484.

stated: 'the only thing which will deter the Russians will be the conviction that the United States is prepared, if necessary, to meet aggression with force of arms'.⁷⁶ This position also implicated that the US thought that Turkey should continue to bear primary responsibility for the defense of the Straits.⁷⁷

Although the US expressed its wish to resist Soviet expansionism, it still regarded the Balkans and the Middle East as a British area of responsibility. For that reason, the American policy change had no direct consequences and American support remained limited to words.⁷⁸ The Turks, however, knew that good relations with the US would be far more profitable than relations with the weakening Great Britain, as the US was the only country capable of supplying the funds that the Turks found their economy required at that time. Another reason that Turkey saw the US as the logical party for support was that the US started to take up the leadership and protection of Western democracies, which can be associated with their ideological wish to be perceived as both European and democratic. Moreover, the Turks considered it important that the United States had no history of colonial domination and that it was located at a safe distance from Turkey.⁷⁹ The Turkish Prime Minister Recep Peker said therefore that he attached great importance to increasing friendship and understanding with the US. He stressed that the US had been playing an outstanding international role in the maintenance of peace and security, which was, although he did not mention it directly, something the Turks wished to receive from the Americans. He acknowledged that Turkey was little and often unfavorably known in the US and intended to improve American familiarity with Turkey.⁸⁰

The wish for a more democratic system in Turkey can primarily be seen in the light of the search for closer relations with the United States and the Turkish hope – motivated by realist arguments – to join the Western camp. Turkish leaders realized that in order to profit fully from American support, it was beneficial to comply with American political and economic ideals. As the former Turkish policy officer Ismail

⁷⁶ FRUS, 'Turkey', 842, telegram August 15, 1946.

⁷⁷ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. VII 1946, 'Turkey', 801-923, 848, telegram August 19, 1946, Acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington, to Soviet Chargé d'Affaires, Fëdor Terentyevich Orekhov, Washington.

⁷⁸ Yılmaz, 'American Perspectives on Turkey', 81.

⁷⁹ Aydın, 'Determinants of Turkish foreign policy', 109.

⁸⁰ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. VII 1946, 'Turkey', 801-923, 845, telegram August 17, 1946, Ambassador Edwin C. Wilson, Ankara, to Secretary of State James Byrnes, Washington.

Soysal argued, President İnönü considered cooperation with the West necessary for the security and development of the country and therefore he deemed it essential to have a political order similar to the West, which 'established a special place for Western civilization and democratic order in Turkish foreign policy'.⁸¹

To a lesser extent, it was internal factors that contributed to this development. Firstly, there was growing criticism on Turkey's one-party system. İnönü's regime had become unpopular by the majority of the Turkish public because it failed to produce viable economic policies, and the lack of improvement in living conditions of most Turkish people.⁸² Secondly, the regime lost the support of many higher educated people and civil servants as well due to high inflation and taxes.⁸³ As the Republican People's Party was closely related to the state apparatus under the one-party system, criticism was directed at the party as well as to the state. This combination of demands and influences led İnönü – well aware of the tensions in his country and party and keeping the wish to receive American support in mind – to start developing policies that would ultimately lead to political liberalization and the establishment of political opposition.⁸⁴ In a speech İnönü gave in November 1945, he stated that the main deficiency of the Turkish system was a lack of opposition parties and he announced that the next elections would be free and direct. A few months later the Democrat Party (DP) was founded, led by former RPP-member Celâl Bayar.⁸⁵

The process of democratization went alongside with increasing attention from the US. Regarding the question of the Straits, it appeared that no consensus could be reached. Therefore, the question remained dormant from October 1946 onwards.⁸⁶ However, US officials had 'no reason to believe that the USSR has relinquished its determination to obtain a share in the control of the Straits' as 'a foothold in the Straits regions would open the way for the USSR to achieve complete

⁸¹ Soysal, 'The influence of the concept of western civilization on Turkish foreign policy', 5-6.

⁸² Aydın, 'Determinants of Turkish foreign policy', 109.

⁸³ Zürcher, *Turkey*, 209.

⁸⁴ FRUS, 'Turkey', 844-845, telegram August 17, 1946.

⁸⁵ Vander Lippe, *The politics of Turkish democracy*, 138.

⁸⁶ Aydın, 'Determinants of Turkish foreign policy', 108.

domination of Turkey and subsequently of the rest of the Near East'.⁸⁷ This direct Soviet threat let realist Turkish arguments for American support prevail.

The proclamation of the Truman Doctrine

Turkey appeared slowly but surely on the United States' radar. In concrete terms, the US was afraid that Turkey would become a Soviet puppet in the near future if no support was given. At the beginning of 1947, almost all American officials agreed that Turkey was in need of military assistance.⁸⁸ It is needless to emphasize that this would not only benefit Turkey, but also the US. The US feared territorial gains by the Soviet Union and chaos in the region, which would immediately lead to the weakening of the strategic and economic position of the whole Western world. This could lead to a security threat to the US and a greater possibility for a third world war.⁸⁹ In February 1947, the UK announced its inability to supply military products to Turkey and it became clear that Britain also intended to withdraw its aid to Greece due to strains on their economy from postwar shortages.⁹⁰ The Brits asked the American government to shoulder the major share of this burden.⁹¹

The American interest in Turkish military power for deterring the Soviets and the British decision to opt out culminated in the Truman Doctrine that directly targeted Turkey. By means of this doctrine – formally announced on March 12, 1947 by President Truman – the US took responsibility for overseas presence during peacetime. On that same day, Turkey became a member of the International

⁸⁷ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. V 1947, 'The Pentagon Talks of 1947 between the United States and the United Kingdom concerning the Middle East and the Eastern Mediterranean', 485-626, 537-538, undated [ca. January 1947], memorandum prepared in the department of state, Washington.

⁸⁸ Leffler, 'Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War', 815.

⁸⁹ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. V 1947, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 1-484, 52, memorandum, undated [ca. February 1947], Chairman of the Special Committee to Study Assistance to Greece and Turkey Loy W. Henderson, Washington, to Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington.

⁹⁰ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. V 1947, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 1-484, 37, aide-mémoire February 21, 1947, British Embassy, Washington, to Department of State, Washington; Canterbury, *Harry S. Truman*, 119.

⁹¹ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. V 1947, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 1-484, 42, memorandum February 24, 1947, Director of the office of Near Eastern and African affairs Loy W. Henderson, Washington, to Secretary of State George Marshall, Washington.

Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.⁹² The doctrine provided three hundred million dollars to Greece and hundred million dollars to Turkey in order to counter the Soviet threat to these countries and bring them in the sphere of influence of the United States.⁹³ In his famous and dramatic speech, Truman stated that the 'fateful hour' had come and that if the United States did not act immediately, 'the effect will be far-reaching to the West as well as to the East'.⁹⁴

The American objectives were twofold. On the one hand, the US aimed to secure Turkey and the region. The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) aimed to strengthen the Turkish will and ability to resist against Soviet pressure and to improve the Turkish military potential so 'that in the unlikely event of war [...] the Turks will resist with force any Soviet aggression and will have the maximum possible military capability to undertake a holding and delaying action in their own country'.⁹⁵ In this way, the US sought to take advantage to improve their strategic interests in the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean.⁹⁶ On the other hand, the Truman Doctrine was directed at stimulating the United States' interrelated objectives of democracy, freedom and economy. They attempted to assure the survival of Turkey as a fully independent and increasingly democratic nation. As a means to this end, the United States would assist Turkey in strengthening the security forces that were required for the protection of their freedom and independence while continuing to maintain the stability of their economy, which would also serve the American economy in an indirect manner.⁹⁷

Via the Truman Doctrine, the US intended to reorganize and modernize the Turkish army. It desired to enhance the fighting capabilities of the army, air force,

⁹² Yılmaz, 'American Perspectives on Turkey', 82.

⁹³ Oran (eds), *Turkish foreign policy, 1919-2006*, 287.

⁹⁴ History and Public Policy Digital Archive, Truman Library, 'Truman Doctrine, 'Recommendations for Assistance to Greece and Turkey', March 12, 1947, 5.

⁹⁵ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. V 1947, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 1-484, 112, memorandum March 13, 1947, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, to the Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson and Secretary of Navy James Forrestal, Washington.

⁹⁶ Leffler, 'Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War', 808.

⁹⁷ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. V 1947, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 1-484, 257, report July 23, 1947, State-War-Navy Coordinating Subcommittee for the Near and Middle East.

and navy through a military training program, to help build strategic highways and to restock Turkish arsenals and war reserves.⁹⁸ They also advised partial demobilization of the Turkish forces because no immediate armed clash between Turkey and Russia was foreseen and the most immediate threat to Turkey was destabilization caused by economic problems relating to maintaining a large army.⁹⁹ In return, the fighting forces should become more effective, 'equal to Western standards'.¹⁰⁰ Demobilized soldiers would be able to join economic activities, and thus the economic situation would improve.¹⁰¹ By doing this, they intended to prevent bankruptcy that occurred in Greece in order to maintain the internal stability in Turkey.¹⁰² İnönü and various other Turkish officials warmly welcomed the aid supplied through the Truman Doctrine.¹⁰³

The Turks, however, conscious of their nation's history of foreign involvement from the West as a result of the Treaty of Sèvres of 1920 – designed by the allied powers after the First World War to split the Ottoman Empire into different spheres of influence – were also afraid that if they accepted the aid, this would imply a certain amount of American control exercised in Turkey.¹⁰⁴ Secretary General of the foreign office Feridun Cemal Erkin therefore requested an emphasis on dialogue when it came to making agreements with the US and asked them to be receptive of Turkish sensitivities in relation to notions of supervision and control.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁸ Leffler, 'Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War', 817; FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. V 1947, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 1-484, 234-235, report July 14, 1947, Ambassador Edwin C. Wilson, Ankara.

⁹⁹ Leffler, 'Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War', 816; Vander Lippe, *The politics of Turkish democracy*, 164.

¹⁰⁰ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. V 1947, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 1-484, 259, report July 15, 1947, Ambassador Edwin C. Wilson, Ankara.

¹⁰¹ Jamil Hasanli, *Stalin and the Turkish crisis of the Cold War, 1945-1953* (Lanham 2011) 333.

¹⁰² Executive Session on the Bill to Provide for Assistance to Greece and Turkey, March 13, 1947, *Legislative Origins of the Truman Doctrine*, 9.

¹⁰³ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. V 1947, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 1-484, 118, telegram March 14, 1947, Ambassador Edwin C. Wilson, Ankara, to Secretary of State George Marshall, Washington.

¹⁰⁴ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. V 1947, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 1-484, 138, telegram April 4, 1926, Ambassador Edwin C. Wilson, Washington, to Embassy in Turkey, Ankara; Hakan Yılmaz, 'Two Pillars of Nationalist Euroscepticism in Turkey: The Tanzimat and Sèvres Syndromes', in: Ingmar Karsson and Annika Strom Melin (eds), *Turkey, Sweden and the European Union: Experiences and Expectations* (Stockholm 2006) 29-40, 29.

¹⁰⁵ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. V 1947, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 1-484, 191, telegram June 4, 1947, Secretary of State George

The US, well aware of the Turkish suspicion and distrust of Western countries, stated that because Turks were proud people who viewed their sovereignty as of utmost importance, it was considered desirable to 'avoid any aspect of unwarranted U.S. interference in Turkish affairs'.¹⁰⁶ Once these problems were solved, the Turkish Prime Minister Hasan Saka and Ambassador Wilson signed the agreement on aid to Turkey on July 12, 1947.¹⁰⁷

With regard to the American advice to partially demobilize armed forces, the Turks were initially very hesitant because of the continuing Soviet menace. The General Staff of the Turkish army considered the 'world situation' too dangerous to warrant a reduction of the army.¹⁰⁸ Saka also agreed that they could not afford to reduce their armed forces.¹⁰⁹ Internal political considerations, however, influenced the Turkish decision to a certain extent. The Turkish people expressed their discontent over the high living costs and the cabinet received strong criticism by the opposition as it, in their eyes, failed to improve the economic situation. No reduction in the armed forces and an increase of the taxes would severely decrease the Government's popularity.¹¹⁰ Eventually, the Turks decided for demobilization, although they anticipated intensified psychological warfare from the Soviets, forcing further expenses when the Soviets learned of this demobilization.¹¹¹ This decision was of course made for budgetary reasons, but also contributing to the decision was the idea that they could rely on American financial aid.

