

British Foreign Office Perspectives on the Admission of Turkey and Greece to NATO, 1947-1952

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is her own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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ABSTRACT

On 4 April 1949, NATO was founded with the ultimate objective to combat the Soviet Union's aggression. Turkey and Greece were arguably 'victims' that suffered from the Soviet Union's aggression, but they still were not considered as appropriate NATO members. Neither Greece nor Turkey were considered to be in Western Europe nor in the Atlantic; and both were considered by Britain that they should be included in a Mediterranean pact. Turkey and Greece were eventually accepted by Britain into NATO because of the MEC plan. This study will expound the British Foreign Office's perspective with regards to the admission of Turkey and Greece to NATO. The prime objective of this research is to identify their rejection and acceptance of the Foreign Office from the angle that has received less attention from other researchers. This thesis has focused on the significant perspective of the Foreign Office through the methodology of British primary historical resources. The study of these resources has found Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin wanted to have NATO swiftly formed, and the Cyprus issue between Turkey and Greece also encouraged him to not consider Turkey and Greece as eligible to be invited to join NATO. After NATO was successfully established, the Cyprus issue remained one of Britain's reasons to continue its opposition towards these countries' admission into NATO. Britain used the MEC as a means to prevent Turkish and Greek membership of NATO. However, due to the difficulties in creating the MEC, the new Foreign Secretary, Herbert Morrison, eventually agreed to allow Turkey and Greece to join NATO.

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List of Abbreviations

AFPRF	Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation
AKEL	Progressive Party of the Working People (<i>Anorthotiko Komma Ergazomenou Laou</i>)
BJSM	British Joint Services Mission
CAB	Cabinet Office Papers
CO	Colonial Office Papers
COS	British Chiefs of Staff
DEFE	Chiefs of Staff Committee Papers
DOS	The United States Department of State Files
<i>DPBO</i>	Documents on British Policy Overseas
EAM	National Liberation Front (<i>Ethniko Apeleftherotiko Metopo</i>)
ELAS	Greek People's Liberation Army (<i>Ellinikós Laïkós Apeleftherotikós Stratós</i>)
FO	Foreign Office records
<i>FRUS</i>	Foreign Relations of the United States
FTA	Federation of Turkish Associations
<i>HANSARD</i>	House of Commons Parliamentary Debate
JCOS	United States Joint Chief of Staff
KKE	Communist Party of Greece (<i>Kommounistikó Kómma Elládas</i>)
MEC	Middle East Command
NA	National Archives (United States)
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

NEA	United States the Bureau of Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs
OEEC	Organisation for European Economic Co-operation
PAC	Public Archives of Canada
PREM	Prime Minister's Office Papers
<i>RG 59</i>	General Records of the Department of State, decimal files
RPP	Republican People's Party
RSPHSA	Russian Social and Political History State Archive
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander Europe [NATO]
SACME	Supreme Allied Commander Middle East
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe [NATO]
TNA	The National Archives (United Kingdom)
UN	United Nations
US	United States
WET	Washington Exploratory Talks
WO	War Office records
WU	Western Union

INTRODUCTION

The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) is an intergovernmental military alliance which was formed on 4 April 1949 in Washington D.C. The twelve original countries were the United States, Britain, Canada, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Portugal and Italy. The Treaty required these countries to 'consult each other whenever the territorial or political integrity of one of their number was threatened, to regard an actual attack on a member as an attack on all of them and to collectively develop their joint capacity to resist such an attack.'¹ This decree is stated in Article 5 of the Treaty and specifies that each member is expected to maintain the security of the North Atlantic area from outside aggression.²

NATO's responsibility for defence and security matters was seen by its members as the best mechanism to resist the expansion of the Soviet Union's power and Communist ideology in the post-Second World War era. It is worth mentioning that there are two distinct groups with different types of NATO membership. The first consists of the seven founding countries that initially formed NATO: The United States, Britain, Canada, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.³ The second group consists of those

¹ Mark Smith, *NATO Enlargement during the Cold War: Strategy and System in the Western Alliance* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), p. 11.

² See André de Staercke, et al (eds.), *NATO's Anxious Birth: The Prophetic Vision of the 1940s* (London: C. Hurst & Company, 1985), pp. 184; Lord Ismay, *NATO: The First Five Years, 1949-1954* ([s.l]: N.A.T.O., 1954), p. 18.

³ *Foreign Relations of the United States* [hereafter *FRUS*], 1948, *Western Europe*, Vol. III (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1948), p. 225, Memorandum by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kennan) to the Under Secretary of State (Lovett), 31 August 1948.

countries that were invited to join NATO. Some, such as Portugal and Iceland,⁴ were invited because it was believed they would be an asset to NATO. In the case of Norway, Denmark and Italy,⁵ the invitation to join was motivated by the fact that these countries had been threatened, or had the potential to be threatened, by the Soviet Union. On these grounds, it would have been logical for Greece and Turkey to also have been invited to join. These two countries were arguably “victims” that faced Soviet aggression in the early Cold War period, the same ‘enemy’ faced by all NATO members.

Soviet intervention in Greece and demands on Turkey triggered the outbreak of the Greek Civil War (1946-1949) and the Turkish Straits crisis (1946-1953). Although the extent of Soviet interference in the early years of the Greek Civil War was unclear, the British Foreign Office believed the Soviets were the true masterminds behind the war. In Turkey, the Soviet Union demanded that the Black Sea Straits settlements, the Montreux Treaty of 1936, be revised in conjunction with its territorial claim over the provinces of Kars and Ardahan, in eastern Turkey. With regard to the Straits, the Soviet Union wanted the same usage rights as Turkey, as well as a naval base on the Bosphorus or in the Dardanelles.⁶ The territorial concessions from Turkey concerning Kars and Ardahan would have given the Soviet Union effective control over both of the

⁴ TNA, FO 371/73075/Z 6948/2307/72/G, ‘Security talks: question of Inclusion of Italy in Western European and North Atlantic Pact’, From Washington to Foreign Office, 26 August 1948; *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 211, Memorandum of the Ninth Meeting of the Working Group Participating in the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, 9 August 1948. See also Theodore C. Achilles, ‘US Role in Negotiations that Led to Atlantic Alliance, Part 2’, *NATO Review*, 27:5 (1979), 16-19 (p. 16); Escott Reid, *Time of Fear and Hope: The Making of the North Atlantic Treaty, 1947-1949* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977), pp. 193-212.

⁵ See Kew, The National Archives [hereafter TNA], FO 371/68067/AN 1276/1195/45/G, ‘Atlantic Security Talks: First meeting of Group, 22 to 24 March 1948’, From Washington to Foreign Office, 22 March 1948; *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, pp. 60-51, Minutes of the First Meeting of the United States-United Kingdom-Canada Security Conversations, ‘Security Information’, 22 March 1948.

⁶ See Barry Rubin, *The Great Powers in the Middle East 1941-1947: The Road to the Cold War* (London: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1980), pp. 191-219.

Turkish Straits.⁷ As a result of these developments in Greece and Turkey, it appeared likely that these countries would be invited to join NATO when the West began its formation in late 1948 and early 1949.

Nevertheless Britain, one of NATO's prominent founding countries, resolutely refused to invite Greece and Turkey to join NATO. Britain's rejection was initiated by Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin and the Foreign Office. It was a surprising decision, considering that British strategic interests in the Mediterranean and the Middle East depended on these two countries not being conquered by an outside power, especially the Soviet Union. It had been for this reason that Britain sought the help of the United States State Department when, in early 1947, it could no longer assist Greece and Turkey in facing the Soviet threat due to domestic economic difficulties. As a result, the first American containment policy, the Truman Doctrine, was introduced in March 1947, followed by the Marshall Plan in June 1947 and NATO in April 1949. Two years after NATO was formed, the new Foreign Secretary Herbert Morrison and the Foreign Office reconsidered Britain's decision regarding Greece and Turkey's NATO membership. At first, Britain agreed to grant associate membership to Greece and Turkey, but eventually Britain gave its permission for both countries to be accepted as full NATO members. Greece and Turkey officially entered NATO on 18 February 1952.

⁷ See John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (New York: Penguin, 2005), p. 28.

Research question and objectives

This dissertation aims to identify Britain's perspective, specifically that of the Foreign Office and Foreign Secretaries Ernest Bevin and Herbert Morrison, towards the admission of Greece and Turkey to NATO during the early Cold War period, 1947 to 1952. Further, it seeks to understand the shift in opinion concerning their membership that occurred in 1951.

Given that, thus far, most research on the admission of Greece and Turkey to NATO has focused on the involvement of the United States, this thesis seeks instead to shed light on Britain's involvement. In viewing the United States as the dominant power in determining Greek and Turkish membership of NATO, other factors unrelated to the Cold War that impacted their admission remain overlooked. Increasing tensions between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus were equally important, as was Foreign Secretary Morrison's inexperience in and ignorance of issues concerning Greece, Turkey, Cyprus and NATO. Morrison's lack of expertise in foreign affairs led him to accept the accession of Greece and Turkey into NATO less than three months after he succeeded Bevin. In order to understand how the issue of Cyprus impacted Greek and Turkish membership of NATO before 1951, and how Morrison's role in the Foreign Office contributed to Greece and Turkey's eventual acceptance into NATO, both must be examined from the perspective of the British Foreign Office. At the time of the dispute, Cyprus was still a British Crown Colony, and Foreign Secretary Bevin and Foreign Secretary Morrison were the key decision makers determining the timing and the grounds for the inclusion of Greece and Turkey into NATO.

In researching this question, this study will give a full account of the admission of Greece and Turkey into NATO and will demonstrate Britain's significant contribution in ensuring the prompt and successful formation of NATO. Many historians, such as Lawrence S. Kaplan and Timothy P. Ireland, believe that the United States was the most influential power behind the rejection, and later acceptance, of Greek and Turkish membership in NATO.⁸ However, this dissertation will reveal two important elements that influenced Foreign Secretary Bevin in his decision not to invite Greece and Turkey to join NATO at the outset, which have received less attention from historians. First, the United States was initially hesitant about forming NATO and delayed its progress. Second, NATO membership became a complicated matter that caused further delays in the ratification of the Treaty. Ultimately, Bevin was more focused on speed than strategy and decided not to press for Greek and Turkish NATO membership, despite British strategic interests in both countries, because of the delay their entry might have brought to the organisation's formation.

Furthermore, this dissertation will present new insights regarding the British Foreign Office and its role in the admission of Greece and Turkey into NATO by concentrating on Bevin and Morrison's distinctive diplomatic tactics in handling these issues. Although the admission of Greece and Turkey happened during the tense period of the early Cold War, both the Cyprus issue and the differences between the two foreign secretaries were unrelated to the Cold War. While this dissertation recognises the importance of

⁸ Lawrence S. Kaplan, *NATO 1948: The Birth of the Transatlantic Alliance* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2007); Timothy P. Ireland, *Creating the Entangling Alliance: The Origins of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization* (London: Aldwych Press, 1981).

the Cold War, both in global politics and in the formation of NATO, it argues that local dynamics – both within Britain and within Greece and Turkey – have been largely overlooked in understanding why these two countries were not initially invited to join.

This research has four objectives. The first is to reflect on British foreign policy towards Greece and Turkey at a time when Britain was suffering economic depression in the years immediately following the Second World War. A detailed account of these policies shows the importance of Greece and Turkey in relation to Britain's position in the Middle East and demonstrates why Britain sought help from the United States to prevent these countries from being penetrated by the Soviet Union. In light of the importance of Greece and Turkey to Britain, it was therefore surprising that the British Foreign Office decided to reject their admission into NATO.

This relates to the second objective of the dissertation: to identify why Britain, specifically Bevin and the Foreign Office, was reluctant to invite Greece and Turkey to join NATO during its formative years. Previous studies have cited the geographical issues of these two countries – namely that both were located outside the Atlantic region - and the British proposals for a Mediterranean defence pact as key reasons for this reluctance. However, this study will focus on the delays faced during the negotiation years. It will be argued that these delays obstructed Bevin's ambition to form NATO swiftly and contributed to his decision not to invite Greece and Turkey to become original NATO members. At this time, Greece and Turkey were in dispute over Cyprus, which soured the relationship between the two countries. Bevin, therefore,

believed encouraging these countries to join NATO might have brought about further delays in NATO's formation.

The third objective is to identify additional reasons for Bevin and the Foreign Office's reluctance to allow Greece and Turkey to join NATO after its formation in April 1949. While Britain's aim to include Turkey in the Middle East Command (MEC) – a regional defence pact proposed by the British - was a factor which has been outlined in previous studies, this study reveals the extent to which Bevin and the Foreign Office's resistance to Greek and Turkish NATO membership was influenced by the Cyprus issue.

The fourth objective is to identify the reasons for the new Foreign Secretary Morrison and the Foreign Office's eventual acceptance of Greece and Turkey as NATO members in 1951. The MEC was a key reason for Morrison's change of stance over Greece and Turkey's full NATO membership. Through this objective, this dissertation will reveal external as well as internal factors at play in Greece and Turkey's acceptance into NATO, particularly in relation to Morrison's inexperience in handling foreign affairs such as the MEC and his limited understanding of issues concerning relations between Turkey, Greece and Cyprus and the impact of this on NATO.

Through these research objectives, this dissertation will provide an original analysis of the influence of Foreign Secretaries Bevin and Morrison on Greek and Turkish NATO membership. This research will demonstrate that Greece and Turkey were not included in NATO, either before or after its formation, because Bevin strongly believed that a conflict between them over Cyprus would delay the formation of NATO and affect its

stability. It was ultimately Morrison, Bevin's successor, who decided to accept Greece and Turkey as new NATO members after less than three months in office.

Literature review

NATO was formed in the context of the early Cold War and it was clear that a key aim of NATO was to deter the Soviet Union and Communism. This underlying premise was embraced by traditionalist historians, who claimed that the policy of the Soviet Union during the post-Second World War period was aggressive and that it was natural for the United States to react to this aggression by forming NATO.⁹ However, revisionist historians argued that Soviet policy in the post-war era was defensive and it was the failure of the United States to recognise this, aggravated by the provocative NATO military alliance, which brought about an avoidable Cold War.¹⁰ Post-revisionists, on the other hand, place blame squarely on both sides.¹¹ They argue that the United States'

⁹ This interpretation was advanced in the memoirs of participants and the writings of the majority of contemporary commentators and historians until the 1960s. Prominent examples are Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs by Harry S. Truman, Volume 1: Year of Decisions* (New York: Doubleday & Company Inc., 1955); Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs by Harry S. Truman, Volume 2: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1953* (Suffolk: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1956); Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1970).

¹⁰ Peter G. Boyle, 'America's Hesitant Road to NATO, 1945-49', in *The Origins of NATO*, ed. by Joseph Smith (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1990), pp. 65-81 (pp. 69-72). The revisionist view was propounded by contemporary dissidents such as Henry Wallace and by New Left historians of the 1960s. For examples see John M. Blum (ed.), *The Price of Vision: The Diary of Henry A. Wallace, 1942-46* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973); Denna F. Fleming, *The Cold War and its Origins, 1917-60* (London: Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1961); Lloyd C. Gardner, *Architects of Illusion: Men and Ideas in American Foreign Policy, 1941-1949* (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1972); Gabriel Kolko and Joyce Kolko, *The Limits of Power: The World and United States Foreign Policy, 1945-54* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972).

¹¹ The post-revisionist scholars included John L. Gaddis, 'The Emerging Post-Revisionist Synthesis on the Origins of the Cold War', *Diplomatic History*, 7:3 (1983), 171-190 (p. 172); J. Samuel Walker, 'Historians and Cold War Origins: The New Consensus', in *American Foreign Relations: A Historiographical Review*, eds. by Gerald K. Haines and J. Samuel Walker (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood, 1981), pp. 207-236; Geoffrey Smith, 'Harry, We Hardly Know You': Revisionism, Politics and Diplomacy, 1945-1954, *American Political Science Review*, 70:2 (1976), 560-582; Geir Lundestad, *America, Scandinavia, and the Cold War, 1945-1949: Expansion and Its Limitation in US Foreign Policy, 1945-1959* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980); John L. Gaddis, *We Know Now: Rethinking Cold War History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

nuclear arms race gave Stalin, then leader of the Soviet Union, an understandable reason to be paranoid and provoked him to react by expanding Soviet power and ideology.¹² Post-revisionists add that the United States countered this Soviet encroachment by implementing a policy of containment, which included the creation of NATO.

It is worth emphasising here that the traditionalists, revisionists, and post-revisionists all employ a bipolar analysis, focused on the Soviet Union and the United States, to explain the genesis of the Cold War and NATO. In recent years, however, the opening of British archives relating to the post-war period has allowed the British perspective, also known as the British school, to be added to Cold War historiography. Scholars of the British school posit that Britain played a significant role in provoking Cold War tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States.¹³ This approach was regarded as a form of depolarisation, meaning the Cold War was 'no longer seen simply as a conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union.'¹⁴ With its poor economic and military

¹² See David Holloway, 'Stalin and the Bomb', in *Origins of the Cold War: An International History*, eds. by Melvyn P. Leffler and David S. Painter (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2005), pp. 72-90 (p. 73).

¹³ Robert Frazier, 'Did Britain Start the Cold War? Bevin and the Truman Doctrine', *Historical Journal*, 27:3 (1984), 715-727; Victor Rothwell, *Britain and the Cold War 1941-1947* (London: Jonathan Cape Ltd., 1982); William C. Cromwell, 'The Marshall Plan, Britain and the Cold War', *Review of International Studies*, 8:4 (1982), 233-249; John Kent, 'British Policy and the Origins of the Cold War', in *Origins of the Cold War: An International History*, eds. by Melvyn P. Leffler and David S. Painter (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 1994), pp. 155-166; Anne Deighton, *The Impossible Peace: Britain, the Division of Germany and the Origins of the Cold War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990); Jamil Hasanli, *Stalin and the Turkish Crisis of the Cold War, 1945-1953* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2013).

¹⁴ Bert Zeeman, 'Britain and the Cold War: An Alternative Approach. The Treaty of Dunkirk Example', *European History Quarterly*, 16:3 (1986), 343-367 (p. 346). The British school scholars included Michael L. Dockrill and Michael F. Hopkins, *The Cold War 1945-91* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Michael L. Dockrill and Michael F. Hopkins, *British Foreign Policy, 1945-56* (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1989); Anne Deighton, *Britain and the Cold War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1990); John A. Lukacs, *New History of the Cold War* (New York: Doubleday & Company Inc., 1966); John W. Young, *France, the Cold War and the Western Alliance, 1944-1949: French Foreign Policy and Post-war Europe* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1990); Sean Greenwood, 'Anglo-French Relations and the Origins of the Treaty Dunkirk' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of London, 1982); Wm. Roger Louis, *The British Empire*

circumstances, as well as a growing concern over the expansion of Soviet power to areas significant to Britain such as Western Europe, the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, Britain, and specifically the Foreign Office, turned to the United States for support in retaining its influence in those areas.¹⁵ The British Foreign Office's strategic plan inadvertently brought the United States into a hostile situation with the Soviet Union, which later resulted in the Cold War and the establishment of NATO. Although traditionalists, revisionists, post-revisionists and the British school have their own perspectives on who caused the Cold War, it would be accurate to conclude that these schools of thought all view the genesis of NATO within the context of the Cold War.

Literature on the origins of NATO demonstrates that the United States and Britain played significant roles in establishing this new military alliance.¹⁶ However, some scholars, such as Peter Foot and Lawrence A. Kaplan, saw the United States' role as more dominant than that of Britain. This was due to the fact that the United States initiated the negotiations and was seen as a superpower due to its economic stability

in the Middle East 1945-1951: Arab Nationalism, the United States and Post-war Imperialism (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984); Robert M. Hathaway, *Ambiguous Partnership: Britain and America, 1944-1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981); Elisabeth Barker, *The British Between the Superpowers, 1945-1950* (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1983); Ritchie Ovendale, *The English-Speaking Alliance: Britain, the United States, the Dominions and the Cold War 1945-51* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1985).

¹⁵ See Kent, 'British Policy and the Origins of the Cold War', pp. 156-165.

¹⁶ John Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism: Britain and the Formation of NATO, 1942-1949* (Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1993); John Baylis, 'Britain and the Formation of NATO', in *The Origins of NATO*, ed. by Joseph Smith (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1990), pp. 3-32; Martin H. Folly, 'The British Military and the Making of the North Atlantic Treaty', in *The Origins of NATO*, ed. by Joseph Smith (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1990), pp. 33-48; Martin H. Folly, 'Breaking the Vicious Circle: Britain, the United States and the Genesis of the North Atlantic Treaty', *Diplomatic History* (1988), 59-77; Sir Nicholas Henderson, *The Birth of NATO* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1982); Don Cook, *Forging the Alliance, NATO, 1945-1950* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1989); Joseph Frankel, *British Foreign Policy 1945-1973* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975); Callum A. MacDonald, 'Waiting for Uncle Sam: Britain, the United States, and the First Cold War', *Reviews in American History*, 17:1 (1989), 125-130; Carol Edler Baumann, 'Britain Faces Europe', *Political Science Quarterly*, 74: 3 (1959) 351-371; Andrew Defty, *Britain, America and Anti-Communist Propaganda 1945-53* (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2004).

and the strength of its military forces.¹⁷ The United States' role in determining which countries were eligible to join NATO during its negotiation years has, therefore, been reviewed in depth.

The same tendency was reflected in literature on the admission of Greece and Turkey to NATO, with historians such as Mark Smith, Alexandra Gheciu, Melvyn P. Leffler, George S. Harris, Bruce R. Kuniholm and Sydney N. Fisher discussing their admission from the point of view of the United States.¹⁸ In doing so, these scholars have neglected Britain's perspective in their analyses and their works do not present a full account of Greece and Turkey's admission to NATO.

¹⁷ Peter Foot, 'America and Origins of the Atlantic Alliance: a Reappraisal', in *The Origins of NATO*, ed. by Joseph Smith (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1990), pp. 82-94; Lawrence A. Kaplan, 'The United States and the Origins of NATO 1946-1949', *The Review of Politics*, 31:2 (1969), 210-222; Lawrence S. Kaplan, *NATO and the United States: The Enduring Alliance* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1988); Lawrence S. Kaplan, *The Long Entanglement: NATO's First Fifty Years* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 1999); Lawrence S. Kaplan, *The United States and NATO, The Formative Years* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1984); Reid, *Time of Fear and Hope: The Making of the North Atlantic Treaty, 1947-1949*; Escott Reid, 'The Birth of the North Atlantic Alliance', *International Journal*, 22:3 (1967), 426-440; Joseph Smith, *The Cold War 1945-1991* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1998); Melvyn P. Leffler, 'The American Drive for Security: Marshall Plan, Revival of Germany, and NATO', in *The Origins of the Cold War, Third Edition*, eds. by Thomas G. Paterson and Robert J. McMahon (Toronto: D.C. Heath and Company, 1991), pp. 229-240; Fraser Cameron, *US Foreign Policy After the Cold War* (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2005); Michael E. Rodgers, 'NATO: From Shadow to Substance – The Formative Years -Insights for the 21st Century' (unpublished master thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, University Monterey, 2007) (<http://hdl.handle.net/10945/3409>); Cees Wiebes and Bert Zeeman, 'The Pentagon Negotiations March 1948: The Launching of the North Atlantic Treaty', *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, 59:3 (1983), 351-363; Theodore C. Achilles, 'US Role in Negotiations that Led to Atlantic Alliance, Part 1', *NATO Review*, 27:4 (1979), 11-14; Theodore C. Achilles, 'US Role in Negotiations that Led to Atlantic Alliance, Part 2', *NATO Review*, 27:5 (1979), 16-19.

¹⁸ Mark Smith, *NATO Enlargement during the Cold War: Strategy and System in the Western Alliance* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000); Alexandra Gheciu, *NATO in the "New Europe": The Politics of International Socialization after the Cold War* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2005); Melvyn P. Leffler, 'Strategy, Diplomacy and the Cold War: The United States, Turkey and NATO, 1945-1952', *The Journal of American History*, 71:4 (1985), 807-825; George S. Harris, 'Turkey and the United States', in *Turkey's Foreign Policy in Transition 1950-1974*, ed. by Kemal H. Karpat (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975), pp. 51-72; Bruce R. Kuniholm, 'Turkey and NATO' in *NATO and the Mediterranean*, eds. by Lawrence S. Kaplan, et al. (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1985), pp. 215-237; Sydney N. Fisher, *The Middle East: A History* (London: Routledge & Keagan Paul LTD., 1959).

A considerable amount of written material is available from the perspective of Britain on Greece and Turkey's admission to NATO. This literature raises two key issues concerning the rejection, and later acceptance, of these two countries. On the issue of rejection, two distinguishing phases were noted: NATO's formative years (1948-1949) and NATO's years of expansion (1950-1951). Literature on the first phase of rejection demonstrates that Greece and Turkey's geographical location was a primary factor in the decision of NATO's founding countries to omit them from the organisation. Ekavi Athanassopoulou and Abdulkadir Baharççek assert that Greece and Turkey were seen as too far from the Atlantic and thus unfit to be included in Western Europe.¹⁹ According to George C. McGhee, NATO's founding countries had focused only on the North Atlantic region when discussing membership, which led Greece and Turkey to be excluded from NATO.²⁰ These scholars have also argued that Foreign Secretary Bevin and the Foreign Office would have preferred to include Greece and Turkey in a Mediterranean pact rather than in NATO.²¹ This matter became a key factor that influenced their rejection of Greece and Turkey's NATO membership between 1948 and 1949.

The aforementioned scholars, however, have not considered another influential reason for Bevin and the Foreign Office's decision to leave Greece and Turkey outside NATO:

¹⁹ Ekavi Athanassopoulou, *Turkey – Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945-1952: The First Enlargement of NATO* (London: Frank Cass, 2012), pp. 103-104; Ekavi Athanassopoulou, 'Western Defence Developments and Turkey's Search for Security in 1948', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 32:2 (1996), 77-108 (pp. 103-104); Abdulkadir Baharççek, 'From Neutrality to Alignment: The Formation of NATO and Turkish Bids for Membership', *Journal of Academic Approaches*, 1:1 (2010), 57-68 (p. 60).

²⁰ George C. McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East Connection: How the Truman Doctrine and Turkey's NATO Entry Contained the Soviets* (Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1990), p. 59.

²¹ *Ibid.*; Athanassopoulou, *Turkey – Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945-1952: The First Enlargement of NATO*, pp. 130-132; Athanassopoulou, 'Western Defence Developments and Turkey's Search for Security in 1948', p. 104; Baharççek, p. 60.

Bevin's desire to form NATO swiftly at a time when tensions had increased between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus. Historians have largely ignored the Cyprus dispute between Greece and Turkey and how this affected these countries' NATO membership. That this dispute took place in isolation of Cold War considerations and was the result of local dynamics between Greece and Turkey thus provides new contribution to the existing literature.

Literature on the second phase of rejection, from 1950 to 1951, illustrates that the geography of Greece and Turkey remained a major factor influencing Britain's refusal to enlarge NATO. Britain argued that Greece and Turkey's Mediterranean location would ruin the Atlantic community of existing NATO members.²² In addition to this geographical concern, Athanassopoulou and Behçet K. Yeşilbursa demonstrate that Britain also refused to enlarge the organisation due to strong opposition from many smaller NATO members, such as Norway and Denmark, to any extensions in their obligation to go to war against the Soviet Union.²³ Britain took this opportunity to justify its decision to keep Greece and Turkey outside NATO.

²² Athanassopoulou, *Turkey – Anglo-American Security Interests: The First Enlargement of NATO*, p. 170; Baharçişek, pp. 63-64.

²³ Ibid.; Behçet K. Yeşilbursa, 'Turkey's Participation in the Middle East Command and its Admission to NATO, 1950-52', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 35: 4 (1999), 70-102 (p. 76). See also Behçet K. Yeşilbursa, 'Turkey's Participation in the Middle East Command and its Admission to NATO, 1950-52', in *Seventy-Five Years of the Turkish Republic*, ed. by Sylvia Kedourie (London: Frank Cass, 2000), pp. 70-102 (p. 76). The resistance of NATO's smaller members has further been discussed by S. Victor Papacosma, 'Greece and NATO' in *NATO and the Mediterranean*, eds. by Lawrence S. Kaplan, et al. (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1985), pp. 189-213 (p. 191); McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East Connection: How the Truman Doctrine and Turkey's NATO Entry Contained the Soviets*, p. 87; Geoffrey Lewis, *Modern Turkey* (New York: Praeger Publishers, Inc., 1974), pp. 198-199; Baharçişek, p. 64; Kurt Jacob, 'Greece, Turkey, and N.A.T.O.', *The World Today*, 8:4 (1952), 162-169 (163).

Further research regarding Bevin and the Foreign Office has been done by S. Victor Papacosma, Athanassopoulou, Yeşilbursa, Dionysios Chourchoulis and Mehmet Gonlubol. They unanimously agree that Bevin and the Foreign Office's aim to include Turkey in the MEC project was the most prominent reason for the decision to rebuff Turkey's requests for NATO membership in May and August 1950.²⁴ These historians, however, overlook three important factors relating to the MEC. The first is that neither Turkey nor Greece had been considered as potential members during the two attempts to formulate the MEC undertaken by the British Foreign Office and the Egyptian government in 1946 and early 1950. Secondly, it was only decided that Turkey should be included in the MEC *after* it requested membership of NATO, in early May 1950. Thirdly only Turkey, not Greece, was confirmed to be included in the MEC in late May 1950. In this way, the MEC was merely used as a *means* to keep Turkey and its security partner, Greece, outside NATO, while tensions over Cyprus were the underlying cause of their exclusion.

Historians such as Chourchoulis, Papacosma, Kuniholm, Gonlubol, McGhee, Harris and Fisher have discussed Greece and Turkey's dispute over Cyprus in their works.²⁵

However, they focus only on the Cyprus problem in the period after Greece and Turkey

²⁴ Papacosma, 'Greece and NATO', p. 191; Athanassopoulou, *Turkey – Anglo-American Security Interests: The First Enlargement of NATO*, p. 170; Yeşilbursa, p. 76; Dionysios Chourchoulis, *The Southern Flank of NATO, 1951-1959: Military Strategy or Political Stabilization* (London: Lexington Books, 2015), p. 3. This book is author's former doctoral thesis under the same title Dionysios Chourchoulis, 'The Southern Flank of NATO, 1951-1959: Military Strategy or Political Stabilisation?' (Doctoral thesis, Queen Mary, University of London, 2010), p. 39; Mehmet Gonlubol, 'NATO, USA and Turkey', in *Turkey's Foreign Policy in Transition 1950-1974*, ed. by Kemal H. Karpat (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975), pp. 13-50 (p. 26).

²⁵ Chourchoulis, *The Southern Flank of NATO, 1951-1959: Military Strategy or Political Stabilization*, pp. 114-179; Papacosma, 'Greece and NATO', pp. 191-207; Kuniholm, 'Turkey and NATO', pp. 220-221; Gonlubol, 'NATO, USA and Turkey', pp. 13-21; McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East Connection: How the Truman Doctrine and Turkey's NATO Entry Contained the Soviets*, pp. 162-169; Harris, 'Turkey and the United States', pp. 59-72; George S. Harris, *The Troubled Alliance: Turkish-American Problems in Historical Perspective 1945-71* (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute, 1972), pp. 105-124; Fisher, *The Middle East: A History*, pp. 494-495.

became NATO members (in particular the 1955 Cyprus Emergency in which Greek and Turkish Cypriot factions clashed with British forces).²⁶ In addition, these historians focus on how this issue threatened the stability of NATO's southern flank, rather than seeing the discord between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus as a reason for Britain's rejection of their NATO membership before 1951. Even though the root of the Cyprus conflict can be traced to 1925, the year Cyprus was declared a British Crown Colony, and worsened in the 1940s, the conflict's impact on Greece and Turkey's admission into NATO has received little attention from historians.

The second key issue in the literature on Greece and Turkey's admission into NATO is the matter of acceptance. Historians have unanimously agreed that the MEC project was the dominant reason influencing Britain to accept Greece and Turkey as part of an enlarged NATO in May 1951. Scholars such as Gonlubol stated that Britain withdrew its opposition towards Turkish NATO membership once it received word that Turkey would play a leading role in the establishment of the MEC project.²⁷ However, Britain did not execute this decision promptly: while the MEC was being formed between 1950 and 1952, opposition to Turkish NATO membership continued. According to Yeşilbursa, Britain was blackmailed by the United States, which would only consider committing to the MEC if Britain agreed to accept Turkey as a new NATO member.²⁸ Chourchoulis, Athannassopoulou, Geoffrey Lewis and Papacosma also argue that when Britain saw

²⁶ For more information on the Cyprus Emergency, see Nancy Crawshaw, *The Cyprus Revolt: An Account of the Struggle for Union with Greece* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978), pp. 114-230; Brendan O'Malley and Ian Craig, *The Cyprus Conspiracy: America, Espionage and the Turkish Invasion* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd., 2008), pp. 8-16; William Mallinson, *Britain and Cyprus: Key Themes and Documents since World War II* (London, I.B. Tauris, 2011), pp. 11-25.

²⁷ Gonlubol, p. 26.

²⁸ Yeşilbursa, p. 81.

that the MEC project was not progressing, but was unable to find a solution, it eventually yielded to the United States' pressure and accepted Turkey as part of an enlarged NATO.²⁹ These historians have not considered internal British factors, in particular the inexperience of the new Foreign Secretary Morrison and how this influenced Britain to accept Greece and Turkey into NATO. This internal factor existed independently of the Cold War question.

To conclude, previous scholars have generally approached Greece and Turkey's admission to NATO from the point of view of the United States and the wider Cold War. Historians who have researched their admission from the perspective of the British Foreign Office seem to have overlooked several interrelated factors that occurred during the period. Interestingly, these neglected issues largely existed independently of the Cold War question. This study therefore fills this gap in the literature and presents a comprehensive analysis of the British Foreign Office's decision-making regarding the admission of Greece and Turkey into NATO by moving beyond the question of the Cold War. This study demonstrates that the two British Foreign Secretaries, Bevin and Morrison, handled matters regarding the Greco-Turkish Cyprus issue and NATO differently. This difference in diplomacy brought a drastic change in Britain's approach to the membership of Greece and Turkey to NATO between 1951 and 1952.

²⁹ Chourchoulis, *The Southern Flank of NATO, 1951-1959: Military Strategy or Political Stabilization*, pp. 28-29. Athanassopoulou, *Turkey – Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945-1952: The First Enlargement of NATO*, p. 230; Lewis, p. 199; Papacosma, p. 192.

Methodology and sources

This study is not about Greece and Turkey's actions within NATO, but rather focuses on the British Foreign Office's perspective towards and policies regarding the admission of Greece and Turkey into NATO. This study employs a qualitative method and the interpretation and analysis of British primary and secondary sources from the perspective of diplomatic history and policy-making. This dissertation employs the induction method, moving from specific observations based on empirical evidence to broader explanations, generalisations and theories. It begins with specific observations and measures on selected issues, formulates hypotheses that this study explores and ends by developing conclusions or theories.

The archival material used in this study was retrieved from the UK National Archives, the British Library, as well as the Brotherton and Edward Boyle Libraries at the University of Leeds. Most of the primary materials are official letters, minutes of meetings and reports from Foreign Office officials concerning the issue of Greece and Turkey's accession to NATO. Other archival sources, such as *FRUS* (Foreign Relations of the United States) and *HANSARD* (House of Commons Parliamentary Debate) were accessed online. Public sources, such as books, memoirs and newspapers written mostly by politicians, diplomats and officials of government departments, were of equal importance in understanding the issue at hand. Academic sources such as monographs and journal articles have also been used.

This dissertation combines a chronological and thematic approach. The chapters are arranged chronologically, beginning from the development of the Cold War in Greece and Turkey in 1945 and ending with Greece and Turkey officially joining NATO in February 1952. The content within each chapter is arranged thematically. This dissertation is divided into three main time periods. The first is the early years after the Second World War in the Eastern Mediterranean region as well as in Britain, from 1945 until 1947. The second is the formative years of NATO, from 1948 until 1949. The third includes the years after NATO was established until Greece and Turkey officially became NATO members, from 1950 until 1952.

This dissertation has four chapters. Chapter One examines British and American policies towards Greece and Turkey during the early period of the Cold War, from 1945 to 1947. This chapter illustrates that, during these years, Greece and Turkey were of great significance to British, and later US, strategic interests in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. The need to defend the security of these countries from the Soviet Union became a high priority for Britain. The significant value of Greece and Turkey to Britain was evident in that it was originally intended these countries would be part of NATO. Nevertheless, both countries were excluded from NATO. Chapter One justifies the main argument of this study: that Britain had reasons for not including Greece and Turkey in NATO, despite its strategic interests in both countries.

Chapter Two demonstrates Britain's motives for excluding Greece and Turkey from NATO during its formative years, 1948 to 1949. This chapter analyses the significant role played by Foreign Secretary Bevin during the negotiations and problems that delayed

the establishment of NATO. The chapter also introduces the concurrent situation in Cyprus, which led to the rapid deterioration of relations between Greece and Turkey. The intersection between these two issues consequently sheds light on Bevin's decision to exclude Greece and Turkey from NATO membership.

Chapter Three inspects Britain's reasons for rejecting Turkish requests for membership of NATO in 1950 as they relate to the Cyprus issue. The chapter deals with Bevin and the Foreign Office's second attempt to formulate the MEC with the Egyptian government in early 1950, after the failure of the first attempt in 1946. On both occasions, neither Greece nor Turkey were nominated as potential members. Only after the Turkish government requested NATO membership in early May 1950 did Bevin and the Foreign Office decide to include Turkey in the MEC. This chapter demonstrates that the MEC was merely a means of preventing Greece and Turkey from joining NATO.

Chapter Four illustrates Britain's refusal to extend NATO's membership to include Greece and Turkey, during the period late 1949 to early 1951. This chapter analyses Bevin and the Foreign Office's continued resistance to Greek and Turkish accession to NATO in light of their deteriorated relationship following disputes over Cyprus. Further, the chapter reveals Britain's reason for accepting Greek and Turkish NATO membership, from 1951 to 1952. Despite issues regarding the southern flank of NATO and the MEC plan, this chapter argues it was the appointment of Morrison as the new Foreign Secretary that altered Britain's decision to accept Greece and Turkey into NATO. This chapter details the differences between the two Foreign Secretaries, specifically in their attitude towards the MEC and Turkey's refusal to participate in it. This chapter shows a

link between Britain's change in standpoint over the admission of Greece and Turkey into NATO and the significant changes brought about by the new Foreign Secretary in March 1951.

In summary, this study will argue that Foreign Secretary Bevin played a substantial role in ensuring Greece and Turkey remained outside NATO. During NATO's negotiation years, he refused to invite these countries to join. He was also opposed to NATO enlargement, as demonstrated by the fact that he and the Foreign Office turned down Turkey's requests for NATO membership in 1950. This study shows that Bevin's decision-making, both before and after NATO was established, was influenced by the intense conflict between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus. Bevin worried that this discord would delay NATO's formation and would harm the stability of NATO as a whole. Only after he left office did the Foreign Office, under Morrison, eventually accept Greece and Turkey's NATO membership.

CHAPTER ONE

The Eastern Mediterranean, the development of the Cold War and the Road to Containment: British and American Policy in Greece and Turkey, 1945-1949

Introduction

Historians writing on the origins of NATO have focused on Soviet aggression in Eastern Europe and Scandinavia, their hostile response to the Marshall Plan and their demand for a treaty of friendship with Norway, but very few have given attention to Soviet action in the Eastern Mediterranean.³⁰ When focusing on the onset of the Cold War from the view of the British school, it can be argued that Soviet involvement in the Greek Civil War (1946-1949) and the Turkish Straits crisis (1946-1953) was a keystone in the creation of NATO in 1949. These crises drove the United States to abandon its isolationist foreign policy and begin intervening in the internal affairs of countries that were threatened, directly or indirectly, by the Soviet Union. This was known as containment.³¹ To prevent the spread of Communism worldwide, the US first provided economic aid to Greece and Turkey under the Truman Doctrine. The second part of the policy of containment was to rehabilitate the economies of all European nations under

³⁰ For more in depth discussions on this matter, see Hasanli, pp. vii-viii; Kaplan, *The Long Entanglement: NATO's First Fifty Years*, pp. 29-30; Foot, 'America and Origins of the Atlantic Alliance: a Reappraisal', p. 82.

³¹ Kaplan, *The Long Entanglement: NATO's First Fifty Years*, p. 1; Armin Rappaport, *A History of American Policy* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1975), p. 386; George F. Kennan, *Memoirs 1925-1950* (London: Hutchinson, 1968), pp. 250-251, pp. 361-363 and p. 378. George F. Kennan was among the United States diplomats who helped establish the first American embassy in the Soviet Union in 1933. In February 1946, while he was *Chargé d'Affaires* in Moscow, Kennan sent an 8,000-word telegram to the US State Department detailing his views on the Soviet Union and US policy towards the communist state. Kennan's analysis provided one of the most influential underpinnings for America's Cold War policy of containment. This matter was also explained by Kennan in Chapter 11: The Long Telegram, pp. 271-297 and Chapter 15: The X – Article, pp. 354-367 of his memoir.

the Marshall Plan. NATO was the third instalment. Yet, while crises in Greece and Turkey paved the way for NATO's formation, nevertheless, both countries were excluded when this new military alliance was formed in 1949.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the historical conflict in the Eastern Mediterranean, specifically Greece and Turkey, as an important factor in the development of the Cold War and subsequently NATO. It examines the importance of Greece and Turkey as buffer countries in containing the expansion of Soviet influence in the Middle East. In detailing the significance of Greece and Turkey to the West, this chapter shows that both countries were important to British, Soviet and, increasingly, American strategy in the aftermath of the Second World War (1945 - 1948). It consequently raises the question as to why Britain later chose not to support Greece and Turkey's membership in NATO, which will form the focus of the next two chapters.