Directly after, the Turks started to request an acceleration of the delivery of aid and additional financial assistance to cover the budget deficit, as a large part of

Marshall, Washington, to Embassy in Turkey, Ankara; FRUS, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 138, telegram April 4, 1926.

¹⁰⁶ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. V 1947, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 1-484, 155, report April 28, 1947, State-War-Navy Coordinating Subcommittee for the Near and Middle East, Washington.

¹⁰⁷ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. V 1947, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 1-484, 231, editorial note July 12, 1947.

¹⁰⁸ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. V 1947, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 1-484, 298, telegram August 17, 1947, Ambassador Edwin C. Wilson, Ankara, to Secretary of State George Marshall, Washington.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹¹⁰ *Ibidem*, 299.

¹¹¹ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. V 1947, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 1-484, 352, telegram September 29, 1947, Chargé d'Affaires Herbert S. Bursley, Ankara, to Secretary of State George Marshall, Washington.

this was caused by national defense expenditures.¹¹² They argued that this was necessary to avoid an economic crisis and in turn prevent public discontent and the domestic spread of Communism.¹¹³ The US was greatly disturbed by this request and informed the Turks that it wished that the Turks maintained their own financial stability and 'scrutinized carefully its budget appropriations in order to ensure that only most necessary expenditures were approved'.¹¹⁴ Apparently, the economic situation of Turkey was not as bad, as the US was not prepared to give financial assistance to cover their budget deficit. For additional money, they advised Turkey to consult the International Bank.¹¹⁵

By the start of 1948, no shipments with military supplies had arrived, leading the Turks to become impatient. Ambassador Baydur argued that delays were disappointing and 'had an adverse effect on the morale of the Turkish government and people, who were constantly subjected to pressure of various sorts from the USSR'.¹¹⁶ Eventually, the doctrine was successfully implemented. In total, the level of American military aid in the period between 1947 and 1951 would reach four hundred million dollars.¹¹⁷ The doctrine also influenced Turkey's internal politics. The Turks became familiar with the American way of democracy. Some American influences can be detected. For example, in July 1947, President İnönü declared that the President of the Republic must be impartial and gave up the leadership of the RPP.¹¹⁸ Moreover, with the Truman Doctrine, Turkey unequivocally aligned itself to the Western camp in the developing Cold War.¹¹⁹ Thus, next to the fact that Turkey gladly accepted support because of the Soviet pressure for realist reasons, arguments for speeding up support were also realist by nature.

¹¹² Ibidem, 353; FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. V 1947, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 1-484, 357, telegram October 2, 1947, Ambassador Edwin C. Wilson, Bern, to Secretary of State George Marshall, Washington.

¹¹³ FRUS, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 353, telegram September 29, 1947.

¹¹⁴ FRUS, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 357, telegram October 2, 1947.

¹¹⁵ Ibidem, 358.

¹¹⁶ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. IV 1948, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 1-732, 20, memorandum, January 9, 1948, division of Greek, Turkish and Iranian affairs David LeBreton, Washington.

¹¹⁷ Oran (eds), *Turkish foreign policy, 1919-2006*, 318.

¹¹⁸ Ibidem, 320.

¹¹⁹ Yılmaz, 'Turkey's quest for NATO Membership', 486.

The lobby for Marshall help

Shortly after Congress approved military support to Greece and Turkey, the new Secretary of State George C. Marshall introduced the Marshall Plan. The Marshall Plan was the much more comprehensive economic counterpart of the Truman Doctrine and was directed at Europe as a whole.¹²⁰ The fear of an economic collapse, which could in turn stimulate socialism in Europe and threaten the capitalist system, was the primary force behind the European Recovery Program.¹²¹ The plan targeted Western European countries and was initially not designed to provide aid to Turkey. On the contrary, American policymakers initially wanted Turkey to contribute to the economic recovery of Europe, as the Turks – in the eyes of the Americans – were not faced with economic recovery but only with economic development problems.¹²² Turkish policymakers, however, still sought to benefit from this economic program.

At first, it was mainly the US that pushed to support Turkey, but as the Turks gained more confidence after receiving aid via the Truman Doctrine, they started pressing for more assistance themselves. Foreign officer Erkin stated at the turn of the year 1946-1947 that if the Soviet attitude towards Turkey did not change, Turkey's future looked gloomy. The economic problems created public discontent, which in turn led to political difficulties for the Turkish government.¹²³ This obliged the Turks to appeal to the US for economic aid. In order to receive protection from the US, Ankara stressed the Soviet threat and dramatized its burden on the economy.

The financial situation was, however, not as bad as the Turks led the Americans to believe, certainly not in comparison with most Western European

¹²⁰ Yılmaz, 'American Perspectives on Turkey', 83.

¹²¹ Vander Lippe, *The politics of Turkish democracy*, 158.

¹²² FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1948, 'United States encouragement of a Western European Union; antecedents of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-580, 370, telegram January 19, 1948, Ambassador Edwin C. Wilson, Ankara, to Secretary of State George Marshall, Washington; FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1948, 'United States encouragement of a Western European Union; antecedents of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-580, 371, telegram January 21, 1948, Secretary of State George Marshall, Washington, to Embassy in Turkey, Ankara.

¹²³ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. VII 1946, 'Turkey', 801-923, 898-899, telegram December 30, 1946, Ambassador Edwin C. Wilson, Ankara, to Secretary of State James Byrnes, Washington.

economies as there were no food shortages or Communist uprisings.¹²⁴ As the historian Jamil Hasanli argues, the Americans considered the political regime in Turkey as stable, the trade balance during the war was in favor of Turkey and production was at a prewar level.¹²⁵ Moreover, as Wilson mentioned, Turkey had a gold reserve of about 230 million dollars.¹²⁶ In short, Turkey was doing relatively well. However, the Turks did not use the gold reserve for economic development as they found it necessary to save it for an emergency and to keep their army mobilized.¹²⁷

When the Marshall Plan was issued and it appeared that the Turks were left out, they were extremely disappointed.¹²⁸ President İnönü was dismayed by the bad news. He complained that countries like Belgium and the Netherlands that were receiving aid under the Plan were a ‘thousand times’ more developed than Turkey and that unless the country received economic assistance, it would suffer economic collapse.¹²⁹ Moreover, the Turkish people had been ‘holding fort for western democracies’ which led to heavy military expenditures against Soviet threats and a massive burden on the Turkish economy.¹³⁰ In return, the US Ambassador in Ankara explained that these remarks revealed a misconception of the purposes and nature of the Recovery Program that was aimed to economically support war-ravaged countries.¹³¹

After a period of strong diplomacy by the Turks, they were included in the framework of the Marshall Plan. The Americans had to admit that Turkey was strongly pressured and therefore its army had to be permanently ready for action. Therefore, the Americans found it necessary to extend the Marshall Plan to

¹²⁴ Kayaoğlu, ‘Cold War in the Aegean’, 327.

¹²⁵ Hasanli, *Stalin and the Turkish crisis of the Cold War*, 333.

¹²⁶ Executive Session on the Bill to Provide for Assistance to Greece and Turkey, March 13, 1947, 48.

¹²⁷ Ibidem.

¹²⁸ FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1948, ‘United States encouragement of a Western European Union; antecedents of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization’, 1-580, 363, telegram January 15, 1948, Ambassador Edwin C. Wilson, Ankara, to Secretary of State George Marshall, Washington.

¹²⁹ Ibidem.

¹³⁰ FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1948, ‘United States encouragement of a Western European Union; antecedents of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization’, 1-580, 369, telegram January 17, 1948, Ambassador Edwin C. Wilson, Ankara to Secretary of State George Marshall, Washington.

¹³¹ FRUS, ‘United States encouragement of a Western European Union; antecedents of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization’, 363-364, telegram January 15.

Turkey.¹³² Turkey also became a member of the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), which was established for the coordination of American aid to European countries.¹³³ In the beginning, the Turks would only receive short in supply commodities that were essential for the maintenance of the present level of the Turkish economy or that would contribute to the general recovery of the European economy, like agricultural equipment, trucks and steel.¹³⁴ They did not receive, as they desired, long-term loans or grants from the US.

The American approach led to disappointment in Ankara; they were afraid that if the US abandoned Turkey economically, they could also do this politically.¹³⁵ Under the influence of public opinion, the Turkish government therefore requested full inclusion in the Marshall Plan. Persistent advocacy led the US to agree to provide Turkey with ten million dollars in loans in March 1948 as part of an economic assistance package. The Turks were however embarrassed with the small amount of money and considered not accepting it because they were afraid this would damage their internal political position. Moreover, they found themselves unable to make an effective contribution to European recovery with a credit of only ten million.¹³⁶ Finally, however, the Turks agreed. During the full period of Marshall aid Turkey received 352 million dollars, as the US felt it was in its interest to have a politically and economically stable Turkey.¹³⁷

The Marshall Plan coincided with a transitional period in the Turkish political system from a one-party regime to a multiparty system. Above all, this democratic change was fueled by external influences and, consequentially, by realist motives. According to Tamkoç, the American programs were instrumental in the liberalization of the internal political regime.¹³⁸ In order to exploit the American political, military and economic support due to security as a Turkish foreign policy objective, it

¹³² Hasanli, *Stalin and the Turkish crisis of the Cold War*, 333.

¹³³ Yılmaz, 'American Perspectives on Turkey', 84.

¹³⁴ FRUS, 'United States encouragement of a Western European Union; antecedents of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 371, telegram January 21, 1948.

¹³⁵ Oran (eds), *Turkish foreign policy, 1919-2006*, 322.

¹³⁶ FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1948, 'United States encouragement of a Western European Union; antecedents of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-580, 434, report May 3, 1948, current economic developments, Washington.

¹³⁷ Oran (eds), *Turkish foreign policy, 1919-2006*, 329.

¹³⁸ Tamkoç, 'The impact of the Truman Doctrine on the national security interests of Turkey', 40.

conformed to the American democratic ideal. In other words, Turkey democratized because the US could not form closer relations with a dictatorial regime.¹³⁹

In this respect, it was certainly helpful that this policy was in line with Atatürk's ideology. But it was also Prime Minister Saka's interpretation that a one-party system would eventually lead to a crisis in Turkish politics. He remarked that Turkey's political life could no longer be built around 'one dominating personality like Ataturk and Inonu', but must develop towards fuller participation of the people. As stated by Saka, this was also the conception of President İnönü himself.¹⁴⁰ The American support was useful for this transition, as there was a pressing need for long-term loans to make the shift to a more democratic multiparty system proceed smoothly.¹⁴¹ The multiparty system was implemented with the early elections of 1946. Although the elections were far from fair as a result of massive vote rigging, the newly established DP managed to win 62 of the 465 seats in the assembly, an important step towards a more democratic system.¹⁴²

American support also stimulated economic and social development. The American focus on freedom of trade and enterprise and growing criticism from the opposition party, academic and business circles resulted in a retreat from Atatürk's statist economic philosophy that had led to the creation of a number of inefficient enterprises that were run by the state.¹⁴³ In July 1948, the Turkish government agreed to curtail practices that 'might restrain competition, limit access to markets, or foster monopolistic control'.¹⁴⁴ Moreover, wartime controls on trade and business were removed and foreign trade was stimulated by reducing trade barriers.¹⁴⁵ The Turkish government chose to adapt its economic policy in many ways in order to meet the American wishes and expressed its willingness to cooperate in every way, which shows the realist nature of the Turkish motives to receive American support.

¹³⁹ Zürcher, *Turkey*, 211.

¹⁴⁰ FRUS, 'Turkey', 844-845, telegram August 17, 1946.

¹⁴¹ Oran (eds), *Turkish foreign policy, 1919-2006*, 322.

¹⁴² Zürcher, *Turkey*, 214.