It is worth highlighting here that the Soviet Union's aggression towards countries important to the West during the post-Second World War era was the key issue that shaped subsequent discussions of NATO membership between 1948 and early 1949. Given that Greece and Turkey were geostrategically valued by the West, and that these two countries were also early "victims" of Soviet aggression, it is puzzling that they were not invited to become NATO members. Literature concerning this rejection states that Britain excluded Greece and Turkey during NATO's formation years due to a geographical issue; these countries were seen as being too far from the Atlantic.³² Ultimately, these reasons would become invalid when Italy, a country equally far from

³² For this literature, see the introduction of this dissertation, p. 19.

the Atlantic and that Britain was considering including in a Mediterranean pact, was invited to join NATO. The case of Italy demonstrates therefore that Britain had other reasons for not accepting Greece and Turkey into NATO, despite its strategic interest in both countries.

In examining how Greece and Turkey became buffer countries for the West, this chapter explores their geostrategic importance to Britain and the Soviet Union, which led to the development of the early Cold War. It also roots Britain's exclusion of Greece and Turkey from NATO in both domestic and international politics. Domestic economic disruption led Britain to seek aid from the United States to combat the Soviet threat in Greece and Turkey. British strategic interests in Greece and Turkey dragged the United States and the Soviet Union into a war of nerves immediately after the end of the Second World War. In order to understand the importance of Greece and Turkey to Britain, this chapter will elaborate on British policy towards both countries and the British understanding of the links between these policies. In analysing the struggle for power and the strategic interests of the 'Northern Tier'³³ in Greece and Turkey during this period, the latter part of this chapter will examine the formulation of American foreign policy in both countries and American understanding of the links between its Greek and Turkish policies. In the final part of this chapter, it will investigate the impact of these events on Anglo-American relations and the beginnings of NATO.

³³ The term "Northern Tier" describes the northernmost Near and Middle Eastern countries on the border of or near the Soviet Union. It gained currency in the 1950s under John Foster Dulles, when he looked to the countries of the Northern Tier as part of an alliance system whose purpose he saw as containing the expansion of Soviet influence. See Bruce R. Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey and Greece* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. xv. See appendix A: Map 1 – The Northern Tier (1946).

The geostrategic importance of independent Greece and Turkey, 1936-1945

During the Second World War, Britain, the Soviet Union, and the Allies cooperated in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Soviets did not interfere when early signs of civil war in Greece appeared from 1942 to 1944 since, unlike other Balkan countries, Greece was of little interest to the Soviet Union at that time.³⁴ The Soviets were also aware that Britain had an interest in Greece and, given Soviet-British collaboration in fighting Germany, it could be argued that the former respected the British sphere of influence in Greece. Later, in October 1944, Joseph Stalin, the Soviet Premier and Winston Churchill, the British Prime Minister, reached an understanding concerning the Balkan countries through the 'Percentage Agreement.' Under this agreement, Stalin accepted British "predominance" in Greece (90 per cent), while Churchill agreed to Soviet hegemony in Romania (90 per cent) and Bulgaria (75 per cent), while both would share Yugoslavia and Hungary on a 50-50 basis.³⁵ It was as a result of this agreement that the Soviet Union refused to assist the Greek People's Liberation Army (ELAS – *Ellinikós Laikós Apeleftherotikós Stratós*) in their revolt against British control in Athens in December

³⁴ See Georgij P. Kynin and Jochen P. Laufer (eds.), *SSSR / Germanskii Vopros*, Vol. 1 (Moscow: *Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya*, 1996), document 79, cited in Geoffrey Roberts, 'Moscow's Cold War on the Periphery: Soviet Policy in Greece, Iran, and Turkey, 1943-8', *Journal of Contemporary History* 46:1 (2011), 58-81 (p. 60).

³⁵ Mogens Pelt, *Tying Greece to the West: US-West German-Greek Relations 1949-1974* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2006), pp. 127-128. See also Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey and Greece*, p. 110. The Percentages agreement was an agreement between Soviet premier Joseph Stalin and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill during the Fourth Moscow Conference, in October 1944, about how to divide various European countries into spheres of influence. The document is contained in TNA, PREM 3/66/7 (169), Record of the Meeting at the Kremlin, 9 October 1944.

1944. The Soviet Union firmly stated that 'our Greek friends will not be able to count on active assistance from here [Moscow].'³⁶

Soviet determination to keep Greek internal affairs at a distance continued until the Yalta Conference in February 1945. During a discussion between the Soviet Foreign Minister, Vyacheslav Molotov, and the British Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, concerning the principle of non-interference in other countries' internal affairs, the former hastened to 'repeat the word of comrade Stalin that he did not have in mind the position in Greece.'³⁷ However, the Soviet position on Greece began to change by the time of the Potsdam Conference in August 1945. The Soviet Union had believed that, if the new democratic government led by the left-wing National Liberation Front (EAM – *Ethniko Apeleftherotiko Metopo*) were to be formed, it would receive massive support from the Greek people. However, Britain helped the right-wing party, the Greek Royalist government, destroy the EAM and form an anti-communist government.³⁸ This was arguably the turning point for the Soviet Union, which subsequently decided to ignore British predominance in Greece.

In contrast, the Soviets had longstanding interests in Turkey and the Turkish Straits and a desire to change local dynamics. The Soviet Union had renounced the historical claims

³⁶ The decision was recorded by Georgi Dimitrov, the former head of the Comintern in his diary entries for 8 and 9 December 1944. The diary was introduced and edited by Ivo Banac – Ivo Banac (ed.), *The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov 1933-1949* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), p. 345.

³⁷ Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation [hereafter AFPRF], f. 06, op. 7a, d. 8, l. 39. Cited in Roberts, 'Moscow's Cold War on the Periphery: Soviet Policy in Greece, Iran, and Turkey, 1943-8', p. 63. Roberts noted that this exchange is omitted from all published Soviet records, an omission designed to cover up Soviet appeasement of Britain in relation to the Greek question. For further examples of omissions in relation to Greece, see Geoffrey Roberts, 'Stalin at the Tehran, Yalta and Potsdam Conferences', *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 9:4 (2007), 6-40.

³⁸ See Roberts, 'Moscow's Cold War on the Periphery: Soviet Policy in Greece, Iran, and Turkey, 1943-8', p. 63.

of the Russian Empire to the territories of Western Armenia (Kars and Ardahan) and the Turkish Straits when the Soviet Union and Turkey signed the Treaty of Friendship and Neutrality in 1925.³⁹ The Soviet Union, however, revived its interest in the Straits in July 1936, after the Montreux Convention concluded that the Montreux Treaty of 1936 gave Turkey exclusive rights to regain control over the Straits, which included remilitarisation.⁴⁰ The Dardanelles and Bosphorus straits were also important to the Soviet Union because they were the only gateways between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. The straits were significant trade routes, as well as important components of Soviet military strategy in Turkey and its other Black Sea neighbours: Russia, Romania and Bulgaria, all three of which were militarily aligned.⁴¹ The Montreux Treaty of 1936 denied these three countries' right to use the straits as an exit or entry point for naval forces traversing to and from the Black Sea.

By the end of the Second World War, the Soviets wanted the Montreux Treaty of 1936 to be revised to meet their needs. As such, they put heavy diplomatic and political pressure on Turkey over the settlement of the Black Sea Straits, a prospect which became all the more complicated when the Soviet government once again claimed the provinces of Kars and Ardahan in eastern Turkey.

³⁹ The Moscow Treaty on Friendship on Brotherhood (16 March 1921) and the Treaty on Friendship and Neutrality (17 December 1925) were signed between Turkey and the Soviet Union during their non-hostile relationship. The latter evolved from the Kars Treaty between Turkey and Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia (13 October 1921) as well as the treaty between Turkey and Ukraine (21 January 1922) that laid down principles of friendship between Turkey and the Soviet Union. These treaties stipulated non-aggression and non-participation in hostile groupings in the event of military clashes. See Hasanli, p. 1.

⁴⁰ Andrew Mango, *Turkey: New Nations and Peoples Library* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1968), p. 63.

⁴¹ Christos Rozakis and Petros N. Stagos, *The Turkish Straits* (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1987), p. 7. See appendix B: Map 2 – The location of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits.

The Eastern Mediterranean and the early Cold War, 1945-1949

Consequently, the main reason Greece and Turkey became contentious countries for the West, particularly Britain and the Soviet Union, immediately after the Second World War was that both powers had the same strategic interests in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Greece and Turkey, located to the north-east of the Mediterranean Sea, were highly valued by Britain because of their proximity to British lines of communication to the Eastern Empire. Further, they were seen as vital connecting routes linking Britain to their oil supplies in the Middle East.⁴² Greece and Turkey also possessed a number of important strategic bases that would benefit Britain in strengthening its security interests in the Mediterranean, the Eastern Empire and the Middle East.⁴³

Several months prior to the end of the Second World War, the Soviet Union returned to the Straits issue with more demands, escalating tensions with Turkey. At the Yalta Conference in February 1945, Stalin formally raised the question of revising the Montreux Treaty of 1936 and suggested that the matter be considered by the American, British and Soviet foreign ministers.⁴⁴ Stalin demanded a naval base at the Bosphorus or the Dardanelles and joint control of the Straits.⁴⁵ In the following month, the Soviets denounced the 1925 Soviet-Turkish Treaty of Friendship and Neutrality. The

⁴² See appendix C: Map 3 – The Mediterranean area, 1945-1946. For record of these British strategic interests in Greece and Turkey, see TNA, DEFE 5/3, COS (47) 9 (0) Final, Note by the Secretary, 'Future Defence Policy', 23 January 1947. See also Susan Isherwood, 'The British Foreign Office and the Post-war Settlements towards Turkey, 1943-1946' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Leeds, 1999), p. 3.

⁴³ See TNA, CAB 133/86, PMM (46) 1, Chiefs of Staff to the Defence Committee, 20 April 1946.

⁴⁴ Geoffrey Roberts, *Molotov: Stalin's Cold Warrior* (Washington D.C.: Potomac Books, Inc, 2012), p. 107.

⁴⁵ Jonathan Knight, 'America's International Guarantees for the Straits: Prelude to the Truman Doctrine', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 13:2 (1977) 241-250 (p. 246).

Soviet Union also decided not to renew the treaty when it expired, in November of the same year, unless Turkey agreed to its demands in the Straits and its claims over the provinces of Kars and Ardahan.⁴⁶

At the Potsdam Conference (July - August 1945), Stalin articulated these Soviet claims.⁴⁷ Churchill and the President of the United States, Harry S. Truman, agreed with the Soviets' demand that the Dardanelles and Bosphorus straits should always be opened to the warships of the Black Sea countries and should remain closed to those of foreign powers.⁴⁸ However, they also supported the Turkish government in rejecting Soviet demands; in particular that the Soviet Union should be allowed to join in the defence of the straits and the demand for Soviet naval bases in the Dardanelles.⁴⁹ The United States worried that the Soviet demand for bases in the Dardanelles might be a ruse for the eventual projection of Soviet power into the Eastern Mediterranean and the Near East.⁵⁰ Regarding the territorial claim on Turkey, both Truman and Churchill felt that the Soviets went too far, given that the conference protocol concerning the Black Sea straits was restricted only to the straits issue.⁵¹

⁴⁶ William Reitzel, *The Mediterranean: Its Role in American Foreign Policy* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1948), p. 74. These demands were presented on 7 June 1945 by Molotov to Selim Sarper, the Turkish envoy to Moscow. See Eduard Mark, 'The Turkish War Scare of 1946', in *Origins of the Cold War: An International History*, eds. by Melvyn P. Leffler and David S. Painter (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 1994), pp. 112-133 (p. 115).

⁴⁷ See appendix D: Map 4 – Soviet claims on Eastern Turkey and demands on the Straits (1945-1946).

⁴⁸ See Martin Gilbert, *Road to Victory: Winston S. Churchill 1941-45* (London: Heinemann, 1986), p. 993. Churchill told Stalin that he was in favour of Russia having free access to the Mediterranean for its merchant ships and ships of war. Churchill believed Britain had nothing to fear from the movement of a Russian fleet through the Straits because of Britain's greater naval strength. See TNA, FO 800/302, 9 October 1944. See also Kent, 'British Policy and the Origins of the Cold War', p. 157.

⁴⁹ Mango, p. 69.

⁵⁰ Leffler, 'Strategy, Diplomacy and the Cold War: The United States, Turkey and NATO, 1945-1952', p. 811.

⁵¹ Roberts, *Molotov: Stalin's Cold Warrior*, p. 108.

Soviet claims on Turkey developed into demands when, on 7 August 1946, the Soviet Union sent a diplomatic note to Turkey concerning the revision of the Montreux Treaty. This led to the Turkish Straits crisis of 1946. The diplomatic note concluded that Turkey's management of the straits was no longer reliable and posed a threat to the security interests of its fellow Black Sea countries. The Soviets therefore called for a multilateral conference to revise the Montreux Treaty.⁵² As a result of this crisis, Turkey sought aid from the West. In March 1947, Turkey received American economic assistance under the Truman Doctrine, the first step in US containment policy.

At the Allied conference in Moscow in December 1945, the Soviet Union turned to its other Eastern Mediterranean concern, Greece. The Soviet Union ended its non-interference in Greek internal affairs by demanding the withdrawal of British forces from Greece. Roberts notes that this demand 'was partly a tactical stance designed to counter Western demands for Soviet troop withdrawals from other countries, including Iran.'⁵³ In the months after the Moscow conference, a civil war erupted in Greece. Although there was no overt interference by the Soviet Union in the Greek Civil War, the Western powers, especially Britain and the United States, were conscious of the Soviet Union's policy in Eastern Europe 'to ensure that the countries which bordered the Soviet Union did not have anti-Soviet governments.'⁵⁴ London and Washington 'believed Moscow would welcome a communist-controlled Greece if, as seemed likely, the Royalist government collapsed.'⁵⁵ Therefore, these Western powers believed that

⁵² Ibid., p. 109.

⁵³ Roberts, 'Moscow's Cold War on the Periphery: Soviet Policy in Greece, Iran, and Turkey, 1943-8', p. 64.

⁵⁴ Boyle, 'America's Hesitant Road to NATO, 1945-49', p. 69.

⁵⁵ Dockrill and Hopkins, *The Cold War 1945-91*, pp. 37-38.

the Soviet Union had instructed its satellite countries to assist the communist insurgents in Greece.

The Soviet Union's expansionist policies and its need for warm-water ports clashed with Britain's need to maintain its line of communication through the Eastern Mediterranean to India and its desire to protect a vast area which stretched eastward from the Persian Gulf.⁵⁶ The Soviet Union's ambition to seek a dominant position in South Eastern Europe in order to enhance its own security led it to include Greece and Turkey in its sphere of interest, alongside other Balkan countries.⁵⁷ The Soviet Union also hoped to gain additional bases in the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean,⁵⁸ making Greece and Turkey favourable choices. It was this overlap of strategic interests in Greece and Turkey that drove Britain and the Soviet Union, two former members of the Grand Alliance, into a war of nerves after the Second World War.

British reactions to Soviet interest in Greece and Turkey, 1945-1947

Developments in Greek and Turkish internal affairs in the early post-Second World War period alarmed Britain, specifically Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin and the Chiefs of Staff (hereafter COS). This was because these circumstances raised the prospect of greater Soviet influence in the Mediterranean. Britain also believed the next Soviet

⁵⁶ Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey and Greece*, p. 3.

⁵⁷ See AFPRF, f. 06, r. 6, fol. 14, v. 143, p. 83. The Soviet Union considers Finland, Sweden, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania, the Slav countries of the Balkan Peninsula, as well as Turkey, as the "maximum sphere" of its interests. Cited in Hasanli, p. 31.

⁵⁸ Leffler, 'Strategy, Diplomacy and the Cold War: The United States, Turkey and NATO, 1945-1952', p. 811. See also Kent, 'British Policy and the Origins of the Cold War', p. 157.

target would be the Middle East, a region dominated by Britain since the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War One. Bevin spoke in a Cabinet meeting in March 1946 about the possible danger to the British if the Soviet Union managed to take control in the Mediterranean, explaining:

Our presence in the Mediterranean serves a purpose which is vital to our position as a Great Power. The Mediterranean is the area through which we bring influence to bear on southern Europe, the soft under-belly of France, Italy, Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey. Without our physical presence in the Mediterranean, we should cut little ice in those states which would fall, like eastern Europe, under the totalitarian yoke. We should also lose our position in the Middle East (including Iraqi oil, now one of our greatest assets), even if we could afford to let Egypt go. If we move out, Russia will move in and the Mediterranean countries from the point of view of commerce and trade, economy and democracy would be finished.⁵⁹

The Middle East was of great importance to Britain because it possessed the largest oil reserves in the world and the availability of strategic bases for military facilities.⁶⁰ Unfortunately for Britain, the Soviet Union also had the same strategic interests in the Middle East. Working Paper No. 15, which was produced from the Russian archives,

⁵⁹ TNA, CAB 131/12, DO (46) 40, Memorandum by Secretary of State to the Defence Committee, 13 March 1946.

⁶⁰ TNA, CAB 133/86, PMM (46) 1, Chiefs of Staff to the Defence Committee, 20 April 1946; see also Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East 1945-1951: Arab Nationalism, the United States and Post-war Imperialism*, p. 226.

disclosed that Western Allies' activities in the Middle East had stimulated Soviet interests in the same area.⁶¹ This can explain the Soviets' determination to compete for the rights to possess the new-found oil fields in the Middle East.⁶²

British policymakers normally took the Middle East into consideration when discussing British policy concerning Greece and Turkey in the Eastern Mediterranean. This was due to the geographical location of Greece and Turkey, being in close proximity to the Middle East. For instance, Kars and Ardahan, provinces claimed by the Soviets from Turkey for security purposes, were also strategic routes to break through Turkish land into oil-rich Iraq.⁶³ The COS therefore anticipated that if Greece and Turkey fell under the domination of the Soviet Union, it would also affect the Middle East region and vice versa.⁶⁴ The COS' prediction echoed Bevin's review of the situation in Turkey, which was currently being pressured by the Soviet Union:

Turkey presents a natural barrier to a Soviet advance to the Middle East
and the Eastern Mediterranean. If the Soviet Union were ever to

⁶¹ Natalia I. Yegorova, *The "Iran Crisis" of 1945-46: A View from the Russian Archives* in Cold War International History Project: Working Paper No. 15, (Washington, D.C., 1996), p. 3 <<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/Working%20Paper%20%2315.pdf>> [accessed 31 August 2017].

⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4. The Western Allies were well aware that from a geostrategic viewpoint, an oil concession that would confirm the Soviets' exclusive extraction and production rights on a territory of 150,000 square kilometres would have yielded great advantages. Thus, they did all they could to prevent it from happening.

⁶³ Rubin, p. 193. According to Rubin, this analysis is taken largely from Howard M. Sachar, *The Emergence of the Middle East* (New York: Knopf, 1969), pp. 44-45. The importance of Kars and Ardahan for Soviets strategic policy against Turkey was scrutinised mostly based on the Russian records by Hasanli in chapter three entitled 'The Inclusion of the South Caucasus Republics in the Soviet Policy against Turkey', pp. 123-174.

⁶⁴ TNA, CAB 133/86, PMM (46) 1, Chiefs of Staff to the Defence Committee, 20 April 1946. See also Rohan Butler, et al. (eds.), *Document on British Policy Overseas* [hereafter *DBPO*]: *Series I Volume I, The Conference at Potsdam, July-August 1945* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1984), Clark Kerr to Eden, 10 July 1945. See also TNA, retrieved from the Brotherton Library, FO 800/443/Com/45/2, Note of a meeting in the Foreign Secretary's room, 21 August 1945.

dominate Turkey, the other Middle East States would become progressively subservient to the Soviet Union and our ability to defend the Middle East would be gravely prejudiced.⁶⁵

The COS and Bevin believed that an increase in Soviet power in Greece and Turkey could seriously endanger British communication networks and oil supplies. Should war break out against the Soviet Union, strategic air offensives would also be under threat of being conquered by the Soviets.⁶⁶ In order to secure British strategic interests in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, Britain undoubtedly needed to protect Greece and Turkey from being overwhelmed by Soviet influence and power, or worse, being converted into Soviet satellite countries. The United States, a new superpower in Mediterranean and Middle Eastern security affairs, also agreed that Greece and Turkey, together with Iran, were strategically important as barrier countries preventing the Soviet Union from entering the Middle East.⁶⁷ Britain, and later the United States, therefore assisted Greece and Turkey by formulating and implementing policies that could help both countries to combat the Soviet threat.

Britain's Prime Minister, Clement Attlee (who succeeded Churchill in 1945), initially suggested disengaging from the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East in order to

⁶⁵ TNA, FO 800/502/Part 2, Review on the situation in Turkey – I. General, 28 July 1948.

⁶⁶ See TNA, CAB 80/99, COS (46) 45 (0), 13 February 1946; See TNA, CAB 131/12, DO (46) 40, 13 March 1946. See also DEFE 5/3, COS (47) 9 (0) Final, Aide Memoir by the Chiefs of Staff, 23 January 1947.

⁶⁷ See *FRUS, 1946, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. VII (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1946), p. 895, Memorandum on Turkey Prepared in the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, 21 October 1946. See also *FRUS, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. V (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1950), p. 254, Paper Prepared in the Office of Greek, Turkish and Iranian Affairs, Regional Policy Statement: Greece, Turkey and Iran: 1. Estimate of the Situation, A. General', 28 December 1950. See also Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey and Greece*, p. xv.

avoid confrontation with the Soviet Union,⁶⁸ but Bevin, the Foreign Office and the COS resisted the idea. They insisted that it would be a major error to cut these commitments and thereby lose British dominance in those areas. Their argument was presented in the Cabinet meeting as follows:

If we do this, important strategic bases would soon be lost to the Soviet Union. This would result in Soviet domination of all of Europe (apart from Britain), North Africa as well as the Middle East. Britain would then be faced with a 'threat to its sea communications, coupled with the direct threat by air attack and long-range bombardment from the mainland of Europe ... the United Kingdom would be reduced to a Malta-type existence, contributing little to the main war potential'.⁶⁹

Ultimately, to ensure the continuation of British possessions and strategic interests in the Mediterranean, it was essential for Britain to help Greece and Turkey remain independent, given that these countries could not resist outside pressures on their own. If the Soviet Union managed to penetrate Greece, 'this would bring Russian influence down to the Aegean, and Turkey would not long remain independent.'⁷⁰ Britain therefore decided to intervene directly in the internal affairs of these countries by providing political, economic and military support.⁷¹

⁶⁸ See TNA, CAB 80/100, COS (46) 54 (0), 22 February 1946. See also Anthony Adamthwaite, 'Britain and the World, 1945-9: The View from the Foreign Office', *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, 61:2 (1985), 223-235 (230).

⁶⁹ TNA, CAB 133/86, PMM (46) 1, Chiefs of Staff to the Defence Committee, 20 April 1946.

⁷⁰ See TNA, CAB 129/23, CP (48) 7, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 'Review of Soviet Policy', 5 January 1948.

⁷¹ See *Hansard*, 20 August 1945, Vol. 413 (London: H.M.S.O., 1945), p. 289; and see also TNA, CAB 129/16, CP (47) 34, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 'Policy towards Greece and

In Greece, there were two main policies carried out by Britain: firstly, political tutelage, and secondly, economic and military support. With regard to the first policy, Britain was determined to assist the Greeks in their political matters after the Treaty of Varkiza was signed in 12 February 1945. The Varkiza agreement gave the new administration of the Greek Royalist government authority to restore political and economic stability in Greece and also to conduct the plebiscite and free elections. Britain believed that if the new administration did not receive firm guidance on these matters it would become a dictatorship, which could lead to a revival of EAM/ELAS and a new left-wing revolt.⁷² From 1945 until the elections in March 1946, Britain's utmost priority in Greece was to support the policy of restoring law and order to ensure the establishment of a stable democratic government. This matter was mentioned by Bevin during the debate on his address concerning Greece in the House of Commons in August 1945:

His Majesty's Government adhere to the policy which they publicly supported when Greece was liberated. We then stated that our object was the establishment of a stable democratic Government in Greece, drawing its strength from the free expression of the people's will. ... Unfortunately, this process was interrupted by an outbreak of violence. We then supported the policy of restoring law and order. The purpose of restoring order was to create the conditions in which the Greek people

Turkey', 25 January 1947. See also TNA, DEFE 5/3, COS (47) 9 (0) Final, Aide Memoir by the Chiefs of Staff, 23 January 1947.

⁷² See TNA, FO371/48276/R13143, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 'Summary on the situation in Greece' (Drafts), 1 August 1945. See also Robert Frazier, *Anglo-American Relations with Greece: The Coming of the Cold War, 1942-47* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), p. 75.

could determine the future of their own government and also settle the constitutional question.⁷³

The reason behind Britain's determination to take responsibility for giving political guidance to Greece was detailed in a memorandum prepared by the Foreign Office. The memorandum stated that Britain required a stable and pro-British government in Greece and the sincere friendship of the Greek people if Britain wanted to maintain its political and military position in the Eastern Mediterranean and to safeguard its lines of communication with the East.⁷⁴ While pursuing political tutelage in Greece, Britain realised it was necessary to also provide economic and military support, given that political reform would fail if the desperate economic situation in Greece was not improved.⁷⁵ Civil war between the left-wing and right-wing groups seemed inevitable due to the Royalist government's hostile attitude towards EAM and its supporters.⁷⁶ It was essential that Britain provided military support, given that the Greek government's army was ill-trained and ill-equipped.

The political situation in Greece worsened after the election in March 1946 due to the outbreak of the Greek Civil War. The communist insurgents, notably the Communist Party of Greece (KKE – *Kommounistikó Kómma Elládas*), boycotted the internationally-

⁷³ *Hansard*, 20 August 1945, Vol. 413, p. 289. See also TNA, retrieved from Brotherton Library, FO 800/468/Gre/45/1, Foreign Office to Athens, 1 August 1945.

⁷⁴ See TNA, FO371/48276/R13143, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 'Summary on the situation in Greece' (Drafts), 1 August 1945.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* In the British records, it was stated that Britain would provide economic aid of approximately £2,000,000 to Greece. See TNA, CAB 129/16, CP (47) 34, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 'Policy towards Greece and Turkey', 25 January 1947. The matter about Britain's political guidance and economic and military aid to Greece was repeatedly mentioned in Bevin's private papers throughout 1945 to 1946 records. See TNA, retrieved from Brotherton Library, FO 800/468: Greece, 1945-1950.

⁷⁶ Frazier, *Anglo-American Relations with Greece: The Coming of the Cold War, 1942-47*, p. 89.

recognised government that had been formed after the elections.⁷⁷ Later, the communist insurgents formed a provisional government, namely the Democratic Greek Government, in northern Greece. The insurgents fought the Greek government's army using guerrilla warfare, with logistical support from the neighbouring communist countries of Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Albania.⁷⁸ Britain's military aid was undoubtedly needed to support the Greek government's army in fighting the communist insurgents. However, in January 1946, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Hugh Dalton, had urged the Foreign Office and the COS to immediately reduce spending on defence due to Britain's economic difficulties.⁷⁹ Despite this, Foreign Secretary Bevin, the Foreign Office, the Defence Minister, Albert V. Alexander, and the COS managed to provide military aid to Greece by arguing that a massive reduction of British troops would seriously weaken its military backing, which was important for an effective foreign policy.⁸⁰

By shouldering the responsibility of helping Greece bolster its defence, Britain hoped that the Greek royalist government would win the civil war. As noted by Bevin, Britain 'accepted responsibility for giving guidance for the training and development of the Greek Army in order that they might be able to defend themselves against any attack from their neighbours.'⁸¹ By helping the Greek government's army fight the Greek communist insurgents, Britain expected Turkey's safety would also be secured. This had been recorded by the British, where it was noted that the Soviet Union 'seemed content

⁷⁷ See *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁷⁸ See TNA, CAB 129/23, CP (48) 7, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 'Review of Soviet Policy', 5 January 1948.

⁷⁹ See TNA, CAB 131/1, DO (46), 1st Meeting, Reports by Chancellor of the Exchequer, 11 January 1946.

⁸⁰ See TNA, CAB 131/1, DO (46), 22nd Meeting, 19 July 1946.

⁸¹ TNA, CAB 129/16, CP (47) 34, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 'Policy towards Greece and Turkey', 25 January 1947.

to wait and let the success of its plans in Greece bring about the collapse of Turkey.’⁸² It seems that the Soviet Union believed it would obtain Turkey by first conquering Greece. Russian archival records were also consistent with Stalin and Molotov’s thoughts that ‘the occupation of Greece was equal to the occupation of Turkey because Greece was a bridgehead from which to attack Turkey.’⁸³ Evidently, the safety of these two countries was closely interlinked, and this seems to be the reason why British policy towards Greece and Turkey during this period was identical.

British security interests in Turkey were also at stake due to Soviet demands. Britain was keen to ensure that Turkey would not succumb to Soviet pressure and, as in the case of Greece, wanted Turkey to remain independent. The first policy implemented by the British to achieve this outcome was political support.⁸⁴ With political support from Britain, Turkey was confident about maintaining its independence and that it wouldn’t be intimidated or undermined by Soviet pressure.

However, mere political support was insufficient for Turkey to face the Soviet threats. When the Turkish Straits crisis escalated in 1946, Britain worried that the Soviet Union would make military movements in order to undermine Turkey’s resistance to its demands. The Soviet Union had sent substantial Russian ground troops to Romania and Bulgaria and concurrently increased its naval presence in the Black Sea on both flanks of

⁸² See TNA, CAB 129/23, CP (48) 7, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, ‘Review of Soviet Policy’, 5 January 1948.

⁸³ Russian Social and Political History State Archive [hereafter RSPHSA], Talks between J. Stalin, V. Molotov and Ş. Saracoğlu, 1 October 1939, f. 558, r. 11, v. 388, pp. 29-30. Cited in Hasanli, p. 7.

⁸⁴ See TNA, CAB 129/23, CP (48) 7, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, ‘Review of Soviet Policy’, 5 January 1948.

Turkey.⁸⁵ The Soviet Union denied it had any intention of posing a military threat to Turkey. Nevertheless, the risk of an upcoming war with Turkey seemed high. In response to this development, Turkey raised its defences by increasing the numbers in its army. However, the large army imposed a great strain on the Turkish economy.⁸⁶ The Turkish Army was ill-equipped and would be unable to meet the Soviets' military strength should a war erupt.

Bevin had stressed earlier in 1946 that 'I do not want Turkey [to be] converted into a satellite State. What I want her [Turkey] to be is really independent.'⁸⁷ Hence, Britain came to the conclusion that, like the Greek government's army, the Turkish Army also needed to be reorganised and well-equipped, providing them with an appropriate contribution of manpower essential for defence.⁸⁸ As Bevin said in the Cabinet meeting of January 1947:

The Turkish Army has to be reorganised and equipped and an appropriate contribution to the manpower for essential defence should be provided. [...] I also recommend that we should co-operate in advising the Turkish Government on the training and organisation of their armed forces, that British Service Representation in Turkey should be strengthened for this purpose and that meanwhile the present limited

⁸⁵ See Hasanli, p. 140.

⁸⁶ See TNA, CAB 129/23, CP (48) 7, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 'Review of Soviet Policy', 5 January 1948. The matter of the drain on Turkey's economy as a result of mobilising its armed forces is also found in *FRUS, 1947, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1947), p. 61, Statement by the Secretary of States, undated.

⁸⁷ *Hansard*, 21 February 1946, Vol. 419 (London: H.M.S.O., 1946), p. 1357.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

supply of equipment should be continued. Additional equipment which the Turkish Army may need should be provided.⁸⁹

Through the policy of economic support and military aid, Britain expected Turkey to be able to confront and resist any Soviet aggression. The same expectation was held for Greece, which received similar aid from Britain.

By the end of 1946, Britain could no longer continue its earlier policy towards Greece and Turkey due to the rapid deterioration of its own economy. The policy of providing economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey proved to be too expensive for an impoverished country like Britain, as stated by Attlee earlier in 1946.⁹⁰ At that time, Dalton had already warned that an economic disaster would inevitably occur in Britain if there was no immediate reduction in defence spending.⁹¹ Yet Bevin and Alexander were both of the opinion that British troops should remain in their occupational roles, especially in Greece and Turkey.⁹² However, when the economic crisis in Britain showed no improvement by the end of 1946, and worsened due to severe winter storms throughout January and February of 1947,⁹³ Bevin, the Foreign Office, Alexander and

⁸⁹ TNA, CAB 129/16, CP (47) 34, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 'Policy towards Greece and Turkey', 25 January 1947.

⁹⁰ TNA, CAB 80/100, COS (46) 54 (0), 22 February 1946; see also Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism: Britain and the Formation of NATO, 1942-1949*, p. 80.

⁹¹ TNA, CAB 131/1, DO (46), 1st Meeting, Reports by Chancellor of the Exchequer, 11 January 1946. In his memoir, Dalton noted of this matter: 'we now faced, not war anymore, only total economic ruin.' Hugh Dalton, *High Tide and After: Memoirs 1945-1960* (London: Muller, 1962), p. 68. This anxiety towards economic collapse was also reflected in the memoir of Emanuel Shinwell, the Minister of Fuel and Power. Emanuel Shinwell, *The Labour Story* (London: Macdonald, 1963), p. 178.

⁹² See TNA, retrieved from Brotherton Library, FO 800/474/PM/46/4/Man/46/3, Bevin to Attlee, 14 January 1946.

⁹³ Factories were closed down, villages were cut off, livestock died in their thousands, people froze in their homes without even the radio as solace since that, too, was a victim of the power crisis. Unemployment reached over two million by the start of February 1947. See Kenneth O. Morgan, *Labour In Power 1945-1951* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 332-333. See also Alex J. Robertson, *The*

the COS eventually had to reconsider their decision in continuing their policy of economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey.

Towards American assistance to Greece and Turkey, 1945-1947

The Cabinet had a dilemma as to which of Britain's responsibilities should be given priority. The tension was between cost of spending that concerned the Treasury on the one hand and strategic importance that concerned the Foreign Office and Ministry of Defence on the other. The Treasury felt intense pressure to put domestic concerns first, given that Britain desperately needed manpower to run its industries and ensure that its plans for economic rehabilitation were successful.⁹⁴ Dalton therefore raised his concerns about the relevance of aid for Greece and Turkey, proposing that the Foreign Office and Ministry of Defence end the policy.⁹⁵ Bevin stressed that he was not confident that Greece would be able to counter outside aggression without the help of Britain. Therefore, Bevin asked the Treasury to postpone any plans to cut military spending on Britain's overseas commitments. Attlee, who had previously agreed to Bevin's decisions regarding military spending, revised his opinion and saw that the commitments needed to be cut and a decision had to be made in February 1947. Bevin realised he could no longer fight to sustain aid for Greece and Turkey. As Cook has argued:

Bleak Midwinter 1947 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987). This book discusses in detail the crises in Britain in 1947.

⁹⁴ TNA, CAB 131/1, DO (46) 27th Meeting, Views by Secretary of State, 'Questions of Defence', 16 November 1946.

⁹⁵ See TNA, CAB 131/5, DO (47) 6th Meeting, Defence Committee, 'Greece: Previous Reference: DO (46) 9th Meeting, Minute 5', 3 March 1947. See also TNA, DEFE 5/3, COS (47) 10 (0), Chiefs of Staff Committee, 'Assistance to Greece – Financial Implications', 13 January 1947.

Bevin had long felt that the Labour party and even Attlee did not fully grasp how much was at stake in Greece, the effect that a Communist takeover would have on the balance of power in the Middle East, [...] Once the decisions were taken in the February crisis to withdraw from Palestine and India, Bevin knew that he could no longer carry the case for holding on in Greece.⁹⁶

Bevin eventually surrendered to Attlee and Dalton's demands to make cuts in military spending. The reduction of British forces in overseas theatres was expected to commence on 1 April 1947.⁹⁷ Although the reduction of overseas forces had been approved, Dalton worried that it was insufficient to save Britain's resources and that its economy would not fully recover. Dalton then forced Bevin to agree to a complete withdrawal of British forces from Greece during the Cabinet's discussion on 18 February 1947 and the latter reluctantly agreed.⁹⁸ Evidently, Britain's economic condition affected its ability to help Greece and Turkey to resist the Soviet threat. It should be noted that the new direction in British policy towards Greece and Turkey did not mean that Britain ignored these countries, nor did it mean that Britain ignored the territories under its control and strategic interests in the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

⁹⁶ Cook, p. 71.

⁹⁷ See TNA, CAB 131/5, DO (47) 6th Meeting, Defence Committee, Minute 3-Greece, p. 4, 3 March 1947.

⁹⁸ See Dalton, pp. 207-208. See also TNA, FO 371/67032/R1900, Minutes by Michael S. Williams (Head of the Southern Department) and Edward Warner (Official of the Southern Department), 18 February 1947. The only official statement on the withdrawal decision was a brief statement in the House of Commons on 17 March 1947, five days after the announcement of the Truman Doctrine. See *Hansard*, 17 March 1947, Vol. 435 (London: H.M.S.O., 1947), p. 16.

An additional factor influencing the decision to withdraw British forces was made because Britain wanted to share the burden with the United States, which it expected would agree to assist Greece and Turkey in the future.⁹⁹ The United States was gaining leverage in its world position. With enormous resources and a tremendous amount of armed forces, the United States was seen by Britain as the only country that could halt Soviet aggression worldwide. Thus, Britain hoped that the United States would become Britain's ally in future conflicts involving the Soviets. Britain also believed that the United States was their only hope in guaranteeing Greece and Turkey's safety, given that the UN was unable to provide an effective solution because of the Soviet Union's repeated use of their veto in the UN Security Council.¹⁰⁰

Bevin was therefore determined to seek for help from the United States and Dalton agreed to this. Bevin instructed the British Ambassador in Washington, Lord Inverchapel (Sir Archibald Clark Kerr) to send a note (*aide-mémoire*) informing the new US Secretary of State, George C. Marshall, that Britain's economic condition would no longer allow it to continue as the reservoir of financial and military support for Greece. Thus, Britain's

⁹⁹ During the Paris Foreign Ministers' meeting in April 1946, Secretary of State James F. Byrnes had said to Bevin that the Communists must be kept out of Greece at all cost. See Frazier, *Anglo-American Relations with Greece: The Coming of the Cold War, 1942-47*, pp. 108-109. Frazier noted that this matter was recorded by Bevin in Foreign Office minute, 9 May 1946. See Frazier, *Anglo-American Relations with Greece: The Coming of the Cold War, 1942-47*, p. 203 at footnote number 22. The same matter was reported by the British Embassy in Athens; in the conversations with the US *Chargé d' Affaires* it was noted that American assistance is not impossible. See FO 371/58729/R7947/1201, From Athens to Foreign Office, 27 May 1946. This matter was also found in the American records. Dean Acheson's [official in the US State Department] telegram to Athens on 8 November 1946, mentioned the discussion between Byrnes and Bevin concerning Greece and that Byrnes was optimistic that the United States would endeavour to strengthen the economic position of Greece. See *FRUS, 1946, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. VII, pp. 262-263, The Acting Secretary of State to the Ambassador in Greece (MacVeagh), 8 November 1946.

¹⁰⁰ See Kaplan, *The United States and NATO, The Formative Years*, p. 33. The Soviet Union proposed 105 vetoes between 1946 and 1969. See Smith, *The Cold War 1945-1991*, p. 78.

aid to Greece would end within six weeks.¹⁰¹ The note was received by the US State Department on 24 February 1947 with great shock. The US State Department did not expect Britain to completely withdraw its forces from Greece at a critical point in the Greek Civil War.¹⁰²

As far as Greece was concerned, Marshall was aware that Britain only wanted to make a partial reduction of British forces in Greece.¹⁰³ Hence, Marshall promptly sent a polite protest to Bevin and questioned whether Britain had changed its policy towards Greece. After Bevin reaffirmed that there was no change in Britain's policy but that it could no longer carry the burden alone, Marshall subsequently assured Bevin that the United States would certainly lighten Britain's burden in Greece and Turkey.¹⁰⁴ Marshall promised to give economic aid to Greece and Turkey, pledging to 'assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way.'¹⁰⁵ Evidently, Marshall fulfilled his promise to Bevin because, shortly after, the United States took a new direction in its

¹⁰¹ The *aide-mémoire* was handed informally to Mr Henderson by Herbert M. Sichel, First Secretary of the British Embassy on 21 February 1947. Thereafter, the *aide-mémoire* was formally delivered to Marshall by Lord Inverchapel on 24 February 1947. See *FRUS, 1947, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, pp. 32-35, The British Embassy to the Department of State, 'Aide-Mémoire', 21 February 1947; *FRUS, 1947, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, pp. 42-43, Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (Henderson) to the Secretary of State, 24 February 1947. See also Francis Williams, *Ernest Bevin: Portrait of A Great Englishman* (London: Hutchinson, 1952), p. 263; Cook, p. 72.

¹⁰² *FRUS, 1947, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, pp. 44-45, Memorandum by the Under Secretary of State (Acheson) to the Secretary of State, 24 February 1947. See also TNA, CAB 131/5, DO (47) 18th Meeting, Defence Committee, '1 – Reduction of Overseas Strength', 4 August 1947. In the British records, the British forces in Greece were to be reduced to one brigade by the beginning of April and were to be wholly withdrawn on the withdrawal of Russian troops from Bulgaria by the end of 1947. See TNA, CAB 131/5, DO (47) 6th Meeting, Defence Committee, Minute 3-Greece, p. 4, 3 March 1947.

¹⁰³ Truman's memoir echoed Marshall's thought, saying that the US State Department heard rumours about Britain's plan to remove nearly half of its troops from Greece, but the United States did not feel that any necessary action needed to be taken at that point in time. See Truman, *Memoirs by Harry S. Truman, Volume 2: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1953*, p. 104.