¹⁴³ Osman Okyar, 'Inflation and political democracy in Turkey 1923-1978', *Foreign Policy/Dış Politika* 8 (1979) 1-2, 69; John Vander Lippe, 'Forgotten brigade of the forgotten war: Turkey's participation in the Korean War', *Middle Eastern Studies* 36 (2000) 1, 92-102, 94.

¹⁴⁴ Act II, Economic Cooperation with Turkey, TIAS 1794, signed July 4, 1948, cited in: George Sellers Harris, *Troubled Alliance: Turkish-American Problems in Historical perspective* (Washington 1971) 12; FRUS, 'Turkey', 844-845, telegram August 17, 1946.

¹⁴⁵ Couloumbis, *The United States, Greece and Turkey*, 18.

Sub-conclusion

For Turkey, the main characteristic of the postwar world was its bipolarity. The US and the USSR were the only two players that truly mattered and Turkey was stuck between these two superpowers. This restricted the freedom of Turkey to choose its own path in international and domestic politics. It was impossible for Turkey to withdraw itself from the emerging Cold War and rely on the balance of power between the Western and Eastern blocs for protection. Turkey could not choose neutrality because it was unable to develop sufficient economic and military capabilities to protect itself from the emerging Soviet threat. Thus, in order to ensure its survival, it had to seek support from the United States.

Given the fact that Turkey was an exposed and relatively small state, which felt threatened in its sovereignty by the Soviet claims on the Turkish Straits and the Soviet propaganda in general, the Turks solely provided realist arguments to convince the United States to express their support and supply financial aid in the early Cold War years. They capitalized on the American Cold War stance while underlining the Soviet threat and the possible consequences a Soviet attack could have on their territorial integrity and sovereignty. Moreover, Turkey began to see American aid and investment as the best method to accelerate economic developments after the war and alleviate its defense burden. This is why, after receiving support via the Truman Doctrine, Turkish leaders started to press for more help via the Marshall Plan. Although there was internal pressure too, it can be argued that the domestic democratization process was also mostly fueled by the wish to form an alliance with the United States for pragmatic considerations, namely the maintenance of Turkish security. As the next chapters will show, ideological arguments would only gain ground in later years.

Chapter 2. The Turkish campaign for an American security guarantee (mid-1948 - mid-1950)

The Cold War climate expedited the establishment of the Turkish-American alliance. The American commitment to Turkey, however, ended with strengthening the effectiveness and size of Turkey's military capabilities in order to enhance the possibility for the Turks to resist Soviet aggression so that the Western powers could gain valuable time in the case of an attack.¹⁴⁶ For a long time, the US attempted to keep Turkey contented while providing them only the most necessary aid. The Turkish government was far from satisfied with the American position and the annual as well as the temporary nature of the American military and economic aid.¹⁴⁷

Although there were no new developments since the matter of the Straits, the Turkish perception of the Soviet threat remained serious in due to the continuing propaganda that incited the Turkish people to rise up against their government, overthrow it and 'to come to understanding with their great friends in Soviet Russia'.¹⁴⁸ Given the fact that the Soviets did not reject their demands for bases in the Straits and the Turkish provinces until May 1953, most Turks had the opinion that the best way to defend their country was to form a military alliance with the US.¹⁴⁹ In order to obtain an American security commitment, Turkey started an intensive lobby even before NATO was founded in April 1949. First they were excluded, but finally the US was convinced to give Turkey an associate membership of NATO in 1950. The Turks strongly believed that they deserved to be included in

¹⁴⁶ Yılmaz, 'American Perspectives on Turkey', 85; FRUS, the Near East, South Asia and Africa, Vol. V 1950, 'The Near East', 1-283, 154-155, report May 11, 1950, Department of State, Washington.

¹⁴⁷ Yuluğ Tekin Kurat, 'Turkey's entry to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', *Foreign Policy/Dış Politika* 10 (1983) 3-4, 66.

¹⁴⁸ Executive Session on the Bill to Provide for Assistance to Greece and Turkey, March 13, 1947, 50; Hasanlı, *Stalin and the Turkish crisis of the Cold War*, 342; FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. IV 1949, 'Participation by the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and in efforts for European integration; the military assistance program', 1-616, 360, memorandum December 5, 1949, Deputy Undersecretary Dean Rusk, Washington.

¹⁴⁹ Suha Bölükbaşı, 'The Evolution of a Close Relationship: Turkish-American relations between 1917-1960', *Foreign Policy/Dış Politika* 16 (1992) 1-2, 90.

NATO as they saw membership as the extension of the support that the Truman Doctrine had offered.¹⁵⁰

Next to realist arguments for their security, the Turks started to use ideological arguments desiring a more equal relationship with the West through becoming a member of the Atlantic Treaty. Domestically, President İnönü, whose principal objectives were to maintain Turkey's territorial integrity and political independence and to help his country to the level of 'contemporary civilization', enabled the election of the more Western-minded Democrat Party.¹⁵¹ This marked the beginning of a more open economy and a stronger lobby for NATO membership.

First steps towards NATO membership

In 1948, Turkey's Atlantic future did not look hopeful. The Turkish government welcomed the signing of the Treaty of Brussels, which was a precursor of NATO.¹⁵² Although they expected to be invited to join this treaty, which they found vital for Europe's defense, the invitation never came.¹⁵³ 1948 was also the year that the Americans started conversations with the Brits and Canadians in order to establish an Atlantic Pact.¹⁵⁴ From the beginning, they discussed whether or not to include Turkey in the pact.¹⁵⁵ A great deal of the discussion was related to the organization's name, because this had major implications on which countries would be included. The participants hesitated between 'Atlantic' or 'Western'. The first would exclude states that did not border the Atlantic Ocean, which would in turn exclude Turkey from being part of the organization. The latter would permit the inclusion of those

¹⁵⁰ Trombley Averill, 'Truman and NATO', 412.

¹⁵¹ Metin Tamkoç, 'The Warrior Diplomat: İsmet İnönü', *Foreign Policy/Dış Politika* 3 (1973) 4, 80.

¹⁵² On March 17, 1948, the UK, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg signed the Treaty of Brussels. Subsequently, the Western Union Defense Organization was signed in September 1948. The US and Canada decided to strengthen this alliance, which led to the preparatory meetings for the establishment of the NATO. Source: Oran (eds), *Turkish foreign policy, 1919-2006*, 324.

¹⁵³ Oran (eds), *Turkish foreign policy, 1919-2006*, 324.

¹⁵⁴ Ibidem.

¹⁵⁵ FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1948, 'United States encouragement of a Western European Union; antecedents of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-580, 60, minutes March 22, 1948, first meeting of the United States-United Kingdom-Canada security conversations, Washington.

states sharing Western civilization, which would presumably exclude Turkey as well, according to the participants.¹⁵⁶

On April 23, it was agreed that an armed attack on Turkey or its neighbors Greece and Iran would affect their own national security and not that of the US. In the case of an attack, these states had to call upon Article 51 of the UN Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security and the right of collective self-defense.¹⁵⁷ This did not mean, however, that the US was not aware of the vital importance Turkey held for Western security.¹⁵⁸ But, as Undersecretary of State Robert A. Lovett explained, it was necessary for the US to draw the line somewhere, or it 'would find itself in the position of underwriting the security of the whole world'.¹⁵⁹ The main criterion remained the security of the United States itself.

Although the US desired to take advantage of Turkey's strategic location without giving the Turks special guarantees for their territorial integrity, they quickly realized that the Turks did desire a certain commitment. The firmness of the Turkish argument to persuade the US to offer such a guarantee evolved over time. At the start of 1948, they did not yet ask for a commitment directly; they only pleaded that the US demonstrated to 'the Soviets that we mean business'.¹⁶⁰ As a substitute for joining the Atlantic Pact, the US advised the rapprochement of Eastern Mediterranean and Middle Eastern countries in a Middle Eastern pact. The Turks however felt that this pact would be ineffective and even unrealizable until the

¹⁵⁶ FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1948, 'United States encouragement of a Western European Union; antecedents of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-580, 64-65, minutes March 23, 1948, second meeting of the United States-United Kingdom-Canada security conversations, Washington.

¹⁵⁷ FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1948, 'United States encouragement of a Western European Union; antecedents of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-580, 102, telegram April 23, 1948, Director of Policy Planning staff George F. Kennan, Washington, to Executive Secretary of the National Security Council Sidney Souers, Washington.

¹⁵⁸ For example in October 1948, an official of the American State-Army-Navy-Air Force coordinating committee advised that the US should consider the establishment of military bases in Turkey and Greece as these countries dominated the major air, land and sea routes from the USSR to the Suez area and the oil fields in the Middle East.

¹⁵⁹ FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1948, 'United States encouragement of a Western European Union; antecedents of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-580, 197, memorandum July 21, 1948, Undersecretary of State Robert A. Lovett, Washington.

¹⁶⁰ FRUS, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 19, memorandum, January 9, 1948.

Israeli-Palestinian question was resolved.¹⁶¹ Moreover, they feared that such a pact might generate a false sense of security and would provoke Soviet aggression.¹⁶²

In the meantime, the Turkish government expressed its discontent about the fact that the US intended to give security guarantees to Western Europe and not to Turkey. According to Ambassador Baydur, this gave the USSR the impression that they could 'with comparative safety' commit aggression against Turkey.¹⁶³ Baydur argued in a realist way that if the Russians should obtain such an idea, they would undoubtedly increase their activities aimed at undermining the independence and integrity of Turkey.¹⁶⁴ In May 1948, the Ambassador expressed, without referring to Turkey directly, his belief that it was important for the United States to give some sort of clear guarantee or let Turkey enter into an arrangement in order to preserve the peace.¹⁶⁵

The Americans reiterated that they could not take care of the security of the whole world and that Turkey should not overlook the aid the US had already provided.¹⁶⁶ For the Turks however, the supply of funds, arms and military training was not satisfactory and they defended their point of view with more persuasiveness each time. They stated pragmatically that, assuming that the primary object of American policy is to prevent a war, it would be more effective to give Turkey a juridical guarantee.¹⁶⁷ The Turkish government considered it a dangerous policy for the US to associate itself with the security of a couple of Western European

¹⁶¹ In order to please the US and to set a cultural and social distance between them and the Arab countries, Turkey was the first Muslim country to recognize Israel in 1949. Naturally, it was impossible to conclude a Mediterranean defense pact as long as the Arab states remained in war with Israel while Turkey was on the side of Israel; FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. IV 1948 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 1-732, 71-72, telegram April 8, 1948, Ambassador Edwin C. Wilson, Ankara, to Secretary of State George Marshall, Washington.

¹⁶² McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East connection*, 55.

¹⁶³ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. IV 1948, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 1-732, 83, memorandum May 11, 1948, Secretary of State George Marshall, Washington.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹⁶⁵ FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1948, 'United States encouragement of a Western European Union; antecedents of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-580, 131 memorandum May 23, 1948, Undersecretary of State Robert A. Lovett, Washington.

¹⁶⁶ FRUS, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 84, memorandum May 11, 1948.

¹⁶⁷ FRUS, 'United States encouragement of a Western European Union; antecedents of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 197, memorandum July 21, 1948.

countries and at the same time leave the southeastern flank of Europe exposed.¹⁶⁸ As an alternative, Erkin, then Turkish Ambassador in Washington, mentioned a possible arrangement including Turkey and Greece with the support of Great Britain and the US.¹⁶⁹ Furthermore, he hoped for a declaration that could be seen as an 'interim step preparing the way for an additional regional arrangement in which Turkey could participate directly'.¹⁷⁰

The first time the Turks directly requested to be included in the anticipated North Atlantic Pact was in December 1948.¹⁷¹ The American response was negative. Because of their extensive commitments to Europe with extremely limited resources, the American policymakers decided to limit the alliance and to prioritize assistance to Western Europe. They felt unable to include Turkey as well because they could not even tell whether the American capabilities were adequate to defend their vital interests in Western Europe.¹⁷² Correspondingly, the net effect of Turkish inclusion would be more harmful than beneficial, as they were not able to commit substantial forces in the event of aggression.¹⁷³ Thus, the US had to wait until Europe's own defensive strength had developed before they could consider further security arrangements.¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁸ Ibidem.

¹⁶⁹ FRUS, the Near East and Africa, Vol. IV 1948, 'United States economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey: the Truman Doctrine', 1-732, 149, memorandum September 9, 1948, Secretary of State George Marshall, Washington.

¹⁷⁰ FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. IV 1949, 'Participation by the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and in efforts for European integration; the military assistance program', 1-616, 118, memorandum February 17, 1949, Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington.

¹⁷¹ FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1948, 'United States encouragement of a Western European Union; antecedents of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-580, 321, memorandum December 14, 1948, Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African affairs Joseph C. Satterthwaite, Washington, to Undersecretary of State Robert A. Lovett, Washington.

¹⁷² FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1950, 'Concern of the United States with the defense of Western Europe: military assistance through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; encouragement of West German participation in an integrated European defense force', 1-1346, 80, memorandum May 1, 1950, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African affairs George Crews McGhee, Washington, to Undersecretary of State James E. Webb, Washington; Leffler, 'Strategy, Diplomacy, and the Cold War', 819-820.

¹⁷³ FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1950, 'Concern of the United States with the defense of Western Europe: military assistance through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; encouragement of West German participation in an integrated European defense force', 1-1346, 220, telegram August 17, 1950, Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington to Embassy in Greece, Athens.

¹⁷⁴ FRUS, 'Concern of the United States with the defense of Western Europe', 80, memorandum May 1, 1950.

In order to keep the Turks satisfied and to ensure they felt supported, the Americans decided to supply further economic and military aid. American officials expressed their confidence in the determination of the Turks and in their effective use of American aid. According to William Averell Harriman, Special Representative in Europe for the Economic Cooperation Administration, the Turkish government recognized they needed, 'not only our physical aid, but even more essentially, our technical assistance in developing programs and training their backward people'.¹⁷⁵ Although he also stressed that 'Turks learn quickly, have an enthusiasm and determination, spurred on by fear of Russian aggression', the fact that an influential American policymaker used the colonial term 'backward' while describing the Turkish people indicates that there were multiple reasons for exclusion. Not only the fact that the European strength was not fully developed, but also doubt over the capacity of the less advanced Turks to become part of the Western alliance, reinforced Turkey's exclusion.¹⁷⁶ No matter how persuasive the Turkish realist arguments were, the US was not yet ready for Turkish inclusion in the Western hemisphere.

Exclusion from the Atlantic Alliance

With the establishment of NATO in April 1949, the US formed its first defensive alliance with Europe. The signatories of the treaty promised to cooperate closely on a political and economic level; they agreed to develop their capacity in order to reconstruct Europe and most importantly, they pledged that an armed attack against one of them would be considered an attack against them all.¹⁷⁷ The signing of the treaty, and the unanticipated inclusion of Italy and some provinces of Algeria in particular, were a source of consternation for Ankara. The inclusion of Mediterranean areas in NATO caused 'confusion and perturbation in Turkish public

¹⁷⁵ FRUS, the Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Vol. VI 1949, 'Turkey', 1638-1685, 1639, telegram January 6, 1949, United States Special Representative in Europe for the Economic Cooperation Administration William Averell Harriman, Paris, to Administrator for the Economic Cooperation Administration, Paul G. Hoffman.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibidem*.

¹⁷⁷ Yılmaz, 'Turkey's quest for NATO Membership', 488; Trombley Averill, 'Truman and NATO', 418.

opinion' because it undermined the geographical argument for Turkey's exclusion.¹⁷⁸ Moreover, the inclusion of Italy in NATO made it very difficult for Turkey to realize a Mediterranean pact, which was the logical alternative to membership of the Atlantic Pact.¹⁷⁹ As the Turkish Foreign Minister Necmettin Sadak stated, 'it was difficult to avoid the impression that Turkey, in the most exposed position of all European countries as regards pressure and possible attack from Soviet Russia, was being abandoned and left outside the thinking of the Western powers as regards security arrangements'.¹⁸⁰

The situation was even less comprehensible for the Turks because, by keeping their army mobilized, they had made so many efforts to resist the Soviet pressure. Ankara even considered taking a policy of non-alignment, a concept that was becoming very popular in the parts of the Cold War world that were not particularly Western nor Soviet. During a visit of Sadak to the US, the Secretary of State Dean Acheson was struck by the Turkish threat of neutrality. US officials feared that if the Turks sought a neutral stand – as they did in the interwar period – the US would not be able to profit from their previous investments in the country.¹⁸¹

One year and one government later, the neutrality argument appeared short-lived or even instrumental, made in order to persuade the US rather than intrinsic to Turkish policy. The new Foreign Minister Fuad Köprülü took the position that, in the event of a third world war, 'defense through neutrality would be illusory for any nation and for Turkey unthinkable'.¹⁸² A neutrality policy was no reasonable option for Turkey, as it would not solve its main issue: retaining their territorial integrity and sovereignty. Neutrality, even if it was armed neutrality, would only invite the USSR

¹⁷⁸ McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East connection*, 59; FRUS, the Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Vol. VI 1949, 'Turkey', 1638-1685, 1648, memorandum April 12, 1949, Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington.

¹⁷⁹ FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. IV 1949, 'Participation by the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and in efforts for European integration; the military assistance program', 1-616, 234, telegram March 16, 1949, Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington, to Embassy in Turkey, Ankara.

¹⁸⁰ FRUS, 'Turkey', 1648, memorandum April 12, 1949.

¹⁸¹ Feroz, *Turkey*, 106.

¹⁸² FRUS, the Near East, South Asia and Africa, Vol. V 1950, 'Turkey', 1224-1354, 1280, telegram July 22, 1950, Ambassador George Wadsworth, Ankara, to Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington.

to impose further demands on Turkey. Therefore, the Minister pleaded to continue their orientation towards Western democracies: 'our interests lie with yours'.¹⁸³

In an attempt to appease the Turks and avoid 'undesirable repercussions' for Turkey, the US assured Turkey that strengthening the collective security of the Atlantic Treaty countries served to enhance Turkey's security as well.¹⁸⁴ Moreover, the US deemed it necessary to issue a special declaration concerning the security of Turkey, as well as Greece and Iran.¹⁸⁵ This resulted in a policy statement that took into consideration the Turkish desire to join the Atlantic or another pact.¹⁸⁶ Acheson reassured Sadak that the vital importance of the independence and integrity of Turkey to the US was in no way diminished as a result of the establishment of NATO.¹⁸⁷ The likelihood of a contractual security arrangement however remained very low, as the US, unlike Turkey, did not perceive Turkish interests as aligned with their own.¹⁸⁸ As long as the US possessed the monopoly of the atomic bomb, and for a short period after, they continued discouraging and refusing all forms of Turkish membership.¹⁸⁹

The Turks were not easily discouraged and turned out to be tough negotiators who managed to formulate multiple options for alliances with the West. By the end of 1949, Ambassador Erkin asked about the state of affairs regarding the interrelationships between the United States and Turkey in the light of the existing British-French-Turkish Treaty of Mutual Assistance of 1939 and the new defense arrangements between the United States, Britain and France under the North

¹⁸³ Ibidem.

¹⁸⁴ FRUS, the Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Vol. VI 1949, 'Turkey', 1638-1685, 1657, letter April 26, 1949, President Harry S. Truman, Washington, to President of Turkey Ismet İnönü, Ankara.

¹⁸⁵ FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. IV 1949, 'Participation by the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and in efforts for European integration; the military assistance program', 1-616, 175, memorandum March 8, 1949, Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs Joseph C. Satterthwaite, Washington, to Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington; FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1950, 'Concern of the United States with the defense of Western Europe: military assistance through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; encouragement of West German participation in an integrated European defense force', 1-1346, 219, telegram August 17, 1950, Secretary of State Dean Acheson, to Embassy in Iran, Tehran.

¹⁸⁶ FRUS, the Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Vol. VI 1949, 'Turkey', 1638-1685, 1670, policy statement May 5, 1949, Department of State, Washington.

¹⁸⁷ FRUS, 'Turkey', 1649-1650, memorandum April 12, 1949.

¹⁸⁸ Ibidem, 1652.

¹⁸⁹ Kurat, 'Turkey's entry to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 66.

Atlantic Treaty.¹⁹⁰ Erkin saw possibilities to receive a similar commitment, albeit an indirect one, via Turkey's alliance with Britain and France. Erkin provided the realist argument that it was not only important that an assurance was given to Turkey to prevent giving the Russians the feeling that 'this country was indifferent or had a lack of interest in the survival of Turkey as a free nation', but that it should also be timed before the approaching Turkish elections in order to strengthen the position of the RPP government.¹⁹¹ The US replied that should the weakened power Britain become involved as a result of Soviet aggression, it was not unlikely that the US would also become involved.¹⁹² They refused, however, to extend a formal commitment.

In May 1950, when the RPP rule was almost at an end, Turkey applied to join the Atlantic Pact, but failed to gain admission. The elections took place on May 22, 1950. The Democrat Party of Adnan Menderes – the leading opposition party – scored a 'sweeping and generally unexpected victory' over the RPP, which had been in power since the foundation of the Republic in 1923.¹⁹³ The US welcomed the free and orderly elections as this was considered evidence that Turkey had achieved democratic maturity. The US chose to disregard the fact that the Turkish government severely suppressed leftwing organizations, which can of course be attributed to the fear of Communism and the fact that the attitude towards leftist groupings in the US was quite similar.¹⁹⁴ They credited President İnönü who had fostered this development, even though this implied that his party was beaten and believed that the election of the DP reflected a countrywide dissatisfaction with the economic conditions and reaction against the single-party mentality that characterized many

¹⁹⁰ FRUS, the Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Vol. VI 1949, 'Turkey', 1638-1685, 1682, memorandum October 13, 1949, Director of the Office of Greek, Turkish and Iranian affairs John D. Jernegan, Washington; FRUS, the Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Vol. VI 1949, 'Turkey', 1638-1685, 1685, editorial note December 5, 1949.

¹⁹¹ FRUS, the Near East, South Asia and Africa, Vol. V 1950, 'Turkey', 1224-1354, 1252, memorandum April 27, 1950, Undersecretary of State James E. Webb, Washington; FRUS, the Near East, South Asia and Africa, Vol. V 1950, 'Turkey', 1224-1354, 1232, memorandum February 15, 1950, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African affairs Raymond A. Hare, Washington.

¹⁹² FRUS, 'The Near East', 155, report May 11, 1950.

¹⁹³ FRUS, the Near East, South Asia and Africa, Vol. V 1950, 'Turkey', 1224-1354, 1262, memorandum May 22, 1950, Acting Secretary of State James E. Webb, Washington, to President Harry S. Truman, Washington.

¹⁹⁴ Vander Lippe, *The politics of Turkish democracy*, 181-182.

RPP leaders.¹⁹⁵ In Truman's congratulations to the new Turkish President Celâl Bayar, it became clear the US saw the developments in Turkey as a showcase for democracy in the world, by stating that Turkey had won 'a respected place within the family of democratic nations'.¹⁹⁶

The estimation that the Democrats appeared to attach more importance to the role of private enterprise and foreign capital as a form of private investment in the economic development of their country also pleased the US, as this would create an environment that would cause American capital flow towards Turkey.¹⁹⁷ According to Aydın however, although the DP appeared to be more pro-Western, it was at least as anxious as the RPP to become more allied on a political and economic level to the West, and particularly to the US as this would curtail their independence. Paradoxically, Turkish policies after 1950 made the country more dependent on US assistance because, although the party encouraged free enterprise in its campaigns, in practice they continued building aid-dependent state enterprises after coming to power.¹⁹⁸

The new DP government would make consecutive applications for NATO membership. The desirability to join the Atlantic Pact was a view 'shared alike by former and present Turkish governments'.¹⁹⁹ Not only the Turkish officials but also the Turkish public found it in the nation's interest to become a NATO member. Many thought that if Turkey would stay outside, the country might move away from democracy. Moreover, the new generation of policymakers was convinced that political liberalism, which they associated with economic prosperity, could only be reached if Turkey was represented in all the major Western institutions.²⁰⁰

American aid continued as Turkey changed its leadership. The US found increasing the low standard of living in Turkey a necessary element in strengthening

¹⁹⁵ FRUS, 'Turkey', 1262-1263, memorandum May 22, 1950.