¹⁰⁴ *FRUS, 1947, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 58, Memorandum by the Secretary of State to President Truman, 'Immediate Aid to Greece and Turkey', 26 February 1947; *FRUS, 1947, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, pp. 59-60, Memorandum by the Secretaries of State, War and the Navy, 'Measures to Meet the British Request for Immediate Aid to Greece and Turkey', undated.

¹⁰⁵ John W. Young, *Cold War Europe 1945-1991: A Political History* (London: Arnold, 1996), p. 15.

foreign policy: the policy of American intervention in world affairs to combat Communism.¹⁰⁶ Cameron notes that 'for the first time in its history, the US had chosen to intervene in peacetime outside the Americas.'¹⁰⁷ It appeared that Bevin's strategy to approach Marshall proved sound because it led to a new American policy towards Greece and Turkey.

American policy towards Greece and Turkey, 1947-1949

Between 1945 and early 1947, the period in which the war of nerves in Greece and Turkey developed, US foreign policy was based on the principle of isolationism. Under this policy, the United States refrained from making any direct commitment to countries located outside of the North American continent, instead establishing diplomatic relations with them. American policy towards Greece and Turkey during this period was largely based on political support, which aimed to provide advice and encouragement. The United States was fulfilling its policy towards Greece by supervising the Greek election.¹⁰⁸ The United States observed Greece's political developments closely, but would not interfere to solve problems that arose throughout the process of developing democracy in Greece. In the view of the United States, Britain was responsible for Greece's affairs because of its strategic interests in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. British records show that the US State Department

¹⁰⁶ *FRUS, 1947, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, pp. 63-64, Memorandum by the Under Secretary of State (Acheson) to the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (Henderson), 'Implementation of Measures for Aid to Greece and Turkey', 27 February 1947.

¹⁰⁷ Cameron, *US Foreign Policy after the Cold War*, p. 8.

¹⁰⁸ Full records concerning this policy see *FRUS: diplomatic papers, 1945, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. VIII (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1945), pp. 98-358 (Greece); *FRUS, 1946, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. VII, pp. 88-288 (Greece).

reminded Britain that Greece was Britain's headache whenever the Foreign Office approached them for help.¹⁰⁹

The United States sided with Turkey in its rejection of Soviet demands in the Straits and the provinces of Kars and Ardahan.¹¹⁰ This political support was essential for Turkey to hold its nerve so that it could successfully counter the Soviet threat. Although Soviet activities in the Black Sea, Romania and Bulgaria had heightened tensions with Turkey, only Britain decided to provide economic and military aid to Turkey. For the United States, the Soviet Union had no intention of using force to achieve its goal vis-à-vis Turkey.¹¹¹ The most apparent reason for the US' non-intervention policy during this period was the isolationist nature of American foreign policy. Therefore, the United States did not feel any urgency to protect these two countries from Soviet encroachment.

Britain was aware of the importance of having the United States as an ally in the Middle East. In order to convince the United States to cooperate with Britain in confronting

¹⁰⁹ See TNA, FO 371/48276/R13415/1671, From Washington to the Foreign Office, 9 August 1945. In Harold Macmillan's speech to the House of Commons, he noted how Britain stood alone in its policy towards Greece and slightly criticised the United States' neutral attitude. 'Britain carried both the military burden and the relief burden. The operations of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) were not functioning at that time. The Commander-in-Chief had to detach British and Indian Divisions from his Army at a time when he was already preparing the final battles which ended triumphantly in Italy in the spring of 1945. While his headquarters was integrated with the American headquarters, in every sphere by sea, by land, by air, in the economic field and in the harassing and expensive field of relief, our American Allies were, on instructions from a higher level, scrupulously neutral. Neutrality of comrades in a siege is not very pleasant.' See *Hansard*, 16 May 1947, Vol. 437 (London: H.M.S.O., 1947), p. 1944.

¹¹⁰ For full records concerning this policy see *FRUS, 1945, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. VIII, pp. 1219-1311 (Turkey); *FRUS, 1946, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. VII, pp. 801-923 (Turkey).

¹¹¹ Leffler, 'Strategy, Diplomacy and the Cold War: The United States, Turkey and NATO, 1945-1952', p. 808.

Soviet hostility, Britain was willing to welcome the United States into the Middle East.¹¹²

This was to ensure that the United States would not feel as if it were being manoeuvred by Britain into a position of having to defend a British-dominated status quo in the Middle East.¹¹³ Britain hoped that, by involving the United States in the Middle East, the United States would realise the need to prevent the Soviets from entering the area. Accordingly, the United States would understand that the most effective way to keep the Soviet Union out of the Middle East was to maintain the freedom of Greece and Turkey; hence, it would encourage American resistance to the Soviet threat in both countries.¹¹⁴

Britain's strategy to encourage US interest in Greece and Turkey by involving it directly in Middle Eastern affairs seemed fruitful. The strategy of inviting the United States into the Middle East was initiated in early 1946¹¹⁵ and later that year the United States began to show an interest in Iran, Turkey and Greece.¹¹⁶ At this point the United States, specifically Truman, agreed with George F. Kennan's advice in his famous "Long Telegram" which was sent to the US State Department in February 1946. The telegram

¹¹² The strategies to bring the United States into the Middle East were put forward by Bevin in his memorandum which was entitled 'Tactics in Seeking US Cooperation in Face of Soviet Hostility'. See Roger Bullen, et al. (eds.), *Documents on British Policy Overseas* [hereafter *DBPO*]: *Series I Volume VI, Britain and America: Atomic Energy, Bases and Food, 12 December 1945-31 July 1946* (London: H.M.S.O, 1987), p. 209.

¹¹³ The Americans, especially the left-wing political parties, believed that Britain was trying to entangle the United States in fighting the Soviet Union not out of principles, but for British interests. See *Ibid.*, p. 202.

¹¹⁴ See Christopher J. Bartlett, *'The Special Relationship': A Political History of Anglo-American Relations since 1945* (London: Longman Group UK Limited, 1992), p. 20.

¹¹⁵ See Bullen, p. 209.

¹¹⁶ Frazier, *Anglo-American Relations with Greece: The Coming of the Cold War, 1942-47*, p. 155. For details about the United States' increasing interest in and concern for Turkey see *FRUS, 1946, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. VII, pp. 840-842, The Acting Secretary of State to the Secretary of State, at Paris, 'Niact', 15 August 1946; *FRUS, 1946, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. VII, pp. 894-897, Memorandum on Turkey Prepared in the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, 21 October 1946. The concern over Turkey had concurrently increased the concern over Greece, the whole Near and Middle East.

stated that the United States must pursue a policy of 'containment' in order to halt Soviet expansion worldwide.¹¹⁷ Britain seemed to have made the right move by entangling the United States directly in Middle Eastern oil affairs, as this strategy led the United States to realise the importance of Greece and Turkey in safeguarding the Middle East. Campbell notes that 'the United States went into the Middle East after the Second World War for two main reasons, oil and the containment of the Soviet Union.'¹¹⁸

As a matter of fact, the United States had shown only marginal interest in the Middle East before Truman came into office. This interest in the Middle East gradually became stronger when officials in the Truman administration became suspicious of the maintenance of Soviet troops in northern Iran. The US was also alarmed by Britain's weakness, which it believed would encourage Soviet expansion in the Middle East.¹¹⁹ While the United States' concern over Iran heightened, and news about Britain's withdrawal from Greece and Turkey reached the US State Department, Marshall and State Department officials believed the time had come for the United States to play its part. They therefore decided to make a new turn in American foreign policy, thus ending America's policy of isolationism. This indicated US readiness to implement a new policy in Greece and Turkey, changing from a diplomatic policy of political support to a containment policy enacted through economic and military support. This new policy was predominantly based on the United States' strategic interest in the geopolitical

¹¹⁷ See *FRUS, 1946, Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union*, Vol. VI (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office), pp. 696-709, The Chargé in the Soviet Union (Kennan) to Secretary of State, 22 February 1946. See also Kennan, p. 367.

¹¹⁸ John C. Campbell, 'The Soviet Union and the United States in the Middle East', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 401 (1972), 126-135 (127).

¹¹⁹ Smith, *The Cold War 1945-1991*, p. 83.

location of these countries, which would prevent the Soviets and Communism from entering the Middle East. As the US State Department stated in its memorandum on this matter:

Strategically, Turkey is the most important factor in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East. By its geographical position, Turkey constitutes the stopper in the neck of the bottle through which Soviet political and military influence could most effectively flow into the eastern Mediterranean and Middle East.¹²⁰

According to American records, the US State Department's reaction to Bevin's note was immediate.¹²¹ Like Britain, the United States grasped the link between Greece and Turkey in regards to security. If Greece fell under Soviet influence, Turkey would be next, and this matter was noted by Truman in his diary as follows:

Greece needed aid, needed it quickly, and in substantial amounts. The alternative was the loss of Greece and the extension of the Iron Curtain across the Eastern Mediterranean. If Greece was lost, Turkey became an

¹²⁰ *FRUS, 1946, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. VII, p. 895, Memorandum on Turkey Prepared in the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, 21 October 1946.

¹²¹ See *FRUS, 1947, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, pp. 43-44, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (Henderson), 24 February 1947; *FRUS, 1947, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, pp. 44-45, Memorandum by the Under Secretary of State (Acheson) to the Secretary of State, 24 February 1947; *FRUS, 1947, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, pp. 45-47, Minutes of the First Meeting of the Special Committee to Study Assistance to Greece and Turkey, 24 February 1947; *FRUS, 1947, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, pp. 47-48, Memorandum by the Chairman of the Special Committee to Study Assistance to Greece and Turkey (Henderson) to the Under Secretary of State (Acheson), 'Report of the Committee Appointed to Study Immediate Aid to Greece and Turkey', undated; *FRUS, 1947, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 58, Memorandum by the Secretary of State to President Truman, 'Immediate Aid to Greece and Turkey', 26 February 1947.

untenable outpost in a sea of Communism. Similarly, if Turkey yielded to Soviet demands, the position of Greece would be extremely endangered.¹²²

Truman's second consideration, that if Turkey fell first it would also endanger its surrounding countries, echoed the US State Department's opinion on this matter. It was clearly stated in the US State Department records as follows:

A Russian-dominated Turkey would open the floodgates for a Soviet advance into Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Palestine, Transjordan, Egypt and the Arabian Peninsula, all of which are at present still relatively free from Russian activities and direct Russian pressure because of their relative remoteness from the sphere of Russian dominance. It would also dangerously, perhaps fatally, expose Greece and Iran, two countries whose governments are already having the greatest difficulty in standing up to the Soviet Union and its agents.¹²³

This matter explains the US State Department's decision to take Turkey into consideration while deliberating economic aid to Greece. American records state that 'a crisis of the utmost importance and urgency has arisen in Greece and to some extent in Turkey. This crisis has a direct and immediate relation to the security of the United

¹²² Truman, *Memoirs by Harry S. Truman, Volume 2: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1953*, p. 106.

¹²³ *FRUS, 1946, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. VII, pp. 895, Memorandum on Turkey Prepared in the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, 21 October 1946.

States.¹²⁴ It is for this reason the United States treated the security affairs of Greece and Turkey as inseparable. Scholar Athanassopoulou used the term ‘Siamese twins’ in describing Greece and Turkey, demonstrating the United States’ approach to them from a security point of view.¹²⁵ Based on this principle, the US State Department agreed to provide immediate aid to Greece and Turkey to stop the Soviet Union’s advance towards the Middle East. US State Department officials, such as Kennan and Dean Acheson, wholeheartedly supported the idea of giving economic aid to Greece and Turkey.¹²⁶ They believed ‘the US must either take on Britain’s role as protector of Near Eastern states from Russia or witness a major advance for communism.’¹²⁷ Acheson also added that, ‘like rotten apples in a barrel infected by one rotten one, the corruption of Greece would infect Iran and all to the east.’¹²⁸

Only thirteen days after news of Britain’s withdrawal from Greece reached the US State Department, on 12 March 1947, the new American policy of giving economic aid to Greece and Turkey was delivered through the Truman Doctrine. Greece and Turkey would receive \$400 million in aid that would become effective in May 1947. The ultimate objective of this economic aid was to combat Communism;¹²⁹ hence, it became

¹²⁴ *FRUS, 1947, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 60, Statement by the Secretary of State, undated.

¹²⁵ Athanassopoulou, *Turkey – Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945-1952*, p. x. Historian David Binder also use this term in his article. See David Binder, ‘Greece, Turkey and NATO’, *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 23:2 (2012), 95-106 (95).

¹²⁶ Kennan, p. 359.

¹²⁷ Young, *Cold War Europe 1945-1991*, p. 15.

¹²⁸ Acheson, p. 21.

¹²⁹ Truman promised that the aid would assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way. See Harry S. Truman, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Harry S. Truman, Containing the Public Messages, Speeches and Statements of the President, January 1 to December 31, 1947* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1963), President’s Message to Congress, 12 March 1947, p. 179. See also Lawrence S. Kaplan, ‘The Monroe Doctrine and the Truman Doctrine: the Case of Greece’, *Journal of the Early Republic*, 13:1 (1993), 1-21 (4). Although Truman did not directly mention ‘the Soviet Union’ or ‘communism’ in his speech, it could not be denied that the real aim was to help Greece and Turkey to resist Soviet expansionism. See Martin McCauley, *The Origins of the Cold War 1941-*

the first instalment of the American containment policy. Through this aid, the United States would commit itself to defending the free world against totalitarian dictatorships. The aid also enjoyed relatively easy approval by Congress, even bypassing the UN due to Truman's argument that the UN was not in a position to extend help of the type required by Greece and Turkey.¹³⁰ Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg agreed with Truman and stated that 'I am frank to say that I think Greece could collapse fifty times before the UN itself could ever hope to handle a situation of this nature.'¹³¹

In Truman's memoir he implied that the decision to give aid to Greece and Turkey was the turning point in America's foreign policy.¹³² Apparently, after Bevin's note to Marshall about Britain's withdrawal from Greece, the United States ended its hesitation towards participating in world affairs and came to Greece and Turkey's assistance so that these countries' independence could be sustained. Although Britain had decided to withdraw completely from Greece within six weeks of 31 March 1947, Cook noted that 'the last British troops did not leave Greece until 1950 when the civil war was over.'¹³³ According to Bevin, British troops remained in Greece due to his arrangement with Marshall: 'I had arranged with Mr Marshall in Moscow in 1947 to keep troops in Greece until the end of that year, and now it was nearly another year.'¹³⁴ It seems that Britain and the United States worked together in combating Communism in Greece. This matter also shows that, ever since the Truman Doctrine was approved by the US

1949: *Fourth Edition* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2016), p. 114; Bradley Lightbody, *The Cold War* (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 1999), p. 18.

¹³⁰ Lawrence S. Kaplan, *The United States and NATO*, p. 34.

¹³¹ Arthur H. Vandenberg Jr. (ed.), *The Private Papers of Senator Vandenberg* (London: Gollancz, 1953), pp. 340-341.

¹³² Truman, *Memoirs by Harry S. Truman, Volume 2: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1953*, p. 111.

¹³³ Cook, p. 72.

¹³⁴ TNA, retrieved from Brotherton Library, FO 800/468/Gre/48/8, Mr Bevin to Sir O. Franks (Washington), 24 September 1948.

Congress, British and US policies towards Greece were parallel and coherent. Given that relations between Britain and the US were strained during the early period after the Second World War as a result of American isolationist policies, the Truman Doctrine apparently revived their close relationship that had been established during the Second World War.

It is accepted by many scholars that the day the Truman Doctrine was proclaimed, the Cold War between the Soviet Union and the West became official.¹³⁵ The consequence of the Truman Doctrine on Anglo-American relations was to bring these two English-speaking nations closer, with each seeing the other as a reliable ally in confronting powerful common enemies. The crises in Greece and Turkey had opened the door for Britain to pursue a close relationship with the United States. Both countries shared the same enemies; hence, it was necessary that they collaborated to ensure that the Soviet Union and its communist ideology did not become a dominant power and gain more supporters throughout the world. Given that the United States was the world's wealthiest and most powerful country at the time, Truman believed that there was no other power capable of tackling the Soviet Union except the United States.¹³⁶ Therefore, the United States pledged that 'wherever and whenever an anti-Communist government was threatened, by indigenous insurgents, foreign invasion, or even

¹³⁵ Those people who agreed to this view completely, or emphasise that the new direction in American foreign policy had brought Cold War tension to a high level include: Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey and Greece*, pp. 420-421; Hathaway, p. 301-303; Walter Lippman, *Isolation and Alliances* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company 1952), p. 32 and p. 42; Daniel Yergin, *Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War* (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), p. 280; Roy Jenkins, *Truman* (London: Collins, 1986), p. 101; William A. Harriman, 'Leadership in World Affairs', *Foreign Affairs*, 32:4 (1954), 525-540.

¹³⁶ Truman, *Memoirs by Harry S. Truman, Volume 2: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1953*, p. 107.

diplomatic pressure, the United States would supply political, economic, and [...] military aid.’¹³⁷

The crises in Greece and Turkey created an opportunity for Britain to convince the United States to abandon its policy of isolationism, to accept responsibility for preserving peace and stability in areas targeted by the Soviet Union and to have a close Anglo-American relationship, also known as the ‘special relationship’.¹³⁸ After the Truman Doctrine was extended to Greece and Turkey, Britain and the United States cooperated closely to prevent the Soviets and Communism from winning the civil war in Greece and gaining authority over the Turkish Straits and the provinces of Kars and Ardahan. Since the Truman Doctrine, British and American policy in Europe, the Eastern Mediterranean, Atlantic and the Middle East were paralleled and coherent so that they could fight Soviet aggression effectively.

The apparent reason why the United States agreed to help Greece and Turkey after Britain’s withdrawal from these countries was because of its own strategic interests in the Middle East. It is worth noting here that Britain was the one that convinced the United States to have an interest in the Middle East. Thereafter, these two countries became closer in regards to security cooperation in the region. The United States subsequently formed the Northern Tier plan, which positioned Iran, Turkey and Greece

¹³⁷ Stephen Ambrose, *Rise to Globalism: American Foreign Policy since 1938* (New York: Penguin Books, 1993), p. 86.

¹³⁸ For more information on the ‘special relationship’, see David Reynolds, ‘Roosevelt, Churchill, and the Wartime Anglo-American Alliance, 1939-1945: Towards a New Synthesis’, in *The ‘Special Relationship’: Anglo-American Relations Since 1945*, eds. by Wm. Roger Louis and Hedley Bull (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), pp. 2-41 (2); John Baylis, *Anglo-American Defence Relations 1939-1984: The Special Relationship* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1984), p. 29.

as buffer countries preventing Soviet expansion into the Middle East. It seemed that American security and strategic interests towards Greece and Turkey were identical to those of Britain. This matter became another reason for Britain and the United States to continue their cooperation on securing their interests in the Middle East.

Aside from the security of Greece, Turkey and the Middle East, Britain and the United States were working to form a new military alliance: NATO. This new military alliance was the third instalment of American containment policy after the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. Throughout the early years of establishing NATO, from early 1948 to early 1949, Britain and the United States worked closely together. It is well-known that the process of establishing NATO was long and strenuous and it could be argued that, without the 'special relationship' between Britain and the United States, NATO would not have been successfully established in April 1949.

A close security and military relationship between Britain and the United States was fostered through the establishment of the Truman Doctrine in 1947, the Marshall Plan in mid-1947 and later through NATO in 1949. The crises in Greece and Turkey were the keystone in building close Anglo-American relations in security and military matters, which eventually resulted in NATO in April 1949. It is worth mentioning that Greece and Turkey were included in the first and the second American containment policy, but were left out of the third instalment. Neither Britain nor the United States suggested that Greece and Turkey be invited to join NATO during its negotiations. This matter seems strange, given that Greece and Turkey were significant for both Britain and the United States in regards to their strategic interests in the Mediterranean and the

Middle East. If they were to cite the geographical location of Greece and Turkey as the reason for their exclusion, Italy is as geographically close to the Mediterranean Sea and as far from the Atlantic as Greece and Turkey. Italy, however, was included as one of the twelve original NATO members in 1949. Only after great hardship in bidding for membership were Greece and Turkey accepted as new NATO members in early 1952.

Conclusion

Developments in Greece and Turkey in the aftermath of the Second World War drove Britain to pursue a policy that could help these countries maintain their liberty. Hence, the British secured a sphere of influence and strategic interests in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. However, the crises in Greece and Turkey erupted at a time when Britain was struggling with its own economic difficulties. This matter was unfortunate for Britain because it meant it could no longer confront the Soviet Union in Europe, Greece, Turkey and the Middle East alone. Britain believed that the key to facing the Soviet challenge to its strategic interests in Greece, Turkey and the Middle East was to win the political and military support of the United States. Most importantly, their foreign policies must be aligned and coherent in regards to effectively containing the spread of Soviet influence and its communist ideology.

Britain needed to convince the United States that the Soviets' policy in the years immediately following the Second World War was aggressive and could threaten the security and stability of Europe, the Mediterranean, the Middle East and the United States. By attaining cooperation with the United States, Britain hoped to ensure that

Greece and Turkey avoided being overwhelmed by Soviet pressure. However, economic deterioration in Britain early in 1947 forced the Cabinet to call for a complete withdrawal of British forces from Greece and Turkey. Britain, specifically Foreign Secretary Bevin, worried that the decision to withdraw from Greece and Turkey would jeopardise their future, thus the United States' assistance in bringing peace to Greece and Turkey was crucial.¹³⁹ Evidently, Bevin's strategy to send a note to the US State Department succeeded in influencing the US State Department to establish the Truman Doctrine. It could therefore be implied that the new American foreign policy towards Greece and Turkey was indirectly influenced by Britain's decision to withdraw from these countries. Britain and the United States subsequently collaborated in fighting Soviet aggression worldwide. This matter had a positive impact on Anglo-American relations concerning security and military affairs and led to the establishment of NATO, which was regarded by the West as the best mechanism for containing the Soviet's expansion of power.

Overall, this chapter has demonstrated the importance of Greece and Turkey to Britain in the early post-Second World War period. The need to secure these interests in the wake of the Soviet threat resulted in the war of nerves between the former and Britain's ally, the United States. Later, in 1949, Britain and the United States formed NATO. Its ultimate aim was to protect countries that were politically, economically and strategically important to Britain and the United States from being threatened by the

¹³⁹ See TNA, CAB 129/16, CP (47) 34, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 'Policy towards Greece and Turkey', 25 January 1947. See also Randall B. Woods and Howard Jones, *Dawning of the Cold War: The United States' Quest for Order* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1991), p. 139; Joseph C. Satterthwaite, 'The Truman Doctrine: Turkey', *Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 401 (1972), 74-84 (p. 74).

Soviet Union. Based on these criteria for entry into NATO, it would appear that Greece and Turkey should have been invited to join the organisation. However, Greece and Turkey's NATO membership was denied by Britain, a move which appeared contradictory to their strategic interest in both countries.

CHAPTER TWO

British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin and delays during NATO's negotiation years, 1948-1949: No Greek and Turkish Membership of NATO

Introduction

During NATO's formative years between early 1948 and early 1949, negotiations had suffered from the United States' attempts to delay the process and issues surrounding the question of membership, in particular Italian membership. These caused the talks to be protracted and the conclusion of the Atlantic pact, which had been expected to conclude by 1 February 1949, to be deferred to April 1949.¹⁴⁰ Historians who have discussed the United States' hesitation in forming NATO and reluctance to proceed quickly after the opening of the summer Washington Talks in 1948 include Lawrence S. Kaplan. Kaplan stated that:

The resulting negotiations that began with the exploratory talks in the summer of 1948 were long and drawn out. Some of the responsibility for the delay was clearly that of the United States. Despite new tensions in June over the Soviet completion of the Berlin blockade there was no sense of haste.¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ For documents which mention that the United States agreed to conclude the Atlantic pact by 1 February 1949, see *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 317, Minutes of the Ninth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, 13 December 1948; TNA, retrieved from Brotherton Library, FO 800/454/Def/48/69, Washington Exploratory Talks on Security Ninth Meeting, 13 December 1948; TNA, FO 371/73081/Z 10182/2307/72/G, From Washington to Foreign Office, 11 December 1948.

¹⁴¹ Kaplan, *NATO and the United States: The Enduring Alliance*, p. 24.

Peter G. Boyle argues that 'an enduring reason for America's hesitancy [to create NATO] was its ambivalent attitude towards the Soviet Union.'¹⁴² This was due to the fact that 'wartime propaganda in the United States regarding "our great Soviet ally" [had] left Americans in a mood to regard optimistically the prospects for postwar cooperation.'¹⁴³

Sir Nicholas Henderson, a British diplomat and representative at the Washington Talks, also commented on the delay. Henderson noted that:

During the negotiations in the summer most of the Americans had been reluctant to move fast [because] they were not decided among themselves what the best outcome of the negotiations would be [and] they did not know how congressional and public opinion would take the idea of a Pact containing strong provisions for assistance in the event of aggression.¹⁴⁴

Hence, it was thought 'there was no point in any case in pushing on too fast inasmuch as nothing could be agreed by the Administration until the return of Congress in the New Year.'¹⁴⁵ Henderson also added that with 'Congress due back in a week or two, and the public opinion apparently strongly in favour of the idea of a pact [*sic*], the US State Department's mood had quite changed and they seemed anxious to get on with the job of drawing up a Pact as quickly as possible.'¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² Boyle, p. 73.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ Henderson, p. 74.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

According to historian Martin H. Folly, ‘the British viewed the American attitude following the Pentagon talks with dissatisfaction.’¹⁴⁷ The British ‘were too concerned about the dangers of assuming military commitments without American partnership and about the effects of American inactivity on European morale to view apparent American hesitation with equanimity.’¹⁴⁸ It should be noted here that the British, in particular Foreign Secretary Bevin, were the ones that had suggested NATO.¹⁴⁹ Bevin undoubtedly believed that a European Recovery Program (ERP) - economic rehabilitation that was delivered under the Marshall Plan¹⁵⁰ - must be formed. This was because the UN was unable to prevent the Soviet Union from forming a political and economic block, known as the *Cominform*, due to the fact that the Soviet Union continued to use its veto for to achieve its own political aims.¹⁵¹ Bevin also insisted that NATO must be formed without delay due to recent Communist threats, noting that ‘the pace set by Russia in Czechoslovakia, then Finland and now Norway, tells us that there is no time to lose.’¹⁵²

¹⁴⁷ Folly, ‘Breaking the Vicious Circle: Britain, the United States and the Genesis of the North Atlantic Treaty’, p. 72.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ See TNA, FO 371/71458/N 3001/3001/63/G, ‘Establishment of an Atlantic Security System’, From Foreign Office to Washington, 10 March 1948.

¹⁵⁰ See *FRUS, 1947, Council of Foreign Ministers; Germany and Austria*, Vol. II (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1947), p. 815, British Memorandum of Conversation, London, undated. See also *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 2, The Chargé in London (Gallman) to the Secretary of State, London, 22 December 1947. See also Kennan, p. 397; Folly, ‘Breaking the Vicious Circle: Britain, the United States and the Genesis of the North Atlantic Treaty’, p. 61.

¹⁵¹ Bevin’s opinion about the ineffectiveness of the UN was stated during his speech in the House of Commons on 22 January 1948. See *Hansard*, 22 January 1948, Vol. 446, cc383-517, p. 401. George F. Kennan (the United States’ diplomat who produced the “Long Telegram”) agreed with this opinion. See the latter’s memoir, Kennan, p. 397. See also Walt W. Rostow, ‘The Offensive of the International Communist movement’ in *The Origins of the Cold War*, eds. by Thomas G. Paterson and Robert J. McMahon (Toronto: D. C. Heath and Company, 1991), pp. 3-14 (p. 11).

¹⁵² TNA, FO 371/71458/N 3001/3001/63/G, ‘Establishment of an Atlantic Security System’, From Foreign Office to Washington, 10 March 1948.

British diplomats such as Henderson, historians such as Baylis and journalists such as Cook also touched upon Bevin's frustration at the US' delay. Bevin's typical *démarche* to tackle these delays was to send letters to the US State Department. Baylis shows that one of Bevin's messages to US Secretary of State Marshall stated that 'there must be no delay, the message said, otherwise, "a favourable opportunity would be missed and a fresh impetus would be given to the cause of communism".'¹⁵³ According to Henderson, the hesitation was due 'not only to the basic question of the wisdom of having a Treaty but to matters of detail, such as Italy and the idea of having different categories of membership in the Treaty.'¹⁵⁴ As noted by Cook, the United States 'foresaw difficulties with Greece and Turkey if Italy was asked to join. The British were also opposed to Italian membership for reasons similar to the American objections.'¹⁵⁵

However, during the latter stage of the talks, Italy was accepted as an original NATO member. It is interesting to highlight here that neither Henderson, Baylis nor Cook elaborated further on the issue of Greek and Turkish membership in their discussion about the delays. In other words, they did not link these delays to Bevin's decision not to invite Greece and Turkey to join NATO during its formation years. Henderson, for example, only mentioned that Greece and Turkey were given assurances that 'the negotiations for an Atlantic Pact did not imply any lessening of United States and British interest in Turkish [and Greek] security.'¹⁵⁶ Baylis, for instance, noted that Kennan believed 'if Italy was included, Greece, Turkey and other countries might claim that they

¹⁵³ Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism: Britain and the Formation of NATO, 1942-1949*, p. 99. See also Henderson, p. 22.

¹⁵⁴ Henderson, p. 59.

¹⁵⁵ Cook, p. 217.

¹⁵⁶ Henderson, p. 67.

also had a case to join, [meaning the] commitment would then be extended and diffused.¹⁵⁷ Baylis makes no further explanation for the exclusion of Greece and Turkey from NATO at this stage. Similarly, Cook had left out the question of Greek and Turkish membership of NATO, only discussing countries invited to join as original members such as Norway, Italy, Portugal, Iceland and Denmark.¹⁵⁸

In light of the lack of in-depth discussion of the exclusion of Greece and Turkey from NATO, the purpose of this chapter is to discuss this issue from the point of view of the British, in particular Bevin. This chapter will show that, despite British strategic interests in both countries, Bevin was resolute in the decision to keep Greece and Turkey out of NATO because he believed their membership might have brought about further delays in NATO's formation. To elucidate this argument, this chapter will concentrate on two correlated matters; first, the delays that occurred during the negotiation years and jeopardised Bevin's ambition to form NATO swiftly and; second, the rise of the Cyprus dispute between Greece and Turkey in late 1948. By concentrating on the delays and the local dynamic between Greece and Turkey, this chapter demonstrates that geographical issues and the prospect of a Mediterranean pact, two factors noted by Ekavi Athannassopoulou and Abdulkadir Baharçiçek, were not the only reasons for exclusion of Greece and Turkey from NATO.¹⁵⁹ Rather, this chapter argues that, because the series of delays that occurred throughout the negotiation years had already hampered Bevin's aim of forming NATO as soon as possible, he thus believed that

¹⁵⁷ Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism: Britain and the Formation of NATO, 1942-1949*, p. 114.

¹⁵⁸ See Cook, p. 219.

¹⁵⁹ For this literature, see the introduction of this dissertation, p. 19.

membership of Greece and Turkey, which at that time were in dispute over the future of Cyprus, would become another obstacle that hindered NATO's formation.

To substantiate this argument, several new source materials such as FO 371 file 78328 and Bevin's private papers FO 800 file 448 (conference, 1949) will be used. The aforementioned FO 371 material contains a record of a conversation between Necmettin Sadak, the Turkish Foreign Minister, and Bevin, in which Sadak asked the latter why the British government refused to include Turkey as one of the original members of NATO. The FO 800 material contains a record of a conversation between Bevin and Dirk Stikker, the Foreign Minister of the Netherlands, in which the latter asked Bevin why he did not favour the inclusion of Greece and Turkey during the Meeting of Consultative Council of the Five-Power Brussels Treaty in London in January 1949.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section discusses Bevin's effort to create a European "Third Force", known as the Western Union (WU). Discussion of the difficulty in bringing the United States into the WU plan is essential in order to show how Bevin devised the idea of NATO and why Bevin wanted NATO to be formed without delay. The second section discusses the delays that occurred throughout the negotiation years and Bevin's reaction to them. This section is necessary in order to prove two things: the 'delay' thesis and Bevin's determination to form NATO promptly. This section is also necessary because it is only by understanding the series of delays and growing frustration felt by Bevin that we can understand Bevin's attitude towards Greek and Turkish membership of NATO. The third section discusses Bevin's negative

attitude towards Greek and Turkish membership of NATO. This section briefly touches upon the increase in tensions between Greece and Turkey over the issue of Cyprus in late 1948, which coincided with their requests for inclusion in NATO. The section then analyses how the Cyprus issue might have influenced Bevin's refusal to include Greece and Turkey in NATO.

Bevin, the European "Third Force" of the Western Union and NATO

The idea for a European "Third Force", which would be 'some form of union in Western Europe, whether of a formal or informal character backed by the Americans and the Dominions'¹⁶⁰ was suggested by Bevin after the breakdown of the London Foreign Ministers meetings in late December 1947. The meetings broke down due to Soviet intransigence over the inclusion of the Soviet-controlled zone in Germany in the ERP. John D. Hickerson, the Director of the Office of European Affairs in the US State Department, 'learned from the Foreign Office that Bevin was thinking in terms of two circles of defense: an inner, European circle, tightly bound; and an outer one, more loosely bound, that would also include the United States and the British Dominions.'¹⁶¹ Since Bevin's idea would not be a formal alliance, Marshall warmly agreed to it.¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ See enclosure entitled 'Summary of a Memorandum Representing Mr. Bevin's Views on the Formation of a Western Union' in *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 5, The British Ambassador (Inverchapel) to the Secretary of State, 13 January 1948.

¹⁶¹ Folly, 'Breaking the Vicious Circle: Britain, the United States and the Genesis of the North Atlantic Treaty', p. 61. See also Alan K. Henrikson, 'The Creation of the North Atlantic Alliance, 1948-1952', *Naval War College Review*, 32:3 (1980), 4-39 (p. 6). See also an interview with John D. Hickerson, conducted by T.A. Hockin and G.C.V. Wright, 27 October 1969, York University Oral History Project.

¹⁶² See *Ibid.*, p. 62. See also Reid, *Time of Fear and Hope: The Making of the North Atlantic Treaty, 1947-1949*, p. 37.

However, Bevin quickly began to favour creating the Western Union as a formal alliance. This can be seen during a discussion in the Cabinet on 4 January 1948 and during Bevin's speech in the House of Commons later the same month. On both occasions, Bevin stated that 'I believe the time is ripe for a consolidation of Western Europe.'¹⁶³ Bevin's speech was lauded in the United States, Europe and Britain itself.¹⁶⁴ However, Marshall and the US State Department officials - who already knew about Bevin's idea for a formal alliance because he had disclosed details of his proposed speech in his secret message to Marshall nine days previously¹⁶⁵ - felt uncomfortable about providing direct military support to the WU for two reasons. Firstly, the intention to base the WU on the Dunkirk model - named after the 1947 Treaty of Dunkirk between Great Britain and France - was seen as flawed, since this model only intended to provide mutual assistance in the event of renewed German, not Soviet, aggression. Secondly, there was no evidence of self-defence capabilities among those countries to be included in the WU plan.

¹⁶³ For Bevin's memorandum to the Cabinet, see TNA, CAB 129/23, CP (48) 6, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 'The First Aim of British Foreign Policy', 4 January 1948. See appendix E: The Third Force memos. For Bevin's speech in the House of Commons, see *Hansard*, 22 January 1948, Vol. 446, cc383-517, p. 396.

¹⁶⁴ See TNA, PREM 8/1431, PM 20/48, Minute from Mr Attlee to Mr Bevin, 28 January 1948; TNA, FO 371/73046/Z 814/273/72/G, 'Proposed Treaties with the Benelux countries: Conversation with M. Spaak', From Sir G. Rendel (Brussels) to Mr Bevin (Foreign Office), 30 January 1948; TNA, FO 800/460/Eur/48/2, From Washington to Foreign Office, 20 January 1948; *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 17, The Under Secretary of State (Lovett) to the British Ambassador (Inverchapel), 2 February 1948. See also Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism: Britain and the Formation of NATO, 1942-1949*, p. 69; Henderson, p. 7. Gladwyn Jebb, Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, saw Bevin's speech as very clever because it showed that Bevin knew perfectly what he wanted; thereby the speech had a great echo all over Europe. See Hubert Miles Gladwyn Jebb, *The Memoirs of Lord Gladwyn* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1972), p. 211.

¹⁶⁵ See *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, pp. 3-4, The British Ambassador (Inverchapel) to the Secretary of State, 13 January 1948. See also TNA, FO 371/73045/Z 542/273/72/G, 'The Western Union', Mr Bevin to Mr Marshall, G31/-/48, Top Secret, Personal, 13 January 1948. See also Kirby, p. 406; Ireland, p. 63; Henderson, p. 7.

With regard to the first reason, US State Department officials such as Robert A. Lovett (Undersecretary of State), Charles E. Bohlen (the State Department Counsellor) and Kennan unanimously agreed that Bevin's plan for a "Third Force" had serious flaws due to the adoption of the Dunkirk Treaty as its basis.¹⁶⁶ They believed that focusing on the threat of renewed German aggression would render the WU incapable of fighting the Soviet threat. Hickerson said that 'there are some doubts in our minds as to whether in the present circumstances it is an adequate one.'¹⁶⁷ These American authorities alternatively suggested the Treaty of Rio de Janeiro as its basis, because this model would provide a more solid basis for the WU.¹⁶⁸ This was because the Rio Treaty suggested a "one for all and all for one" mentality in its defence measures, meaning members of the WU could guarantee one another against aggression from within the union as well as from outside it.¹⁶⁹

As for the second reason, the US State Department wanted evidence that the Western Europe countries were capable of taking the initiative in matters of their own security before providing political and military support. This matter was noted by Lovett:

¹⁶⁶ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe, Vol. III, pp. 9-10, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director of the Office of European Affairs (Hickerson), 21 January 1948.*

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid., p. 10, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director of the Office of European Affairs (Hickerson), 21 January 1948.*

¹⁶⁸ *See FRUS, 1948, Western Europe, Vol. III, p. 7, Memorandum by the Director of the Office of European Affairs (Hickerson) to the Secretary of State, 19 January 1950.*

¹⁶⁹ *See FRUS, 1948, Western Europe, Vol. III, p. 10, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director of the Office of European Affairs (Hickerson), 21 January 1948. See also TNA, FO 371/73045/Z 561/273/72/G, 'The Western Union: Conversation with Mr Hickerson', From Washington to Foreign Office, 21 January 1948. The officials of the US State Department believed that the Rio model would not only provide a more solid basis for the WU, but would also prove more readily capable of extension to include some of the Soviet satellite countries of Eastern Europe and possibly even the Soviet Union itself. See also Reid, *Time of Fear and Hope: The Making of the North Atlantic Treaty, 1947-1949*, p. 39; Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism: Britain and the Formation of NATO, 1942-1949*, p. 68.*

When there is evidence of unity with a firm determination to effect an arrangement under which the various European countries are prepared to act in concert to defend themselves, the United States will carefully consider the part it might appropriately play in support of such a Western European Union, established presumably in harmony with the charter of the United Nations.¹⁷⁰

Due to the fact that there was no evidence of Western European countries acting in concert to defend themselves, Lovett noted that ‘the United States Government does not have any very clear picture of exactly what Mr. Bevin’s proposals for a Western Union really are.’¹⁷¹ Lovett then told Lord Inverchapel, British Ambassador to the United States, that ‘you are in effect asking us to pour concrete before we see the blueprints.’¹⁷²

Since Bevin was determined to gain US political and military support for the WU, he then proceeded to sign the Brussels Treaty between Britain and Western European countries as the first step towards the establishment of the WU.¹⁷³ As these countries were formally bound by the same treaty, a mechanism for self-defence could be

¹⁷⁰ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, pp. 17-18, The Under Secretary of State (Lovett) to the British Ambassador (Inverchapel), 2 February 1948.

¹⁷¹ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 22, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director of the Office of European Affairs (Hickerson), 7 February 1948.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ For documents regarding the signatory of the Brussels Treaty, see TNA, CAB 129/26, CP (48) 96, Memorandum by Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, ‘The Brussels Treaty’, 24 March 1948; TNA, FO 371/67671/Z 2213/25/17, ‘Anglo-French Alliance’, From Paris to Foreign Office, 3 March 1947; *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, pp. 54-55, Address by the President of the United States to the Congress, 17 March 1948; *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, pp. 55-56, Joint Message by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs (Bidault) and the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Bevin) to the Secretary of State, Brussels, 17 March 1948.

devised which would prove their capability in this matter, as was demanded by the US State Department.¹⁷⁴ Furthermore, Bevin had adopted the Rio model as the basis of the WU.¹⁷⁵ However, the US State Department still refused to commit political and military support to the WU for two reasons. Firstly, the US State Department worried a 'new and extensive military and political commitment might well adversely affect the prospects for the ERP to get approval by the US Congress.'¹⁷⁶ Secondly, it assumed 'that the Soviet Government has no present desire for war.'¹⁷⁷

While the US State Department refused to commit to US forces operating in Europe through the WU, the Soviet Union had extended its area of control. This was the result of the Communists in Czechoslovakia forcibly taking control of the government and Finland signing a "treaty of friendship" with the Soviet Union which was to include close cooperation in economic and military affairs.¹⁷⁸ Norway was believed to be the next target for a friendship treaty and Bevin asserted that 'nor can we afford at this moment to risk a Norwegian defection which would involve the appearance of Russia on the Atlantic and the collapse of the whole Scandinavian system.'¹⁷⁹ Bevin added:

¹⁷⁴ See *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 17, The Under Secretary of State (Lovett) to the British Ambassador (Inverchapel), 2 February 1948. See also *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 34, The Secretary of State to the Embassy in France, 27 February 1948.