¹⁹⁶ FRUS, the Near East, South Asia and Africa, Vol. V 1950, 'Turkey', 1224-1354, 1264, telegram May 24, 1950, President Harry S. Truman, Washington, to President of the Turkish Republic Celâl Bayar, Ankara.

¹⁹⁷ FRUS, 'Turkey', 1263, memorandum May 22, 1950; FRUS, the Near East, South Asia and Africa, Vol. V 1950, 'Turkey', 1224-1354, 1227, memorandum February 1, 1950, Acting Army Attaché, Paris.

¹⁹⁸ Aydın, 'Determinants of Turkish foreign policy', 110.

¹⁹⁹ FRUS, the Near East, South Asia and Africa, Vol. V 1950, 'Turkey', 1224-1354, 1286, telegram July 31, 1950, Ambassador George Wadsworth, Istanbul, to Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington.

²⁰⁰ Oran (eds), *Turkish foreign policy, 1919-2006*, 324.

the Turkish efforts to oppose Communist pressure and support its defense burden, while it would at the same time contribute to European recovery. Amongst others, the US intended to increase agricultural production, enlarge and modernize the coal mines and develop Turkey's transportation system and power resources.²⁰¹ While the US aimed to support Turkey without a pact, the Turkish government was afraid that the economic aid it was receiving might be decreased if it did not join NATO. Through becoming a member of the alliance, Turkey was determined to preserve its aid levels and participate in future assistance programs.²⁰²

After joining the Korean War, which will be elaborated upon in the next chapter, the new Turkish government took up the campaign with more dedication than ever before. In August 1950, it officially applied for membership of NATO.²⁰³ First, the well-known realist arguments were used, stipulating the vital importance of NATO membership to the Turkish morale and stability in Turkey, the Near East, security in the Mediterranean, in the whole of Europe and to world peace as they were under 'critical Soviet threat'.²⁰⁴ It was even argued that Turkey's preparedness for war would be boosted by the moral effect of admission. Turkey, it was argued, was a 'natural partner' in the European defense because of its strong army. Moreover, as a NATO member, Turkey could play a positive role in strengthening the morale of other European and Middle Eastern countries that, in their eyes, were making minimal effort to defend Europe.²⁰⁵ In addition, Turkey was already included in the OEEC and the Council of Europe, so exclusion from NATO would be inconsistent, according to the Turkish Ambassador Erkin.²⁰⁶ The American

²⁰¹ FRUS, the Near East, South Asia and Africa, Vol. V 1950, 'Turkey', 1224-1354, 1237, memorandum March 6, 1950, Undersecretary of State James E. Webb, Washington, to Executive Secretary of the National Security Council James S. Lay, Washington.

²⁰² Oran (eds), *Turkish foreign policy, 1919-2006*, 324.

²⁰³ Zürcher, *Turkey*, 237.

²⁰⁴ FRUS, the Near East, South Asia and Africa, Vol. V 1950, 'Turkey', 1224-1354, 1297, telegram August 22, 1950, Ambassador George Wadsworth, Ankara, to Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington.

²⁰⁵ FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1950, 'Concern of the United States with the defense of Western Europe: military assistance through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; encouragement of West German participation in an integrated European defense force', 1-1346, 248, telegram August 25, 1950, Secretary of State Dean Acheson, to Embassies in London, Paris and Moscow.

²⁰⁶ FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1950, 'Concern of the United States with the defense of Western Europe: military assistance through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; encouragement of West German participation in an integrated European defense force', 1-1346, 249, telephone call August 25, 1950, Ambassador Feridun Cemal Erkin, Ankara, to Secretary of State Dean Acheson and Assistant

Ambassador in Turkey even emphasized the 'sound realism' of the Turkish position.²⁰⁷

However, as they did not achieve their goal, the Turks made a shift from realist to more emotional and Kemalist arguments. The new Prime Minister Adnan Menderes stated that Turkey was part of Europe and that this inherently meant that Turkey should become a NATO member.²⁰⁸ Ambassador Erkin added that the exclusion of Turkey made the Turkish people very dissatisfied, as they felt treated like 'second-rate members of European society'. In spite of the Truman Doctrine and other aid, they started to feel abandoned, seeing that the center of American interest was shifting to Western Europe, which resulted in a growing 'wave of bitterness'.²⁰⁹ Personally, Erkin's pride was damaged, as he felt that the American stance reflected the effectiveness of his diplomacy.²¹⁰ President Bayar ended by stating that they wished to join the Atlantic Pact to bring their full cooperation to the mutual defense of the Western democratic world of which 'we truly feel ourselves a part'.²¹¹ Hence, the new Turkish government did all it could, and even made a shift to ideological arguments to convince the US.

Associate membership of NATO

As the Turkish government continued pressing for membership, the US started to look for other options. Realizing that declining Turkey completely would risk the loss of an important ally in a future war, American policy makers suggested a Mediterranean pact and a strongly worded non-reciprocal declaration. Another option was making Turkey a NATO member on a consultative basis but, according to Acheson, this could only be a delaying device that would ultimately lead to full

Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African affairs George Crews McGhee, Washington.

²⁰⁷ FRUS, 'Concern of the United States with the defense of Western Europe', 248, telegram August 25, 1950.

²⁰⁸ FRUS, 'Turkey', 1299, telegram August 22, 1950.

²⁰⁹ FRUS, the Near East, South Asia and Africa, Vol. V 1950, 'Turkey', 1224-1354, 1311, memorandum September 11, 1950, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African affairs J. Lampton Berry, Washington.

²¹⁰ Ibidem.

²¹¹ FRUS, the Near East, South Asia and Africa, Vol. V 1950, 'Turkey', 1224-1354, 1312, telegram September 12, 1950, Ambassador George Wadsworth, Istanbul, to Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington.

membership.²¹² The JCS, however, recommended giving Turkey an associate status within NATO, as this would improve the coordination of military planning against Soviet aggression in the Mediterranean area, which became even more urgent as the US lost its nuclear monopoly and the Eastern Mediterranean could no longer be abandoned to this threat.²¹³ Moreover, the United States National Security Council (NSC) – which was established in 1947 to contain the USSR in the light of the tensions between the two power blocs – warned that any substantial extension of Soviet influence was very dangerous and that since all interests were vital, the US had to commit itself to the defense of the countries which were prospective victims of Soviet aggression.²¹⁴ Furthermore, an association with NATO would reduce Turkish disappointment that full membership could not be given.²¹⁵

On September 14, 1950, the other NATO members approved the American proposal to give Turkey an associate membership of NATO.²¹⁶ Greece was offered the same. At first, the Turks expressed serious disappointment and answered that this decision would be distressing to the government and people and that it was possible that, under these circumstances, the USSR would make ‘a strong bid for Turkish friendship’.²¹⁷ The Ambassador stated that he could not understand how Turkey could be expected to engage in the defense of the Mediterranean without

²¹² FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1950, ‘Concern of the United States with the defense of Western Europe: military assistance through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; encouragement of West German participation in an integrated European defense force’, 1-1346, 259-260, telegram August 31, 1950, Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington, to Secretary of Defense Louis A. Johnson, Washington.

²¹³ FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1950, ‘Concern of the United States with the defense of Western Europe: military assistance through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; encouragement of West German participation in an integrated European defense force’, 1-1346, 278, telegram September 11, 1950, Secretary of Defense Louis A. Johnson, to Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington; Kurat, ‘Turkey’s entry to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization’, 72.

²¹⁴ Bölükbaşı, ‘The Evolution of a Close Relationship’, 90-91.

²¹⁵ FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1950, ‘Concern of the United States with the defense of Western Europe: military assistance through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; encouragement of West German participation in an integrated European defense force’, 1-1346, 280, paper September 11, 1950, Department of State, Washington.

²¹⁶ FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1950, ‘Concern of the United States with the defense of Western Europe: military assistance through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; encouragement of West German participation in an integrated European defense force’, 1-1346, 302, telegram September 14, 1950, Secretary of State Dean Acheson, New York, to President Harry S. Truman, Washington.

²¹⁷ FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1950, ‘Concern of the United States with the defense of Western Europe: military assistance through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; encouragement of West German participation in an integrated European defense force’, 1-1346, 334, memorandum September 19, 1950, Secretary of State Dean Acheson, New York; McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East connection*, 74.

some prior political commitment.²¹⁸ However, the Turks accepted their associate membership with good grace, with Acheson responding that the subject of Turkey's entry into NATO should be considered closed within a period of one to one and a half years while the organization was building up strength in the Atlantic region.²¹⁹ Interestingly, Turkey argued against associate membership with realist arguments, but finally accepted because they expected it would lead to full membership in the near future.

Sub-conclusion

First and foremost, the Turks considered an alliance with the United States as the best solution for Turkey's security problems that went hand in hand with being small nation in a bipolar world. Therefore, realist arguments dominated the Turkish lobby for NATO membership. The Turkish leaders not only emphasized the risks of a Soviet offensive for Turkey itself, but also approached the matter from the American side by pointing out the security advantages of Turkish membership for the US. However, as time passed on, the Turks began to feel impatient. They also started using ideological arguments, sharing their wish to establish a Western identity and an equal relationship with the West, as had been long cherished by Atatürk. It is not to be said that this was not a true desire of the Turks, but in this context it seems likely that the Kemalist argument was instrumental, made in order to convince the Americans to extend a security guarantee as they felt the hot breath of the Soviets in their necks. A similar principle can be seen in domestic developments. Despite of the Turkish government's compliance to democratic advancement, it is feasible that this aspect was less important in stimulating the Turkish attachment to NATO than conventional security and territorial interests.

²¹⁸ FRUS, 'Concern of the United States with the defense of Western Europe', 334, memorandum September 19, 1950.

²¹⁹ McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East connection*, 74.

Chapter 3. Becoming a NATO member (mid-1950 – 1952)

The new Democrat government did not implement any radical changes in their foreign policy. The party leaders had been longstanding proponents of strong relations with the US and Turkish inclusion in NATO. Their Minister of Foreign Affairs Fuad Köprülü stated that Turkey was focused on the West since the end of Second World War and that it would only take 'a more energetic form in that direction'.²²⁰ This resulted in stepping up efforts to gain NATO membership, for example by sending a brigade to fight in the Korean War. The alliance between Turkey and the US would take its final shape at the end of a bumpy road towards a formal commitment with the inclusion of Turkey in NATO in 1952.²²¹

For Turkey to become a NATO member, joining the Korean War was a crucial event as it ensured American assistance and the integration of Turkey into the Western camp. Moreover, it marked the definitive end of the period of Turkish neutralism. During this period there was no Soviet aggression directed at Turkey apart from the usual propaganda. As the threat of a Soviet invasion did not appear imminent, arguments for NATO membership tended to become more ideological and directed at establishing a more equal relationship with the United States.²²² On the other hand, Turkey was still aware of the Soviet threat. Witnessing the fate of countries in Central and Eastern Europe and seeing Soviet influences in the Middle East and North Africa, they felt that only a formal military commitment would be sufficient to deter Soviet pressure.²²³ Therefore, realist arguments remained more prominent than ideological ones as a basis for its decision to employ troops in Korea.

²²⁰ McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East connection*, 71.

²²¹ Yılmaz, 'Turkey's quest for NATO Membership', 488.

²²² FRUS, the Near East, South Asia and Africa, Vol. V 1950, 'Turkey', 1224-1354, 1319, memorandum September 19, 1950, Acting Secretary of State James E. Webb, Washington, to Executive Secretary of the National Security Council James S. Lay.

²²³ Alex Calvo, 'A faraway war: the Turkish brigade in Korea', in: Aksu Kenan (eds), *Turkey: a regional power in the making* (Newcastle upon Tyne 2013) 213.