¹⁷⁵ See TNA, FO 371/73047/Z 1308/273/72/G, 'Western Union: Further Discussions with the Benelux governments', Foreign Office minute (conversation with French ambassador), 13 February 1948. See also Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism: Britain and the Formation of NATO, 1942-1949*, p. 70; Cook, p. 122.

¹⁷⁶ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 22, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director of the Office of European Affairs (Hickerson), 7 February 1948.

¹⁷⁷ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 40, Memorandum by the Director of the Office of European Affairs (Hickerson) to the Secretary of State, 8 March 1948.

¹⁷⁸ See TNA, FO 371/71458/N 3001/3001/63/G, 'Establishment of an Atlantic Security System', From Foreign Office to Washington, 10 March 1948. See also *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 40, Memorandum by the Director of the Office of European Affairs (Hickerson) to the Secretary of State, 8 March 1948. See also TNA, CAB 129/25, CP (48) 71, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 'The Czechoslovak Crisis', 3 March 1949. See also Cook, pp. 119-123; Folly, 'Breaking the Vicious Circle: Britain, the United States and the Genesis of the North Atlantic Treaty', p. 66.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

We may thus be shortly confronted by two serious threats, the strategic threat involved by the extension of the Russian sphere of influence to the Atlantic and the political threat to destroy all our efforts to build up a Western Union.¹⁸⁰

Worried about these threats, Bevin had thought to include Norway and other Scandinavian countries in the WU so that they would be more confident 'to turn down any approach they might receive from the Soviet Union.'¹⁸¹ Yet the WU itself would not suffice to help the Scandinavian countries against Soviet pressure. Bevin stressed that 'this would be a mistake since France and the United Kingdom with the Benelux countries could not by themselves effectively defend Scandinavian countries in regard to the whole problem of Atlantic security.'¹⁸² In stressing *by themselves*, Bevin implied that the US State Department's refusal to commit US forces to the WU contributed to the alliance's inability to defend the Scandinavian countries. As the threat to Norway could not be neglected, Bevin therefore suggested 'a scheme of Atlantic security with which the United States would be even more closely concerned' as 'the most practical course in his view' in his *aide-mémoire* to Marshall dated 10 March 1948.¹⁸³ This Atlantic security system would also consist of the Brussels community of the WU as its

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ TNA, FO 371/68067/AN 1274/1195/45G, 'Atlantic Security: Conversation with Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs', Conversation with the Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs, 15 March 1948.

¹⁸² TNA, FO 371/71458/N 3001/3001/63/G, 'Establishment of an Atlantic Security System', From Foreign Office to Washington, 10 March 1948.

¹⁸³ See Ibid. See also *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 47, The British Embassy to the Department of State, 'Aide-Mémoire', Washington, 11 March 1948. See also National Archives [hereafter NA], *Record Group 59* [hereafter RG 59], General Files of the Department of State, Confidential File 1945-1949, Box C-509, 840.20/3-1148. Cited in Wiebes and Zeeman, p. 354. See also Public Archives of Canada [hereafter PAC], *Reid Papers*, Vol. 6, File 12. Cited in Wiebes and Zeeman, p. 354. See also Ireland, p. 72.

members.¹⁸⁴ After Marshall received the note, he did not hesitate to agree to Bevin's proposal and stated that he was 'prepared to proceed at once in the joint discussions on the establishment of an Atlantic security system.'¹⁸⁵ These secret meetings became known as the Pentagon Talks and took place between 22 March 1948 and 1 April 1948. They were attended by government delegations from the United States, Britain and Canada.

It is worth pointing out here that Marshall's positive response to Bevin's NATO proposal indicated that he was ready to commit US forces to a system that would also be joined by countries of the WU. This was a new development in the State Department's attitude, given that its officials were previously reluctant to commit US forces to the WU plan. Since Marshall indicated that he was ready to move swiftly on this matter, Bevin therefore insisted that this Atlantic system must be formed without delay due to recent Communist threats in Czechoslovakia, Finland and Norway. Bevin said 'I am convinced therefore that we should study without any delay the establishment of such an Atlantic security system, so that if the threat to Norway should develop we could at once inspire the necessary confidence to consolidate the West against Soviet infiltration.'¹⁸⁶

Although Bevin failed to bring the United States into the WU plan, he did however succeed in bringing the United States into the security affairs of Western Europe countries, albeit under a different defence system. This was due to the fact that the

¹⁸⁴ See *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ See *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 48, The Secretary of State to the British Ambassador (Inverchapel), 12 March 1948. See also TNA, FO 371/71458/N 3002/3001/63/G, 'Establishment of an Atlantic Security System', From Washington to Foreign Office, 12 March 1948. See also Ireland, p. 73.

¹⁸⁶ TNA, FO 371/71458/N 3001/3001/63/G, 'Establishment of an Atlantic Security System', From Foreign Office to Washington, 10 March 1948.

countries of the WU would have become original members of NATO. What is more, NATO membership could prove more beneficial to Western Europe because the United States would be even more closely involved in NATO than it was expected to be in the WU. Before the Pentagon Talks were adjourned, the US representatives 'agreed that a *treaty* [original emphasis] should be accomplished as soon as possible, the optimum possibility being that it might be accomplished prior to the end of the current session of Congress.'¹⁸⁷ Unfortunately, NATO's signing took place in April of the following year due to a series of delays that caused a setback in NATO's creation. Since Bevin's ultimate objective was that NATO be formed as soon as possible, these delays directly hampered his aim. This study believes that these delays influenced Bevin's opinion on Greek and Turkish membership, namely that their inclusion might bring about a further delay to the formation of NATO. To elucidate this argument, the delays and Bevin's reaction to them will be analysed and discussed in the next section.

Delays in forming NATO, April 1948 to March 1949

Throughout the negotiation years, a series of delays arose which meant the formation of NATO could not be achieved earlier than April 1949. To be precise, there were four delays that slowed the negotiations down. These were: US hesitation on continuing negotiations after the Pentagon Talks were adjourned; the United States delegates refused to progress swiftly after the next round of talks – the *Washington Exploratory*

¹⁸⁷ See *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 72, Minutes of the Sixth Meeting of the United States-United Kingdom-Canada Security Conversation, Held at Washington, 1 April 1948.

Talks on Security - were opened; problems regarding Article 2 of NATO; and, the problem regarding Italian membership.

*US hesitation in opening the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, and Bevin's
reaction*

The first sign that the United States was hesitant to open the next round of talks could be sensed when Hickerson told Lord Inverchapel, during their private session a day before the Pentagon Talks were adjourned, that 'quadripartite talks could not begin before the end of next week at the earliest.'¹⁸⁸ This was due to the fact that 'there were signs that Hickerson [was] encountering resistance to his idea of a pact [NATO] during soundings of his colleagues in [the] State Department.'¹⁸⁹ Seeing that US State Department officials were in a critical stage in making up their own minds, Lord Inverchapel asked Bevin to send a personal message to Lovett, via Marshall, asking for presidential assurances of support for the Western Europe countries until the conclusion of an Atlantic treaty.¹⁹⁰

Lovett's response to Bevin's letter confirmed the first delay in NATO arrangements: that the United States was reluctant to open the next round of talks. Lovett explained he could 'foresee the obstacles that would probably stand in the way of a formal pact at

¹⁸⁸ TNA, FO 371/68068A/AN 1437/1195/45/G, 'Atlantic Security Talks: movements of Mr Jebb', From Washington to Foreign Office, 31 March 1948.

¹⁸⁹ TNA, FO 371/68068A/AN 1412/1195/45/G, 'Atlantic Security Talks: proposed message to Mr Marshall', From Washington to Foreign Office, 31 March 1948.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

this stage.¹⁹¹ There were two apparent reasons why Lovett was determined not to commit to the next round of talks in the near future. The first was that a military alliance would complicate congressional approval of the ERP. Lovett said that, 'if Congressman Taber for instance got wind of any negotiations for a pact, he would see to it that his Appropriations Committee would obstruct the grant of funds for E.R.P.'¹⁹² The second reason was Lovett doubted the military strength of the Brussels powers, as shown in the following:

What was of immediate concern to him [Lovett] was this: that in the eyes of most people here [in the USA] the Brussels Treaty would remain a piece of paper until its signatory got to work upon active plans for their own security. It was clear that, if attacked, they would have to look after themselves until [the] United States could step in and cut the enemy's jugular vein. So far as he knew no steps had yet been taken towards serious military talks between the five countries concerned.¹⁹³

Lovett, who had the authority to call for the next round of talks, asserted that he would take this next step only after the idea for an Atlantic pact was approved by a higher authority, in particular the President and the Senators; but, he had yet to present it before them.¹⁹⁴ Lovett's delays caused disappointment to Bevin, who said: 'Quite

¹⁹¹ TNA, FO 371/68068A/AN 1547/1195/45/G, 'Atlantic Security', From Washington to Foreign Office, 10 April 1948.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

frankly I regard Lovett's attitude as most disappointing.'¹⁹⁵ Bevin added that Lovett's attitude had somehow affected other officials in the United States government when Lewis W. Douglas, US Ambassador to the United Kingdom, informed Bevin 'that the United States Government was "still not clear in their policy in relation to the Five Power Treaty"'.¹⁹⁶ Bevin, however, was determined to overcome the delays as he believed 'the morale of Western Europe may deteriorate unless the United States can agreed to hold Four Power conversations in the near future.'¹⁹⁷

For the first initiative to counter US hesitation in resuming negotiations, Bevin adopted a joint approach with Georges Bidault, the French Foreign Minister, in pressing Marshall to open the quadripartite talks. The pair did so by 'referring to his [Marshall's] letter of March 25th in which he said that the Four Power discussions would open "very shortly"' as the basis for their argument.¹⁹⁸ Since this joint message was delivered to Marshall via Lovett, the latter was the first to respond. By this time Lovett had already presented the Atlantic pact proposal before his higher authorities, and as far as Bevin knew, Lovett's presentation went well.¹⁹⁹ This could be the reason why Bevin confidently asked Lord Inverchapel to propose to Lovett that he call for the quadripartite talks in May 1948.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁵ TNA, FO 371/68068A/AN 1547/1195/45/G, 'Atlantic Security', From Foreign Office to Washington, 16 April 1948.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid. For the conversation between Bevin and Douglas, see TNA, FO 371/68068A/AN 1618/1195/45/G, 'Atlantic Security', Conversation with the United States Ambassador, Five-Power Pact: Economic and Defence Matters, 15 April 1948.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid. See also TNA, FO 371/68068A/AN 1547/1195/45/G, 'Atlantic Security', From Foreign Office to Paris, 16 April 1948; TNA, FO 371/68068A/AN 1631/1195/45/G, 'Western European and North Atlantic Security: message for Mr Marshall from S of S and M. Bidault', From Paris to Foreign Office, 17 April 1948. For Marshall's letter dated 25 March 1948, see *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 68, The Secretary of State to the Embassy in France, 25 March 1948.

¹⁹⁹ Three days earlier, Lord Inverchapel had already informed the Foreign Office that 'as recorded in a letter to Jebb of the 14th April, there is now very good reason to believe that, as a result of Lovett's sounding of him, Vandenberg is favourably inclined to a North Atlantic pact at any rate on the Rio model.'

Again, Lovett was still not ready to call for the next round of talks because ‘he found them [his political leaders] sympathetic but “realistic in [the] sense that they need to be convinced that the Five Allies are at work on some plan of their own”.’²⁰¹ Seemingly, Lovett and his political leaders’ views on this matter echoed one another. Lovett stressed that ‘all he needed in order to make a start was some visible proof that Western Europe was getting together to fight its own battles or at any rate the earlier stages of these battles until American forces could come into action.’²⁰² Similarly, Marshall ‘fully agreed on the desirability and urgency of coordinated planning to meet possible emergencies’ and he ‘hope[d] to be able by next week to suggest the definite date.’²⁰³ However, that was the last thing that Bevin heard from Marshall, and after several weeks had passed there was still no date given by the US State Department. According to Henderson, ‘if patience is the proof of diplomacy, the Brussels Treaty Foreign Ministers, and particularly Bevin, were severely tested in the weeks which followed Marshall’s telegram on April 22.’²⁰⁴

Due to Lovett’s insistence on seeing evidence of the Brussels powers’ self-defence mechanism, Bevin adopted his second initiative in order to persuade Lovett to continue

TNA, FO 371/68068A/AN 1664/1195/45/G, ‘Western European and North Atlantic Security: U.S. attitude’, From Washington to Foreign Office, 16 April 1948.

²⁰⁰ TNA, FO 371/68068A/AN 1547/1195/45/G, ‘Atlantic Security’, From Foreign Office to Washington, 16 April 1948.

²⁰¹ TNA, FO 371/68068A/AN 1666/1195/45/G, ‘Atlantic Security: proposed conference’, From Washington to Foreign Office, 19 April 1948.

²⁰² TNA, FO 371/68068A/AN 1665/1195/45/G, ‘Western European and the North Atlantic Security: view of Mr Lovett’, From Washington to Foreign Office, 19 April 1948.

²⁰³ TNA, FO 371/68068A/AN 1708/1195/45/G, ‘Atlantic Security: message from Mr Marshall to S of S and M. Bidault’, From Washington to Foreign Office, 22 April 1948. See also *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 99, The Secretary of State to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs (Bidault), drafted 21 April 1948. It was noted that the transmission to Bevin was not printed. See footnote 1 of this *FRUS*.

²⁰⁴ Henderson, p. 24.

the negotiations. On 22 April 1948, Bevin set up a permanent military committee in London in order 'to tackle the problem of military conversations' and informed Lovett about it the same day.²⁰⁵ It should be noted here that this military committee would later become the Permanent Commission of the Brussels powers. Although Lovett welcomed this effort because it was 'easier to deal with a going concern than with a union that existed only on paper,'²⁰⁶ Lovett's decision not to call for the next round of talks remained virtually unchanged. This was due to the present situation in the US State Department, with anti-Treaty officials such as Kennan and Bohlen clashing with pro-Treaty officials such as Hickerson and Theodore C. Achilles, the Director of the Division of Western European Affairs.

This division of opinion in the US State Department was the third reason that influenced Lovett's decision not to open the next round of talks. Kennan and Bohlen were highly doubtful about the necessity of forming a new security alliance. Bohlen, for instance, argued that 'the idea of concluding an Atlantic pact, to which the United States should be a party, appeared to him to be mistaken' because he believed 'an Atlantic pact would cause undue provocation to the Soviets.'²⁰⁷ Kennan, therefore, 'maintained that the best deterrent action on their part was to make it plain that the United States was prepared to give military support to the Western European countries for the purpose of

²⁰⁵ TNA, FO 371/68068A/AN 1666/1195/45/G, 'Atlantic Security: proposed conference', From Foreign Office to Washington, 22 April 1948; TNA, FO 371/68068A/AN 1688/1195/45/G, 'Western European and North Atlantic Security Talks', From Foreign Office to Washington, 22 April 1948.

²⁰⁶ TNA, FO 371/68068A/AN 1701/1195/45/G, 'Western European and North Atlantic Security', From Washington to Foreign Office, 22 April 1948.

²⁰⁷ See enclosed a record of a short informal talk between Bohlen and Jock Balfour (the British Chargé in Washington) about the security plans in TNA, FO 371/73069/Z 4187/2307/72/G, 'North Atlantic Security', Lord Inverchapel (Washington) to Sir Orme Sargent, G3/-/48, Top Secret, 1 May 1948.

supplying their deficiencies in war material.²⁰⁸ These internal differences of opinion could also be the reason why Marshall failed to give an exact date for the next round of talks as promised to Bevin on 22 April 1948. Hickerson had admitted previously 'that the US State Department had run into certain political objections to United States participation in a defence pact,' thus 'the US State Department would not be in a position to propose a date for the opening of quadripartite talks.'²⁰⁹

To deal with Kennan and Bohlen's opposition, Bevin adopted another tack. On 14 May 1948, Bevin sent a telegram to the pair, for communication to Marshall, in the hope that they would understand how important NATO was to the psychological state of the Western Europe countries. Bevin argued that 'the mere fact that the United States was prepared to enter into some kind of regional defensive system would, by itself, encourage the democratic forces all over the world and be far the best deterrent to any Soviet miscalculation which, [...] probably constitutes the only serious danger of war in the near future.'²¹⁰ It is important to highlight here that Bevin's message reached Kennan and Bohlen in the midst of Vandenberg's working paper being endorsed by the United States government.²¹¹ Passed on 11 June 1948, the Vandenberg Resolution advised the United States to support the security of Europe and the Atlantic and had great influence on anti-Treaty officials in the US State Department like Kennan and

²⁰⁸ See enclosed a record of a private talk between Kennan and Balfour about the problem of associating the United States with Western European defence plans in TNA, FO 371/73069/Z 4188/2307/72/G, 'North Atlantic Security', Lord Inverchapel (Washington) to Sir Orme Sargent, G3-/48, Top Secret, 5 May 1948.

²⁰⁹ TNA, FO 371/73069/Z 3714/2307/72/G, 'Western Security Talks', From Washington to Foreign Office, 30 April 1948.

²¹⁰ TNA, FO 371/73069/Z 3941/2307/72/G, 'Western Security Talks', From Foreign Office to Washington, 14 May 1948.

²¹¹ See TNA, FO 371/73069/Z 4029/2307/72/G, 'Atlantic Security', From Washington to Foreign Office, 11 May 1948. See also *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 118, footnote 1, Draft Senate Resolution on the United Nations, Washington, undated.

Bohlen.²¹² Bohlen, for instance, had previously told Lord Inverchapel that he would accept NATO if Vandenberg's working paper was endorsed by the Senate.²¹³ Kennan's views echoed those of Bohlen.²¹⁴ It seemed then that, although Bevin's message made a persuasive argument which mellowed Kennan and Bohlen somewhat, far more important was that his message arrived at the right moment. Whether this was a wise move on Bevin's part or he was simply lucky in this matter is debatable. In the following months, Kennan and Bohlen's resistance progressively reduced. According to Kennan, Bevin's message was an 'invaluable contribution' to the debate which was being waged in the US State Department.²¹⁵

Although the internal differences in the US State Department had been resolved, that 1948 was an election year was the fourth reason that prevented Lovett and Marshall from agreeing to open the next round of talks. This was evident when Lovett and Marshall did not agree with Bevin's suggestion for 'the quadripartite talks with the limited agenda,' while Hickerson suggested 'the opening of the quadripartite talks ought in any case to be delayed more than [...] another fortnight or three weeks.'²¹⁶ Marshall said:

²¹² See *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, pp. 118-119, Draft Senate Resolution on the United Nations, Washington, undated. See also TNA, CAB 21/2097/19/10/212, Part I, North Atlantic Security Pact, 6 July 1948. See also Achilles, 'US Role in Negotiations that Led to Atlantic Alliance, Part 1', p. 11; Henderson, pp. 26-27; Cook, p. 164; Simon J. Ball, *The Cold War: An International History, 1947-1991* (London: Arnold, 1998), p. 32; Kennan, p. 406.

²¹³ See TNA, FO 371/73069/Z 4187/2307/72/G, 'North Atlantic Security', Lord Inverchapel (Washington) to Sir Orme Sargent, G3-/48, Top Secret, 1 May 1948.

²¹⁴ See TNA, FO 371/73069/Z 4188/2307/72/G, 'North Atlantic Security', Lord Inverchapel (Washington) to Sir Orme Sargent, G3-/48, Top Secret, 5 May 1948.

²¹⁵ TNA, FO 371/73070/Z 4269/2307/72/G, 'Security Talks', From Washington to Foreign Office, 20 May 1948.

²¹⁶ TNA, FO 371/73070/Z 4269/2307/72/G, 'Security Talks', From Foreign Office to Washington, 25 May 1948.

Hasty or ill-prepared action could easily promote disunity rather than unity both in the United States and among European countries. It will be clear to Mr Bevin that there is no possibility of completing the necessary negotiation of these matters in time to permit congressional consideration at the present session.²¹⁷

Kennan and Bohlen, now new supporters of the NATO plan, also believed it was impossible to conclude a treaty in an election year. It was stated that 'there could be no question of the Senate's ratifying a pact at this session of Congress [due to] the domestic difficulties in the way of opening actual negotiations in an election year.'²¹⁸

Bevin however, disagreed with the decision to resume the talks after the election.

Bevin again sent a letter to Marshall to persuade him to change his mind regarding this matter. Bevin said 'I cannot agree that the situation in Europe will not further deteriorate if conversations on security are postponed until after Congress rises.'²¹⁹

Bevin added 'I would therefore earnestly beg him to consider the possibility of holding the "quadripartite" talks as soon as possible, if only on the "limited agenda" proposed by Hickerson.'²²⁰ As defence for this suggestion, Bevin argued that 'the summoning of the talks would probably in itself hold the position for a period and it would enable the Western Powers to advance their own ideas as regards general regional security, even if

²¹⁷ See enclosure entitled 'Comments by the Secretary of State on Mr Bevin's Message of 14 May' in *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 133, The Acting Secretary of State to the British Chargé (Balfour), 28 May 1948.

²¹⁸ See TNA, FO 371/73070/Z 4269/2307/72/G, 'Security Talks', From Washington to Foreign Office, 20 May 1948. See also Kennan, p. 413.

²¹⁹ TNA, FO 371/73070/Z 4466/2307/72/G, 'Security Talks', From Foreign Office to Washington, 1 June 1948.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*

these are not immediately acceptable to the Americans.²²¹ Marshall, however, said that it was not yet a suitable time to start the negotiations but confirmed that 'sooner or later the United States Government would take some action.'²²² Although the Vandenberg Resolution was passed in mid-1948, it seemed that Marshall was convinced that the best time to resume negotiations was after the election in November. As a result, all Bevin could do was sit back and wait patiently.

There was one additional reason that prevented Lovett from calling for the next round of talks: the issue of Palestine. It is worth mentioning here that the Anglo-American relationship was strained over the question of Palestine. The United States and Britain held differing opinions towards the adoption of Resolution 181(II) by the UN General Assembly on 29 November 1947, which recommended the partition of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states.²²³ The United States supported this partition resolution and voted for it, but Britain abstained in the vote.²²⁴ Since 1945, Bevin had criticised the United States for being dishonest in handling the problem of Palestine. In Bevin's view, Truman backed Zionism - the ideology pushing at that time for a Jewish state - because of his need for Jewish votes, money and influence in the presidential elections of

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² TNA, FO 371/73070/Z 4673/2307/72/G, 'Security Talks', From Washington to Foreign Office, 14 June 1948.

²²³ *FRUS, 1948, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa (in two parts)*, Vol. V, Part 2 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1948), p. 533, footnote 4, The British Embassy to the Department of State, 'Memorandum', 5 January 1948. For the text of the Resolution, see the appendix of this *FRUS*, pp. 1709-1730. Reprinted from United Nations, *Official Records of the Second Session of the General Assembly, Resolutions, 16 September–29 September 1947*, pp. 131 ff. (U.N. document A/519, 8 January 1948).

²²⁴ See *FRUS, 1947, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 1291, The United States Representative at the United Nations (Austin) to the Secretary of State, New York, 29 November 1947.

1948.²²⁵ Truman, on the other hand, felt that Bevin was deeply prejudiced by the situation on the ground in Palestine and favoured the Arabs as opposed to the Jews.²²⁶

As a matter of fact, since the beginning of the Pentagon Talks, Bevin had anticipated that the issue of Palestine would disrupt the discussions. At that time, Bevin avoided this issue. Bevin asked Gladwyn Jebb, advisor to the British Ambassador to the UN, through Frank K. Roberts, the Principle Private Secretary to the Foreign Secretary, to avoid this issue in order to make sure the meeting went smoothly. This matter was noted by Roberts as follows:

The Secretary of State [Bevin] is most anxious that [the] Palestine question should not be brought in any way into your talks on Atlantic Security and on United States support for [the] Brussels Treaty. You [Jebb] should therefore carefully avoid being drawn into any (repeat any) discussions in Washington [the Pentagon Talks] about Palestine.²²⁷

This was apparently because Jebb was in some way connected with the Palestine discussions in the UN Security Council in New York.²²⁸ The issue of Palestine was a cover

²²⁵ See TNA, PREM 8/627, Bevin to Washington, 12 October 1945. See also John Baylis, *Anglo-American Relations since 1939: The Enduring Alliance* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), p. 40; Reid, *Time of Fear and Hope: The Making of the North Atlantic Treaty, 1947-1949*, p. 52; Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism: Britain and the Formation of NATO, 1942-1949*, p. 104.

²²⁶ See Truman, *Memoirs by Harry S. Truman, Volume 2: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1953*, p. 164. See also Reid, *Time of Fear and Hope: The Making of the North Atlantic Treaty, 1947-1949*, p. 52; Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism: Britain and the Formation of NATO, 1942-1949*, p. 104.

²²⁷ TNA, FO 371/68067/AN 1301/1195/45/G, 'Atlantic Security Talks', From Foreign Office to Washington, 22 March 1948.

²²⁸ Gladwyn Jebb was responsible for advising the British Ambassador to the UN, Sir Alexander Cadogan, on certain matters before the UN Security Council, notably on Palestine. See TNA, FO 371/68067/AN

story for Jebb to attend the secret tripartite talks in the Pentagon, meaning his real purpose of attending the discussions about NATO could be concealed effectively.²²⁹ Nonetheless, this issue was unavoidable. Jebb stated that 'at the end of our discussions today Americans betrayed nervousness regarding my own cover.'²³⁰ Jebb managed to avoid this issue by saying to the US delegates that 'it may be best for me to fly up to New York when Palestine next appears in the agenda of the Security Council.'²³¹

However, the US State Department officials still could not leave the issue of Palestine out, as it was one of Lovett's reasons for his reluctance to resume negotiations. Lovett said 'I also think it right to mention that leading State Department officials are at the moment labouring under a sense of keen disappointment at the apparent failure until now to reach any meeting of minds about the Palestine issue.'²³² What is more, this issue was also of concern to the Senators. During a closed session to support Vandenberg's working paper held between Lovett and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in May 1948, Senator Wherry and Senator Brewster tacked on 'amendments relating to Palestine.'²³³ In this circumstance, Lovett and the other US

1303/1195/45/G, 'Atlantic Security Talks: Cover for Mr Jebb', From Washington to Foreign Office, 22 March 1948.

²²⁹ See TNA, FO 371/68067/AN 1196/1195/45/G, 'Atlantic Security System: British representatives for the Washington talks', From Foreign Office to Paris, 15 March 1948; TNA, FO 371/68068A/AN 1437/1195/45/G, 'Atlantic Security Talks: movements of Mr Jebb', From Foreign Office to New York, 2 April 1948. See also *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 61.

²³⁰ See TNA, FO 371/68067/AN 1303/1195/45/G, 'Atlantic Security Talks: Cover for Mr Jebb', From Washington to Foreign Office, 22 March 1948.

²³¹ *Ibid.*

²³² TNA, FO 371/68068A/AN 1664/1195/45/G, 'Western European and North Atlantic Security: U.S. attitude', From Washington to Foreign Office, 16 April 1948.

²³³ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 105, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State (Lovett), 27 April 1948.

State Department officials comprehended that ‘an understanding over Palestine was necessary if the security pact to be concluded.’²³⁴

Bevin therefore adopted an attitude of tolerance in discussing the Palestine issue so that the negotiations could be resumed at the nearest opportunity. However, Bevin at first seemed to remain firm in his stance over this issue. This matter was noted in British records as follows:

While the Secretary of State [Bevin] does not wish to mention Palestine directly in this letter, he wishes to make the point that while Anglo-American relations must, of course, be very close, it is essential that the impression should not get about that we in Britain are tied to the American chariot wheel. This impression is, of course, strengthened if American foreign policy appears to shift with every wind and we are then expected to shift with it.²³⁵

It seemed that Bevin worried Britain’s appearance of independence in policymaking would be damaged if it were to change its position on the Palestine question. In this circumstance, Mr Hamilton Fish Armstrong, an American diplomat in Britain, had a conversation with Bevin and ‘expressed some anxiety about the danger of Britain and the U.S.A. drifting apart, not only over Palestine but as a result of the

²³⁴ Wrong to Pearson, memorandum, 25 May 1948, “North Atlantic Security Pact”, NASP., file 283(s), part 1. Cited in Reid, *Time of Fear and Hope: The Making of the North Atlantic Treaty, 1947-1949*, p. 52. Humphrey Hume Wrong was Canadian Ambassador, and Lester B. Pearson was Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs.

²³⁵ TNA, FO 371/73070/Z 4674/2307/72/G, ‘Western Security, U.S Policy’, Frank K. Roberts to Sir O. Sargent, 31 May 1948.

misunderstandings in connection with the Bedell Smith-Molotov exchanges.²³⁶ Bevin responded to Hamilton that 'whatever misunderstanding there might be, he never himself had any suspicions about American intentions on this matter in which we were moving in full consultation.'²³⁷ It was apparent that Bevin was willing to compromise and was willing to keep discussing this issue until an agreement or settlement could be reached between these two governments. Bevin explained his approach by saying to Hamilton that 'he realised that America had not as much experience in foreign affairs as we had and that while she was developing a sense of responsibility remarkably well, there must occasionally be setbacks to which he did not attach excessive importance.'²³⁸ Moreover, Bevin and the Foreign Office's central aim was to secure the involvement of the United States in NATO. It was therefore important to make sure that problems over Palestine did not prevent the achievement of this objective.²³⁹

The US State Department eventually resumed negotiations on 6 July 1948, four months prior to the presidential election. This decisive shift in the US State Department's attitude towards NATO arrangements was taken due to the imposition of the Berlin blockade by the Soviet Union on 24 June 1948.²⁴⁰ Numerous historians, including Baylis,

²³⁶ TNA, FO 800/483/NA/48/1, 'North Atlantic Pact: Conversation between Mr. Hamilton and Mr Bevin', Frank K. Roberts to North American Department, 1 June 1948.

²³⁷ Ibid.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ TNA, FO 371/73072/Z 5454/2307/72/G, 'Forthcoming Security Talks', Foreign Office minute, Top Secret, 2 July 1948. See also TNA, CAB 129/29, CP (48) 207, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 'Palestine', 24 August 1948.

²⁴⁰ See *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 139, The Secretary of State to the Embassy in France, 23 June 1948; *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 140, Report by the National Security Council, 'The Position of the United States with Respect to Support for Western Union and Other Related Free Countries', 28 June 1948. See also TNA, FO 371/73072/Z 5260/2307/72/G, From Washington to Foreign Office, 28 June 1948. See also Truman, *Memoirs by Harry S. Truman, Volume 2: Years of Trial and Hope, 1946-1953*, pp. 137-138; Henderson, p. 34; Cook, pp. 154-155; Ireland, p. 113; Folly, 'Breaking the Vicious Circle: Britain, the United States and the Genesis of the North Atlantic Treaty', p. 59; Bernard L.

have argued that this crisis was a significant turning-point in the history of the formation of NATO.²⁴¹ The crisis apparently succeeded in pressing the US State Department to end its hesitation and open the next round of talks, the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security. Nevertheless, the United States continued with its hesitations when its delegates refused to proceed quickly during the talks. These delays deepened Bevin's frustration in light of his ambition to form NATO promptly.

The US delays in the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security and Bevin's reaction

The Washington Exploratory Talks on Security took place between 6 July 1948 and 9 September 1948. Since the opening of these talks was against the will of US State Department officials – they wanted the talks to be resumed after the election – they were therefore half-hearted in making rapid progress. The US State Department officials admitted to Henderson, the British representative in the talks, that 'the State Department feel that nothing can be done in the direction of summoning the formal Conference until after the Presidential Elections.'²⁴² In Lovett's word of welcome to the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, he asserted that his government was aware of the need to proceed swiftly, but it had to move very cautiously, particularly in an

Montgomery, *The Memoirs of Field Marshal the Viscount Montgomery of Alamein* (London: Collins, 1958), p. 508.

²⁴¹ Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism: Britain and the Formation of NATO, 1942-1949*, p. 101.

²⁴² TNA, FO 371/73077/Z 7639/2307/72/G, 'State Department views on working level of Washington Security Talks', Sir Nicholas Henderson for Mr Frederick Hoyer Millar (Washington) to Mr Gladwyn Jebb, G3/-/48, Top Secret, 13 September 1948.

election year, so that it would have the backing of the vast majority of the American people.²⁴³ As a result, the US repeatedly delayed the talks.

The first attempt at delay was clearly evident when the United States delegates did not put forward a proposal of their own throughout the first five meetings.²⁴⁴ According to Reid, the United States government 'insisted that since it was the Brussels powers which had requested these discussions; it was up to the Brussels powers, not the United States, to make the proposals.'²⁴⁵ Lovett said he 'would leave it to the representatives of the Brussels Treaty signatories to make the decision since their governments were responsible for these conversations being held.'²⁴⁶ This indicated that Lovett was demanding that the Brussels powers make their initiatives before further progress could be made by the United States government. Reid also agreed that 'the fact that no paper was put before the participants in these talks resulted in diffuses, discussions, confusion – and a slow rate of progress which was probably what the United States wanted.'²⁴⁷

Bevin closely supervised the negotiations through the British delegation, in particular Sir Oliver Franks, the new British Ambassador to the United States who was involved in the NATO negotiations. Bevin was keen to see NATO formed promptly, and as such did his best to overcome these delays. However, the Brussels delegations only realised after

²⁴³ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 149, Minutes of the First Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, 6 July 1948. See also TNA, FO 371/73072/Z 5612/2307/72/G, Washington Exploratory Talks on Security: First Meeting, 6 July 1948.

²⁴⁴ See *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, pp. 148-182 for Minutes of the First Meeting to the Fifth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 6 to July 9, 1948.

²⁴⁵ Reid, *Time of Fear and Hope: The Making of the North Atlantic Treaty, 1947-1949*, p. 55.

²⁴⁶ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 230, Minutes of the Sixth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, 3 September 1948.

²⁴⁷ Reid, *Time of Fear and Hope: The Making of the North Atlantic Treaty, 1947-1949*, p. 55.

the fifth meeting that the US delegates had not put forward any proposals of their own, meaning Bevin could do little to tackle the US' attempts at delay.

The second attempt to delay progress was evident in Lovett's doubt over the military strength of the Brussels powers.²⁴⁸ The powers were not ready to invite the United States observer to London because, as noted by the COS and as was agreed by the Foreign Office, 'it would be premature at this stage for a U.S. observer to attend meetings of the Military Committee.'²⁴⁹ However, since the first meeting of the Washington Talks, Lovett still clung to the question of the Brussels powers' capacity for self-defence. This was evident in the minutes of the meeting which noted that 'self-help and mutual aid, Mr. Lovett said, are the two basic criteria to which he made reference earlier.'²⁵⁰ Insofar as military talks in London were concerned, Lovett expected the Brussels powers would send formal invitations to military observers of the United States, and presumably Canada, since the United States had only 'received informal invitation to send qualified officers.'²⁵¹ Lovett then took the line that:

Before we could deal definitely with Item (4) [Nature of U.S. Association under Vandenberg Resolution with European Security Arrangements],

²⁴⁸ See *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, pp. 153-160 for Minutes of the Second Meeting and the Third Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, July 6 to July 7, 1948. See *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, pp. 228-232, Minutes of the Sixth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, 3 September 1948.

²⁴⁹ TNA, FO 371/73070/Z 4614/2307/72/G, 'Appointment of a U.S. Observer to the Military Committee of the Five Powers', Colonel P.R.M. Waterfield (Ministry of Defence) to Mr J.W. Russell (Foreign Office), 27 May 1948. For a full report about this matter, see 'Extract from confidential annex to COS (48) 72nd Meeting, Minutes 1, Annex – II. Attendance of U.S. Observer', that was attached in this telegram. For the Foreign Office's same respond to this matter, see TNA, FO 371/73070/Z 4614/2307/72/G, 'Appointment of the U.S. Observer to the Military Committee of the Five Powers', Mr J.W. Russell to Colonel P.R.M. Waterfield, 2 June 1948.

²⁵⁰ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 150, Minutes of the First Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, 6 July 1948.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

much more information would be needed on what arrangements had actually been made in Europe. The United States would need the views of its military representatives on their return from London.²⁵²

Lovett's statement was understood by the Foreign Office to mean that no decisions could be reached in the Washington Talks until American military observers had been to London and returned to Washington with a complete picture.²⁵³

Furthermore, because the military capabilities of the Brussels powers were not yet proven, the United States government worried it might over-extend itself. A phrase used in the Senate was that 'the United States could not afford "to re-build a fire trap," in other words, that European security must be rebuilt on a much sounder basis than in the past.'²⁵⁴ In this context, 'Lovett ha[d] emphasised the difficulties which the United States would experience in meeting the requirements of Western Europe for military equipment.'²⁵⁵ Lovett also made 'elaborate circumlocutions' in the early stages of the talks, which some of the other delegates saw as 'a sinister design aimed at giving the Western European countries the illusion but not reality of American support.'²⁵⁶ This vague description of the United States position could be regarded as its third delaying tactic, since the Brussels powers delegations, and particularly the French, continued to

²⁵² *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 155, Minutes of the Second Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, 6 July 1948.

²⁵³ See TNA, FO 371/73072/Z 5616/2307/72/G, 'Security Talks: Meeting on July 6th', From Washington to Foreign Office, 6 July 1948.

²⁵⁴ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 151, Minutes of the First Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, 6 July 1948.

²⁵⁵ TNA, FO 371/73074/Z 6100/2307/72/G, Mr Derick Hoyer Millar (Washington) to Mr Gladwyn Jebb (Foreign Office), 12 July 1948.

²⁵⁶ TNA, FO 371/73074/Z 6140/2307/72/G, 'Comments on the records of the five meetings in Washington on Security matters', Foreign Office memorandum, 28 July 1948.

demand precise wording before the discussions could progress to any other questions.²⁵⁷ This matter was shown in American records as follows:

Mr Hoyer Millar [the British representative] and Mr. Bérard [the French representative] suggested more precise language for Article 3 of the Rio Treaty, which provides that an armed attack against one Party shall be considered as attack against all Parties, and requires each Party to assist in meeting the attack.²⁵⁸

In response to these second and third delaying tactics, Bevin agreed to extend formal invitations to the United States and Canadian governments to send military experts to London.²⁵⁹ Considering that it was still premature for the Brussels powers' self-defence plans to be presented before these military observers, this matter indirectly proved that Bevin was determined to push the US delegates to move faster. He sought to show that the Brussels powers were not bluffing about their own self-defence arrangements. This *démarche* might also nudge the United States government to end its third delaying tactic, since the military arrangements initiated by the Brussels powers indicated that they would not be too dependent on American military assistance.

²⁵⁷ See TNA, FO 371/73075/Z 6630/2307/72/G, 'Association of U.S.A with Western European Regional Security Arrangements', From Washington to Foreign Office, 11 August 1948; TNA, FO 371/73075/Z 6632/2307/72/G, 'French views on Atlantic Pact Proposals: meeting with M. Schumann & possible visit by Mr Jebb to Paris', From Paris to Foreign Office, 14 August 1948; FO 371/73075/Z 6407/2307/72/G, Sir Oliver Franks (Washington) to Foreign Office, 15 August 1948. See also Ireland, p. 103.

²⁵⁸ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 212, Memorandum of the Tenth Meeting of the Working Group Participating in the Washington Exploratory Talks in Security, 12 August 1948.

²⁵⁹ See TNA, FO 371/73072/Z 5616/2307/72/G, 'Security Talks: Meeting on July 6th', From Foreign Office to Washington, 13 July 1948; TNA, FO 371/73072/Z 5616/2307/72/G, 'Security Talks: Meeting on July 6th', From Foreign Office to Washington, 14 July 1948.

The French delegates also caused delays when, in mid-August 1948 Henri Bonnet, the French Ambassador to the United States who participated in the talks, demanded short-term assistance to France from Marshall.²⁶⁰ Bonnet also threatened that ‘the French would only accept an Atlantic security pact on the following three conditions: unity of command at once; immediate movement of US military supplies to France; and immediate movement of US military personnel to France.’²⁶¹ Marshall was furious and decided that no further discussions would be taken until this problem had been settled.²⁶² This French proposal had an adverse effect on Kennan and Bohlen, who once again began to question whether it was necessary to form NATO. According to Henderson, Kennan had stressed that ‘if the French do not want a treaty, we had better drop the idea after all.’²⁶³ For France, the meetings were merely about how to increase European security; hence, it saw the opportunity to secure American aid to Western European countries and itself in particular. Nonetheless, the United States government took France’s demand too seriously, meaning it seems likely that the US State Department officials took advantage of this matter and positioned it as their fourth delaying tactic.

²⁶⁰ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, pp. 208-211 and p. 220. See also TNA, FO 371/73075/Z 6630/2307/72/G, ‘Association of U.S.A with Western European Regional Security Arrangements’, From Washington to Foreign Office, 11 August 1948; TNA, FO 371/73075/Z 7002/2307/72/G, ‘Washington Security Talks: informal meeting between Ambassadors and Mr LOVETT on August 20th’, From Mr Derick Hoyer Millar (Washington) to Mr Gladwyn Jebb (Foreign Office), 20 August 1948; TNA, FO 371/73077/Z 7563/2307/G, ‘Washington Exploratory Talks on Security: 6th Meeting’, Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, Sixth Meeting, 3 September 1948. See also Henderson, pp. 52-53; Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism: Britain and the Formation of NATO, 1942-1949*, p. 105.

²⁶¹ Pearson, memorandum, 20 August 1948, “North Atlantic Security”, NASP., file 283(s), part 2. Cited in Reid, *Time of Fear and Hope: The Making of the North Atlantic Treaty, 1947-1949*, p. 117.

²⁶² See *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, pp. 229-231, Minutes of the Sixth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, 3 September 1948. See also TNA, FO 371/73075/Z 6826/2307/72/G, ‘Discussion on U.S. paper on possible provision of North Atlantic Security Pact’, From Washington to Foreign Office, 17 August 1948.

²⁶³ Henderson, pp. 52-53. See also Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism: Britain and the Formation of NATO, 1942-1949*, p. 105.

To tackle the delay caused by the French, Bevin immediately adopted a diplomacy *démarche* by instructing Jebb to persuade Jean Chauvel, the Secretary-General of the French Foreign Office, and Robert Schuman, the new French Foreign Minister, of the need to distinguish between immediate and long-term security problems.²⁶⁴ This initiative resulted in the French government agreeing to withdraw its demand. Jebb noted that ‘on the instructions of the Secretary of State [Bevin] I went over to Paris on August 23rd and had long conversations first with M. Chauvel and subsequently with M. Schumann and M. Chauvel. These conversations, on the face of them, appear to have been very satisfactory.’²⁶⁵ In volunteering to handle this problem, Bevin proved his determination to push the United States delegates to stop their delaying tactics and allow the discussions to continue.

However, January 1949 was to bring two last-minute problems that dragged the discussions out longer, meaning the convocation of the talks that was expected to be concluded in early February 1949 had to be postponed. These last-minute problems were the issue surrounding Article 2 of the Atlantic treaty and the French government’s demand for Italian membership and the inclusion of Algeria. These new matters were also connected to Marshall and Lovett’s retirement; Acheson succeeded Marshall as the new Secretary of State and replaced Lovett as the new chairman of the Committee of Ambassadors in January 1949.

²⁶⁴ FO 371/73073/Z 5819/2307/72/G, ‘Washington Security Talks and meeting at The Hague of Brussels Treaty Powers: proposed visit of Mr Jebb to Washington’, From Washington to Foreign Office, 16 July 1948. For details about the meeting between Jebb and Chauvel and later Schuman, see TNA, FO 371/73075/Z 6947/2307/72/G, ‘Atlantic Security Pact: conversation between Mr Jebb and M. Chauvel in Paris on August 23rd’, Foreign Office minute, Mr Jebb, Top Secret, 23 August 1948; and TNA, FO 371/73075/Z 6999/2307/72/G, ‘Atlantic Security Pact: conversation between Mr JEBB and M. SCHUMANN on August 24th’, Foreign Office minute, Mr Jebb, Top Secret, 24 August 1948.

²⁶⁵ TNA, FO 371/73075/Z 6947/2307/72/G, ‘Atlantic Security Pact: conversation between Mr Jebb and M. Chauvel in Paris on August 23rd’, From Foreign Office to Washington, 25 August 1948.

Delays regarding Article 2 and Bevin's reaction

Article 2 of the Atlantic treaty concerns the pledge for economic, social and cultural collaboration among the pact members. It was proposed by the Canadian representatives during the Pentagon Talks and was supported by the United States representatives, in particular by Lovett.²⁶⁶ However, the article was opposed by the British government, in particular Bevin. This was due to the fact that Bevin thought 'it would [...] be a mistake to risk duplicating the work of the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) and the Brussels Treaty machinery, which was beginning to work well.'²⁶⁷ However, the rest of the Brussels powers would have no objection to including this article 'if such duplication were clearly avoided.'²⁶⁸ Lester B. Pearson, the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, met Bevin personally and urged him to avoid prolonged discussions about Article 2 based on his opposition to it. Bevin therefore agreed to yield, as he was keen that NATO be formed without delay. Pearson's argument to Bevin was as follows:

²⁶⁶ See PAC, *Reid Papers*, Vol. 6, File 12, Draft of Pentagon Paper, 24 March 1948. Cited in Wiebes and Zeeman, p. 357. See also John A. Munro and Alex I. Inglis (eds.), *Mike: The Memoirs of the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson, Vol. 2 1948-1957* (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1973), p. 44 and p. 46. For the United States' support to this provision, see *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 151 and p. 175, Minutes of the First and Fifth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, 6 July and 9 July 1948.

²⁶⁷ See enclosed memorandum, point no. 2 in TNA, FO 371/73081/Z 9294/2307/72/G, 'Report by U.K. Representative on Permanent Commission on recent negotiations regarding an Atlantic Pact', Top Secret, Z 8974/2307/G, Sir Paul Mason (Foreign Office official) for the Secretary of State (Bevin) to Mr Gladwyn Jebb, 6 November 1948.

²⁶⁸ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 337, Report of the International Working Group to the Ambassador Committee, 'Annex B – Comments on Proposed Articles, Point no. 2: Co-Operation in the Cultural, Economic, and Social Fields', 24 December 1948.

He [Pearson] urged that it would be rash to hold a Conference of Governments until agreement on all the main principles had been reached. What was needed was a draft treaty to which the Conference of Governments could put the finishing touches, and could sign when the details had been agreed. It would be disastrous, he said, to call a Conference and then to find that so much was unsettled that the Government representatives had to separate before a definite agreement had been made. It should be our principal objective to avoid this danger.²⁶⁹

Yet, when Acheson replaced Marshall as Secretary of State and replaced Lovett as the chairman of the Committee of Ambassadors in January 1949 he decided to drop Article 2, claiming 'the Senators were worried about Article 2 as at present worded. It detracted from the main purpose of the Treaty and got involved in social and economic questions which might raise internal political problems.'²⁷⁰ The Canadian government would face 'great political difficulty in Canada if there were no article in the Treaty of a non-military nature.'²⁷¹ Canada therefore sought British government support, because it was thought Article 2 'might well be an invaluable instrument for an approach to a solution of the intractable problems of United Kingdom-Canadian financial relations.'²⁷²

²⁶⁹ TNA, FO 371/73081/Z 9380/2307/72/G, 'Canadian Government's views regarding North Atlantic Pact negotiations', Mr Michael Walker (Commonwealth Relations Office) to Mr J.W. Russell (Western Department of the Foreign Office), Top Secret, F.2075/20 – North Atlantic Pact, 10 November 1948.

²⁷⁰ *FRUS, 1949, Western Europe*, Vol. IV, p. 86, Minutes of the Twelve Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, 8 February 1949.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*

²⁷² TNA, FO 371/79228/Z 1741/1074/72/G, 'North Atlantic Pact: Canadian attitude regarding Article II', Mr Cumming Bruce (Commonwealth Relations Office) to Mr Jebb, 22 February 1949.

Although Bevin was still disinterested in this economic provision, he was however willing to compromise with Canada over Article 2 because of the delay that this matter might have brought to the conclusion of the NATO treaty. This was shown in Bevin's letter to Sir Oliver Franks, British ambassador to the United States and British representative in the NATO talks, as follows:

I [Bevin] agree that some wording on the lines suggested by the Canadians might prove of great value, but it is hardly surprising that the Americans should be chary about accepting a clause the object of which is to commit them to giving assistance in regard to Anglo-Canadian trade. You [Sir Oliver Franks] should give as much support as you can to the Canadian proposal, but I do not regard this as a point on which we ought to hold out if there is any risk of it causing a delay in the signature of the Pact. You may if you wish so inform your Canadian colleague.²⁷³

It is clear that the prospect of delay was Bevin's main concern when he agreed not to oppose the inclusion of Article 2. This matter was also agreed upon by Baylis, who stated that 'the Canadians obviously felt that the issue was so important that the British government was reluctant to jeopardise the treaty at this late stage by continuing their opposition to what was regarded as a minor issue.'²⁷⁴

²⁷³ TNA, FO 371/79228/Z 1741/1074/72/G, 'North Atlantic Pact: Canadian attitude regarding Article II', From Foreign Office to Washington, 24 February 1949.

²⁷⁴ Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism: Britain and the Formation of NATO, 1942-1949*, p. 112.

Acheson eventually accepted Article 2 as part of the treaty after the British government and the Brussels powers unanimously gave their support to it, because the 'inclusion of such an article would render Pact more acceptable to public opinion.'²⁷⁵ His acceptance was also driven by the fact that Humphrey Hume Wrong, the Canadian representative and Canadian Ambassador to the United States, told Acheson 'that unless we get an article on these lines in the treaty the Canadian government would have to review its position towards the whole project.'²⁷⁶

Soon after the problem with Article 2 was resolved, the French representatives caused another delay by refusing to accept Acheson's new decision to retract US support for the inclusion of Italy in NATO. The French demanded the inclusion of Italy, as well as Algeria, and linked these demands to Norwegian membership. This matter impelled the Committee of Ambassadors to discuss the issues again, posing another last-minute delay to the conclusion of the NATO treaty.

Prolonged discussion and last-minute delays regarding Italian membership and Bevin's reaction

Italian membership was proposed by Hickerson, the United States representative, during the first meeting of the Pentagon Talks. At that time, in April 1948, the Italian Communist Party looked likely to win the Italian general election. Hickerson said that

²⁷⁵ TNA, FO 371/79228/Z 1741/1074/72/G, 'North Atlantic Pact: Canadian attitude regarding Article II', From Commonwealth Relations Office to UK High Commissioner in Canada, No. 219, Top Secret and Personal – North Atlantic Pact, 22 February 1949.

²⁷⁶ Wrong, statement, 25 February 1949, "North Atlantic Security Pact", NASP., file 283(s), part 7. Cited in Baylis, *The Diplomacy of Pragmatism: Britain and the Formation of NATO, 1942-1949*, p. 112.

'Italy, more even than Norway, is now most directly menaced.'²⁷⁷ Hickerson's proposal for Italian membership was supported by his fellow colleagues, such as Ambassador Douglas, Achilles, General Grunther (representing Forrestal) and George Butler (representing Kennan). All believed a country like Italy, which was facing 'political change favourable to an aggressor', should be given the necessary assistance in order to preserve its 'territorial integrity and political independence'²⁷⁸

The inclusion of Italy in NATO was seen by these United States officials as giving practical aid to Italy. They stated that 'such [an] invitation prior to the Italian elections on April 18 would be of assistance to him [De Gasperi, Prime Minister of Italy] in the election campaign.'²⁷⁹ However, the British representative, Lord Inverchapel, worried that Bevin would not agree to Italian membership, reporting back to Bevin that 'I fear that the results of this discussion may not seem altogether satisfactory to you.'²⁸⁰ Lord Inverchapel was aware that Bevin preferred for Italy to be grouped in a Mediterranean system together with Greece and Turkey.²⁸¹

Although Bevin would rather include Italy in a Mediterranean pact, he was however willing to compromise. He therefore replied to Lord Inverchapel saying 'I am

²⁷⁷ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 61, Minutes of the First Meeting of the United States-United Kingdom-Canada Security Conversations, 22 March 1948.

²⁷⁸ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 63, Report Prepared by the Policy Planning Staff Concerning Western Union and Related Problems, 'The Problem: The Position of the United States with respect to Western Union and related problems', 23 March 1948.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid*, p. 62, Report Prepared by the Policy Planning Staff Concerning Western Union and Related Problems, 'The Problem: The Position of the United States with respect to Western Union and related problems', 23 March 1948.

²⁸⁰ TNA, FO 371/68067/AN 1276/1195/45G, 'Atlantic Security Talks: First meeting of Group on March 22', From Washington to Foreign Office, 22 March 1948.

²⁸¹ See TNA, FO 371/71458/N 3001/3001/63/G, 'Establishment of an Atlantic Security System', From Foreign Office to Washington, 10 March 1948. See also TNA, FO 371/68067/AN 1274/1195/45G, 'Atlantic Security: Conversation with Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs', Conversation with the Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs, 15 March 1948.

disappointed at [the] American attitude, but I agree that our best course is to explore the possibilities and endeavour in the process to push the Americans along.'²⁸² Bevin's reaction to this matter of Italian membership implied that he was keen for the talks to run smoothly so that the Atlantic pact could be formed as soon as possible. Thereafter, the British delegation took the following position: 'we have also agreed, on strong American insistence, to do our best, with their support, to extend the full Brussels system to Scandinavia and if possible also to Italy.'²⁸³

When the NATO talks were resumed in July 1948, the United States no longer wanted Italy in NATO because the Communists were soundly defeated in the Italian general election.²⁸⁴ This decisive shift over Italian membership was made by Marshall, Lovett, Senator John Foster Dulles and Senator Vandenberg when they met two days after the Italian general election. They all 'felt that the inclusion of Italy, unless it had theretofore become a member of the Brussels pact, would be a mistake since it would destroy the natural geographic basis of the North Atlantic area.'²⁸⁵ According to Lovett, if Italy was included, the Atlantic community 'would get out of the North Atlantic and begin to get into a mid-European, Near Eastern or Mediterranean group.'²⁸⁶ Kennan, who had been absent during the Pentagon Talks, also agreed with his fellow officials' opinion and

²⁸² TNA, FO 371/68067/AN 1276/1195/45G, 'Atlantic Security Talks: First meeting of Group on March 22', From Foreign Office to Washington, 24 March 1948.

²⁸³ TNA, FO 371/68067/AN 1315/1195/45G, 'Atlantic Security Talks: proposed American working paper', From Washington to Foreign Office, 24 March 1948.

²⁸⁴ See TNA, FO 371/73075/Z 6948/2307/72/G, 'Security Talks: question of inclusion of Italy in Western European and North Atlantic Pact', From Washington to Foreign Office, 26 August 1948; TNA, FO 371/73075/Z 6948/2307/72/G, 'Security Talks: question of inclusion of Italy in Western European and North Atlantic Pact', From Foreign Office to Washington, 30 August 1948. See also Reid, *Time of Fear and Hope: The Making of the North Atlantic Treaty, 1947-1949*, p. 201.

²⁸⁵ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 107, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Under Secretary of State (Lovett), 27 April 1948.

²⁸⁶ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 179, Minutes of the Fifth Meeting of the Washington Talks Exploratory Talks on Security, 9 July 1948.

stressed that membership of NATO must be confined 'strictly to the North Atlantic area.'²⁸⁷ Kennan argued that 'it was most important to avoid doing anything which might tend to split Europe into two halves and thus make more difficult the eventual achievement of [a] European federation.'²⁸⁸

This new US stance on Italian membership was supported by the rest of the Brussels powers representatives in the Washington Talks. The British representatives argued that their Foreign Secretary believed Italy would demand the return of some of its former colonies, as well as some revisions to the Italian peace treaty as its price for entering NATO. In Bevin's letter to Sir Oliver Franks, Bevin said:

I have given very careful consideration to this whole question of the inclusion of Italy in the Atlantic Pact. [...] And whilst I am on this point I may say that I am disturbed at Mr. Dewey's public engagements to support the return of all the Italian colonies. If he has his way, Italy's destiny will be so linked with the Middle East that she should more appropriately join a Mediterranean than an Atlantic Pact [...] you should say that I cannot now agree to the inclusion of Italy.²⁸⁹

Other representatives, for example the French, asserted that their governments believed Italy 'should belong to another defensive system covering both shores of the

²⁸⁷ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 225, Memorandum by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kennan) to the Under Secretary of State (Lovett), 31 August 1948.

²⁸⁸ TNA, FO 371/73075/Z 6948/2307/72/G, 'Security Talks: question of inclusion of Italy in Western European and North Atlantic Pact', From Washington to Foreign Office, 26 August 1948.

²⁸⁹ TNA, FO 371/73075/Z 6948/2307/72/G, 'Security Talks: question of inclusion of Italy in Western European and North Atlantic Pact', From Foreign Office to Washington, 30 August 1948.

Mediterranean and extending to Persian Gulf and Northern Iran frontier.'²⁹⁰ In a similar manner, the Netherlands Ambassador to the United States who representative at the talks said 'that his government feared that membership in the Atlantic pact might be so widened that certain countries, particularly Italy, would be included which were more of a liability than an asset.'²⁹¹ It seemed that all delegations in the Washington Talks had unanimously agreed to Italian exclusion from NATO. Yet Hickerson, who initially suggested Italian membership, was 'very unhappy at the idea of leaving Italy out' and 'felt that to exclude Italy would have a most unfortunate effect on the Italian political situation, and would encourage Italy to turn to the East rather than to the West, etc.'²⁹²

However, during the December 1948 meetings, the issue of Italian membership was raised again when French representatives 'said that their Government strongly favoured the inclusion of Italy.'²⁹³ This issue was complicated further when the French representatives demanded the extension of the Atlantic pact to Algeria, since 'it would be extremely difficult for France to leave part of its metropolitan territory out of the area. Algeria was a part of France and in the same relation to France as Alaska or Florida to the United States.'²⁹⁴ The British representative, Jebb, thought that the French government's support for Italian membership was merely a bid to get Algeria into

²⁹⁰ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 143, The Ambassador in France (Caffery) to the Secretary of State, Paris, 29 June 1948.

²⁹¹ Pearson, memorandum, 20 August 1948, "North Atlantic Security Pact", NASP., file 283(s), part 2. Cited in Reid, *Time of Fear and Hope: The Making of the North Atlantic Treaty, 1947-1949*, p. 201. See also TNA, FO 371/73075/ Z 6948/2307/72/G, 'Security Talks: question of inclusion of Italy in Western European and North Atlantic Pact', From Washington to Foreign Office, 26 August 1948.

²⁹² TNA, FO 371/73075/Z 6948/2307/72/G, 'Security Talks: question of inclusion of Italy in Western European and North Atlantic Pact', From Washington to Foreign Office, 26 August 1948.

²⁹³ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 341, Report of the International Working Group to the Ambassadors' Committee, 24 December 1948. For an outline of arguments in favour of including Italy, see the same *FRUS*, p. 340.

²⁹⁴ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 325, Minutes of the Tenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks, 22 December 1948.

NATO, believing it would enhance 'the solidarity between them and their allies in the event of any nationalist movement in Algeria being stimulated by the Russians or the Arabs, or both.'²⁹⁵

With regard to Italian membership, only the British and Canadian representatives remained against the inclusion of Italy.²⁹⁶ The rest of the Brussels powers weren't adamant in their opposition to Italian membership. The Belgian representatives, for example, said that 'their Government was not opposed in principle to the inclusion of Italy if this were favoured by the other Governments.'²⁹⁷ On the United States' side, Lovett 'said that the United States had no firm position at the present time';²⁹⁸ hence, he 'referred the question to Mr. Kennan.'²⁹⁹ Yet Kennan had strongly resisted Italian membership, stating earlier in November 1948 that 'the Policy Planning Staff is of the opinion that the scope of a pact of this sort should be restricted to the North Atlantic area itself, and that attempts to go further afield and to include countries beyond that area might have undesirable consequences.'³⁰⁰ Kennan therefore firmly stated that Italy would not become an original member of NATO, but rather it was preferable for Italy to

²⁹⁵ TNA, FO 371/79222/Z 444/1074/72/G, 'North Atlantic Pact: 1) Participation of Italy and inclusion of Algeria', Foreign Office minute, 11 January 1949; TNA, PREM 8/1379/Part 1/PM/48/122, Top Secret, 31 December 1948.

²⁹⁶ See *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 341, Report of the International Working Group to the Ambassadors' Committee, 24 December 1948. For the outline of arguments for the exclusion of Italy, see the same *FRUS*, pp. 340-341.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁸ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 330, Minutes of the Tenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks, 22 December 1948.

²⁹⁹ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 332, Minutes of the Tenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks, 22 December 1948.

³⁰⁰ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 285-286, Memorandum by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kennan), 'Enclosure: Considerations Affecting the Conclusion of A North Atlantic Security Pact – 2. The territorial scope of the pact', 24 November 1948.

hold 'simultaneous association in some mutually acceptable form with the Brussels and Atlantic Pacts.'³⁰¹

However, during the January 1949 meetings, the Committee of Ambassadors unanimously agreed to include Italy in NATO. This decision was the result of Hickerson's initiative in the period between Lovett's retirement³⁰² and Acheson's appointment as new Secretary of State and chairman of the Committee of Ambassadors. Hickerson sent a message expressing US support for Italian membership to the Permanent Commission of the Brussels powers in Lovett's name, despite the fact that Lovett had already left the State Department on 19 January 1949. The message noted that the 'US position remains substantially as stated Annex C Dec 24 but we would accept Italian inclusion in Council of Europe as sufficient evidence of close Italian ties with Brussels Treaty countries to warrant inclusion of Italy in Atlantic Pact.'³⁰³ Hickerson's message was passed to the Commission through Paul-Henri Spaak, the Belgian Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. According to Alan Goodrich Kirk, the United States Ambassador to Belgium, Spaak 'wondered how [the United States] proposed a draft pact providing for Italian inclusion. He [Spaak] said, however, [...] if we [the United States] feel strongly that Italian inclusion is essential he will certainly not oppose it.'³⁰⁴ Given that the United States and the rest of the Brussels powers supported Italian membership, the British

³⁰¹ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 342, Report of the International Working Group to the Ambassadors' Committee, 24 December 1948.

³⁰² In 1976, Hickerson himself told Reid that if Acheson had not replaced Lovett, Italy would not have become an original member of NATO. See Hickerson to Reid, letter, 21 January 1976, personal communication. Cited in Reid, *Time of Fear and Hope: The Making of the North Atlantic Treaty, 1947-1949*, p. 211.

³⁰³ *FRUS, 1949, Western Europe*, Vol. IV, p. 40, The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Belgium, 19 January 1949.

³⁰⁴ *FRUS, 1949, Western Europe*, Vol. IV, pp. 43-44, The Ambassador in Belgium (Kirk) to the Secretary of State, Brussels, 22 January 1949.

government therefore took the same position.³⁰⁵ This matter indicated that, regarding the issue of Italian membership, Bevin had once again acted tolerantly and in doing so proved his determination to form NATO without further delay.

However, the United States changed its mind again when Acheson, the new chairman of the Committee of Ambassadors, spoke out against the decision to include Italy in NATO during the February 1949 meetings. Acheson said 'it would be well if the question of Italian membership could be deferred until the treaty had been ratified. United States government would prefer not to have to carry the burden of Italy through the debates in the Senate ratification.'³⁰⁶ Acheson also argued that 'if Italy were brought in, Greece, Turkey, Iran and other countries might claim to be only slightly removed.'³⁰⁷ It seems, therefore, that US diplomacy suffered from a lack of consistency over Italian membership. However, it is worth remembering here that the United States' message of support for Italian membership a month earlier had been sent to the Brussels powers by Hickerson, without first consulting Acheson. This explains the change in the United States' position regarding Italian membership at this stage. Acheson's new proposal to exclude Italy was supported by all representatives, except Bonnet, the French representative.

³⁰⁵ See *FRUS, 1949, Western Europe*, Vol. IV, p. 53, The Ambassador in France (Caffery) to the Secretary of State, 31 January 1949. See also Washington Embassy to Department of External Affairs, 24 January 1949, WA 189, "North Atlantic Security Pact", NASP., file 283(s), part 6. Cited in Reid, *Time of Fear and Hope: The Making of the North Atlantic Treaty, 1947-1949*, p. 206.

³⁰⁶ See Minutes of Ambassadors' Committee, 25 February 1949, "North Atlantic Security Pact", NASP., file 283(s), part 7. Cited in Reid, *Time of Fear and Hope: The Making of the North Atlantic Treaty, 1947-1949*, p. 206. In *FRUS, 1949, Western Europe*, Vol. IV, p. 123 it was mentioned in footnote number 3 that Minutes of the Thirteenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security are not printed and they are in Department of State file No. 840.20/2-2549.

³⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

It could be argued that Acheson's decision to postpone the inclusion of Italy was a catalyst for the French government to react against it, thereby causing a last-minute delay to the conclusion of the NATO treaty. The French government wanted Italy in NATO because it would give a strong precedent to make the claim for Algerian inclusion. As reported in the American documents, 'Bonnet in extraordinary exhibition insisted that all govts [*sic*] under consideration as prospective members particularly Italy be invited simultaneously.'³⁰⁸ Bonnet said that his government would only accept Norway in NATO if Italy and Algeria were also included. This matter was recorded as follows:

The attitude the French adopted at yesterday's meeting, in suddenly linking Norway and Italy and saying that Norway could not be invited to join the talks unless a similar invitation was extended to Italy, has created a deep and unfortunate impression on the Americans from Acheson down. They are resentful of tactics which they regard as near blackmail and which are wounding to their moral sense. The Canadian Ambassador feels equally strongly on this subject.³⁰⁹

The discussions became yet more difficult when Bonnet said that 'the French Government would have to reconsider its position as far as its own participation was concerned' if Norway was included without Italy and Algeria.³¹⁰ The French government's threat to withdraw its participation was regarded as serious. The

³⁰⁸ *FRUS, 1949, Western Europe*, Vol. IV, p. 123, The Secretary of State to the Embassy in France, 25 February 1949.

³⁰⁹ TNA, FO 371/79229/Z 1778/1074/72/G, 'North Atlantic Pact: French attitude regarding inclusion of Italy and Norway', From Washington to Foreign Office, 26 February 1949.

³¹⁰ *FRUS, 1949, Western Europe*, Vol. IV, p. 129, Minutes of Fourteenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, 1 March 1949.

Committee of Ambassadors therefore agreed to include Algeria in the NATO pledge in order to secure Norwegian membership.³¹¹ The British Ambassador, Franks, sought Bevin's help and asserted that 'anything you can do to help to sort this out [the French linking Norway and Italy] would be a real contribution to a speedy conclusion.'³¹² Bevin's reply to Franks was as follows:

The French, however, have demanded – and rightly so I think – that the question of Italy should now be decided one way or the other. Our line is, broadly speaking, the same as it has always been, namely that we ourselves are not (repeat not) keen on Italy acceding to the Pact, but that if both the Americans and the French insist we should not raise objections.³¹³

It seemed that, at this late stage, Bevin was determined not to jeopardise the Atlantic pact treaty by continuing his opposition to Italian membership. Besides Bevin, US higher authorities such as President Truman, Senator Vandenberg, Senator Tom Connally and Senator Walter F. George were also concerned about the delay in concluding the treaty when Acheson approached them for advice on Italian membership.³¹⁴ Acheson noted

³¹¹ See *Ibid.*, p. 131, Minutes of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, 1 March 1949.

³¹² TNA, FO 371/79229/Z 1778/1074/72G, 'North Atlantic Pact: French attitude regarding inclusion of Italy and Norway', From Washington to Foreign Office, 26 February 1949.

³¹³ TNA, FO 371/79229/Z 1807/1074/72G, 'North Atlantic Pact: discussion between officials of State Department and French Embassy on subject of Italy and Norway', From Foreign Office to Washington, 1 March 1949.

³¹⁴ For record of Acheson's meeting with the President, see *FRUS, 1949, Western Europe*, Vol. IV, p. 125, Memorandum of Conversation, by Secretary of State: Meeting with the President, 28 February 1949. For record of Acheson's meeting with the Senators, see Memorandum, 28 February 1949, signed by Acheson on "conversation with Senators Connally, George and Vandenberg", Department of State, file No. 840.20/2-2849.

'the President and the Senators thought that it would be dangerous to delay further the drafting of the terms of the Treaty and the publication of the Treaty once agreed.'³¹⁵

Since the possibility of delay was one of the main issues of concern to Acheson's higher authorities, all representatives in the Committee of Ambassadors acknowledged their support and officially accepted Italian membership during the 1 and 4 March 1949 meetings.³¹⁶ After a year of painful debate over the question of membership, Italy, which had originally been considered for a Mediterranean system along with Greece and Turkey, eventually became an original member of NATO. To avoid Greece and Turkey demanding the same NATO membership, the United States and Britain agreed to assure both countries that the negotiations for an Atlantic Pact did not imply any lessening of American and British interest in Greek and Turkish security.³¹⁷

To conclude, the complex process that had to be undertaken in regard to Italian membership strengthens the 'delay' thesis. The issue of Italy and other delays had apparently ruined Bevin's aim for NATO to be formed as soon as possible. In order to tackle these obstacles, Bevin had repeatedly compromised with the US, Canadian and French governments when they used delaying tactics, insisted on Article 2 and demanded Italian membership. The question of Italian membership also showed that

³¹⁵ See *FRUS, 1949, Western Europe*, Vol. IV, pp. 128-129, Minutes of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, 1 March 1949.

³¹⁶ See *Ibid.*, pp. 126-135, Minutes of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, 1 March 1949. See *FRUS, 1949, Western Europe*, Vol. IV, p. 151, Minutes of the Fifteenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, March 4, 1949.

³¹⁷ See *FRUS, 1949, Western Europe*, Vol. IV, pp. 175-176, Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (Satterthwaite) to the Secretary of State, 'Subject: Declaration on Greece, Turkey and Iran', 8 March 1949. See also TNA, FO 371/78459/R 3193/1072/19, Athens to Foreign Office, 21 March 1949; TNA, PREM 8/1379/Part 1/2629, From Foreign Office to Washington, 7 March 1949.

the French government made considerable efforts to secure Italian inclusion in NATO. The fact that Bevin did not do the same for Greece and Turkey, despite both countries being of great strategic value to Britain, suggests there must be an additional reason for Bevin's decision not to include them in NATO's initial negotiations. This additional reason will be discussed in the next section.

Delays and the Cyprus issue: Bevin's negative attitude towards Greek and Turkish membership

It is interesting to highlight here that, at the beginning of Bevin's initiative for a new security arrangement of the WU, he had considered including Greece in this union. This was evident in his Third Force Memos in January 1948, in which he noted that 'I believe therefore that we should seek to form with the backing of the Americas and the Dominions a Western democratic system comprising, if possible, Scandinavia, the Low Countries, France, Portugal, Italy and Greece.'³¹⁸ Considering that countries of the WU were to be absorbed into NATO, it seems that Greece initially had potential to be a member of NATO. However, Bevin no longer considered Greece when he proposed an Atlantic pact in March 1948.³¹⁹

During a conversation between Lange, the Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Bevin, in which the former sought clarification about the Atlantic pact, Bevin had mentioned the third system saying 'that we should work out a Mediterranean security

³¹⁸ TNA, CAB 129/23, CP (48) 6, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 4 January 1948.

³¹⁹ See TNA, FO 371/71458/N 3001/3001/63/G, 'Establishment of an Atlantic Security System', From Foreign Office to Washington, 10 March 1948.

system affecting Italy, Turkey, &c.³²⁰ Although Bevin only mentioned Italy and Turkey, it was understood that Greece would also be included in this third Mediterranean pact system. This was due to three factors: all were Mediterranean countries; a Mediterranean pact was originally proposed by Turkey;³²¹ and, the security affairs of Greece and Turkey were invariably treated in a fraternal way.³²² It was therefore better that both countries be included in or excluded from any security system. Since Bevin preferred Greece and Turkey to be grouped in the third system of a Mediterranean pact, the British representatives did not suggest that Greece and Turkey be included in NATO during the Pentagon Talks, even though they had a chance to do so when Hickerson decided to include Italy in NATO as opposed to a Mediterranean pact.³²³

It is worth noting here that Greece and Turkey would be taken into account when the three representatives of the United States, Britain and Canada in the Pentagon Talks discussed Italian membership. According to Achilles, who was involved in the negotiations, of all the countries considered eligible to join NATO, Italy was the most controversial and most opposed by various governments. This was because it went 'beyond the strictly "Atlantic" framework; [...] thereby opening the gates for other nations to apply' such as Greece, Turkey, Germany and Spain.³²⁴ A number of factors meant that Bevin could have followed Hickerson and made the claim for Greek and Turkish NATO membership: both were of great importance to British strategic interests

³²⁰ TNA, FO 371/68067/AN 1274/1195/45G, 'Atlantic Security: Conversation with Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs', Conversation with the Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs, 15 March 1948.

³²¹ See TNA, FO 371/67276/R11125/68/44, From Sir Noel Charles (the British Ambassador to Turkey) to Foreign Office, 7 August 1947; TNA, FO 371/67276/R11125/68/44, From Foreign Office to the British Embassy in Rome, 12 September 1947.

³²² See Chapter One of this dissertation, pp. 56-58.

³²³ See *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 61, Minutes of the First Meeting of the United States-United Kingdom-Canada Security Conversations, 22 March 1948.

³²⁴ Achilles, 'US Role in Negotiations that Led to Atlantic Alliance, Part 2', p. 16.

and were experiencing Soviet threats, thus meeting the criteria for NATO membership.³²⁵ Both were also interested in joining NATO³²⁶ and were similar to Italy in regard to their geographical location and proposed membership in the Mediterranean system. What is more, given that Bevin was initially disinterested in Turkey's proposal for a Mediterranean pact,³²⁷ he could have dismissed the third system plan by inviting Greece and Turkey to join NATO. Nevertheless, Bevin was consistent in his preference for a Mediterranean pact.

This position became stronger when all the representatives in the summer Washington Talks agreed that Italy would be included in the Mediterranean system after the Communists were soundly defeated in the Italian general election. When Hickerson, who favoured including Italy in NATO, expressed his objection to this decision during the

³²⁵ TNA, CAB 129/23, CP (48) 6, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 'The First Aim of British Foreign Policy', 4 January 1948; TNA, FO 371/68067/AN 1276/1195/45/G, 'Atlantic Security Talks: First meeting of Group, 22 to 24 March 1948', From Washington to Foreign Office, 22 March 1948.

³²⁶ Due to Bevin's 'Western Union' speech in the House of Commons on 22 January 1948, Turkey became aware that the West would arrange a new Western Defence Pact. Sir David V. Kelly, the British Ambassador to Angora (Turkey), informed the Foreign Office that the President of Turkey was impressed by Bevin's speech and Ankara had already started considering that Turkey should press to participate in it. See TNA, FO 371/72534/R 1270/114/44, Sir D. Kelly to Foreign Office, 28 January 1948.

³²⁷ Turkey proposed a Mediterranean pact in early March 1947 due to its anxiety over a possible southward expansion of the Soviet Union's military and ideological power. However, there was no response from the Foreign Office and Foreign Secretary Bevin to this proposal and no further discussion took place on this matter. See TNA, FO 371/67276/R11125/68/44, Sir Noel Charles (British Ambassador to Turkey) to Foreign Office, 7 August 1947; TNA, FO 371/67276/R11125/68/44, Foreign Office to the British Embassy in Rome, 12 September 1947. It is arguable that Bevin believed it was not the right time to form a new security pact while Britain was struggling with its economic matters. Moreover, Bevin had just concluded the Treaty of Dunkirk between Britain and France on 4 March 1947, an alliance to address a re-awakening of German aggression. See Athanassopoulou, *Turkey – Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945-1952: The First Enlargement of NATO*, p. 68; Duff Cooper, *Old Men Forget* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1953), pp. 359-373. Hence, Bevin's utmost security priority was the Western European countries, rather than the Mediterranean countries of Greece and Turkey. Bevin, however, revived the plan for this pact when Turkey acknowledged its interest in joining the new Western Defence Pact announced by Bevin in January 1948. See footnote 251 of this chapter. At this point, Iran and Italy were also considered by Bevin for inclusion in this pact. Bevin promised Turkey that he would ensure the arrangement for a Mediterranean Pact as soon as NATO was successfully formed and, most importantly, when the time was opportune. See TNA, FO 800/502/Part 2, Review on the situation in Turkey – B. Eastern Mediterranean Bloc, 28 July 1948; TNA, FO 371/78329/R 2889/1072/67, Minutes by William Strang, 8 March 1949.

meeting in August 1948,³²⁸ the British representatives said it was impossible to include Italy without Greece and Turkey and that a Mediterranean system was the best option for these three countries rather than the Atlantic system.³²⁹ Up to this point, the geographical issue and the prospect of a Mediterranean pact appeared as the obvious reasons influencing Bevin and the Foreign Office's denial of Greek and Turkish membership in NATO.³³⁰ However, we should remember that Italy was one of the original members of NATO when the treaty was signed on 4 April 1949. Thus, these two aforementioned arguments could be challenged with the example of Italy. Since Italy was the only country that slipped out of the Mediterranean system, it appears there must be another explanation for Greece and Turkey being left behind. It should be noted here that a Mediterranean pact had never been established. Although Bevin had promised to pursue it after NATO was successfully formed,³³¹ it remained on paper until it was dismissed completely in 1951. This study believes the dispute between Greece and Turkey over the future of Cyprus could be the reason why these two countries were left out of NATO.

Since this study argues that the issue of Cyprus is a contributory reason for Bevin's decision to leave Greece and Turkey out of NATO, it is worth touching briefly on the

³²⁸ See TNA, FO 371/73075/Z 6948/2307/72/G, 'Security Talks: question of inclusion of Italy in Western European and North Atlantic Pact', From Washington to Foreign Office, 26 August 1948.

³²⁹ See TNA, FO 371/73077/Z 7564/2307/72/G, 'Present state of discussion in Washington on a Treaty for the defence of the North Atlantic Area', Foreign Office minute by Mr Jebb, Secret, 9 September 1948. See also TNA, retrieved from Brotherton Library, FO 800/454/Def/48/58, Record of Conversation between Secretary of State and French Minister of Defence in Paris, on 25th September, 1948. Later during the meeting of Committee of Ambassadors in December 1948, Sir Oliver Franks expressed his view (which was also his government's view) that a Mediterranean pact was the most suitable system for Italy, Greece and Turkey. See *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 329, Minutes of the Tenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks, 22 December 1948.

³³⁰ For literature covering these arguments, see the introduction of this dissertation, p. 19 and footnotes 19, 20 and 21.

³³¹ See TNA, FO 800/502/Part 2, Review on the situation in Turkey – B. Eastern Mediterranean Bloc, 28 July 1948; TNA, FO 371/78329/R 2889/1072/67, Minutes by William Strang, 8 March 1949.

background of this issue. Historically, when Greece and Turkey had quarrelled over Cyprus, the island was still under British rule due to its status as a British Crown Colony since 1925. Initially, the Cyprus dispute was a conflict between the British government and the people of Cyprus, due to the latter's demand for self-determination. However, this friction eventually shifted from a colonial dispute to an ethnic dispute between the people of the island themselves, namely the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots. These two ethnic groups became rivals because they had different ideas on the future settlement of Cyprus. The Greek Cypriots demanded that Cyprus be united with Greece, famously referred to as *enosis*.³³² Yet the Turkish Cypriots preferred Cyprus to be annexed to Turkey, instead of forming a union with Greece. The Turkish Cypriots strongly believed that Cyprus belonged to Turkey, since it had been part of the Ottoman Empire prior to British rule. However, because of the small number of Turkish Cypriots compared to the Greek Cypriots, the Turkish Cypriots changed their aim from annexation to a partition of the island, known as *taksim*.³³³ Since then, the Cyprus dispute was understood as a problem of opposing nationalisms between these two major populations inhabiting the island of Cyprus. This ethnic dispute became more complicated when both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots dragged their mother countries, Greece and Turkey, into the conflict.³³⁴ Greece became involved and

³³² *Enosis* was the Greek Cypriots' aspiration for a union with Greece. The idea for *enosis* dates back to the creation of the modern Greek state in 1830. It became a political issue when the British took control of Cyprus in 1878. Under Ottoman rule, its propagation had not been allowed. The Greek Cypriots saw the change from Ottoman to British rule as a first step towards the achievement of *enosis*. See Joseph S. Joseph, *Cyprus: Ethnic Conflict and International Politics: From Independence to the Threshold of the European Union* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), pp. 171-172.

³³³ See Monteagle Stearns, *Entangled Allies: U.S. Policy Toward Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1992), p. 109.

³³⁴ Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots look to Greece and Turkey respectively as their protector. See Crawshaw, p. 45.

supported Greek Cypriots and their *enosis* movement in July 1948.³³⁵ Turkey, meanwhile, intervened in the Cyprus dispute later than Greece, in November 1948, due to massive pressure from the press and the public in Turkey.³³⁶ As a consequence of Greece and Turkey's intervention in Cyprus, the issue quickly became a contentious matter and affected the inter-governmental relationship between them.

By the time the Turkish government decided to help the Turkish Cypriots combat *enosis*, the US presidential election of 1948 had just ended and the Committee of Ambassadors was due to resume NATO negotiations. The Turkish government sent a formal request for inclusion in the Atlantic pact to both the British and the United States governments in late November 1948.³³⁷ It is worth mentioning here that, earlier in October 1948, Necmettin Sadak, the Turkish Foreign Minister, had approached Bevin, Marshall and Roberts (Bevin's Private Secretary) to enquire whether the questions of a Mediterranean pact and Turkish accession to NATO had been considered at the meeting of the Brussels treaty powers.³³⁸ For the former, both governments replied that 'it was

³³⁵ Initially, starting from mid-1947, the Greek government slowly disengaged from the Greek Cypriots and the question of *enosis* because it was reluctant to jeopardise its relationship with Britain by asking for Cyprus. See Evanthis Hatzivassiliou, *Britain and the International Status of Cyprus, 1955–59* (United States of America: University of Minnesota, 1997), p. 10. However, the United States' support for *enosis* had boosted Greece's confidence to fight for Cyprus from Britain, hence explaining Greece's decision to intervene in the Cyprus dispute in mid-1948. See Crawshaw, p. 36.

³³⁶ The commentators of the press, namely *Hurriyet*, demanded that the island of Cyprus be returned to Turkey, not Greece. Therefore, when the Turkish government appeared hesitant in assisting Turkish Cypriots in Cyprus, it was harshly criticised by this press. Turkey was seen by Turkish Cypriots as their protector and also the best guarantor to prevent *enosis* from happening. Thus, the press in Turkey believed that the Turkish government was obliged to help Turkish Cypriots in the dispute in Cyprus. In November, a Turkish Cypriot delegation visited President Inonu and he was reported to have reassured them that Turkey was concerned about the future of Cyprus. Clearly, the Turkish government made a promise that it would help Turkish Cypriots resist *enosis*. See Crawshaw, p. 45.

³³⁷ TNA, FO 371/72535/R 13409/114/44, 'Turkish request for inclusion in the Atlantic pact', From Angora to Foreign Office, 26 November 1948. See also *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, pp. 294–295, The Ambassador in Turkey (Wadsworth) to the Secretary of State, 26 November 1948.