A Turkish Brigade to Korea

The Korean War broke out only one month after the Democrat Party government came to power, on the 25th of June 1950. It was a major development since it was the first conflict during which Communist and Western forces engaged in a battle that made the Cold War become 'hot'.²²⁴ Following pressure from the US, the response of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) was exceptionally swift. On the day of the invasion, they passed a resolution that called for an end to the hostilities and assistance from its members.²²⁵ In contrast to what many authors claim, Turkish leaders were initially hesitant to respond to the UNSC call to support the American-UN effort in Korea.²²⁶ Although they stated that they would 'support it in any way we can' and approved all steps taken by the US government, including that in the UN, they were reluctant to provide troops due to fear of a direct Soviet attack on Turkey.²²⁷ Another, slightly contradictory, argument they put forward was that they did not believe that the invasion was the start of a worldwide Soviet offensive.²²⁸ From the American side, there was also the estimation that Turkey would not provide ground forces.²²⁹

One month after the outbreak of the war, the American Ambassador in Ankara George Wadsworth had a conversation with the Turkish Foreign Minister, in which the latter firmly supported the American effort to organize an international coalition to resist the North Korean invasion. Köprülü explained that the Turkish Government wished its response would 'bear witness to its sincere desire manifest

²²⁴ Ibidem, 206.

²²⁵ FRUS, Korea, Vol. VII 1950, 'The outbreak of hostilities in Korea; response of the United States and the United Nations to events in Korea, June 24-30, 1950', 125-270, 155-156, resolution June 25, 1950, United Nations Security Council.

²²⁶ Brown, 'The one coalition they craved to join', 94; Yılmaz, 'Turkey's quest for NATO Membership', 489-490.

²²⁷ FRUS, Korea, Vol. VII 1950, 'The period of the North Korean offensive, July 1-September 15, 1950: British and Indian efforts at mediation; United Nations activities concerning Korea; the problem of the 38th parallel', 271-730, 442, telegram July 21, 1950, Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington, to consulates general in Hong Kong and Singapore; FRUS, the Near East, South Asia and Africa, Vol. V 1950, 'Turkey', 1224-1354, 1276, telegram June 29, 1950, Ambassador George Wadsworth, Ankara.

²²⁸ FRUS, 'Turkey', 1276, telegram June 29, 1950.

²²⁹ FRUS, Korea, Vol. VII 1950, 'The period of the North Korean offensive, July 1-September 15, 1950: British and Indian efforts at mediation; United Nations activities concerning Korea; the problem of the 38th parallel', 271-730, 434, memorandum July 19, 1950, Deputy Secretary of State for Far Eastern affairs Livingston T. Merchant, Washington, to Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern affairs Dean Rusk, Washington.

by practical action its loyalty to UN and to Turk-US collaboration'. Adding that he especially hoped that the Turkish reply to the UN would 'conform with US policy and public opinion', he tried to please the Americans.²³⁰ Wadsworth, in consultation with the American General William McBride, replied that the best way the Turkish government could manifest its support was to promptly dispatch a 'fully equipped regimental combat team'.²³¹ In such a way, Turkey could best show its loyalty to the United Nations and American-Turkish collaboration and at the same time serve its own interests.²³² The American Ambassador noticed that Köprülü sensed that his country was 'on the verge [of] its most important post-war decision' as it was the first time the Turkish army would fight in a conflict abroad since the establishment of the Turkish Republic, therefore definitively abandoning its policy of neutralism as formulated by Atatürk.²³³ Köprülü assured the American Ambassador that the decision to employ troops would be made as soon as possible and he expressed the hope that this would 'render even more effective collaboration in political as well as military fields'.²³⁴ The words of the Turkish Chief of Staff illustrate the Turkish intentions even better, as he stated that 'it will be [the] greatest crime in Turkish history if we fail [to] take advantage [of] this opportunity'.²³⁵

Motivated by cultivating American favor, the Turkish cabinet decided on July 25, 1950, to dispatch 4500 combat troops to Korea, which was in the first phase of the war the largest detachment after that of the US.²³⁶ Firstly, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs endorsed this decision by expressing an idealized belief in the advantages of collective security. He argued that Turkey had an obligation to act and stated that he saw the Korean War as the beginning of a new era in which Turkey

²³⁰ FRUS, the Near East, South Asia and Africa, Vol. V 1950, 'Turkey', 1224-1354, 1281, telegram July 24, 1950, Ambassador George Wadsworth, Ankara, to Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington.

²³¹ Ibidem.

²³² Ibidem, 1282.

²³³ Ibidem; Füsün Türkmen, 'Turkey and the Korean War', *Turkish Studies* 3 (2002) 2, 161-180, 169; Couloumbis, *The United States, Greece and Turkey*, 11.

²³⁴ FRUS, 'Turkey', 1282, telegram July 24, 1950.

²³⁵ Ibidem.

²³⁶ Yılmaz, 'Turkey's quest for NATO Membership', 490; FRUS, Korea, Vol. VII 1950, 'The period of the North Korean offensive, July 1-September 15, 1950: British and Indian efforts at mediation; United Nations activities concerning Korea; the problem of the 38th parallel', 271-730, 545, memorandum August 8, 1950, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern affairs Livingston T. Merchant, Washington, to Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern affairs Dean Rusk, Washington; Oran (eds), *Turkish foreign policy, 1919-2006*, 326.

was obliged to strive harder towards common objectives.²³⁷ This point of view was also put forward by the former Foreign Minister Bayülken, who stated that the 'belief of Turkey in the ideals embodied in the Charter was a major factor deciding Turkey's position in the Korean War'.²³⁸ Turkey viewed international peace and security as of utmost importance, which was of course in their own advantage as well. Behind this decision was also the idea of Turkey showcasing its fighting capabilities, in order to show the free world its value to NATO.²³⁹

Secondly, fearing that they would be next in line to be attacked by the Soviets, Turkey showed the Western powers how they would like to be treated in the case of a Communist attack. So, one could argue that Turkish national interests were in agreement with the concept of collective security. Naturally, protection could be guaranteed by NATO membership. Turkey's underlying objective was thus more realistic than ideological and directly related to one central goal: paving the way for NATO membership. The Turkish government was aware that sending ground troops – fighting and dying – instead of for example air units, was the ultimate proof of commitment.²⁴⁰ And despite the American effort to modernize the Turkish army, the conscript Turkish forces had plenty of troops but little else, which made sending soldiers the most obvious choice.

As the Turks did not want to miss the opportunity to earn the approval of the US, the decision to send troops was made without consulting opposition parties or seeking parliamentary approval.²⁴¹ The oppositional RPP issued a statement that the decision was violating the constitution, as the national assembly was responsible for issues such as war and peace.²⁴² This undemocratic decision did not bother the Americans, as they referred to official Turkish reports stating that the decision had been widely met with enthusiastic support. Köprülü dismissed the RPP's criticism by saying that it was 'patently prompted by considerations of domestic policies'.²⁴³ Another important reason for Turkey to join the war was that Greece – its bitter,

²³⁷ FRUS, 'Turkey', 1289, telegram July 31, 1950.

²³⁸ Bayülken, 'Turkey and the United Nations', 102-103.

²³⁹ Kurat, 'Turkey's entry to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 74.

²⁴⁰ Allan R. Millet, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951: They came from the North* (Kansas 2010) 262.

²⁴¹ Oran (eds), *Turkish foreign policy, 1919-2006*, 325.

²⁴² Ibidem.

²⁴³ FRUS, 'Turkey', 1288-1289, telegram July 31, 1950.

long-time rival and competitor for NATO membership – was also applying to commit troops to Korea. Turkey resented the idea of Greece joining the fight against Communism in Korea whilst they remained absent.²⁴⁴ The Americans gladly received the Turkish offer, regarding it as a ‘welcome demonstration of Turkish solidarity with the US in support of UN principles’.²⁴⁵

The Turkish infantry brigade arrived in Korea in mid-October 1950.²⁴⁶ Although the Turks knew the US did not intend to offer NATO membership immediately, the Turkish Ambassador Erkin observed that there was a growing feeling among Turkish leaders and people that the country should be included in NATO. The forthright Turkish contribution to the Korean War demonstrated their good intentions and intensified this feeling ‘to the extent that the question is now a major issue in Turkey’.²⁴⁷ In the autumn of 1950, they started to argue that inclusion was necessary as the Turkish opposition and people began to assert that the Americans were only using the Turkish soldiers as pawns, leading to a general feeling that Turkey should not send its ‘youth to die for you in Korea’.²⁴⁸ Thus, although ideological arguments were raised in the period towards joining the Korean War, realist motivations remained predominant.

The Korean War efforts started bearing fruit

In Korea, the Turkish brigade stood its ground against the Chinese forces during the battle at Kunuri, which ensured the orderly withdrawal of the American forces. During this action, the Turks suffered heavy losses.²⁴⁹ Despite the lack of training and the language barrier, the Turkish soldiers made a lasting impression. In November 1950, the first signs that the Turkish soldiers were dedicated fighters would reach the US. At that moment, the American government started to press for keeping the

²⁴⁴ Millet, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951*, 262.

²⁴⁵ FRUS, ‘Turkey’, 1320, memorandum September 19, 1950.

²⁴⁶ Oran (eds), *Turkish foreign policy, 1919-2006*, 325.

²⁴⁷ FRUS, the Near East, South Asia and Africa, Vol. V 1950, ‘Turkey’, 1224-1354, 1301, memorandum August 25, 1950, Secretary of State Dean Acheson.

²⁴⁸ FRUS, ‘Turkey’, 1313, telegram September 12, 1950.

²⁴⁹ In the course of the whole Korean War, 717 Turkish soldiers were killed, 5,247 were wounded, 167 were missing and 234 were imprisoned. Source: Oran (eds), *Turkish foreign policy, 1919-2006*, 326; Zürcher, *Turkey*, 382. Figures are from: *Türkiye 1923-1973 ansiklopedisi*, Istanbul: Kaynak, 1974, Vol. III, 950.

Turkish soldiers in Korea.²⁵⁰ In December, they even expressed the desire to ask Turkey to increase the size of their commitment in Korea, which resulted in a rise to six thousand men.²⁵¹ The US acknowledged that the Turks had been highly dedicated and had been badly hurt in the action.²⁵² Moreover, as historian Yuluğ Tekin Kurat argues, the fact that the Turkish soldiers had impressed the Pentagon as brave, disciplined and intelligent fighters destroyed the negative Turkish image that the Soviet propaganda had cleverly introduced by using the Armenian genocide as a tool.²⁵³ Later, the US became even more vocal about its appreciation for the Turkish troops. Ambassador Wadsworth reported that 'he had never seen such unanimity of high praise as that of the Americans for the Turkish Brigade in Korea'.²⁵⁴

When the Turkish efforts in Korea started to generate American appreciation, the Turkish opposition party decided that it would let go of its argument about the unconstitutionality to send armed forces and associated itself with the government's position to support the war effort.²⁵⁵ Organizations that protested the Turkish role in the Korean War, like the Turkish Organization for Peace, were closed by force. This was one of the many actions taken by the Democrat government against leftist, pacifist intellectuals and was the beginning of political oppression by a party that promised political liberalization.²⁵⁶

Then, the US requested replacements for the Turkish Brigade in Korea, complimenting the Turks by saying that 'as soldiers, Turkey has gained great support

²⁵⁰ FRUS, Korea, Vol. VII 1950, 'The period of the United Nations offensive, September 16-November 26, 1950: the problem of the 38th parallel; United Nations activities concerning Korea; the question of the intervention by the People's Republic of China', 731-1236, 1028, memorandum November 2, 1950, Secretary of Defense George Marshall, Washington, to Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington; Oran (eds), *Turkish foreign policy, 1919-2006*, 326.

²⁵¹ FRUS, Korea, Vol. VII 1950, 'The period from November 28 to December 31, 1950: Chinese Communist intervention in Korea; the Korean question in the United Nations; the Truman-Attlee discussions; retreat of the United Nations forces', 1237-1634, 1412, telegram December 5, 1950, Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington, to Secretary of Defense George Marshall, Washington; Oran (eds), *Turkish foreign policy, 1919-2006*, 326.