³³⁸ See TNA, FO 371/72535/R 11559/114/44, 'Request for copy of conversation between Secretary of State and Turkish Foreign Minister in Paris', Mr John Wilson (Istanbul) to Mr I. Porter (Foreign Office of Southern Department), 6 October 1948; *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 294, The Ambassador in

better to leave the question of a Mediterranean pact until after the American elections.³³⁹ With regard to the latter, Roberts 'said that this was not of course a question of direct interest to the Benelux Powers and that as far as I knew it had not therefore been discussed among the Five Powers.'³⁴⁰ Due to the fact that the prospect of a Mediterranean pact was vague, the Turkish government, afraid that communism might make gains in Asia and consequently affect Turkey,³⁴¹ decided it wanted to join the Atlantic pact instead. Greece took the same move. This was evident when the Greek Ambassador, Vassili Dendramis, approached the US State Department and expressed his government's enthusiasm to be included in the Atlantic pact.³⁴²

The significance of these Greek and Turkish requests for inclusion in NATO in late 1948 is twofold: firstly, it came when the Committee of Ambassadors became tangled in the question of Italian membership, leading the discussions to become protracted. Secondly, Greece and Turkey were in a bitter disagreement over Cyprus. These two issues are believed by this study to be additional factors that influenced Bevin's

Turkey (Wadsworth) to the Secretary of State, Ankara, 26 November 1948. See footnote 1 which states that Marshall had a conversation with Necmettin Sadak on November 9, 1948 and reported to the State Department in Marshall's telegram Delga 684 of November 10, 1948, not printed (840.20/11-1048); See TNA, FO 371/72535/R 12342/114/44, 'Conversation in Paris between Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs and Mr Roberts', Foreign Office minute by Mr Frank K. Roberts, 27 October 1948.

³³⁹ TNA, FO 371/72535/R 12342/114/44, 'Conversation in Paris between Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs and Mr Roberts', From Foreign Office to Angora, 29 October 1948.

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

³⁴¹ This matter was relayed by the Turkish President Inonu to Professor Arnold Toynbee during the latter's visit to Ankara. Toynbee was very popular in Turkey, particularly with the old guard, as he was working there as a correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian* during Ataturk's early struggles after the 1914-18 war and was one of the first important foreign journalists to take a sympathetic attitude towards the new Turkey. See TNA, FO 371/72535/R 13293/114/44, 'Visit of Professor TOYNBEE to Turkey; account of interview with Turkish President', Sir D. Kelly (Ankara) to Mr C.H. Bateman (Foreign Office), 17 November 1948. See enclosed copy of letter from Professor Arnold Toynbee to H.M. Ambassador, 5 November 1948.

³⁴² *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 321, Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (Satterthwaite) to the Under Secretary of State (Lovett), 14 December 1948. See footnote 3 which states that Ambassador Vassili Dendramis talked with Chief of the Division of Greek, Turkish, and Iranian Affairs Jernegan on December 1. The conversation is reported by Jernegan in his memorandum of that date, not printed (840.00/12-148).

opposition to the inclusion of Greece and Turkey in NATO, in addition to the geographical issue and prospect of a Mediterranean pact discussed in available literature.³⁴³

With regard to the delays surrounding Italian membership, it should be remembered here that Italian membership would have implications for Greek and Turkish membership too. It is also worth highlighting that, since the beginning of the efforts to establish NATO, US representatives had never thought to consider Greece and Turkey as possible members of NATO. This was evident when Hickerson, during the Pentagon Talks, was determined to include only Italy in NATO. He said that 'joint assurances might at the same time be given Greece, Turkey and Iran by the US and UK'³⁴⁴ so that these countries would not demand the same NATO membership as their fellow Mediterranean country, Italy. Similarly, during the December 1948 meetings of the Washington Talks Lovett had not favoured Italian membership because it would fuel Greek and Turkish membership aspirations. This matter was shown as follows:

The inclusion of Italy would have repercussions, in other capitals, namely Athens and Ankara. Although he [Lovett] would not attempt to gauge the sentiment that would prevail in those capitals, should it be known that Italy was being taken into the Pact, while Greece and Turkey were being kept out – In spite of certain definite overtures which they had already

³⁴³ For this literature, see the introduction of this dissertation, p. 19.

³⁴⁴ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 65, Minutes of the Second Meeting of the United States-United Kingdom-Canada Security Conversations, Held at Washington, 23 March 1948.

made – he was sure that their reaction was foremost in the minds of the Governments that were to be parties to this Pact.³⁴⁵

Equally Kennan, who strongly opposed Italian membership, also argued that if Italy was included this would encourage Greece and Turkey to apply too. Kennan said that ‘in the first place, the admission of any single country beyond the North Atlantic area would be taken by others as constituting a precedent, and would almost certainly lead to a series of demands from states still further afield that they be similarly treated.’³⁴⁶ In light of these attitudes towards Italian, Greek and Turkish membership it could be said that, had Bevin instructed the British representatives to suggest Greek and Turkish membership at this stage, the talks would become protracted and delay the conclusion of the Atlantic pact. Debates over the inclusion of Italy and Algeria had already proved this could be the case. Lovett said that:

time and urgency were of paramount importance. Should the Governments concerned become involved in delicate and intricate negotiations on far-reaching matters, having no direct relations with the North Atlantic security, they might be faced with complications that would retard the speedy conclusion of the Pact.³⁴⁷

³⁴⁵ See *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 331, Minutes of the Tenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks, 22 December 1948; TNA, retrieved from Brotherton Library, FO 800/454/Def/48/71, Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, Tenth Meeting, 22 December 1948.

³⁴⁶ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 285-286, Memorandum by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kennan), ‘Enclosure: Considerations Affecting the Conclusion of A North Atlantic Security Pact – 2. The territorial scope of the pact’, 24 November 1948.

³⁴⁷ *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, pp. 330-331, Minutes of the Tenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks, 22 December 1948.

Lovett's anticipation of delays was vindicated when Sir Oliver Franks also reported to Bevin that the Italian and Algerian questions had complicated the December 1948 meetings. Franks said 'the main problem has been that of Italy and French North Africa [Algeria].'³⁴⁸ In addition, when Bohlen replied to the French Ambassador's inquiry about the date for the next meeting of the Committee of Ambassadors in early January 1949, his answer that 'there were two questions which still remain unsolved which might be handled by drafting formulas, namely, the question of the reference to North Africa by which the French Government had in mind particularly Algeria and Italy';³⁴⁹ proves that the Italian and Algerian issues caused the negotiations to become complicated and protracted.

Given that Italian membership had already dragged out the discussions and that US State Department officials constantly responded negatively to the possibility of Greek and Turkish membership even if Italy was included, this study believes these two matters nurtured Bevin's opposition to Greek and Turkish inclusion in NATO. Fundamentally, Bevin was convinced that these new membership proposals might have brought another delay in NATO's formation. This matter was evident in a conversation between Bevin and the Turkish Foreign Minister Sadak, who came to London before proceeding to Paris in connection with the OEEC meeting in early February 1949. Bevin and Sadak had a long and cordial conversation about various matters pertaining to the establishment of the Atlantic pact. However, details of this discussion disclosed the ulterior motive of the visit: The Turkish government wanted to hear from Bevin himself

³⁴⁸ See TNA, retrieved from Brotherton Library, FO 800/454/Def/48/72, Sir Oliver Franks to Secretary of State Bevin, 29 December 1948.

³⁴⁹ *FRUS, 1949, Western Europe*, Vol. IV (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975), p. 5, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Counselor of the Department of State (Bohlen), 3 January 1949.

why Britain had not suggested including Turkey in the Atlantic pact. In justifying Britain's opposition to the inclusion of Turkey, Bevin first mentioned the case of Italian membership. Bevin took Italy as his reference because, at the time the conversation was being held, the February 1949 meetings in Washington under Acheson had decided to exclude Italy from becoming an original member of NATO. Bevin's explanation was as follows:

As to the proposal declaration in respect of countries not concerned in the Atlantic Pact, I would like first to consider the case of Italy. I had been against the inclusion of Italy in the Pact. The reason was not because I was against Italy – any more than I was against Greece or Turkey – but because I was convinced that we would be better advised to create a well-organised nucleus before widening our organisation and thus diffusing out potential resources. I had told the Italian Government that it was not politics or prestige that should govern our thinking on this matter but the strictly practical issues.³⁵⁰

Bevin also added that 'if the Pact were too wide at the beginning, we [Britain] had felt that there would be a greater danger of the US Congress not accepting it.'³⁵¹ Bevin's answer validates the argument of this study: that Bevin was more focused on speed so that the Atlantic pact could be formed at the soonest opportunity. Bevin, although aware that Turkey was keen to join NATO, worried any response from Turkey in regard

³⁵⁰ TNA, FO 371/78328/R 1843/1072/67/G, 'Turkish interest in proposed North Atlantic Pact (Record of conversation with S of S)', Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs (conversation), No. 26, Top Secret, 14 February 1949, p. 3.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

to its exclusion would bring unnecessary delays. Bevin thus suggested that 'perhaps his Excellency might instruct the Turkish Ambassador in Washington to keep in touch with His Majesty's Ambassador and the representatives of the other countries engaged in negotiating upon the Pact in order that they should be apprised from day to day of Turkish reaction. This would be a helpful way of avoiding delays.'³⁵²

Earlier in the conversation, Bevin had expressed his concern to Sadak about the problem with Article 5. The United States had wanted to water down the wording of Article 5 - which would bind the United States with the automatic commitment to go to war - further delaying the conclusion of the Atlantic pact.³⁵³ Bevin told Sadak that he had been in agreement with the original text of Article 5, 'but Acheson had discussed the matter with Senators Vandenberg and Connolly, as a result of which a new text had been evolved which was feebler than the original. This was the cause of Bevin's disquiet.'³⁵⁴ This matter indirectly implied that Bevin would not have let any other issue that could cause more delays, such as Italian or Turkish (and Greek) membership, be brought into the talks and risk jeopardising the quick formation of NATO. With Greece and Turkey still in dispute over Cyprus, their membership was too complicated to handle when discussions in Washington had already suffered from delays as a result of the Italian and Algerian cases.

³⁵² Ibid.

³⁵³ See TNA, FO 371/79225/Z 1416/1074/72/G, From Washington to Foreign Office, 15 February 1949. See also *FRUS, 1949, Western Europe*, Vol. IV, pp. 76, 78, 81, 85 and 86, Minutes of the Twelfth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, 8 February 1949; *FRUS, 1949, Western Europe*, Vol. IV, pp. 108-110, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State, 14 February 1949.

³⁵⁴ TNA, FO 371/78328/R 1843/1072/67/G, 'Turkish interest in proposed North Atlantic Pact (Record of conversation with S of S)', Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs (conversation), No. 26, Top Secret, 14 February 1949, p. 2.

Sadak also questioned Bevin as to why he and the other Brussels powers were keen to speed up arrangements to create the Atlantic pact. Bevin's answer was as follow:

We had decided to work on similar lines to those adopted in respect of the Marshall Plan – namely to help ourselves in so far we could and to seek aid from the United States to meet those requirements which could not be met from our own resources.³⁵⁵

It seemed that Bevin saw the Atlantic pact as the main mechanism for assisting Britain in solving its economic difficulties and thus restoring its superpower status and prestige. Seemingly, Britain's weakness in defence matters as a result of its economic problems was of the utmost concern to Bevin, which explains his determination to bring the Atlantic pact into existence as soon as possible.

It is also worth mentioning here that, before the conversation come to an end, Sadak had frankly put before Bevin a further point concerning the issue of membership. 'The Turkish government had, he said, been told that the Atlantic pact was designed on a geographical basis [...] but if Italy were included, that would change the situation.'³⁵⁶ Sadak also stated that 'it would be difficult for Turkey to understand why Italy should figure in a North Atlantic Pact and why Turkey should be excluded.'³⁵⁷ As a matter of fact, Bevin had indirectly revealed why Britain had accepted Italian membership. He noted that, due to the US and French governments' keenness to bring Italy in, Britain

³⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 2-3.

³⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 4.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

'had, therefore, been under considerable pressure' to acquiesce to these two governments' preference for Italian membership.³⁵⁸ Bevin's statement validates further the argument of this study, that the geographical issue that happened to exclude Greece and Turkey from NATO was no longer the primary concern when Bevin compromised on Italian membership. It also strengthens the argument that the delays that occurred throughout the negotiation years had influenced Bevin's negative attitude towards Greek and Turkish membership.

Besides Sadak, the Greek Ambassador to London, M. Mostras, also visited the Foreign Office and asked one of its officials, J. W. Russell, about the Greek government's membership of NATO. Similarly, Russell's answer to Mostras was also concerned with the possible delay that the Greek government might have brought about if it insisted on joining NATO at this critical stage. Russell's reply to Mostras was as follows:

Mostras was now enquiring on behalf of [Greek diplomat Panagiotis] Pipinelis for what role, if any, Greece was being cast in the present deliberations on the Atlantic Pact. Russell replied that discussions were still going on, and that they were at a critical stage; that no firm decisions had yet been reached as to what, if any, other countries were to be invited to join the Pact; that various candidates had been mentioned; that Italy, as he has doubtless read in the press, had been the subject of lively discussions but no decision had yet been reached; that it seemed unlikely that any other Mediterranean powers [Greece and Turkey]

³⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

would be invited to join; [...] The North Atlantic Pact was not yet drafted: it was still in any case to be accepted in Congress and in the Canadian House of Representatives; when it was signed we would be able to see the next step more clearly.³⁵⁹

Russell's statement indirectly implied that it was better for NATO to get congressional approval before any decision could be taken regarding Greek and Turkish membership in NATO. The Foreign Office, like Bevin, preferred NATO to be formed without delay, believing any new proposal for membership would further complicate the discussions.

As for the second issue, namely that of Cyprus, this study's argument that this also contributed to Bevin's negative attitude towards Greek and Turkish membership of NATO became evident during the meetings of the Committee of Ambassadors in January 1949. It is worth mentioning here that, throughout the negotiations years, the Committee of Ambassadors did not favour the inclusion of countries that were struggling with domestic difficulties, namely Spain, Italy and later Algeria because these countries were presumed to be a liability rather than an asset.³⁶⁰ During these January 1949 meetings, the Committee of Ambassadors was concerned by the idea of Algeria being covered by NATO's pledge. It should be mentioned here that, although the British

³⁵⁹ TNA, FO 371/78328/R 581/1072/67/G, 'Greece and the Atlantic Pact (Record of conversation with M. MOSTRAS [Greek Embassy])', Foreign Office minute by Mr Russell, Secret, 28 January 1949.

³⁶⁰ See TNA, retrieved from Brotherton Library, FO 800/454/Def/48/72, Sir Oliver Franks to Secretary of State Bevin, 29 December 1948; *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 165, Minutes of the Fourth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, 8 July 1948; TNA, FO 371/73073/Z 5640/2307/72/G, Washington Exploratory Talks on Security: 4th meeting, 'Security Relations with Other Western European Countries', 8 July 1948; *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 66, Minutes of the Third Meeting of the United States-United Kingdom-Canada Security Conversations, 24 March 1948; TNA, FO 371/68067/AN 1276/1195/45/G, 'Atlantic Security Talks: First meeting of Group, 22 to 24 March 1948', From Washington to Foreign Office, 24 March 1948.

and other Brussels powers' representatives were not in favour of Algeria being covered by NATO's pledge, their position was not rigid. The British government, for instance, due to its sympathy with the French position, 'had been thinking of the inclusion of all Africa north of latitude 30° north' which would encompass Algeria, Libya and Egypt.³⁶¹ Similarly, Mr. Van Kelffens, the Dutch representative, noted that 'if the majority thought it wise to include North Africa, the Netherlands would not oppose it.'³⁶² However, the United States and Canadian representatives strongly opposed the inclusion of French North Africa 'on the ground that it set a precedent for other colonial areas and posed the risk of drawing them into colonial conflicts.'³⁶³

It seemed that the US and Canadian representatives were worried that, if Algeria was to be included, this would present the opportunity for other ambassadors and their respective governments, which also possessed colonial areas, to claim a place for their colonies in NATO. Although these two representatives did not specifically mention which other ambassadors, this study believes they were surely referring to the British Ambassador Franks and the British government, whose Crown Colony of Cyprus was currently experiencing political unrest due to *enosis*. Bevin planned to use British bases in Cyprus for NATO purposes, which he noted in his memorandum as follows:

Provided we can organise a Western European system such as I have outlined above, backed by the power and resources of the

³⁶¹ TNA, FO 800/454/Def/48/71, Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, Tenth Meeting, 22 December 1948.

³⁶² *FRUS, 1948, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 328, Minutes of the Tenth Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks, 22 December 1948.

³⁶³ TNA, FO 371/79221/Z 283/1074/72/G, Washington to Foreign Office, 'North Atlantic Pact: Meeting of Washington Working Party on January 10', 10 January 1949.

Commonwealth and of the Americans, it should be possible to develop our own power and influence to equal that of the United States of America and the U.S.S.R. We have the material resources in the Colonial Empire if we develop them [Cyprus base], and by giving a spiritual lead now, we should be able to carry out our task in a way which will show clearly that we are not subservient to the United States of America or to the Soviet Union.³⁶⁴

The US and Canadian representatives were worried that the British government might try to do for Cyprus what the French did for Algeria. If this were to occur, they worried their respective governments would inevitably become involved in the Cyprus dispute. Since the US and Canadian representatives refused to admit countries suffering domestic political difficulties, like Algeria and Cyprus, in the Atlantic pact, the suggestion of Greek and Turkish membership, two countries at that time in dispute over Cyprus, could be regarded as an unwise move. This was apparently because the Committee of Ambassadors might require further meetings to discuss this matter, thus dragging the negotiations out longer. This happened before the issue of Italian membership was raised again in the January 1949 meeting and was recorded as follows:

The question of the inclusion of Italy in the Pact had been brought to the front by a formal request on the part of Italy. He [Lovett] regretted that the request had been made because it could prove to be a complicating

³⁶⁴ TNA, CAB 129/23, CP (48) 6, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 'The First Aim of British Foreign Policy', 4 January 1948.

element in Italian internal affairs. However, since the request had been made, it was necessary that it be considered.³⁶⁵

It is worth pointing out again here that the Greek and the Turkish governments' requests for membership coincided with the rise of the Cyprus dispute and also coincided with Bevin and the British representatives' struggle against the delays caused by the question of Italian membership, from late 1948 until early 1949. Since Italian and Algerian memberships had already complicated the talks and delayed the conclusion of the Atlantic pact treaty, this study believes that Bevin refused to complicate the situation further and cause more delays by suggesting Greek and Turkish membership. Bevin's perception of another delay was evident in his answer to the Foreign Minister of the Netherlands, Dirk Stikker, when the latter asked Bevin about why Portugal, Greece and Turkey were not included in the Atlantic pact. This conversation took place during the Meeting of Consultative Council of the Five-Power Brussels Treaty in London, between 27 and 29 January 1949, during which Bevin answered Stikker as follows:

Mr. Bevin said there were some political difficulties here. He noticed Ireland was left out. He would not mind Ireland coming in and he was open to discussion about Portugal, but he did think Turkey and Greece might present some difficulties. Switzerland also was a problem since, if

³⁶⁵ *FRUS, 1949, Western Europe*, Vol. IV, pp. 27-28, Minutes of the Eleventh Meeting of the Washington Exploratory Talks on Security, 14 January 1949.

we invited her, we might get a rebuff. He thought it most important to avoid that.³⁶⁶

Although Bevin did not explain what 'some political difficulties' meant, given the political hostility between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus it seems likely he was referring to this issue. It is possible that, if Bevin suggested that these two problematic countries be invited to join NATO alongside their Mediterranean neighbour, Italy, the other representatives, in particular those of the United States and Canada, would have delayed discussions until the British representatives dropped the idea. Moreover, it would have been difficult to obtain the approval of the US Congress on Greek and Turkish NATO membership. This was because, when Acheson had approached Senators Vandenberg, Connally and George for advice about Italian membership in late February 1948, they rejected Italian membership on the same grounds as Greek and Turkish membership. This matter was recorded as follows:

The Senators were unanimous in their view that the wisest course at present would be not to have Italy an original signatory. They expressed considerable doubt as to the wisdom of having Italy in the pact at all. However, they were maintaining open mind upon this point. They thought that the presence of Italy in the pact would not be a help in putting it through the Senate, but would probably be a hindrance. The points that they raised were: First, the difficulty which this raised as to the pact's regional character; second, the problems which it raised in

³⁶⁶ TNA, FO 800/448, Record of Meeting on Thursday, 27th January, 1949, at 10:30 A.M. (Full Session), p. 8.

regard to Greece and Turkey; third, the problem that with Italy in, Tito might be forced to closer relations with Russia.³⁶⁷

In conclusion this section proves that, in light of further archival research using British records, it was Bevin who refused to bring Greece and Turkey into NATO during the negotiation years. This was mainly due to Bevin's personal aim for NATO to be formed without further delays. Based on the analysis and discussion in this section, one can argue that the Cyprus issue might also have influenced Bevin to leave Greece and Turkey out of NATO during its formative years. It should be noted that Bevin's decision not to invite Greece and Turkey to join NATO did not mean that he had underestimated the importance of these countries to British strategic and security interests. Bevin had repeatedly asked Sir Oliver Franks to remind the United States government about the need to provide Greece and Turkey some assurance of security so that their independence and integrity could be secured.³⁶⁸ This matter proves that Bevin never neglected Greece and Turkey and thus his decision to exclude them from NATO was merely because the question was not yet appropriate to be discussed because it would cause more delay in concluding the Atlantic pact treaty. This was the circumstance that Bevin wanted to avoid.

³⁶⁷ Memorandum, 28 February 1949, signed by Acheson on "conversation with Senators Connally, George and Vandenberg", Department of State, file No. 840.20/2-2849.

³⁶⁸ See TNA, PREM 8/1379/Part 1/2629, From Foreign Office to Washington, 7 March 1949; TNA, PREM 8/1379/Part 1/3042, From Foreign Office to Washington, 17 March 1949. See also *FRUS, 1949, Western Europe*, Vol. IV, pp. 175-176, Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (Satterthwaite) to the Secretary of State, 'Subject: Declaration on Greece, Turkey and Iran', 8 March 1949.

Conclusion

On 4 April 1949, NATO was founded without Greek and Turkish membership. Only Italy managed to become one of NATO's original members, while Algeria was included within the coverage area of this treaty. The geographical location of Greece and Turkey and the prospect of a Mediterranean pact are two common reasons that can be found in available literature to explain why the British government did not propose that Greece and Turkey be included in NATO, despite these countries' significance to British strategic interests.³⁶⁹ However, by analysing this rejection in light of Bevin's concerns over the delays that hampered his aspiration to form NATO as soon as possible, the importance of the Cyprus issue increases. This was because the protracted and delayed negotiations that resulted from the United States' hesitations, as well as the complicated issues of Italian and Algerian membership, had led Bevin to conclude that Greek and Turkish membership of NATO was not yet appropriate to be tabled and discussed at that time given their bitter dispute over Cyprus.

The Cyprus issue has been considered by other historians as irrelevant or is absent from the literature. This explains why previous historians have made less effort in investigating the correlation between the Cyprus issue and Britain's rejection of Greek and Turkish membership of NATO during the negotiation years. It is worth emphasising here that without considering the circumstances, namely the delays in NATO arrangements; Bevin's enthusiasm to have NATO formed as soon as possible; and the rise of the Greco-Turkish Cyprus conflict, it seems likely the geographical issue and

³⁶⁹ For literature covering these arguments, see the introduction of this dissertation, p. 19 and footnotes 19, 20 and 21.

prospect of a Mediterranean pact would remain the only two reasons considered to have influenced Bevin and the Foreign Office to exclude Greece and Turkey from NATO.

Once again, this study believes that these reasons no longer could be defended when Italy, a country that was supposed to be included in a Mediterranean pact together with Greece and Turkey, was invited to join NATO. What is more, when considering that Greece and Turkey were significant for both Britain and the United States in regard to their strategic interests in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, it seems unnatural to see Italy included in NATO without Greece and Turkey. This matter also indicates that, although Greece and Turkey were important to Britain due to its strategic interests and the need to prevent these countries falling under Soviet domination, it seems that Bevin's objective to form NATO swiftly was his utmost priority at that time. Hence, this study argues that the Cyprus dispute between Greece and Turkey had inflicted damage on these countries' chances of becoming NATO members. This was apparently because Bevin believed the proposal for these countries' membership might have posed another delay to NATO's formation.

CHAPTER THREE

The Cyprus Issue and Turkish Interest in joining NATO: the MEC as a Means to Prevent Turkish, and thus Greek, Membership in NATO, 1949-1950

Introduction

Historians studying the rejection of NATO enlargement and the exclusion of Greece and Turkey have largely focused on the point of view of smaller NATO members, namely the Scandinavian countries and the Brussels countries.³⁷⁰ These smaller members were reluctant to accept Greece and Turkey as new NATO members for various reasons, most notably the geographic issue. Yet they had to acquiesce to the decision of NATO's key ally, the United States, which strongly favoured Greece and Turkey's admission into NATO.³⁷¹ The perspective of Britain also has been studied by historians and two reasons for its rejection of Greece and Turkey have been considered: the geographic location of these countries and the MEC plan.³⁷² Considering the fact that the United States had already supported their inclusion in NATO, both were of great importance to British strategic interests in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, and both countries had yet to participate in any security systems, Britain's continued rejection of Greece and Turkey's inclusion in NATO during the high Cold War period could be regarded as bizarre.

³⁷⁰ For this literature, see the introduction of this dissertation, p. 20.

³⁷¹ Smith, *NATO Enlargement during the Cold War: Strategy and System in the Western Alliance*, p. 85; Gheciu, pp. 42-43.

³⁷² For this literature, see the introduction of this dissertation, pp. 20-21.

The purpose of this chapter is to further inspect Britain's reasons for rejecting Turkish requests for membership of NATO in 1950 as they relate to the Cyprus issue. This will help to understand why Britain, especially Bevin and the Foreign Office, remained uninterested in accepting Greece and Turkey in NATO during the period after it was formed. This chapter also reassesses the question of the MEC, which is regarded by previous historians as a key reason for Britain's continued refusal to include Greece and Turkey in NATO. This chapter argues that the British government, in particular Bevin and the Foreign Office, used the MEC as a means to prevent Turkish, and thus Greek, membership of NATO due to the Cyprus issue.

To explain these arguments, this chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section is a discussion of the Cyprus dispute between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, which had affected Anglo-Greek and Greco-Turkish relationships between late 1949 and 1950. Discussion of this matter is essential in order to understand how the Cyprus issue had diminished Greece and Turkey's chance of becoming members of NATO in 1950. The second section is the crux of this study's argument: that the British Foreign Office used the MEC as a means to keep Greece and Turkey outside NATO. To substantiate this, a prelude to Turkey's inclusion in the MEC is touched upon. It discusses first the Turkish Republican People's Party (RPP) government's concern over the defence of the Middle East, which had been ongoing since late 1949. This matter had heightened its interest in joining NATO, leading to a formal request for Turkish membership in NATO in early May 1950. The British Foreign Office's two prominent efforts towards the defence of the Middle East, in cooperation with the Egyptian government before May 1950, will also be discussed. In both these efforts, no thought

was given to including Turkey as a member. The British Foreign Office's move to bring Turkey into the defence of the Middle East only *after* the latter formally requested membership in NATO in May 1950, suggests the MEC was used as a means to exclude Turkey from NATO. The third section discusses the British Foreign Office's justification for rejecting Turkey's second request for NATO membership in August 1950, which is linked to the Cyprus issue. To elucidate this argument, this section briefly touches upon circumstances that brought the United States to accept this second request. It then analyses the British Foreign Office's judgment against NATO enlargement that was influenced by the Cyprus issue.

Britain, Greece, Turkey and the 'Cyprus question', 1949-1950

The new position of Bevin and his Foreign Office regarding the continuation of British rule in Cyprus was indirectly responsible for the trouble between Greece and Turkey over the island.³⁷³ The change of decision was made in late 1946, when the situation in Greece deteriorated further due to invasion, occupation, resistance, reprisals and the danger of civil war.³⁷⁴ As Bevin said to the Greek Ambassador in London, M. Aghnidis, it was 'senseless to hand Cyprus to Greece if that country was on the point of going

³⁷³ The British post-war Labour government considered handing Cyprus back to Greece. In September 1945, the Foreign Office put forward the same justification as in 1941, that it was a proper gesture in enhancing Britain's relations with Greece in return for base rights in Cyprus. See TNA, FO 371/48344/R15384, Memorandum by Orme G. Sargent, 8 September 1945. For Foreign Office's view in 1941, see TNA, FO 371/29846/R397, Minute by Edward Warner (Southern Department of Foreign Office), 16 January 1941. The Foreign Office's view on ceding Cyprus to Greece remained until 1946. See TNA, FO 371/38760, Minute by Michael S. Williams (Southern Department of Foreign Office), 9 April 1946. See TNA, FO 371/53761, From Secretary of State (Bevin) to Secretary of State for the Colonies (George Henry Hall), 17 September 1946.

³⁷⁴ See TNA, FO 371/67081/R2360, Notes of the Meeting, 7 February 1947; TNA FO 371/68071/R2527, Arthur Creech Jones to Cypriot Delegation, 25 February 1947. See also Alan Bullock, *Ernest Bevin, Foreign Secretary 1945-1951* (London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1983), p. 41; Mark Simmons, *The British and Cyprus: An Outpost of Empire to Sovereign Bases, 1878-1974* (Gloucestershire: The History Press, 2015), p. 67.

communist.³⁷⁵ The determination of Bevin, the Foreign Office and the COS to retain British sovereignty in Cyprus was reinforced by Britain's relative decline in the Middle East region and the loss of other regional assets, including Palestine in 1948, Egypt's challenge to Britain over the Sudan and the Suez base, and Prime Minister Mohammed Mussadiq's open defiance of Britain in Iran in the early 1950s.³⁷⁶ Britain saw Cyprus as the better option and believed it should be retained under British possession. As noted by the War Office in 1951, 'much instability has been caused in the Middle East by moves and rumours of moves of British troops. A stable and firmly held British stronghold on Cyprus is therefore of the greatest strategic importance.'³⁷⁷

Moreover, according to the COS in April 1948, Cyprus could provide a base for military offensives against the Soviet Union in the midst of the Cold War, since the Soviet Union was within bomber range of the bases in Cyprus.³⁷⁸ Britain therefore put forward the Winster Constitutional Proposals of 1948 in order to stay in Cyprus.³⁷⁹ In response to Britain's initiative, the Greek Cypriots brought their mother country Greece into the local conflict to combat the Winster Proposals and to fight for *enosis* in mid-1948. As

³⁷⁵ TNA, FO 371/58891/R18129, Minutes of conference between Bevin and Aghnidis by Frederick Warner to Foreign Office, 7 December 1946. See also George M. Alexander, *The Prelude to the Truman Doctrine: British Policy in Greece, 1944-1947* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 229.

³⁷⁶ Evanthis Hatzivassiliou, 'Cold War Pressures, Regional Strategies, and Relative Decline: British Military and Strategic Planning for Cyprus, 1950-1960', *The Journal of Military History*, 73:4 (2009), 1143-1166 (1148-1149).

³⁷⁷ TNA, DEFE 5/31, COS (51) 245, Note by the War Office: Sovereignty of Cyprus – Background, 24 April 1951.

³⁷⁸ TNA, DEFE 2/1654, COS (48) 70th Meeting, Minute by Air Ministry to COS Committee: Cyprus-Strategic Requirements of a Very Heavy Bomber Airfield, 9 April 1948. See appendix F: Map 5 – Map for an atomic attack.

³⁷⁹ Murat Metin Hakki, *The Cyprus Issue: A Documentary History, 1878-2006* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 2008), pp. 9-10 – *The New York Times*, 12 May 1948, Britain proposes to stay in Cyprus, p. 18.

the Greek Cypriots turned to Athens, the Turkish Cypriots sought help from their mother country, Turkey, to assist them against the *enosis* movement.³⁸⁰

Britain's determination to maintain control of Cyprus, even after the abortive constitutional offer,³⁸¹ worsened the situation between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots and generated more problems between Greece and Turkey.³⁸² At the domestic level, the demand for *enosis* became stronger when a Cypriot communist party, the Progressive Party of the Working People (AKEL – *Anorthotiko Komma Ergazomenou Laou*) initiated the first notice of a plebiscite - a collection of signatures to support or oppose union with Greece - in September 1949 by publicly offering the Ethnarchy³⁸³ (the Right) its co-operation in promoting the cause of *enosis* before the UN.³⁸⁴ This initiative became more organised when the Ethnarchy agreed to sponsor the plebiscite in the domestic domain by extending the propaganda campaign in two stages. This matter was noted by Sir Andrew B. Wright, Governor of Cyprus in the late 1940s, to the British Secretary of State for the Colonies, Sir Arthur Creech Jones, as follows:

³⁸⁰ Joseph, *Cyprus: Ethnic Conflict and International Politics: From Independence to the Threshold of the European Union*, p. 13; George H. Kelling, *Countdown to Rebellion: British Policy in Cyprus, 1939-1955* (London: Greenwood Press, 1990), p. 95.

³⁸¹ For more in depth discussions on this matter, see Kelling, pp. 85-88; Crawshaw, pp. 37-42.

³⁸² For more in depth discussions on this matter, see Joseph, 'Cyprus: Domestic Ethnopolitical Conflict and International Politics'; Kelling, *Countdown to Rebellion: British Policy in Cyprus, 1939-1955*; Ronald R. Krebs, 'NATO and the Greco-Turkish Conflict', *International Organization*, 53:2 (1999), 343-377; Knox Helm, 'Turkey and Her Defence Problems', *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, 30:4 (1954), 434-439; Meltem Müftüleri-Bac, 'The Cyprus Debacle: What the Future Holds', *Futures*, 31 (1999) 559-575; Robert Holland, 'NATO and the Struggle for Cyprus', *Journal of Modern Greek Studies*, 13:1 (1995), 33-61.

³⁸³ The *Ethnarch* (ethnic political leader) of the Greek Cypriot community was the name given to the archbishop since the seventeenth century. Thus, the religious leader also became *ex officio* a political leader. See Joseph, 'Cyprus: Domestic Ethnopolitical Conflict and International Politics', p. 395.

³⁸⁴ See enclosed copies of a patriotic proclamation of EAS and a proclamation by the Central Committee of AKEL published in N. Democratis of 11/12/49 in TNA, CO 67/352/2, From the Governor of Cyprus to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 12 December 1949. See also Sources for the History of Cyprus [hereafter SHC], edited by Paul W. Wallace and Andreas G. Orphanides – Reed Coughlan (ed.), *Volume XI, Enosis and the British: British Official Documents 1878-1950* (New York: Greece and Cyprus Research Center, 2004), VII. Dispatch from A. B. Wright, 5 December 1949 (CO 67/352/2), p. 248. See also Stefanidis, *Isle of Discord: Nationalism, Imperialism and the Making of the Cyprus Problem*, p. 6.

First, a plebiscite to be carried out in the churches. Second, formal election (in accordance with local procedure of electing archbishop) of persons (? to go) to Greece to represent Greek people of Cyprus in Parliamentary Chamber in Athens in imitation of historic coup adopted for Crete.³⁸⁵

In the same telegram, without mention of the churches, Wright reported that the first stage had already been adopted by the Ethnarchy.³⁸⁶ This circumstance prompted the Turkish Cypriot political parties, which had the same aspirations against *enosis*, to abandon their differences and merge into a single Federation of Turkish Associations (FTA) and hold a rally in Nicosia on 12 December 1949 against the plebiscite.³⁸⁷ The FTA, therefore, demanded that if the British left the island it should be returned to Turkey.³⁸⁸ According to historian Stefanidis, the FTA also demanded that Governor Wright stop the plebiscite.³⁸⁹ Wright and the British government had already taken a series of actions to prevent plebiscite propaganda, including demanding a removal of the Greek Consul-General in Nicosia, Alexis Liatis, from his position due to his association with the

³⁸⁵ TNA, CO 67/352/2, From Cyprus (Sir A. Wright) to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 5 December 1949. See also SHC, Coughlan, *Volume XI, Enosis and the British: British Official Documents 1878-1950*, VIII. Dispatch from A. B. Wright, 5 December 1949 (CO 67/352/2), p. 248.

³⁸⁶ Ibid. A further report by Wright about *enosis* propaganda as expressed in violent speeches contained in TNA, FO 371/87715/RG 1081/2, From Cyprus (Sir A. Wright) to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 30 December 1949.

³⁸⁷ See enclosed a copy of a telegram from the Turkish National Party of Cyprus to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, dated 13 December 1949 in TNA, CO 67/352/2, From the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Officer Adminstrating the Government of Cyprus, 24 December 1949. See also *Cyprus Mail*, 13 December 1949. Cited in Crawshaw, p. 48.

³⁸⁸ Ibid. See also TNA, CO 537/4978, Athens Embassy Weekly Summary, 18 December 1949.

³⁸⁹ Stefanidis, *Isle of Discord: Nationalism, Imperialism and the Making of the Cyprus Problem*, p. 9.

plebiscite movement,³⁹⁰ placing a ban on *enosis* meetings in Cyprus³⁹¹ and warning against signing the referendum.³⁹² Yet despite these measures, the Ethnarchy and AKEL managed to proceed to the second stage on 15 January 1950. The result of this plebiscite was as follows:

The “plebiscite” held in Cyprus on the 15th of January, 1950 and throughout the following week resulted, as expected, in an overwhelmingly large vote in favour of union with Greece (Enosis). It is estimated that about 96% of the Greek population of the island signed. (One fifth of the population is Turkish and is strongly opposed to Enosis).³⁹³

The Greek government had supported the Ethnarchy and AKEL’s active effort in pursuing *enosis* since late 1949. For instance, the King and Queen of Hellenes conveyed their support for *enosis* during the meeting with Koumparides, Secretary of Cyprus

³⁹⁰ See TNA, FO 371/78424/R 11540/1022/19G, From Cyprus (Sir A. Wright) to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 10 December 1949; TNA, FO 371/78427/R 11866/1022/19G, Sir Clifford Norton (British Ambassador in Athens) to Charles H. Bateman, Assistant Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs (Northern and Southern Europe), 15 December 1949. For in depth discussions about this matter, see documents enclosed in TNA, FO 371/87715/RG 1081/7, ‘Views on possible withdrawal of Greek Consul-General from Cyprus’, dated between 30 December 1949 and 5 January 1950; and ‘Conversation between the Minister of State and the Greek Ambassador on 2nd January concerning the behaviour of the Greek Consul-General in Cyprus, Mr. LIATIS’, dated between 2 and 6 January 1950.

³⁹¹ See TNA, FO 371/87715/RG 1081/5, From Athens (Sir C. Norton) to Foreign Office, 3 January 1950; TNA, FO 371/87715/RG 1081/11, From Cyprus (Sir A. Wright) to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 4 January 1950.

³⁹² TNA, FO 371/78427/R 1184/2, From Cyprus (Sir A. Wright) to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 19 December 1949. See also TNA, DEFE 11/30, Foreign Office Intelligence No. 12, 13 January 1950.

³⁹³ See enclosed report by Mary Fisher of the Colonial Office to Mr R. C. Barnes of the Southern Department of Foreign Office about ‘Visit of Cyprus Ethnarchy Delegations to the United States’ in TNA, CO 67/370/4, From Cyprus to Foreign Office, 31 August 1950. See also SHC, Coughlan, *Volume XI, Enosis and the British: British Official Documents 1878-1950*, VIII. Visit of Cyprus Ethnarchy Delegations to the United States, 1950 (CO 67/370/4), p. 249.

Ethnarchy.³⁹⁴ In addition, ten deputies in the Greek Parliament supported proposals for the union of Cyprus with Greece during a motion tabled on 13 December 1949.³⁹⁵ The increased support of Greece for the *enosis* movement and a heightened plebiscite campaign in January 1950 provoked Turkish Cypriots and the Turkish press. The FTA organised an anti-plebiscite movement and sent a delegation to Ankara 'to present their views on the "Enosis" question to the Turkish Government.'³⁹⁶ The British Ambassador to Turkey, Sir Noel Charles, informed the Foreign Office that 'most leading Istanbul papers report student demonstrations against cession of Island to Greece and against proposal to hold a plebiscite.'³⁹⁷ The Turkish government reassured the delegation and the public that 'there was no risk of the island being handed back to Greece.'³⁹⁸ This matter was evident in a letter sent by the Southern Department of the Foreign Office to the British Ambassador in Athens, which stated that 'His Majesty's Government are not at present in a position to give the question [*enosis*] further consideration or to settle it in a manner favourable to Greece.'³⁹⁹ The Turkish government also stressed 'that the Turkish Government had made it clear to His Majesty's Government that if by any chance we were to leave Cyprus, Turkey would expect to be consulted.'⁴⁰⁰

³⁹⁴ See TNA, FO 371/78425/R 11187/1022/19, From Cyprus (Sir A. Wright) to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 25 November 1949; TNA, FO 371/87715/RG 1081/9, Foreign Office minute by Sir Anthony Rumbold (Head of Southern Europe Department of Foreign Office with the rank of Counsellor), 28 December 1949; TNA, FO 371/87715/RG 1081/10, Foreign Office minute by Sir A. Rumbold, 16 December 1949.

³⁹⁵ See TNA, FO 371/78426/R 11624/1022/19, From Athens (Sir C. Norton) to Foreign Office, 14 December 1949.

³⁹⁶ TNA, FO 371/87715/RG 1081/26, Sir N. Charles to Foreign Office, 11 January 1950.

³⁹⁷ TNA, CO 67/352/2, From Angora (Sir N. Charles) to Foreign Office, 'Cyprus', 17 December 1949. See also Stefanidis, *Isle of Discord: Nationalism, Imperialism and the Making of the Cyprus Problem*, p. 9.

³⁹⁸ TNA, FO 371/87715/RG 1081/26, Sir N. Charles to Foreign Office (Hector McNeil, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, de facto deputy to Bevin), 11 January 1950.

³⁹⁹ TNA, FO 371/87715/RG 1081/1, Southern Department to British Embassy Athens, 11 January 1950.

⁴⁰⁰ TNA, FO 371/87715/RG 1081/26, Sir N. Charles to Foreign Office (Mr Hector McNeil), 11 January 1950. See also TNA, CO 67/352/2, From the Governor of Cyprus to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, 'Weekly Summary of the Local Press (Week ending 22.12.49)', 23 December 1949.

After the plebiscite and the result favouring union with Greece, the Ethnarchy and AKEL sent a separate delegation to Athens, London and the United States in order to present the plebiscite results. These Greek Cypriot political parties' efforts to publicise the plebiscite had considerable success in Athens.⁴⁰¹ The communist delegation was warmly received by the Greek Left, while the Speaker of the Chamber accepted a volume containing plebiscite signatures brought by the Ethnarchy.⁴⁰² Large and enthusiastic meetings in favour of union were held and the Greek Orthodox Church in Athens was now well engaged in the *enosis* campaign.⁴⁰³

In response to these developments, the Turkish Cypriots made more serious efforts to prevent Cyprus from ceding to Greece. During the Ethnarchy delegation's visit to London in early August 1950, the FTA staged anti-*enosis* demonstration in Cyprus, Turkey and London, exhibiting placards reading "Long live union of Cyprus with Turkey" and "Cyprus belong to us".⁴⁰⁴ Meanwhile in Turkey, the Turkish government established the 'Cyprus is Turkish' Society in order to oppose the possibility of Cyprus being ceded to Greece.⁴⁰⁵ According to the British Ambassador to Turkey, Noel Charles, the Turkish

⁴⁰¹ See enclosed report by Mary Fisher of the Colonial Office to Mr R. C. Barnes of the Southern Department of Foreign Office about 'Visit of Cyprus Ethnarchy Delegations to the United States' in TNA, CO 67/370/4, From Cyprus to Foreign Office, 31 August 1950. See also SHC, Coughlan, *Volume XI, Enosis and the British: British Official Documents 1878-1950*, VIII. Visit of Cyprus Ethnarchy Delegations to the United States, 1950 (CO 67/370/4), p. 249.

⁴⁰² See TNA, FO 381/87723/RG 1081/175, 'Activities of the Ethnarchy delegation during their recent visit to Greece', British Embassy Athens (Mr J. C. A. Roper) to Southern Department (Mr R. C. Barnes), 10 August 1950.

⁴⁰³ See enclosed report by Mary Fisher of the Colonial Office to Mr R. C. Barnes of the Southern Department of Foreign Office about 'Visit of Cyprus Ethnarchy Delegations to the United States' in TNA, CO 67/370/4, From Cyprus to Foreign Office, 31 August 1950. See also SHC, Coughlan, *Volume XI, Enosis and the British: British Official Documents 1878-1950*, VIII. Visit of Cyprus Ethnarchy Delegations to the United States, 1950 (CO 67/370/4), pp. 249-250.

⁴⁰⁴ Kelling, p. 110. See also TNA, FO 371/87723/RG 1081/172, Miss M. Fisher (Colonial Office) to Southern Department (Mr R. C. Barnes), 11 August 1950.

⁴⁰⁵ See Harris, *The Troubled Alliance: Turkish-American Problems in Historical Perspective 1945-71*, pp. 105-106.

government was determined to remain friendly with Greece, but it could not allow any change of sovereignty in Cyprus in a manner harmful to Turkish interests.⁴⁰⁶ As noted by Charles regarding the Turkish attitude to the Cyprus question:

He [Turkish Foreign Minister Sadak] concluded by saying that Turkey's policy was against acquiring new territories or reclaiming parts of their old empire; they had parted with many islands close to their coast but Cyprus was so much nearer Turkey than to Greece and it would raise a grave issue if there were a possibility of the island being handed back to Greece.⁴⁰⁷

Seemingly, the plebiscite caused the dispute between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots to become more intense and contributed to a further deterioration in relations between their respective mother countries, Greece and Turkey.⁴⁰⁸

Regarding the visits to London and the United States, London refused to meet both the AKEL⁴⁰⁹ and the Ethnarchy delegations.⁴¹⁰ Since these delegations could not discuss the

⁴⁰⁶ TNA, FO 371/78427/R 11889/1022/19, From Angora (Sir N. Charles) to Foreign Office, 21 December 1949.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁸ For more reports on Turkey's aggressive plans, see TNA, FO 371/78422/R 4849/1022/19, BBC Monitoring of Free Greek Radio, 'Special Broadcast to Cyprus regarding Turkish attitude to Cyprus and propaganda in favour of her return to Greece' 5 May 1949. See also *The Times*, 6 January 1950; *The Times*, 17 January 1950; *The Times*, 19 January 1950.

⁴⁰⁹ For more in depth discussions on London's reasons for rejection that were given to the communist delegation of AKEL, see Ioannis D. Stefanidis, 'The Cyprus question, 1949-1952: British Attitude, American Reactions and Greek Dilemmas', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*, 15:1 (1991), 212-268 (236). One of the apparent reasons was that the communists of AKEL received strong support from the Eastern Bloc, see TNA, FO 371/87717/RG 1081/65, Colonial Office, 'Translated texts of monitored broadcasts of Sofia, Budapest, Warsaw and Bucharest radios concerning the Cyprus plebiscite, 14-15 January 1950', 22 January 1950.

plebiscite in London, they proceeded with their plan to bring the Cyprus question before the UN by visiting the US State Department in order to get American support.⁴¹¹ However, only the Ethnarchy delegation had a chance to meet the Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations, Jack McFall, in the State Department on 13 September 1950 since the communist delegation had been denied entry to the United States.⁴¹² The communist delegation, therefore, travelled to the capitals of Eastern Europe and notified the Eastern Bloc of the plebiscite results.⁴¹³

It is worth mentioning here that, two months before the Ethnarchy delegation reached the United States, John Martin, the British Under-Secretary for Colonial Affairs, was sent to the United States. He was tasked with winning American support for the retention of British sovereignty in Cyprus by clarifying the strategic importance of the island and seeking assurances that the Cyprus question would not be discussed at the UN.⁴¹⁴ Although Martin received an unsatisfactory answer on the former matter,⁴¹⁵ the

⁴¹⁰ See enclosed report by Mary Fisher of the Colonial Office to Mr R. C. Barnes of the Southern Department of Foreign Office about 'Visit of Cyprus Ethnarchy Delegations to the United States' in TNA, CO 67/370/4, From Cyprus to Foreign Office, 31 August 1950 for further discussion on London's reasons for rejection that were given to the Ethnarchy delegation. See also SHC, Coughlan, *Volume XI, Enosis and the British: British Official Documents 1878-1950*, VIII. Visit of Cyprus Ethnarchy Delegations to the United States, 1950 (CO 67/370/4), p. 250; TNA, FO 381/87723/RG 1081/176, 'Demand for the Union of Cyprus with Greece', Colonial Office (on behalf the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Jim Griffiths) to the Bishop of Kyrenia, 12 August 1950; TNA, FO 381/87723/RG 1081/178, Southern Department (Mr R. C. Barnes) to Church of England Council on Foreign Relations (Dr G. L. Prestige), 23 August 1950; Stefanidis, *Isle of Discord: Nationalism, Imperialism and the Making of the Cyprus Problem*, p. 15; Crawshaw, p. 59.

⁴¹¹ See *Ibid.* See also *Ibid.*

⁴¹² Stefanidis, *Isle of Discord: Nationalism, Imperialism and the Making of the Cyprus Problem*, p. 16.

⁴¹³ *Ibid.* See also enclosed report by Mary Fisher of the Colonial Office to Mr R. C. Barnes of the Southern Department of Foreign Office about 'Visit of Cyprus Ethnarchy Delegations to the United States' in TNA, CO 67/370/4, From Cyprus to Foreign Office, 31 August 1950. See also SHC, Coughlan, *Volume XI, Enosis and the British: British Official Documents 1878-1950*, VIII. Visit of Cyprus Ethnarchy Delegations to the United States, 1950 (CO 67/370/4), p. 249.

⁴¹⁴ For the proposed discussion with the Americans on the possibility of the Cyprus question being raised at the UN General Assembly, see TNA, FO 371/87721/RG 1081/147, Miss M. Fisher (Colonial Office) to Mr Barnes (Southern Department), 29 June 1950.

⁴¹⁵ See record of discussion on Cyprus held at the State Department on July 10th, 1950 enclosed in TNA, FO 371/87722/RG 1081/158, British Embassy Washington to Sir Anthony Rumbold (Southern

officials of the US State Department agreed with the latter issue. They worried ‘the A.K.E.L. would ask the Soviet Delegation or any of the Satellite Delegations to sponsor this issue at Lake Success [New York, USA - then home of the United Nations].’⁴¹⁶ However, if the Cyprus question succeeded in being placed on the General Assembly Agenda, the US officials suggested to Martin that the Greek government should be persuaded ‘to settle this issue at a suitable moment by direct negotiations with the United Kingdom within the framework of traditional Anglo-Greek friendship.’⁴¹⁷ Although Martin did not favour this suggestion during the meeting,⁴¹⁸ the Colonial Office later agreed to it when Mr Frederick Hoyer Miller, the UK Deputy at the North Atlantic Council, informed the Foreign Office the possibility of Cyprus being raised at the UN.⁴¹⁹ As stated by Mary Fisher of the Colonial Office to Mr R. C. Barnes of the Southern Department of Foreign Office: ‘Lobby the Greeks to stick to the line taken by General Plastiras that this was a purely Anglo-Greek question and not one for the United Nations.’⁴²⁰ The Colonial Office believed that, if the Cyprus question were to be brought before the UN, it would create trouble rather than solve the issue. This matter was noted by Mary Fisher in the same letter to Mr Barnes as follows:

We had no reason now to expect that the Cyprus question would be brought forward by the Egyptians or the Syrians. It seemed to us much

Department), 14 July 1950. The same reaction was shown by Mr Mackenzie (United Nations Political Department) before Barnes (Southern Department) during their meeting about Cyprus at the Colonial Office on 9 August 1950. See TNA, FO 371/87723/RG 1081/171, Southern Department of Foreign Office to British Embassy Washington, 19 August 1950.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid.

⁴¹⁸ For the details of why Martin disagreed with this suggestion, see Ibid.

⁴¹⁹ See TNA, FO 371/87722/RG 1081/158, Sir Frederick Hoyer Millar (Washington) to Sir A. Rumbold, 14 July 1950.

⁴²⁰ TNA, FO 371/87723/RG 1081/171, Miss M. Fisher (Colonial Office) to Mr Barnes (Southern Department), 10 August 1950.

more likely that it would be raised by one of the Eastern European countries. (As you know of A.K.E.L. delegation arrived in Prague in the course of last month). The object would, of course, not be to achieve Enosis but to make trouble.⁴²¹

Accordingly, when the Ethnarchy delegation visited the US State Department in September 1950, McFall told them that the US government preferred the Cyprus question to be settled within the framework of Anglo-Greek relations. McFall stated that 'the [Cyprus] question concerned the British government alone and, in any case, it was improper to raise it in such a time of crisis [the Korean War].'⁴²² What is more, according to Kelling, since the Cypriot Ethnarchy delegation was not a member of the UN, it could not submit a resolution without a sponsor.⁴²³ Even if a sponsor had been forthcoming, Cyprus had in fact already missed the deadline for the forthcoming session, since the Assembly's agenda had already been circulated, approved and allocated to committees.⁴²⁴

As a matter of fact, on the same day the Ethnarchy delegation arrived in Athens, on 24 May 1950, the Greek Prime Minister, Alexandros Diomidis, announced at the close of a debate on Cyprus in the Greek Chamber that he preferred the Cyprus question to be

⁴²¹ Ibid.

⁴²² See memo of the conversation between McFall and the Cypriot Ethnarchy delegation on September 13th, 1950 enclosed in TNA, FO 371/87723/1081/191, From Washington (Sir O. Franks) to Foreign Office, 14 September 1950.

⁴²³ Kelling, p. 107.

⁴²⁴ See enclosed report by Mary Fisher of the Colonial Office to Mr R. C. Barnes of the Southern Department of Foreign Office about 'Visit of Cyprus Ethnarchy Delegations to the United States' in TNA, CO 67/370/4, From Cyprus to Foreign Office, 31 August 1950. See also SHC, Coughlan, *Volume XI, Enosis and the British: British Official Documents 1878-1950*, VIII. Visit of Cyprus Ethnarchy Delegations to the United States, 1950 (CO 67/370/4), p. 250. See also Crawshaw, p. 60.

settled with the British government within the framework of traditional Anglo-Greek friendship.⁴²⁵ Diomidis' speech was as follows:

The Greek Government feels deep emotion at the presence in Athens of the national mission of the people of Cyprus, which is bringing the island's universal message in favour of old-established Anglo-Greek friendship, a friendship which we want to see undisturbed, and in conformity with the proven liberal traditions of that great democracy, we express the hope that satisfaction will be given to the universal desire of all Greeks for enosis, which is destined to make warmer still the bonds between, and to serve the common interests of the two countries.⁴²⁶

The Greek Prime Minister's speech was well received by all speakers in the Chamber. The speakers agreed that 'the Greek government should accept the Cypriot offer of enosis and take the matter up with the British Government,' rather than a recourse to the UN.⁴²⁷ The Greek Prime Minister wanted to avoid souring the relationship between the Greek and British governments over the Cyprus question. This is evident in the fact that, earlier in mid-December 1949, at the early stage of the plebiscite movement, the Greek Prime Minister had voiced concerns that 'further enosis agitation might endanger Greece's international position.'⁴²⁸ The Greek Prime Minister then stressed that 'friendship with our allies must remain unshaken since the solution of all our problems

⁴²⁵ TNA, FO 371/87719/RG 1081/107, From Athens (Sir C. Norton) to Foreign Office, 24 May 1950.

⁴²⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴²⁷ TNA, FO 371/87720/RG 1081/114, From Athens (Sir C. Norton) to Foreign Office, 28 May 1950.

⁴²⁸ TNA, CO 537/4978, Sir C. Norton (Athens) to Foreign Office, 21 December 1949.

depends on it.⁴²⁹ The question of Greek security was one of the utmost problems concerning the Greek government, given that Cold War tension was on the increase.⁴³⁰ Furthermore, Greece had yet to become a member of any security system, having been excluded from NATO during its formative years and a Mediterranean pact still existing only on paper.⁴³¹

It is worth mentioning here that the Greek government had started to ask both the US and Britain about being included in NATO in late 1949.⁴³² This was due to a number of factors: first, the forthcoming reduction in the Greek Armed Forces and the withdrawal of British forces from Greece due to the civil war coming to an end in October 1949.⁴³³ Secondly, Britain and the United States refused to form a Mediterranean pact imminently, since both believed 'it was premature to consider the setting up of an Eastern Mediterranean Pact.'⁴³⁴ Furthermore, the Greek government believed that

⁴²⁹ Ibid.

⁴³⁰ See enclosed Telegram No. 789 dated 1 November 1949 in TNA, FO 371/78329/ R 10515/1072/67G, 'Short brief on the question of GREECE being included in the Atlantic Pact, written in case the Secretary of State speaks to M. Tsaldaris on the subject in Paris', From Athens (Sir C. Norton) to Foreign Office, 1 November 1949.

⁴³¹ These two circumstances became Greece's fundamental argument for its inclusion in NATO. See enclosed document entitled 'Greece and the Atlantic Pact' in TNA, FO 371/78329/R 10515/1072/67G, 'Short brief on the question of GREECE being included in the Atlantic Pact, written in case the Secretary of State speaks to M. Tsaldaris on the subject in Paris', Foreign Office minute by Sir A. Rumbold, 3 November 1949.

⁴³² See *FRUS, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. VI (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977), pp. 447-449, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State, 28 October 1949. See enclosed document entitled 'Greece and the Atlantic Pact' in TNA, FO 371/78329/R 10515/1072/67G, 'Short brief on the question of GREECE being included in the Atlantic Pact, written in case the Secretary of State speaks to M. Tsaldaris on the subject in Paris', Foreign Office minute by Sir A. Rumbold, 3 November 1949.

⁴³³ See enclosed Telegram No. 792, No. 789 and No. 791 all dated 1 November 1949 in TNA, FO 371/78329/ R 10515/1072/67G, 'Short brief on the question of GREECE being included in the Atlantic Pact, written in case the Secretary of State speaks to M. Tsaldaris on the subject in Paris', From Athens (Sir C. Norton) to Foreign Office, 1 November 1949.

⁴³⁴ See enclosed document entitled 'Greece and the Atlantic Pact' in TNA, FO 371/78329/R 10515/1072/67G, 'Short brief on the question of GREECE being included in the Atlantic Pact, written in case the Secretary of State speaks to M. Tsaldaris on the subject in Paris', Foreign Office minute by Sir A. Rumbold, 3 November 1949.

Britain's security guarantee to Greece, which had been given in 1939 and implemented in 1940, was 'no longer operative.'⁴³⁵ Due to these circumstances, the Greek government told the US government that it 'felt that it was necessary to do something to prevent undesirable developments in Greece.'⁴³⁶ To ensure the safety of Greece in the midst of the Cold War, it was crucial to maintain a good relationship with the Western powers and, in the case of Cyprus, with Britain in particular. Seemingly, the Greek government walked a tightrope between the demands of the Greek Cypriots for *enosis* and the struggle to maintain a good relationship with the British government.

Although the Greek government needed to avoid a confrontation with Britain because of Cyprus, the Turkish government operated under different circumstances. The Turkish government could maintain good relations with the British government without much worry, since both they and the Turkish Cypriots believed the best way to prevent *enosis* was by supporting the retention of British rule in Cyprus.⁴³⁷ The Turkish Foreign Minister Sadak's position can be observed in the following:

In reply to my [British Ambassador Charles] question M. Sadak said very confidentially that the Turkish Government and people would be fundamentally concerned if a change of sovereignty were envisaged. Turkey's interest was mainly strategic [*sic*], and so long as the island remained in British hands they felt quite happy as it would afford

⁴³⁵ Ibid.

⁴³⁶ *FRUS, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. VI, p. 448, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State, 28 October 1949.

⁴³⁷ TNA, FO 371/78427/R 11889/1022/19, Sir N. Charles (Angora) to Foreign Office, 22 December 1949.

protection to Turkey and the port of Iskenderun besides assuring supply of military and other assistance in the event of war.⁴³⁸

Sir Mehmed Munir, the Turkish representative on the Governor's Executive Council to the Foreign Office, also made the same remarks on this matter: 'They [the Turkish Cypriots] were supporting the regime [British rule] because they disliked the prospect of union with Greece.'⁴³⁹ Nevertheless, due to the Turkish government's support for the Turkish Cypriots, the Cyprus question caused damage to Greco-Turkish relations. As remarked by Under-Secretary for Colonial Affairs, Martin, during a meeting with US State Department officials in July 1950 regarding the Cyprus question, 'any such agreement would come as a disagreeable shock to the Turks and would damage Greco-Turkish relations.'⁴⁴⁰

Overall, although the Greek Cypriots' efforts were fruitless in bringing the 1950 plebiscite to the UN, they did however worsen their conflict with the Turkish Cypriots. As the mother countries of these two ethnic communities, relations between Greece and Turkey, as well as their internal politics, were affected by this conflict. Greco-Turkish rivalry over Cyprus has since brought these two countries to the brink of war.⁴⁴¹ As the sovereign power in Cyprus, Britain's involvement in this bitter conflict was

⁴³⁸ Ibid.

⁴³⁹ See TNA, FO 371/87716/RG 1081/45, Minute by Rumbold, 6 February 1950.

⁴⁴⁰ See record of discussion on Cyprus held at the State Department on July 10th, 1950 enclosed in TNA, FO 371/87722/RG 1081/158, British Embassy Washington to Sir Anthony Rumbold (Southern Department), 14 July 1950.

⁴⁴¹ Joseph, *Cyprus: Ethnic Conflict and International Politics: From Independence to the Threshold of the European Union*, p. 13; Krebs, 'NATO and the Greco-Turkish Conflict', p. 356.

inevitable and diplomacy between the three countries became increasingly complicated.

Given that the relationship between Greece and Turkey deteriorated further between late 1949 and 1950 as a result of the plebiscite, and given that, at the same time, both countries were in a search for security with the Western powers, this study believes Greco-Turkish rivalry over Cyprus affected these countries' chances of becoming members of NATO during the period after it was successfully established. This in turn leads to a new insight into the MEC, which this study believes was a means of keeping Turkey, and thus Greece, outside of NATO. To elucidate this argument, Turkey and Britain's initiatives in the defence of the Middle East during this period will be analysed in-depth.

The MEC as a means of preventing Turkish, and thus Greek, membership of NATO

The MEC was a regional defence pact of the Middle East pursued by Britain, with the ultimate aim of safeguarding this vital strategic area from Soviet penetration.⁴⁴² The idea for this military arrangement that would consist of Britain, Egypt, Israel and the Arab States had emerged in late 1945 due to the Egyptian government's demand for unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Egypt and the Suez Canal Zone.⁴⁴³ The

⁴⁴² See TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/11C, 'Record of Sir W. Strang's conversations with the Turkish Ambassador', Foreign Office minute by Strang, 1 June 1950.

⁴⁴³ See TNA, FO 371/50774/U 181/36/70, 'Policy Required to Secure British Strategic Interests in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East', 5 January 1945; TNA, CAB 81/48, PHP (45) 10 (0) (Final), 'Security in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East', 27 March 1945; TNA, retrieved from the Brotherton Library, FO 800/457/Eg/45/4, Personal for Foreign Secretary from C.I.G.S., 5 November 1945; TNA, FO 371/53293/J1854/G, Stansgate (The Viscount Stansgate was Secretary of State of Air) to Bevin, 28 April 1946.

Foreign Office and the COS anticipated that the Soviet Union would manage to take over the Suez Canal Zone and subsequently military facilities comprising fighter squadrons and bomber bases in Egypt if Britain agreed to evacuate.⁴⁴⁴ Given that Egypt and the Suez Canal Zone were vital positions for the defence of the Middle East, this situation would bring about Soviet domination in the region and 'would heighten the probability of world war in which we [Britain] should be massacred.'⁴⁴⁵ Britain was convinced that, by turning the Suez Canal Zone into an Allied base and offering Egypt an equal partnership in a regional defence effort (which became officially known as the MEC in early 1951),⁴⁴⁶ Soviet penetration in the Middle East could be avoided even if British troops had evacuated this zone.

As regards to the question of NATO membership, Greece and Turkey had been excluded from NATO when the treaty was signed in April 1949. However, neither had given up hope of joining and continued to ask about the possibility of their inclusion between late 1949 and 1950. It is worth mentioning here that Turkey's efforts were made in a more demanding manner than those of Greece. This was noticeable when only Turkey requested membership in NATO in early May 1950. There are several matters that may have caused Greece to be less persistent in asking for its inclusion in NATO than Turkey. Firstly, Greece was, during that period, recovering from a civil war. Secondly, the Greek

⁴⁴⁴ TNA, CAB 131/12, DO (46) 40, Memorandum by Secretary of State to the Defence Committee, 13 March 1946.

⁴⁴⁵ TNA, retrieved from the Brotherton Library, FO 800/476/ME/47/2, Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean, Note by Mr P. Dixon, 8 January 1947.

⁴⁴⁶ TNA, retrieved from the Brotherton Library, FO 800/457/Eg/45/4, Personal for Foreign Secretary from C.I.G.S., 5 November 1945; TNA, CAB 131/9, DO (50) 40, Co-operation with Egypt, Report by the Chiefs of Staff, 19 May 1950; TNA, PREM 8/1359, Copy of letter from Slim to King Farouk, 13 July 1950; TNA, CAB 129/45, CP (51) 95, Memorandum for Foreign Affairs, 30 March 1951. It should be noted here that the name MEC began to be used in early 1951. Before that, this regional defence pact was known by many general names such as the Anglo-Egyptian alliance, regional partnership, Anglo-Egyptian defensive plan, Middle East defensive confederation and so on.

Cypriots demanded Greece's support for *enosis* and their plebiscite movement. The Greek government was also satisfied with the Anglo-American "Joint Declaration" to Greece and Turkey, which provided an alternative safety guarantee to countries that were not included in NATO.⁴⁴⁷ Furthermore, Greece still hoped that a Mediterranean pact would be formed by the Western powers, as shown by the fact that it once again advocated for this pact in February 1949.⁴⁴⁸

Therefore, in order to understand Turkey's efforts, this section focuses on its initiative to obtain membership of NATO between late 1949 and early 1950 through its active involvement in the defence of the Middle East. Where the discussion touches upon the question of Turkish membership of NATO, its security partner, Greece, will also be mentioned. As discussed in Chapter One, Britain and the United States treated the security affairs of Greece and Turkey in a fraternal way. When the issue of the extension of NATO had been touched upon, the United States had asserted that 'it would be unrealistic to include Turkey if Greece were not included.'⁴⁴⁹ This consideration had

⁴⁴⁷ For records about this, see TNA, FO 371/78459/R 3123/1072/19, 'Greek reactions to the Atlantic Pact--Special prominence given to Secretary of State's and Mr. Acheson's assurance on Greece', From Athens (Sir C. Norton) to Foreign Office, 19 March 1949; TNA, FO 371/78459/R 3193/1072/19, 'The Atlantic Pact: Further reports of Greek reactions', From Athens (Sir C. Norton) to Foreign Office, 21 March 1949; TNA, FO 800/483, Washington to Foreign Office, 16 March 1949; TNA, FO 371/78459/R 3767/1072/19, 'North Atlantic Pact: Press reports of statement by M. Tsaldaris welcoming the Pact', From Athens (Sir C. Norton) to Foreign Office, 6 April 1949. Although the Greek Press, *Ta Nea*, later attacked Greek Foreign Minister M. Tsaldaris' official statement expressing the Greek government's satisfaction at the signing of the pact, it argued that the Greeks feel some bitterness at the fact that Italy was included. Greece however had to be content with extracts from speeches by President Truman and Secretary of State Acheson. See TNA, FO 371/78459/R 3823/1072/19, 'Further Press reactions to Atlantic Pact: approval of statements by Mr Truman, Mr Acheson and Mr Bevin', From Athens (Sir C. Norton) to Foreign Office, 8 April 1949.

⁴⁴⁸ See TNA, FO 371/78328/R 2067/1072/67G, 'Greek proposal for Mediterranean Pact (Copy of aide-memoire communicated to Sir O. Sargent)', 21 February 1949. See also TNA, FO 371/78329/R 10515/1072/67G, 'Short brief on the question of GREECE being included in the Atlantic Pact, written in case the Secretary of State speaks to M. Tsaldaris on the subject in Paris', Foreign Office minute by Sir A. Rumbold, 3 November 1949.

⁴⁴⁹ *FRUS, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. VI, p. 35, Memorandum by Mr. Gordon P. Merriam of the Policy Planning Staff, 13 June 1949.

generated a belief that Greece and Turkey were to be treated under one category and that they should be considered together, either both included or both excluded from NATO.⁴⁵⁰

Turkish interest in NATO and the defence of the Middle East, late 1949 to early May 1950:

Towards Turkey's inclusion in the MEC

When the Western powers finalised the treaty of NATO in April 1949 without Turkey as a member, the Turkish RPP government felt that Turkey was 'being abandoned and left outside the thinking of the Western powers as regards security arrangements.'⁴⁵¹ Turkey also believed it was 'the most exposed position of all European countries as regards pressure and possible attack from Soviet Russia.'⁴⁵² The Turkish RPP government was therefore relentless in its pursuit of security guarantees from the Western powers. In response, the Western powers, in particular Britain and the United States, offered Turkey two solutions for defence matters: the Anglo-American "Joint Declaration" to Greece and Turkey and a Mediterranean pact (also known as an Eastern Mediterranean pact) that would be established under the Anglo-French-Turkish Treaty of Alliance of 1939.

⁴⁵⁰ This concept was applied by the North Atlantic Council (NAC) during the discussions and debates on the membership of Greece and Turkey between 1950 and 1951. These countries were regarded as one category because of the view that a solution for one country that did not include the other would not work. Scholars who mention this matter in their work include: Gheciu, p. 41; Theodore A. Coulombis, *The United States, Greece and Turkey: The Troubled Triangle* (New York: Preager Publishers, 1983), p. 14; Harris, *Troubled Alliance: Turkish-American Problems in Historical Perspective, 1945-1971*, p. 26. See also *FRUS, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 1314, The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Turkey, 3 September 1950.

⁴⁵¹ See memorandum of conversation, April 12th, 1949 enclosed in TNA, FO 371/78670/R 5695/1072/44, 'Memorandum of conversation between Mr Acheson and Necmeddin Sadak regarding Turkey's position with respect to the Atlantic Pact', Sir Noel Charles (Angora) to Sir A. Rumbold, 24 May 1949.

⁴⁵² Ibid.

Turkey, however, regarded these two solutions as inadequate to guarantee its safety. In regard to the first solution, Turkey was not satisfied with the American declaration since it was not delivered formally like Bevin did in the House of Commons:⁴⁵³ rather, Acheson broadcast the declaration only on US national radio, with no official support from the Senate.⁴⁵⁴ Turkey therefore believed that the American declaration would not be strong enough to fulfil its purpose.⁴⁵⁵ In regard to the second solution, a Mediterranean pact, Turkey 'recognised that there was no other Eastern Mediterranean country, with the possible exception of Israel, which could provide any force capable of assisting Turkey in case of a major war.'⁴⁵⁶ Hence, a Mediterranean pact could bring Turkey nothing 'but added complications and burdens.'⁴⁵⁷ Turkey did press the United States for a political arrangement, in which the US would at least associate itself with the Anglo-French-Turkish Treaty of Alliance of 1939. Turkey also proposed a Mediterranean pact that would be established under this 1939 Treaty and be linked to

⁴⁵³ See *Hansard*, 18 March 1949, Vol. 462, cc2533-2543, col. 2535 for Bevin's special prominence of security guarantee to Greece and Turkey.

⁴⁵⁴ See *The New York Times*, 19 March 1949 [<http://www.nytimes.com/1949/03/19/archives/acheson-replies-at-press-conference-on-atlantic-pact.html>] for a broadcast by Acheson regarding the security declaration on the United States national radio. For text of radio address by Acheson on 18 March 1949, see Department of State *Bulletin*, March 27, 1949, "The Meaning of the North Atlantic Pact", pp. 384 ff. For the Turkish government's comment on this matter, see TNA, FO 371/78329/R 2915/1072/67G, 'Turkish attitude towards proposed Declaration covering Greece, Turkey and Iran', From Angora (Sir D. Kelly) to Foreign Office, 14 March 1949.

⁴⁵⁵ See TNA, FO 371/78329/R 3205/1072/67, 'Turkish Ambassador request for information concerning Secretary of State's statement about Turkey in connexion with the Atlantic Pact', Conversation with Sir W. Strang, 17 March 1949.

⁴⁵⁶ See enclosed copies of despatch from Canadian Ambassador in Turkey dated March 2nd, 1949 in TNA, FO 371/78329/R 3948/1072/67, 'Turkey and Mediterranean Pact – Encloses copies of despatch from Canadian Ambassador in Turkey', Mr E. N. Larmour (Commonwealth Relations Office) to Mr G. W. Furlonge (Commonwealth Liaison Department, Foreign Office), 12 April 1949.

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

NATO, so that the strength of the Mediterranean pact could be enhanced.⁴⁵⁸ However, the United States' position appeared inconclusive regarding these suggestions.⁴⁵⁹

These developments led Turkey to seek admission in a stronger defence pact, namely NATO. To do so, Turkey approached the British government first in early November 1949, in particular Bevin and Strang.⁴⁶⁰ Unfortunately, both indicated that no extension could be considered at that time, stating that 'the Atlantic Pact itself does not cover the Eastern Mediterranean and the Atlantic Powers as such will not themselves be discussing Eastern Mediterranean questions.'⁴⁶¹ Although Turkey had yet to approach the United States, it had already been made aware of America's reluctance to enlarge NATO when, earlier in October 1949, Acheson rejected the Greek Foreign Minister Mr Tsaldaris's request for Greek inclusion in NATO. Acheson rejected Greek inclusion because he believed that NATO must be made to work first in Western Europe, before its extension to other countries could be considered.⁴⁶²

⁴⁵⁸ The Turkish Ambassador, Feridun Cemal Erkin, approached George C. McGhee (Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs) on 26 September 1949, James E. Webb 1949 (Acting Secretary of State) on 30 September 1949 and John D. Jernegan (Director, Office of Greek, Turkish and Iranian Affairs) on 13 October 1949 regarding these two proposals. See footnote 1 in *FRUS, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. VI, p. 1682; Memorandum of conversation by McGhee, September 26, 1949: 840.20/9-2649; Memorandum of conversation by Webb, September 30, Secretary's Memoranda, Lot 53 D 344; *FRUS, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. VI, p. 1682, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director of the Office of Greek, Turkish, and Iranian Affairs (Jernegan), 13 October 1949.

⁴⁵⁹ See *FRUS, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. VI, p. 1682, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Director of the Office of Greek, Turkish, and Iranian Affairs (Jernegan), 13 October 1949.

⁴⁶⁰ See TNA, FO 371/78329/R 11079/1072/67G, 'Paper headed "Security of Greece and Turkey" prepared for the conversation between the Secretary of State and the Turkish Ambassador', Foreign Office minute by Sir W. Strang, 17 November 1949.

⁴⁶¹ TNA, FO 371/78329/R 11080/1072/67G, 'Turkey and the Atlantic Pact: minute written in connection with the forthcoming conversation between the Secretary of State and the Turkish Ambassador', Foreign Office minute by Sir A. Rumbold, 22 November 1949.

⁴⁶² See *FRUS, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. VI, pp. 447-449, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State, 28 October 1949. Acheson's view echoed British Foreign Office, see enclosed document entitled 'Greece and the Atlantic Pact' in TNA, FO 371/78329/R 10515/1072/67G, 'Short brief on the question of GREECE being included in the Atlantic Pact, written in case the Secretary of

The American position against NATO enlargement became more explicit when George C. McGhee, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs, told the Turkish President, İsmet İnönü, and Turkish Foreign Minister, Sadak, that the United States preferred to give direct military assistance to Turkey, Greece and Iran during his visit to Ankara in December 1949. This visit took place after the Conference of American Chiefs of Mission in the Near East at Istanbul, Turkey, held between 26 and 29 November 1949.⁴⁶³ The Turkish RPP government thus 'had gained the impression that there had been a lessening of interest in Turkey on the part of the United States as compared with what M. Sadak had found some months ago in Washington.'⁴⁶⁴ Turkey subsequently inquired once again about the possibility of American association with the Anglo-French-Turkish Alliance and a Mediterranean pact linked to NATO and begged the British Foreign Office to support the initiative.⁴⁶⁵ The Foreign Office refused to cooperate, believing it was not yet the opportune time to discuss the security of Turkey.⁴⁶⁶ However, the Turkish Ambassador to the USA, Feridun

State speaks to M. Tsaldaris on the subject in Paris', Foreign Office minute by Sir A. Rumbold, 3 November 1949.

⁴⁶³ It was stated in *FRUS, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. VI, p. 1685 that McGhee visited Ankara on 1 and 2 December. He had a long conversation with Foreign Minister Sadak, was received by President İnönü and talked informally with a number of Turkish cabinet members. Records of the substance of these conversations have not been found. However, the British Ambassador to Turkey, Sir Noel Charles, reported these conversations to the Foreign Office. See TNA, FO 371/78329/R 11548/1072/67G, 'Conversation with the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs who expressed the wish for stronger support from Great Britain and the U.S. in the event of an attack on Turkey', Sir N. Charles (Angora) to Foreign Office (Mr Attlee), 6 December 1949.

⁴⁶⁴ TNA, FO 371/78329/R 11942/1072/67G, 'Report of a conversation with the Turkish Ambassador who outlined the points he wished to put to the Secretary of State about U.S and U.K assistance for Turkey', Foreign Office minute by Sir W. Strang, 16 December 1949.

⁴⁶⁵ See TNA, FO 371/78329/R 11548/1072/67G, 'Conversation with the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs who expressed the wish for stronger support from Great Britain and the U.S. in the event of an attack on Turkey', Sir N. Charles (Angora) to Foreign Office (Mr Attlee), 6 December 1949.

⁴⁶⁶ For record and British Foreign Office's reason regarding this matter, see TNA, FO 371/78329/R 11942/1072/67G, 'Report of a conversation with the Turkish Ambassador who outlined the points he wished to put to the Secretary of State about U.S and U.K assistance for Turkey', Foreign Office minute by Sir A. Rumbold, 16 December 1949.

Cemal Erkin, had already approached the US Deputy Under Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, on 5 December 1949 regarding these proposals. Again however, 'Rusk could say no more than that the Department was continuing its studies of the question.'⁴⁶⁷

Another reason Turkey was so keen on achieving American association with the Anglo-French-Turkish Alliance and a Mediterranean pact linked to NATO in late 1949 was because the United States did not see the security of the Middle East as its priority. This attitude was shown clearly when the Conference of American Chiefs of Mission in the Near East at Istanbul, chaired by McGhee before his visit to Ankara, concluded that the United States would not associate itself with defence plans for the Middle East.⁴⁶⁸

McGhee told the Turkish Foreign Minister, Sadak, that the reasoning behind the decision was that 'Russia was now on the defensive and was unlikely to attack, and that, in any event, the Middle Eastern countries were now "communist-proof".'⁴⁶⁹ Sadak however, disagreed with McGhee's view, a matter which was reported by Strang as follows:

The [Turkish] Ambassador said that M. Sadak did not agree with Mr.

McGhee's optimistic view. He thought that the only way to stop the

⁴⁶⁷ *FRUS, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. VI, p. 1685, Editorial Note. For the full text of Rusk's memorandum of this conversation, see *FRUS, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. IV, pp. 359-360, Memorandum of conversation, by the Deputy Under Secretary of State (Rusk), Washington, 5 December 1949.

⁴⁶⁸ For documentation on the conference regarding this conclusion, see *FRUS, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. VI, p. 169, Agreed Conclusions of the Conference of Near Eastern Chiefs of Mission Held at Istanbul, November 26-29, 1949, Istanbul, undated.

⁴⁶⁹ McGhee gave an account of the proceedings of the conference to Turkish Foreign Minister Sadak during the former's visit to Ankara after the conference. TNA, FO 371/78329/R 11942/1072/67G, 'Report of a conversation with the Turkish Ambassador who outlined the points he wished to put to the Secretary of State about U.S and U.K assistance for Turkey', Foreign Office minute by Sir W. Strang, 16 December 1949. To note here, the details of the conversation between McGhee and Sadak and the latter's reaction to McGhee's view was reported by the Turkish Ambassador to London, Cevat Açikalin to Michael Wright (Foreign Office Under-Secretary) and Sir William Strang.

Russians was to make plain that Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States would act together in the event of a Russian attack on Turkey. It would be necessary to convince the Russians one hundred per cent that Turkey and the Middle East would not be left undefended.⁴⁷⁰

Turkey believed that if the Soviet Union succeeded in penetrating the Middle East, Turkey would become the next target.⁴⁷¹ Furthermore, 'the Turks were alarmed at the speech made by [Georgy] Malenkov [Secretary of the Central Committee] last November in which Turkey was indicated as one of the principal countries hostile to Russia lying along the Russian borders.'⁴⁷² The Turkish RPP government had therefore convinced themselves of 'the Kremlin intent sooner or later to pick a quarrel with Turkey.'⁴⁷³ Hence, towards the end of 1949, Turkey was keen to obtain Britain's support for its efforts to acquire American association with the Anglo-French-Turkish Alliance and a Mediterranean pact linked to NATO. To do so, the Turkish Ambassador to London, Cevat Açıkalın, had repeatedly emphasised to members of the Foreign Office, such as Michael Wright, the Foreign Office Under-Secretary, and Bevin 'that he thought the Middle East was the area in which the Soviet Union were most likely to seek to cause trouble in the near future.'⁴⁷⁴ Açıkalın's suggestion was as follows:

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid.

⁴⁷² See section background in a brief note for the Secretary of State on the Turkish request for Turkish security to be borne in mind at the Conference of Foreign Ministers prepared by Mr Bateman in TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/9, Foreign Office minute by Mr. Bateman, 9 May 1950.

⁴⁷³ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁴ TNA, FO371/87948/RK 1071/3, 'Record of a conversation between the Turkish Ambassador and Mr Wright at the Foreign Office on 14th December 1949', Foreign Office minute by Mr Wright, 15 December 1949.

He [Açikalin] thought that some form of Middle East Pact with American participation was most desirable in the interests of stability and resistance to Communist penetration. He wondered whether thought might also be given to American adherence to the Anglo-French-Turkish Treaty. He had heard that the American Middle East representatives at Istanbul had expressed confidence in the resistance of the Middle East to Communism. He thought that unless some action [*sic*] were taken this was an over-optimistic picture.⁴⁷⁵

Wright told Açikalin that he could not, of course, speak for the United States government and could only give him his informal impressions: that the American Congress would not agree to 'American participation in the near future in any regional agreements over and beyond the Atlantic Pact.'⁴⁷⁶ In his response to Açikalin, Bevin meanwhile took the same line, explaining in late November 1949 that 'until we and the Americans had completed the work upon which we are now engaged he would not be able to say what our ultimate intentions as regards the security of Turkey might be.'⁴⁷⁷ Thus, the efforts of Turkey in Washington were made without support from the British Foreign Office. As mentioned earlier, this approach to the United States met with frustration.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid. After the Turkish Ambassador Açikalin approached Mr Wright on 14 December 1949, he also approached Bevin on 21 and 31 December 1949 and covered much of the same ground. See TNA, FO371/87948/RK 1071/3, Foreign Office minute by Mr A. Rumbold, 2 January 1950.

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁷ TNA, FO 371/78329/R 11942/1072/67G, 'Report of a conversation with the Turkish Ambassador who outlined the points he wished to put to the Secretary of State about U.S and U.K assistance for Turkey', Foreign Office minute by Sir A. Rumbold, 16 December 1949.