²⁵² FRUS, Korea, Vol. VII 1950, 'The period from November 28 to December 31, 1950: Chinese Communist intervention in Korea; the Korean question in the United Nations; the Truman-Attlee discussions; retreat of the United Nations forces', 1237-1634, 1469, minutes of the sixth meeting December 8, 1950, President Harry S. Truman and Prime Minister Clement Attlee, Washington.

²⁵³ Kurat, 'Turkey's entry to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 76.

²⁵⁴ FRUS, the Near East, South Asia and Africa, Vol. V 1950, 'Turkey', 1224-1354, 1352, memorandum December 28, 1950, Special Assistant, joint military mission for aid to Turkey Lieutenant Colonel Delk M. Oden, Ankara.

²⁵⁵ Oran (eds), *Turkish foreign policy, 1919-2006*, 326.

²⁵⁶ Vander Lippe, 'Forgotten brigade of the forgotten war', 98.

in the United States and as soldiers we want this prestige to continue'.²⁵⁷ According to Prime Minister Menderes, Turkey was quite willing to supply new troops, but he also explained that there was a political problem given the high losses. He felt that 'the Turkish people did not realize that the US appreciated the Turkish sacrifices and that the Americans were making similar sacrifices'.²⁵⁸ Eventually, the Turkish cabinet approved the dispatch of replacement soldiers to Korea to reinforce the Turkish Brigade in January 1951.

Realizing that gaining NATO membership was still not imminent, the Turks requested an increase in military support as compensation. The Turkish Chief of the General Staff Nuri Yamut stated that 'both Turkey and Greece are strong fortresses' against the Soviet threat, and this required equipment, arms and communications furnished by their strong ally, the United States.²⁵⁹ Pointing at weaknesses in the European defense, he asked for a large number of machine guns and three hundred jets.²⁶⁰ Army General Dwight D. Eisenhower was in favor of supplying extra arms to Turkey and so was Assistant Secretary of State George Crews McGhee, who stated that 'the importance of a strong Turkey has been highlighted by the revelation of the comparative weakness of the Middle East as a whole'.²⁶¹ From a military perspective, the Americans found it necessary to finance the expansion of the Turkish military with forty thousand men 'in order to augment the size of the country's forces and to strengthen their fighting capabilities', while a large part of the army had been demobilized a few years previously.²⁶²

Noticing an increased American willingness for inclusion due to the Turkish Korean War efforts, the Turkish President Bayar, in conversation with American representatives, elaborated on his point of view in order to convince the Americans. McGhee, who was thoroughly convinced of the need for Turkish NATO membership,

²⁵⁷ FRUS, 'Turkey', 1353, memorandum December 28, 1950.

²⁵⁸ *Ibidem*, 1352.

²⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, 1349.

²⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, 1350.

²⁶¹ FRUS, European security, Vol. III part I 1951, 'Participation of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-1316, 468, memorandum February 12, 1951, Director of the office of Greek, Turkish and Iranian affairs William M. Rountree; FRUS, European security, Vol. III part I 1951, 'Participation of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-1316, 454, notes of a meeting January 31, 1951, Washington.

²⁶² FRUS, Korea and China, Vol. VII part 1 1951, 'Korea', 1-1473, 382, telegram April 26, 1951, Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington, to Secretary of Defense George Marshall, Washington.

memorized that this meeting was of great significance in gaining the support of the American government for Turkish admission.²⁶³ After discussing the importance of Turkish security, the President argued that Turkey supported the 'common goals of the free world', and to do this properly, not only military aid, but also political cooperation was necessary.²⁶⁴ Due to the lack of political commitment, the relationship between the US and Turkey in security affairs was like 'a business concern in which some members make profits and some members invest capital but acquire no profit'.²⁶⁵ This was very disappointing for the Turks, as '*it wants to give a guarantee and it would like to receive a guarantee*'.²⁶⁶ Turkey, he explained in an ideological way, desired a 'partnership of equals' and to 'make its share of sacrifices and to do its duty in the creation of a free and democratic world'.²⁶⁷

In a later conversation, the Turks claimed that their request for NATO membership stemmed from 'strength rather than from weakness', revealing their inability to comprehend the reluctance of NATO to accept the offer of the 'strongest army in Europe' and of the only nation in the Middle East with the military power to resist aggression and that, together with Greece, could constitute 'Eisenhower's strong right flank'.²⁶⁸ Even though Turkey did not possess the strongest or most advanced army in Europe, it certainly had the largest at that time, which indeed could be considered as essential to encircle the Soviet bloc. Ambassador Erkin expressed his disappointment that he had nothing 'concrete to take back to Turkey', as he had already been reporting to Ankara for two years about the matter. He warned that if the US did not give a commitment soon, 'Turkey might be forced to take security measures of its own'.²⁶⁹ Although he did not explain what was meant

²⁶³ McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East connection*, 81.

²⁶⁴ FRUS, 'Participation of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 469, memorandum February 12, 1951.

²⁶⁵ *Ibidem*, 469-470.

²⁶⁶ *Ibidem*, 470.

²⁶⁷ *Ibidem*, 473.

²⁶⁸ FRUS, European security, Vol. III part I 1951, 'Participation of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-1316, 516, telegram April 24, 1951, Ambassador George Wadsworth, Ankara, to Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington.

²⁶⁹ FRUS, European security, Vol. III part I 1951, 'Participation of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-1316, 517, conversation April 30, 1951, Ambassador Feridun Cemal Erkin with Assistant Secretary of State George Crews McGhee, Washington.

with this statement, it is possible to interpret it as an (empty) threat for returning to neutralism.

The first time that the US made an extensive and seriously substantiated proposal for a security guarantee for Turkey was in February 1951. The influential member of the State Department's policy planning staff Henry S. Villard urged the staff's director Paul H. Nitze to take a security guarantee for Turkey into consideration. He argued that Turkish security was vital to that of the US. Moreover, the fact that the US had already invested so much in Turkey militarily and economically and that 'our prestige has been so much involved in the process' would make it unthinkable to 'fail to act in case of Soviet aggression against Turkey'. Hence, it would be logical to provide Turkey with a formal commitment.²⁷⁰ He argued that if the US failed to help, not only would Turkish morale be shattered, but the Turks would also feel that they had been wrongly encouraged by the Americans to set up the defense against the USSR if the US did not have any intentions to supply support in a 'final showdown'. The result would be 'deep-seated and lasting resentment against the U.S'.²⁷¹ He concluded by stating that in order to obtain maximum cooperation from the Turks, it seemed essential to him to offer them a written guarantee.²⁷²

On 15 May 1951, after carefully weighing the pros and cons of Turkish admission to NATO on a geopolitical, international and national level, the US proposed to its allies that Turkey and Greece would be admitted to NATO.²⁷³ Moreover, pressure from the NSC and the CIA, which felt that the time had come to press 'for the inclusion of Turkey as a full member of NATO, this being the most

²⁷⁰ FRUS, the Near East, South Asia and Africa, Vol. V 1951, 'Turkey', 1100-1191, 1117, memorandum February 5, 1951, Henry S. Villard, Washington, to Director of policy planning staff Paul Henry Nitze, Washington.

²⁷¹ Ibidem.

²⁷² Ibidem, 1118.

²⁷³ FRUS, European security, Vol. III part I 1951, 'Participation of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-1316, 501-505, telegram March 24, 1951, Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington, to Secretary of Defense George Marshall, Washington; FRUS, European security, Vol. III part I 1951, 'Participation of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-1316, 513, memorandum April 24, 1951, Assistant Secretaries for Near Eastern and African affairs George Crews McGhee and European affairs George W. Perkins, Washington, to Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington.

desirable form of reciprocal security arrangement', played a major role.²⁷⁴ The US became aware that in Turkey, public statements and military and economic assistance programs were no longer considered a substitute for a security commitment. The US stated that from then onwards, it believed that Turkish inclusion was compatible with Article 2 of NATO's treaty and its preamble, as Turkey cooperated with the West on multiple levels and in several organizations, it adhered to the Western values of individual liberty, rule of law and democracy and, 'present-day Turkey considers Western civilization is likewise its heritage'.²⁷⁵

The Korean War proved to be the turning point in the Turkish quest for NATO membership, but not in a way the Turks anticipated. The changing American position had virtually nothing to do with Turkey's repeated requests for membership. The underlying motivation was their understanding of the changing world conditions, mostly illustrated by the Korean War, the extensive armament of Soviet satellites in the Balkans and the growing realization that 'all elements of strength', regardless of their geographical location, should be unified into security arrangements to resist the 'imperialistic intentions' of the Soviet Union.²⁷⁶ Former Turkish Ambassador to NATO Muharrem Nuri Birgi argued in 1973 that time has shown that the main factor leading the 'highly developed powers' in the West to embrace their less developed allies in NATO 'was the fear for life created by the probability of an armed invasion by Soviet Russia'.²⁷⁷

The Turkish fighting capabilities, as demonstrated in Korea, proved to be an important factor. According to Assistant Secretary of State McGhee, the Turkish decision to send troops to Korea was the smartest decision they could have made. The Turkish army not only showed exceptional fighting qualities, but Turkey also

²⁷⁴ FRUS, the Near East, South Asia and Africa, Vol. V 1951, 'Turkey', 1100-1191, 1150, policy statement undated [ca. May 1951], National Security Council, Washington; McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East connection*, 86.

²⁷⁵ FRUS, European security, Vol. III part I 1951, 'Participation of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-1316, 571, working paper August 8, 1951, Department of State, Washington, for Foreign Ministers Meetings, Washington; Oran (eds), *Turkish foreign policy, 1919-2006*, 327.

²⁷⁶ FRUS, 'Participation of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 516, telegram April 24, 1951; Oran (eds), *Turkish foreign policy, 1919-2006*, 326.

²⁷⁷ Muharrem Nuri Birgi, 'Developments within the Atlantic community and Turkey', *Foreign Policy/Dış Politika* 3 (1973) 4, 72-73.

demonstrated their support for the principle of collective security.²⁷⁸ He explained that the US was very proud of its association with Turkey in Korea, 'which is indicative of Turkish-American cooperation in broad world politics'. The Turkish action in Korea proved that if Turkey was met with aggression the US would not stand idly by.²⁷⁹ In the words of his colleague William M. Rountree, director of the office of Greek, Turkish and Iranian affairs: 'Turkish soldiers there have won them the admiration of the whole free world'.²⁸⁰

The Turkish response was predominantly positive. Ambassador Erkin was happy with the developments, but he also said that the Turkish people had lost a 'great deal of their earlier enthusiasm for inclusion in NATO and emphasized that the longer the uncertainty of inclusion continued, the less satisfied they would be with the final outcome'.²⁸¹ Firstly, postponing the decision would not enhance their confidence in the strength and determination of other NATO countries, and secondly, their 'national pride' would be damaged if they felt that other NATO countries were unwilling to accept Turkey 'to equal partnership in NATO'.²⁸²

From then onwards, the Turkish fate was in the hands of the other NATO members. France was an early proponent of Turkish participation. Already in 1948 it was convinced that Turkey should be part of the then developing mutual defense strategy.²⁸³ Italy, Luxemburg and the Netherlands also shared the American view.²⁸⁴ Britain and NATO's Scandinavian members Denmark and Norway were the main opponents to Turkey's admission. They stated that the inclusion of a non-Christian, non-European and poorly developed country would weaken the concept of the alliance, its unity and homogeneity.²⁸⁵ They were also afraid that the modernization

²⁷⁸ FRUS, 'Participation of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 471, memorandum February 12, 1951; Türkmen, 'Turkey and the Korean War', 171.

²⁷⁹ FRUS, 'Participation of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 471, memorandum February 12, 1951.

²⁸⁰ *Ibidem*, 468.

²⁸¹ FRUS, the Near East, South Asia and Africa, Vol. V 1951, 'Turkey', 1100-1191, 1171, memorandum June 4, 1951, Officer in Charge Turkish Affairs Robert Moore, Washington.

²⁸² *Ibidem*.

²⁸³ FRUS, Western Europe, Vol. III 1948, 'United States encouragement of a Western European Union; antecedents of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-580, 294, telegram November 26, 1948, Ambassador George Wadsworth, Ankara, to Secretary of State George Marshall, Washington.

²⁸⁴ Oran (eds), *Turkish foreign policy, 1919-2006*, 327.

²⁸⁵ FRUS, European security, Vol. III part I 1951, 'Participation of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-1316, 679, telegram September 19, 1951, Secretary of State Dean

of the Turkish army would cost them significant funds.²⁸⁶ Moreover, the UK intended to develop a Middle East Command to preserve their interests in the region, particularly in Egypt, in which they saw a major role for Turkey.²⁸⁷

Turkey entered NATO de facto in the autumn of 1951. As the Scandinavians did not want to be the only ones to veto Turkey's inclusion and the Brits adopted a more flexible position, it was agreed at the NATO Ministerial Council Meeting held on September 20, 1951, to invite Turkey and Greece to join the alliance.²⁸⁸ The atmosphere in Ankara was jubilant, as they thought this meant they were finally 'being accepted as European'.²⁸⁹ When the admission of Turkey into NATO was still subject to ratification by certain NATO governments, it was debated under whose command Turkey should come. While the Brits insisted on placing Turkey under a British general, which could be the start of the future Middle East Command, Turkey favored being assigned to an American general. They had the opinion that they, 'as an inseparable part of Europe', had to be under the regular NATO army of the Supreme Allied Commander Europe General Eisenhower.²⁹⁰ Eventually, a compromise was reached through French arbitration. France suggested that the Turkish and Greek armies should fall under General Eisenhower, while its navy would come under a Middle East Command, which was accepted by the Turkish

Acheson, Ottawa, to President Harry S. Truman, Washington; FRUS, European security, Vol. III part I 1951, 'Participation of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-1316, 257, telegram August 24, 1951, United States Deputy Representative on the North Atlantic Council Charles M. Spofford, London, to Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Washington.

²⁸⁶ Yilmaz, 'Turkey's quest for NATO Membership', 489.

²⁸⁷ FRUS, European security, Vol. III part I 1951, 'Participation of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-1316, 555, memorandum July 6, 1951, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs James C. H. Bonbright, Washington.

²⁸⁸ FRUS, European security, Vol. III part I 1951, 'Participation of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-1316, 661, memorandum September 16, 1951, Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs George W. Perkins, Ottawa; FRUS, European security, Vol. III part I 1951, 'Participation of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-1316, 683, telegram September 20, 1951, United States Delegation, Ottawa, to Acting Secretary of State James E. Webb, Washington.

²⁸⁹ FRUS, European security, Vol. III part I 1951, 'Participation of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-1316, 603, telegram October 31, 1951, United States Deputy Representative on the North Atlantic Council Charles M. Spofford, London, to Acting Secretary of State James E. Webb, Washington.

²⁹⁰ FRUS, European security, Vol. III part I 1951, 'Participation of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-1316, 598, memorandum October 18, 1951, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Omar Bradley, Washington, to President Harry S. Truman, Washington.

government.²⁹¹ Despite this decision, the Middle East Command would never be implemented.²⁹² On February 18, 1952, the Republic of Turkey and Greece formally acceded to NATO.²⁹³

During the years before the Turkish accession to NATO, the USSR allowed the relations with Turkey to remain rather quiet. At this point, however, a Soviet response was necessary. Just before the protocol went into effect, the Soviet Embassy presented a note to the Turkish government in which they protested the inclusion of Turkey in NATO. It stated that Turkey had no connection with the Atlantic in any way, and that the Turkish territory was about to be used by 'imperialistic states' as a base for aggressive acts against the Soviet Union.²⁹⁴ Turkey replied soon after receiving the note, categorically denying the Soviet charges and stating that 'if the Soviet Government were to carry out a sincere self-inspection, she would admit that there exist very genuine reasons for Turkey to feel anxiety about her own security'.²⁹⁵ Another Soviet telegram followed, but after that the issue was dropped. No Soviet response followed after Turkey's official admission into NATO. Turkish participation in NATO took the treaty unambiguously out of the Atlantic region, distressed the USSR by a clear-cut threat directly on its border, and further intensified the Cold War.²⁹⁶

Sub-conclusion

Although Turkish leaders provided ideological arguments to join the Korean War, they were not Kemalist in nature. The arguments were directed at a foreign public, stipulating the importance of the principles of collective security and international peace with the objective to convince the United States. Their real motivation to send troops, however, was based on realist arguments and directly related to their wish

²⁹¹ FRUS, Western European Security, Vol. V part 1 1952-1954, 1-570, 269, telegram February 13, 1952, Acting Secretary of State James E. Webb, Washington, to Embassy in Turkey, Ankara.

²⁹² Oran (eds), *Turkish foreign policy, 1919-2006*, 328.

²⁹³ FRUS, Western European Security, Vol. V part 1 1952-1954, 1-570, 177, Final Communiqué of the Ninth Session of the North Atlantic Council February 26, 1952, Lisbon.

²⁹⁴ FRUS, European security, Vol. III part I 1951, 'Participation of the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization', 1-1316, 605, editorial note, November 30, 1951; McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East connection*, 89.

²⁹⁵ As cited in: McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East connection*, 89.

²⁹⁶ Trombley Averill, 'Truman and NATO', 421.

to gain NATO membership. Later, the accomplishments of the Turkish troops in Korea contributed a great deal to convincing the US. It was however not the performance of the Turkish brigade, but the American perception of the toughening Cold War that appeared to be the decisive factor in the American decision to let Turkey enter NATO.

In Turkey, admission to NATO was welcomed enthusiastically. The General Assembly ratified the treaty with 404 votes in favor and one abstention.²⁹⁷ Primarily, membership provided a security guarantee against the USSR and it institutionalized American military assistance to Turkey. Second, obtaining a place in the Atlantic community constituted the establishment of an equal relationship with the West. Third, it initiated the broadening and deepening of Turkish relations with the other NATO members. Hence, ideology remained of lesser importance than realism.

²⁹⁷ Türkmen, 'Turkey and the Korean War', 178.

Conclusion

The timeframe encompassing March 1945 to February 1952 was one of the most significant periods of recent Turkish history as this was a period in which the survival of Turkey as an independent country was in danger. As a small nation in the advent of the Cold War, Turkey feared confrontation with the superior strength of the Soviet Union. It felt threatened by Soviet demands for military bases in the Straits and the northeastern provinces. If the Soviets had persisted in their demands, this would have had very negative consequences for Turkish territorial integrity and independence. The most effective way for Turkey to prevent a confrontation and enhance its possibilities for survival as a state was seeking relations with the other superpower at that time, the United States.

Therefore, I argue in line with the authors Aydın and Brown that Turkish foreign policy was deeply influenced by the developments of the Cold War. With the alternative of a Soviet invasion, it was in Turkey's interest to abandon its policy of neutrality and to exploit every opportunity to convince the more powerful United States with realist arguments to support Turkey financially and in the field of security. The fact that the Turks had to give up their sovereignty to a certain extent in order to receive American support was less harmful than risking the chance of a violent clash with the USSR. They convinced the US by means of an extensive diplomatic lobby after gaining courage as a result of American support via the Truman Doctrine, first for more aid via the Marshall Plan and other funds, and subsequently for a security guarantee, preferably in the form of NATO membership. During this process, Turkey played an active role in efforts to define the USSR as a dangerous and expansionist power.

In 1950, the Turkish approach shifted from diplomacy to providing material help by showing their abilities to protect the objective of collective security by joining the Korean War. Although it was the Turks that were consistently taking the initiative, it was the increasing geopolitical friction and Cold War threat that was decisive in convincing the United States to extend this much-desired assurance. These observations undermine Barnett's argument about the shared construction of

threat and the formation of alliances in international relations; the shared identity with the United States was less important than the geopolitical situation at that time.

Turkey's geographical location was imperative. On the one hand, it was unfortunate that the country was located alongside the border of the USSR as this resulted in a direct and substantial threat. On the other hand, Turkey's location was advantageous, as it was of great strategic significance for the US. The US saw Turkey as instrumental in helping deter Soviet imperialism, securing essential oil supplies from the Middle East and protecting the Western bloc. To the disappointment of the Turks, the US was very hesitant in supplying a security guarantee. This also indicates that the US was not specifically interested in Turkey. American policymakers, however, quickly realized the necessity of Turkey for preserving stability in the region as a whole. From a Turkish perspective, it is logical to observe that its delicate geostrategic position at the crossroads of almost three continents – aided by a historical sensitivity for issues concerning sovereignty and territorial integrity – was the main factor that prioritized security considerations in Turkish foreign policy.

This is not to indicate that the Turks did not raise ideology-based arguments. Principally during the later years, they used arguments for gaining the Western identity and an equal relationship with the West, particularly at two specific moments: just before gaining associate membership of NATO in autumn 1950; and in February 1951, before the Americans decided to extend their commitment to the Turks. It is remarkable however, that Kemalist arguments were employed to a much lesser extent than realist arguments, and only on moments that the realist argument seemed worn out and they needed greater means to persuade the Americans. It was certainly the case that the Turkish leadership wanted to be acknowledged as an equal by the West. From the establishment of the Turkish Republic onwards, Turkish leaders desired an equal relationship. However, this research reveals – in a similar way as authors like Aydın and Brown – that security-based motives played a more important role than ideological ones in the process towards gaining NATO membership. The identity issue paled in comparison with the basic issue of security.

The dominance of realism can also be seen with regards to domestic developments. In accordance with Hale and Akşin, I argue that internal political and

social developments in Turkey demonstrate that the regime was deeply influenced by security and foreign policy considerations. The Turkish democratization process and the modernization of Turkish society that occurred during the years after the Second World War were driven by the hope of receiving an American approval and assistance in order to obtain national security. The newly elected Democrat Party government was influential as their party leaders accelerated the process of integration into the West. They saw the liberal world as close to their party's ideology. The US encouraged the democratization process, but they did not impose it as they deemed strategic factors more important than democracy.

The combination of the three perspectives, the Turkish foreign policy perspective supported by the American foreign policy view and developments in Turkish domestic politics, proved to be a valuable approach. The use of multiple perspectives led to a more complete analysis that highlighted the important role of strategic imperatives from both the Turkish as well as the American side, which resulted in an in-depth narrative about the Turkey's motives for entering NATO. The diplomatic primary sources from the American State Department turned out to be rich in information. They not only gave insight into American foreign policy directions but also provided understanding about Turkish fears and wishes. The lack of Turkish primary sources is a shortcoming in this research, however, integrating the American sources with a number of articles from *Foreign Policy/Dış Politika* led to a comprehensive view of the Turkish perspective.

This research came across a number of unanticipated findings that can be explored in future studies. Firstly, it appeared that the United States from 1950 onwards found that Turkey should be encouraged to assume the leadership among Islamic countries in the Middle East. In the eyes of American policymakers, Turkey was able to understand the Western views and in this way, they could function as a bridge between East and West.²⁹⁸ It is especially interesting to study the possible tensions that this generated in the light of the Turkish position in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since Turkey was, as opposed to most other Middle Eastern countries, in favor of Israel. Secondly, it is worth researching the influence of the

²⁹⁸ FRUS, the Near East, South Asia and Africa, Vol. V 1950, 'The Near East', 1-283, 260, paper December 28, 1950, office of Greek, Turkish and Iranian Affairs.

military training that several Turkish senior military officers received in the United States and how this affected their identities, their views on the West and subsequently Turkish foreign policy.

By becoming a NATO member, Turkey was able to institutionalize its relations with the United States and other Western states. Participation based on equality, mutual respect and interests enabled Turkey to develop mechanisms that decreased the chance for foreign intervention. Despite the fact that the Turkish-American relationship changed over time, understanding the dynamics between the two countries and the motives behind Turkey's conduct demonstrate the continuing relevance of NATO for Turkey's foreign policy today.

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