Turkish fear of a Soviet attack continued to increase when, in early 1950, Açıkalın undertook a general tour of the Balkans, China and South East Asia and 'found all shades of opinion convinced that Russia would, before long, begin to probe against Turkey and the Middle East.'⁴⁷⁸ It seemed to Turkey that 'the United States policy of attempting to defend Western Europe, while leaving doors in the Middle East and the North-East Mediterranean wide open, was a grave political and strategical [*sic*] error.'⁴⁷⁹ Charles H. Bateman, Assistant Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs (Northern and Southern Europe) had rationalised the US attitude by arguing that 'it was surely a question of timing [and] the United States could hardly be expected to undertake all at once the defence of every focal point on the globe's surface.'⁴⁸⁰ Açıkalın, however, 'continued to maintain that Turkey and the Middle East ought to receive priority from the United Kingdom and the United States.'⁴⁸¹

Yet despite Turkey's efforts, the United States maintained its 'present endeavouring to defend Western Europe because they felt that to be a crucial point.'⁴⁸² Turkey felt that, in hesitating 'to give Turkey a political guarantee such as adhering to the Anglo-French-Turkish Alliance, they [the United States] were in fact encouraging the Russians to have a crack at Turkey.'⁴⁸³ Furthermore, Açıkalın 'seemed to think that the U.S. Administration often exaggerated for bargaining purposes the difficulties they have with

⁴⁷⁸ TNA, FO371/87948/RK 1071/1, 'Record of Mr Bateman's conversation with Turkish Ambassador regarding Turkey's position as a key point in event of attack by Russia and need for U.S. aid for defence purposes', 20 February 1950.

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸² TNA, FO371/87948/RK 1071/1, 'Record of Mr Bateman's conversation with Turkish Ambassador regarding Turkey's position as a key point in event of attack by Russia and need for U.S. aid for defence purposes', 20 February 1950.

⁴⁸³ *Ibid.*

Congress.⁴⁸⁴ These developments encouraged the Turkish RPP government to adopt a new direction in its foreign policy towards the Middle East: to become actively involved in Middle Eastern affairs, in particular defence matters, in cooperation with the Western powers, notably Britain, whose strategic interests rested largely in this region.

As a matter of fact, Turkey had shown interest in the defence of the Middle East since the conference in Istanbul, in late 1949, concluded that the United States would not involve itself in defence plans for the Middle East. As reported by Strang, 'it was also desirable that there should be regular informal contacts, at any rate between U.K. and Turkish Representatives, so that the Turkish Government could be continuously informed of what was going on in Middle Eastern affairs, particularly from the point of view of defence.'⁴⁸⁵ Turkey was deeply concerned with the defence of the Middle East because its security was linked to that of the broader region. If the Middle East fell under Soviet domination, it would also affect the eastern Mediterranean and vice versa.⁴⁸⁶ When the United States still refused to commit itself to the defence of the Middle East and remained uncertain about associating with the Anglo-French-Turkish Alliance and a Mediterranean pact, Turkey felt frustrated given its insistence that the risk of an imminent Russian attack was high.⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸⁴ TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1196/1, 'Record of Mr Younger's conversation with the Turkish Ambassador', Foreign Office minute by Mr Kenneth G. Younger (minister of state at the Foreign Office and the deputy to Bevin), 14 March 1950.

⁴⁸⁵ TNA, FO 371/78329/R 11942/1072/67G, 'Report of a conversation with the Turkish Ambassador who outlined the points he wished to put to the Secretary of State about U.S and U.K assistance for Turkey', Foreign Office minute by Sir W. Strang, 16 December 1949.

⁴⁸⁶ See Chapter One of this dissertation, pp. 39-40.

⁴⁸⁷ See TNA, FO 800/507/Tu/50/1, Conversation between the Secretary of States and the Turkish Ambassador, (1) Possibility of an imminent Russian Attack; (2) Policy of the United States; (3) The Middle East, 22 March 1940.

Worried with the safety of the Middle East, as well as its own, Turkey therefore approached Britain. Britain was currently reinstating efforts for a regional defence pact in the Middle East in cooperation with the Egyptian government, but faced the latter's intransigence over the Suez Canal Zone which caused Anglo-Egyptian negotiations to reach an impasse. This initiative was carried out by the Turkish Foreign Minister, Sadak, who spoke with Bevin at Strasbourg and Paris on 1 and 5 April 1950 respectively. Sadak told Bevin about his government's readiness to play an active role in the defence of the Middle East by proposing Anglo-Turkish cooperation in the region and also offered Turkish assistance in Anglo-Egyptian talks for a new settlement regarding the Suez Canal Zone.⁴⁸⁸

However, this new Turkish approach towards the defence of the Middle East had a hidden agenda. By collaborating with Britain in the defence of the Middle East and playing an honest broker in the row between Britain and Egypt regarding their conflict over the Suez Canal Zone, Turkey was actually bidding for its place in NATO. This was evident when, immediately after Turkey told Britain about these aforementioned matters, in April 1950, Turkey for the first time requested admission into NATO through its *aide-mémoire*. Dated 3 May 1950, the *aide-mémoire* was sent to the British, the United States and French governments and contained a request for Turkish NATO membership, 'urg[ing] her [Turkey's] ally Great Britain, who is naturally concerned with

⁴⁸⁸ See TNA, FO 800/507/Tu/50/3, Conversation between the Secretary of State and the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs in Strasbourg on 1st April, 1950, Part II.—Middle East, 1 April 1950. See TNA, FO 800/507/Tu/50/4, Conversation between the Secretary of State and the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs in Paris on 5th April, 1950, The Middle East, 5 April 1950; See enclosed record of conversation at the British Embassy, Paris on April 5th, 1950 in TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/4, 'Consideration on whether the Foreign Office should comply with M. Sadak's request for a copy of his conversation with Mr. Bevin, 5 April on defence of the Middle East', Foreign Office minute by Mr. R. Barclay, 5 April 1950.

the security and independence of Turkey and the Middle East, to bear in mind the question of Turkey's security at the London Conference, where vital security and defence are to be discussed.'⁴⁸⁹ Moreover, the Turkish Ambassador Açıkalın's statement to Bateman that was made two days after the *aide-mémoire* was circulated seems to validate the claim that the Turkish *démarche* to Britain was a gambit for securing Turkish accession to NATO. Açıkalın's statement was as follows:

If Turkey were to help British policy vis-à-vis Egypt and the Arabs generally, it was insufficient for Turkey to rely solely upon the 1939 Treaty. The Egyptians, Arabs and Israelis knew perfectly well that Turkey was the ally of Great Britain and this rather vitiated her position as a go-between. If, on the other hand, Turkey were politically bound with a larger group [NATO], this would not only serve to warn Russia off, but would also materially assist Turkey in any steps she might be able to take towards the advancement of British policy in the Middle East.⁴⁹⁰

However, the British Foreign Office's reaction to the Turkish request for membership in NATO was not as Turkey had expected. Instead of concurring with its request, Bevin and the Foreign Office decided to bring Turkey into a regional defence pact of the Middle

⁴⁸⁹ See enclosed an *aide-mémoire* dated 3 May 1950 in TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/7, 'Conversation between Mr. Younger and the Turkish Ambassador on defence of Turkey, and relations between Turkey and the Arab States', Conversation between the Minister of State and the Turkish Ambassador – Inclusion of Turkey in North Atlantic Defence System, 3 May 1950. Scholars such as John M. Vander Lippe and Athanassopoulou also view this *aide-mémoire* as the first Turkish request for admission to NATO. See John M. Vander Lippe, 'Forgotten Brigade of the Forgotten War: Turkey's Participation in the Korean War', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 36:1 (2000), 92-102 (p. 95); Athanassopoulou, *Turkey – Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945-1952: The First Enlargement of NATO*, p. 157.

⁴⁹⁰ TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/8, 'Conversation between M. Açıkalın and Mr. Bateman on 5th May at the Foreign Office at which the former was given the outline of the agenda for the Tripartite Ministerial meeting', Record of conversation with Turkish Ambassador by C. H. Bateman, 5 May 1950.

East. This unexpected decision by the British Foreign Office convinces this study that the MEC was likely a means for blocking Turkey, and thus Greece, from joining NATO.

To justify this interpretation of the MEC, that it was treated by Bevin and the Foreign Office as a means of excluding Greece and Turkey from NATO, the next subtopic will analyse the fact that Turkey was not considered by the British Foreign Office during their efforts to initiate the MEC with the Egyptian government, in 1946 and early 1950, both of which were before Turkey first requested membership in NATO in early May 1950.

Anglo-Egyptian efforts for a regional defence of the Middle East, 1946 and early 1950: An analysis of the MEC as a means of excluding Turkey from NATO

A regional defence pact for the Middle East was considered by Britain when there seemed little prospect for Britain to retain its predominant power and influence in Egypt and the Suez Canal Zone. This was due to the Egyptian government's demands for a complete evacuation of British troops from its land since early 1945. It should be noted that the participation of Egypt in the British plan for a regional defence of the Middle East was the most important criterion for ensuring the effectiveness of this military arrangement. The reason for this was explained in the British records as follows:

Egypt is the key strategic area of the Middle East. Not only is she the gateway to Africa, whose penetration by Communism would be a disaster to Western civilisation, but she forms a vital link in the

communications between the Atlantic Powers and their allies in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Furthermore, Egypt is the only country in the Middle East possessing the facilities and resources for the conduct of a major war and on which the defence of any part of the Middle East can be based. Without a fully prepared base in Egypt, the defence of the Middle East (including Egypt itself) cannot be attempted.⁴⁹¹

The British government's attempted negotiations with other potential members of this regional defence pact, such as Israel and the Arab States, will not be touched upon. This subtopic focuses only on Anglo-Egyptian efforts for the establishment of this military arrangement, since without successful Anglo-Egyptian talks regarding this military arrangement, negotiations with other potential members would have been futile.

The first prominent Anglo-Egyptian effort for the defence of the Middle East occurred in 1946. Bevin managed to persuade the Egyptian Prime Minister, Ismail Sidky, to agree to the establishment of an Anglo-Egyptian defence alliance that would produce combined military arrangements in the event of war.⁴⁹² Sidky's agreement was an act of compromise in return for Bevin's agreement to gradually withdraw British troops from Egypt, which would be completed by September 1949 as stipulated in the Bevin-Sidky Treaty of 1946 (also known as the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty).⁴⁹³ Unfortunately, this

⁴⁹¹ See Appendix I: Co-operation with Egypt – Brief for the Chief of the Imperial General Staff in TNA, CAB 131/9, DO (50) 40, Co-operation with Egypt, Report by the Chiefs of Staff, 19 May 1950.

⁴⁹² See *The New York Times*, 20 October 1946 [<https://www.nytimes.com/1946/10/20/archives/bevin-sidky-parley-on-treaty-continues.html>]. See also Anglo-Egyptian Treaty enclosed in TNA, FO 800/457/Eg/46/56, Anglo-Egyptian Treaty, Memorandum by the Prime Minister, 25 October 1946.

⁴⁹³ See evacuation protocol enclosed in TNA, FO 800/457/Eg/46/56, Anglo-Egyptian Treaty, Memorandum by the Prime Minister, 25 October 1946.

stillborn Bevin-Sidky treaty was soon to be buried due to growing differences over policy towards Sudan.⁴⁹⁴

Although the disagreement between Bevin and Sidky over the issue of Sudan seemed to be the reason for the collapse of the treaty, it later became apparent that the real reason was that the Egyptians wanted unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Egypt and the Suez Canal Zone. As noted by Bevin in January 1947, 'Nokrashi [the new Egyptian Prime Minister after Sidky resigned in late 1949] was still asking me [Bevin] to accept his proposal. In doing so he was, in effect, asking His Majesty's Government to enter into a treaty with the Egyptian Government to swear away the rights of a third party. His Majesty's Government could not do this.'⁴⁹⁵ This matter also indicated that the Egyptian government would not agree to an Anglo-Egyptian military defence as long as British troops still occupied Egypt and the Suez Canal Zone. This matter deadlocked Anglo-Egyptian efforts to arrange a regional defence of the Middle East. Hence, at this first prominent attempt, the British Foreign Office could not put forward an official proposal for this military arrangement.

In regard to the MEC being a means for excluding Turkey from NATO, it is important to note here that Turkey was not actually considered as a potential member of a regional defence for the Middle East during Bevin's first attempt to reach this military

⁴⁹⁴ See TNA, PREM 8/1388, Minutes of Bevin-Sidky meetings, 18, 19, 23, 24 October 1946; TNA, CAB 131/1, DO (46) 30th meeting, Minute 1, 24 October 1946. See also a report about an attempt to find a way out of the deadlock over the Sudan between Bevin and Sidky enclosed in TNA, FO 800/505/Sud/46/30, Sir Orme Sargent to Attlee, 25 November 1946. For further discussion about this matter see Peter L. Hahn, *The United States, Great Britain, and Egypt, 1945-1956: Strategy and Diplomacy in the Early Cold War* (London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), pp. 34-36; Elizabeth Monroe, *Britain's Moment in the Middle East 1914-1971* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1981), p. 156.

⁴⁹⁵ TNA, FO 800/505/Sud/47/5, From Foreign Office (Bevin) to Cairo, 25 January 1947.

arrangement in 1946. This was evident when, in late 1945, the Chief of Imperial General Staff (C.I.G.S.), Field Marshall Alan Brooke, who was tasked with informing Middle Eastern countries about some form of Middle East Defensive Confederation backed by Great Britain, did not visit Turkey.⁴⁹⁶ This forms the basis of the notion that the MEC was used as a means of exclusion, because it indicates that there was no reason for Turkey to be included in this regional defence pact given that its involvement was less significant than that of Egypt, Israel and the Arab States. However, the Egyptian government proved difficult to deal with, leading Bevin and the Foreign Office to fail in reaching a formal proposal for a regional defence pact of the Middle East on their first attempt. Although the collapse of the Bevin-Sidky Treaty had jeopardised the chance of Egypt's involvement in this military arrangement, the COS turned this problem into an opportunity by using the breakdown of the agreement as a reason to perform a slow evacuation from the Suez Canal Zone: on 31 August 1947, 126,600 British personnel still remained in Egypt.⁴⁹⁷

However, when the new Egyptian government dominated by the Wafd party renewed a strong demand for unconditional British troop withdrawal from Egypt and the Suez Canal Zone immediately after it came into office on 3 January 1950, Bevin began a new effort for a regional defence pact for the Middle East. Bevin accordingly visited the Egyptian Foreign Minister, Mohammed Salaheddin, and the Egyptian Prime Minister,

⁴⁹⁶ See TNA, retrieved from the Brotherton Library, FO 800/457/Eg/45/4, Personal for Foreign Secretary from C.I.G.S., 5 November 1945.

⁴⁹⁷ TNA, DEFE 4/3, COS (47), 51st meeting, Committee Minutes (Minute 6), 6 April 1947; TNA, DEFE 4/4, COS (47), 66th meeting, Committee Minutes (Minute 3), 21 May 1947; TNA, retrieved from the Brotherton Library, FO 800/457, Hollis (General Sir Leslie Hollis was Deputy Secretary (Military) to Cabinet) to Bevin, 30 July 1947; TNA, DEFE 4/7, COS (47), 120th meeting, Committee Minutes (Annex 4), 17 September 1947.

Mustapha Nahas Pasha, in Cairo in late January 1950. Bevin argued 'that the countries of that area [the Middle East], together with the United Kingdom, would have to work together to ensure the security of this whole area. If it were left weak and undefended, it would be a temptation to the Russians to advance.'⁴⁹⁸ Bevin held out hope that Anglo-Egyptian cooperation in the MEC would preserve British base rights in Egypt and the Suez Canal Zone. This was because Bevin 'wanted to get away from the principle of occupation in favour of joint arrangements on a mutual basis – perhaps something in the nature of Joint Defence Boards.'⁴⁹⁹

Although Salaheddin agreed that 'from the point of view of general security, the Middle East still constituted a missing link,'⁵⁰⁰ he however still yearned for the unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Egypt and the Suez Canal Zone. This was noted in Bevin's record as follows:

On the other hand, he [Salaheddin] could not quite agree that the position as between Egypt and the United Kingdom was comparable to that existing between the United Kingdom and the United States with regard to the provision of bases. The United States and the United Kingdom were acting on a basis of complete equality. The Egyptian

⁴⁹⁸ TNA, retrieved from the Brotherton Library, FO 800/457/Eg/50/3, Record of a conversation between Mr. Bevin and the Egyptian Minister for Foreign Affairs in Cairo on 28th January, 1950, International Situation and Anglo-Egyptian Relations, 28 January 1950.

⁴⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

Government had their own public opinion to reckon with [unconditional British troop withdrawal] and this added to the difficulty.⁵⁰¹

Nahas Pasha also told Bevin that 'Egypt did not wish to be the victim of any new [defence] arrangements which were come to.'⁵⁰² The deep concern of the Egyptian Authorities over the presence of British troops in the Suez Canal Zone had been a hindrance to a smooth establishment of a regional defence pact of the Middle East. This was because, from Bevin's meeting with Salaheddin and Nahas Pasha in late January 1950 until March 1950, Anglo-Egyptian official negotiations on this military arrangement had yet to start. The Egyptian government asserted that it would consider negotiating and cooperating in a regional defence of the Middle East only after the British forces had fully evacuated the Suez Canal Zone. This matter was stated by Salaheddin in his message to Bevin in March 1950 as follows:

It is noteworthy that Egyptian public opinion is of primary importance in the Middle East. It had grown to believe, after successive bitter trials, that it would be futile to proceed with negotiations unless based on the immediate withdrawal of British forces and the safeguarding of the unity of Egypt and the Sudan under the Egyptian Crown, and that Egypt cannot contribute her full share to World Peace before her National Rights have been completely secured. Should the British hasten to agree to the aforesaid bases, the Egyptian Government would welcome entering into

⁵⁰¹ Ibid.

⁵⁰² TNA, retrieved from the Brotherton Library, FO 800/457/Eg/50/4, Record of a conversation between Mr. Bevin and Nahas Pasha, in Cairo, on 26th January, 1950, (1) Colombo Conference; (2) Anglo-Egyptian Relations, 28 January 1950.

talks with Great Britain with the object of arriving at an understanding over the measures to be taken for confronting the dangers that threaten international security and the independence of nations, and with a view to reaching a practical settlement which would ensure the complete independence of Egypt and the Sudan as one integral whole, and would, at the same time, secure wholehearted collaboration in the sustained efforts for repelling international Communist danger.⁵⁰³

However, Bevin preferred formal arrangements for a regional defence of the Middle East to be made before British troops could be evacuated.⁵⁰⁴ As asserted by Bevin to the Egyptian Ambassador, Amr Pasha, he 'felt that Egypt would not be able to defend that vital territory by herself and that assistance must be given to her.'⁵⁰⁵ Since both the British and Egyptian governments refused to compromise regarding the Suez Canal Zone, during this second attempt to reach an agreement it was difficult for Bevin to make any progress such as putting forward a formal proposal for the creation of a regional defence pact of the Middle East.

It is interesting to note here that, during Bevin's new attempt to formulate the regional defence pact of the Middle East with the Egyptian government in early 1950, he still did not envisage Turkey's involvement. This matter was indirectly reflected in Bevin's answer to Amr Pasha, who suggested bringing Turkey into some arrangement in order

⁵⁰³ See enclosure of a message from the Egyptian Foreign Minister to Bevin in TNA, FO 800/477/ME/50/3, Conversation between the Secretary of State and the Egyptian Ambassador, Defence of the Middle East and States of the Sudan, 21 March 1950.

⁵⁰⁴ TNA, FO 800/477/ME/50/3, Conversation between the Secretary of State and the Egyptian Ambassador, Defence of the Middle East and States of the Sudan, 21 March 1950.

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid.

to break the deadlock in Anglo-Egyptian talks. This matter was recorded by Bevin as follows:

Amr Pasha then asked me [Bevin] whether I thought it would be possible to bring Turkey into some arrangement, which would give us all the facilities we required. I replied that, if the problem were limited to defence only, his suggestion was one which we could consider, but I was very worried about the phrases in his note concerning the Sudan. I was afraid that his Government's approach to the problem of the Sudan would turn out to be absolutely impracticable. In the end, however, I gave an understanding that His Majesty's Government would study the position again. I said I thought much more work would have to be done on the military side than had yet been achieved.⁵⁰⁶

Given that the British government intended to maintain its base rights in Egypt and the Suez Canal Zone through a partnership with the Egyptian government in a regional defence of the Middle East, its interest in this Anglo-Egyptian military arrangement was not limited only to defence matters. Therefore, it is evident that at this time Bevin thought Turkey's involvement in this regional pact was not necessary. This matter thus proves that Turkey was not at the forefront of British consideration in regard to matters of the defence of the Middle East, both in 1946 and early 1950, which is important for strengthening the thesis that the MEC was used as a means for excluding Turkey from NATO.

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid.

Another point that should be highlighted here to underpin this interpretation of the MEC is that, in Bevin's response to Amr Pasha's suggestion regarding Turkey, he thought that much more work would have to be done on the military side if the British government revised its position on this matter. This was because Bevin was well aware of the present state of the Turkish Armed Forces, which were still unfit for modern war, as commented by the British military attachés in Ankara in late 1949.⁵⁰⁷ There were several reasons for this. Firstly, the process of modernising Turkish infantry divisions – in which these units would be reorganised and issued with modern equipment – had not yet started. Secondly, matters of supply and communications were, until recently, completely neglected by the Turkish General Staff. The mentality of the average Turkish soldier was also ill-adapted to deal with modern wireless. The Turkish Air Force had no front line aircraft that were not obsolescent or obsolete, and the Turkish Navy was at present hardly a serious operational force, consisting of a pre-1914 obsolete battle cruiser, a handful of British and US destroyers and submarines, and having no long range anti-aircraft defence. Thus, the effectiveness of the Turkish Armed Forces was probably limited to minesweeping and operating nets and booms.⁵⁰⁸ This matter seemed to have considerable influence on Bevin's position in March 1950: that Turkey's involvement was less-favourable for consideration because it would impose an extra load on a military arrangement which had still yet to begin.

Ten days after Bevin had a conversation with Amr Pasha, the Turkish Foreign Minister, Sadak, told Bevin at Strasbourg that the Turkish government favoured the closest

⁵⁰⁷ TNA, FO 371/87975/RK 1192/1, Sir N. Charles to Foreign Office (Bevin), 30 December 1949.

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

cooperation with the British government in all matters concerning the Middle East, in particular in serving as a bridge between Britain and the Arab States, adding it would do all it could to help the British as regards Egypt, notably the Anglo-Egyptian dispute over the presence of British troops in the Suez Canal Zone.⁵⁰⁹ According to Sadak, 'the continued presence of the United Kingdom in Egypt and North Africa was essential for Turkey, and His Majesty's Government [British] could always count on the support of the Turkish Government on this issue [the defence of the Middle East].'⁵¹⁰ As regards Egypt, Bevin was keen for the Turkish government to take the initiative. As said by Bevin to Sadak during their follow up meeting in Paris, after the Strasbourg conversation:

Mr. Bevin said that he thought it might be possible in this way for the Turkish Government to find out a little more about what was in the minds of the Egyptians. They continued to harp on the need for the evacuation by the British of the Canal Zone, but this could not be accepted. [...] Perhaps it might then be possible for the Turkish Government to say something to the Egyptians about the desirability of a settlement. In the meanwhile he did not wish to conduct official negotiations with the Egyptians.⁵¹¹

⁵⁰⁹ TNA, FO 800/507/Tu/50/3, Conversation between the Secretary of State and the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs in Strasbourg on 1st April, 1950, Part II.—Middle East, 1 April 1950. The Turkish Foreign Minister Sadak also told this matter to British Ambassador Charles during their private dinner on 15 April 1950. See TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/6, 'Conversation with Mr Sadak (Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs) on the Anglo-Turkish Cooperation in the Middle East and Turkish Assistance in Anglo-Egyptian Talks', From Ankara (Sir N. Charles) to Foreign Office, 17 April 1950.

⁵¹⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹¹ TNA, FO 800/507/Tu/50/4, Conversation between the Secretary of State and the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs in Paris on 5th April, 1950, The Middle East, 5 April 1950.

Considering that, earlier in March 1950 Bevin had not favoured Turkey's involvement in a regional defence of the Middle East, this new attitude was likely because Bevin was desperate to break the deadlock in the Anglo-Egyptian talks. Given that Bevin had agreed to Turkish assistance in the Anglo-Egyptian settlement, it seemed to be axiomatic that Bevin still had not thought of bringing Turkey into this regional defence of the Middle East. This was clear in that this subject had not been touched upon with Sadak in either Strasbourg or Paris. This indicates that, until April 1950, the British had still not considered Turkey's involvement in this military arrangement. The continuing stance against including Turkey might have been influenced by further reports, in March and April 1950, by Ambassador Charles about the strength of the Turkish Armed Forces. These reports stated 'that the Turkish Army could not as yet really stand on its own feet' and 'the capacity of the Turkish Army to resist aggression would depend on the strength of the attack.'⁵¹²

As discussed in earlier subtopics, the Turkish government's efforts to tie itself closer to the Middle East on defence matters formed part of its initiative in lobbying for Turkey's membership in NATO. In respect to this *démarche*, the Turkish RPP government requested membership of NATO in the following month, through its *aide-mémoire* dated 3 May 1950. The Turkish RPP government wanted the question of including Turkey in NATO to be placed on the agenda of a meeting of the Foreign Ministers in London due to take place the following week, given that the request was sent to Britain,

⁵¹² See TNA, FO 371/87975/RK 1192/5, Sir N. Charles to Southern Department of Foreign Office (Sir A. Rumbold), 30 March 1950; TNA, FO 371/87975/RK 1192/7, Sir N. Charles to Southern Department of Foreign Office (Sir A. Rumbold), 4 April 1950.

the United States and France, which these three Foreign Ministers' governments.⁵¹³ Yet neither the British government, in particular Bevin and the Foreign Office, nor the Foreign Ministers at the London Conference, responded to this request.⁵¹⁴

However, before the conference had opened, Bevin and the Foreign Office had arrived at a decision to include Turkey in a regional defence of the Middle East.⁵¹⁵ When Bevin relayed this notion to Acheson and Schuman at the end of the Conference, both agreed. They hence agreed to issue a statement about Turkey's inclusion in a regional defence of the Middle East on 19 May 1950.⁵¹⁶ An official statement that mentioned Turkey's participation in this military arrangement was reflected in British records as follows:

The ideal military arrangement in the Middle East would be a regional pact consisting of the United Kingdom, the Arab League States, Israel, Turkey, Persia and possibly Greece, in which Egypt, as a willing partner, would provide the base facilities required.⁵¹⁷

The idea that the MEC was a means of excluding Turkey from NATO, rather than reason for doing so, is derived from this situation – that Bevin and the Foreign Office made the

⁵¹³ Three Foreign Ministers who attended this London Conference were Bevin (Britain), Acheson (the United States) and M. Robert Schuman (France). See *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 May 1950 [<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/27572049>].

⁵¹⁴ See TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/11, 'Record of Sir W. Strang's conversations with the Turkish Ambassador', Foreign Office minute by Strang, 31 May 1950. See also TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/11, Sir A. Rumbold to Foreign Office, 9 June 1950.

⁵¹⁵ See TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/9, 'Brief for the Secretary of State on (1) Turkish request for Turkish security to be borne in mind at Conference of Foreign Ministers', Foreign Office minute by Mr Wright, 12 May 1950. See also TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/11C, 'Record of Sir W. Strang's conversations with the Turkish Ambassador', Foreign Office minute by Strang, 1 June 1950.

⁵¹⁶ See TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/11, 'Record of Sir W. Strang's conversations with the Turkish Ambassador', Foreign Office minute by Strang, 31 May 1950.

⁵¹⁷ See Appendix I: Co-operation with Egypt – Brief for the Chief of the Imperial General Staff in TNA, CAB 131/9, DO (50) 40, Co-operation with Egypt, Report by the Chiefs of Staff, 19 May 1950.

decision to include Turkey in a regional defence of the Middle East *after* the Turkish government requested membership in NATO in early May 1950. This aspect of the MEC has been neglected by historians, who argue that it was the main reason Bevin and the Foreign Office rejected Turkish requests for membership in 1950. This was apparently because, before the Turkish RPP government had propounded its NATO membership request, Turkey was absent from British thinking in regard to countries that should participate in the regional defence of the Middle East. Moreover, the weakness of the Turkish Armed Forces at that time, as discussed earlier, also attributed to Bevin's unfavourable response to include Turkey in this military arrangement.⁵¹⁸ Hence, it grows ever clearer to this study that the MEC was a means of exclusion, since although Turkey could contribute little militarily, Bevin and the Foreign Office were still willing to bring Turkey into this regional defence pact anyway.

It is also interesting to mention here that the decision to bring Turkey into a regional defence of the Middle East was made without telling the Turkish government in advance. This matter was reflected in a report by head of the Southern Department, Sir Anthony Rumbold, to the Foreign Office as follows:

The Turkish Ambassador [Açikalin] called on Sir William Strang on the 31st May and again on the 1st June. He had two complaints to make; first that no reply had been sent to his memorandum [*aide-mémoire* dated 3rd May 1950], and secondly that he had learnt for the first time from

⁵¹⁸ See TNA, FO 371/87975/RK 1192/5, Sir N. Charles to Southern Department of Foreign Office (Sir A. Rumbold), 30 March 1950; TNA, FO 371/87975/RK 1192/7, Sir N. Charles to Southern Department of Foreign Office (Sir A. Rumbold), 4 April 1950. See this chapter, p. 177.

the newspapers of the parallel statements about Turkey, Greece and Persia [Iran] made by the Secretary of State [Bevin] and Mr. Acheson on 19th May.⁵¹⁹

Strang explained to Açıkalın that the reason why neither Bevin nor Acheson had informed the Turkish government was that ‘the decision to issue the statements had been taken at the last minute and it had not therefore been possible to inform the Ambassador in advance.’⁵²⁰ However, from the point of view of this study, this *démarche* – not telling Turkey in advance – is another point that substantiates the argument that the MEC was used as a means of exclusion. Whatever the reason for not informing Turkey, if Bevin and the Foreign Office were genuine about bringing it into a regional defence pact of the Middle East, with no hidden agenda relating to its request for membership in NATO, the British should have refrained from publicising the decision until Turkey had been informed. All these points convince this study that the decision to bring Turkey into the MEC in May 1950 was not primarily because Bevin and the Foreign Office wanted Turkey in the agreement, but rather because they wanted to avoid Turkey, and its security partner Greece, joining NATO.

It is important to emphasise here that, although Bevin and the Foreign Office had not stated explicitly that the MEC was their *démarche* in ensuring Greece and Turkey

⁵¹⁹ TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/11, Sir A. Rumbold to Foreign Office, 9 June 1950.

⁵²⁰ TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/11A, ‘Record of Sir W. Strang’s conversations with the Turkish Ambassador’, Record of a Meeting in Sir W. Strang’s Room, 1 June 1950. In a Foreign Office minute by Strang, he further noted that the reason why the decision was made at the very end of the Conference was because Mr. Acheson’s statement was not finally approved by him until he was on the train on the way from London to Liverpool. See TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/11C, ‘Record of Sir W. Strang’s conversations with the Turkish Ambassador’, Foreign Office minute by Strang, 1 June 1950.

remained outside NATO, two actions demonstrate their subtle move. Firstly, that neither Greece nor Turkey had been considered for inclusion in a regional defence pact of the Middle East since the idea was initiated by the British in late 1945. Secondly, the decision to put Turkey in this military arrangement was made after it requested membership in NATO in early May 1950. These two decisions appear to substantiate this study's interpretation that the MEC was seen as a means of exclusion in British thinking.

There is one more aspect of the British Foreign Office's plan for a regional defence of the Middle East that could further support the argument of this study: that only Turkey was confirmed to be brought into this military arrangement. It should be noted that in the official statement dated 19 May 1950, which mentioned the new participation of Eastern Mediterranean countries in a regional defence of the Middle East as aforementioned above, Bevin and the Foreign Office seemed unsure about including Greece, using the word 'possibly' before mentioning it.⁵²¹ The British, and also Acheson, preferred to give direct support to Greece if there was an attack from the Soviet Union. This matter was reported by Wright as follows:

The Secretary of State [Bevin], on the 19th May [1950], reaffirmed "that H.M.G. remain vitally concerned in the independence, integrity, and security of Greece, Turkey and Persia [...] H.M.G. are [*sic*] determined to continue their policy of direct support and to other countries who are striving through military and economic efforts to safeguard their

⁵²¹ See footnote 517 of this chapter. See also TNA, PREM 8/1359, DO (50) 40, Defence Committee, 19 May 1950.

independence and territorial integrity.” Mr. Acheson spoke in similar terms.⁵²²

This matter shows that Greece was not considered by the British for inclusion either in the MEC or NATO. Evidently, the uncertainty of the British about Greece being included in a regional defence of the Middle East was linked to the Cyprus issue. This matter was reflected in the outline of disadvantages that could arise if Cyprus were handed back to Greece given by Under-Secretary for Colonial Affairs, Martin, to US State Department officials during his attempts to obtain American support for the British retaining their sovereign power in Cyprus, in July 1950. The outline was as follows:

- (A) There was no certainty of political stability in Greece. A future Greek Government might withdraw such facilities as had been granted.
- (B) Any such agreement would come as a disagreeable shock to the Turks and would damage Greco-Turkish relations.
- (C) It would also endanger the British political and strategic position generally in the Middle East.
- (D) It might in particular give the Egyptian Government occasion to think that we were “on the slide” and thus lead to increased Egyptian pressure for the evacuation of the Canal Zones.

⁵²² TNA, FO 371/87949/RK 1071/23, Foreign Office minute by Mr M. Wright, 26 July 1950. See also Margaret Carlyle (ed.), *Documents on International Affairs, 1949-1950* (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), p. 79.

(E) It was in any case doubtful whether in an area as small as Cyprus the maintenance of satisfactory base facilities was compatible with the surrender of sovereignty over the island as a whole.⁵²³

Points B and C of this outline remarked that Bevin and the Foreign Office were wary of having Greece in a regional defence of the Middle East if there was ill-feeling between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus, since this situation would negatively affect the military arrangement. Hence, only Turkey was confirmed to be included in this regional defence arrangement. This study believes the reluctance to include Greece in the MEC was motivated by the same reason Bevin and the Foreign Office refused to accept the Turkish request for membership of NATO. This was because the security of Greece and Turkey were dovetailed together, in that Turkey in NATO would have dragged Greece into NATO too, even though the latter did not apply for membership.⁵²⁴

Seemingly, the decision to bring only Turkey into the MEC, without its security partner Greece, not only clarifies further that the MEC was used as a means of exclusion but also demonstrates that one of the reasons Bevin and the Foreign Office refused Turkish requests for membership of NATO was the Cyprus issue. That this issue – the struggle between the British and Greek governments over the sovereignty of this island and the rapid deterioration in relations between the Greek and the Turkish governments due to

⁵²³ See record of discussion on Cyprus held at the State Department on 10 July 1950 enclosed in TNA, FO 371/87722/RG 1081/158, British Embassy Washington to Sir Anthony Rumbold (Southern Department), 14 July 1950.

⁵²⁴ See TNA, FO 371/87949/RK 1071/34, 'Turkish request that His Majesty's Government should support their bid for inclusion in the Atlantic Pact', Foreign Office minute by Sir A. Rumbold, 9 August 1950.

their own preference for its future – had affected Greece and Turkey's chances of becoming members of NATO, will be discussed thoroughly in the next section.

The British Foreign Office against NATO enlargement: An analysis of the Cyprus issue as a contributory reason for this stance

Since the previous section discusses this study's perception that the MEC was a means to prevent a NATO enlargement that would include Greece and Turkey, it is essential to ask here why the British government, in particular Bevin and the Foreign Office, still refused to include Greece and Turkey in NATO when this military pact had been successfully established over a year ago. As this study is looking at the correlation between the Cyprus issue and British Foreign Office's decision to keep Greece and Turkey outside NATO, it is important to note here that, although reasons relating to the Cyprus issue could be sensed in late 1949, they only became apparent after the newly-elected Turkish Democrat government, which won the Turkish elections of 14 May 1950, submitted a new request for Turkey's NATO membership in early August 1950 and the United States accepted this appeal. This was due to the fact that, prior to this, Bevin and the Foreign Office had used American reasons for rejecting NATO's expansion as their own. However, they could no longer continue with this strategy, since they did not agree with the new US position to support NATO's extension. The British, therefore, had to present their own argument for not favouring Greece and Turkey as new members of NATO. It was only then that it became apparent the Cyprus issue was their reason for rejection.

Britain's *démarche*, namely copying the US stance in rejecting Greece and Turkey, was evident in Strang's response to the Turkish Ambassador to the UK, Açıkalın, on 31 May and 1 June 1950. Strang's response explained why it had not been possible for the British Foreign Office to agree to the inclusion of Greece and Turkey in NATO.⁵²⁵ Those reasons were outlined by Rumbold in his reply to a question posed in the British Parliament as follows:

- (i) The United States is not in a position to enter into further political commitments at present,
- (ii) It is not possible for the United States to enter into military understandings in the absence of military commitments, and
- (iii) Military undertakings and staff talks between Great Britain and Turkey would be meaningless without the participation of the United States since British and American plans for this area are dovetailed together.⁵²⁶

This British Foreign Office's approach, to adopt the same reason for refusing the inclusion of Greece and Turkey in NATO as the United States, had been adopted since November 1949 when the Turkish Foreign Minister, Sadak, and the Greek Foreign Minister, Tsaldaris, separately asked Bevin about a NATO enlargement that would

⁵²⁵ See TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/11, 'Record of Sir W. Strang's conversations with the Turkish Ambassador', Foreign Office minute by Strang, 31 May 1950; TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/11A, 'Record of Sir W. Strang's conversations with the Turkish Ambassador', Record of a Meeting in Sir W. Strang's Room, 1 June 1950; TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/11B. Points which can be made to the Turkish Ambassador (or to any other Turkish officials who complain that the position of Turkey is overlooked), 1 June 1950.

⁵²⁶ TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/16, 'An answer to a question on Turkey and the Security in the Eastern Mediterranean', a draft reply by Sir A. Rumbold to Parliamentary question by Mr Phillips Price M.P., 16 June 1950.

include both countries during their encounter in Paris.⁵²⁷ The British approach of copying the American stance was noticeable when Jebb, now British Ambassador to the United Nations, double-checked the American position on NATO enlargement before Bevin had a meeting with the Turkish Ambassador to the UK Açıkalın (after the former returned from Paris) and he told Bevin that there was no question of NATO being extended in scope to cover Turkey and Greece because the United States had not yet agreed to extend this Atlantic Pact beyond the Europe theatre.⁵²⁸

It is interesting to mention here that the British Foreign Office's negative attitude towards NATO enlargement as it related to the Cyprus issue could already be sensed at this point, in November 1949. This was due to Bevin's less enthusiastic response to Tsaldaris but not to Sadak, even though both Foreign Ministers had asked the same question regarding NATO enlargement to include their respective countries. This matter was reported by Bateman as follows:

M. Tsaldaris asked whether Greece could be brought within the purview of the North Atlantic Treaty and whether Greek Staff talks could be held with Lord Montgomery's organisation. In reply the Secretary of State said that Lord Montgomery's Mandate did not extend to South-East Europe, that he could give no direct answer to the question of bringing Greece

⁵²⁷ Bevin was attending a Council of Foreign Ministers in that month in Paris. See Foreign Office memorandum by Mr C. H. Bateman entitled 'Security of Greece and Turkey' dated 17 November 1949 enclosed in TNA, FO 371/78329/R 11079/1072/67G, 'Paper headed "Security of Greece and Turkey" prepared for the conversation between the Secretary of State and the Turkish Ambassador'.

⁵²⁸ See TNA, FO 371/78329/R 11079/1072/67G, 'Paper headed "Security of Greece and Turkey" prepared for the conversation between the Secretary of State and the Turkish Ambassador', Foreign Office minute by Sir Gladwyn Jebb, 17 November 1949. See also *FRUS, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. VI, pp. 447-449, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State, 28 October 1949.

under the cover of the North Atlantic Treaty, but that he would discuss these questions with Mr. Acheson and later bring them before the Cabinet. M. Sadak, the Turkish Foreign Minister, asked whether the plans now under consideration for the implementation of the North Atlantic Treaty could be made to cover the Eastern Mediterranean and whether in that case contact could be established with the Turkish General Staff. According to the records of the conversation, the Secretary of State answered both queries in the affirmative.⁵²⁹

The same matter was also reported by Bevin's Principal Private Secretary, Roderick Barclay, who stated that 'the Secretary of State [Bevin] was, as the records show, decidedly more forthcoming to M. Sadak than to M. Tsaldaris.'⁵³⁰

There were three situations that subtly demonstrated Bevin's negative attitude towards Tsaldaris in regard to Greece's inclusion in NATO. Firstly, Bevin promised Tsaldaris something that was not going to happen – 'that he would discuss these questions with Mr. Acheson' – a promise that could be considered pointless because, as noted by Barclay, 'there was in fact no opportunity to take the matter up with Mr. Acheson in Paris.'⁵³¹ Secondly, Bevin did not fulfil his promise to Tsaldaris – 'bring them [the talks between the Greek Staff and Lord Montgomery's organisation] before the Cabinet' –

⁵²⁹ Foreign Office memorandum by Mr C. H. Bateman entitled 'Security of Greece and Turkey' dated 17 November 1949 enclosed in TNA, FO 371/78329/R 11079/1072/67G, 'Paper headed "Security of Greece and Turkey" prepared for the conversation between the Secretary of State and the Turkish Ambassador'.

⁵³⁰ TNA, FO 371/78329/R 11079/1072/67G, 'Paper headed "Security of Greece and Turkey" prepared for the conversation between the Secretary of State and the Turkish Ambassador', Foreign Office minute by Sir R. Barclay, 18 November 1949.

⁵³¹ *Ibid.*

when he suggested only that 'there should be contact between British military authorities and the Turkish General Staff.'⁵³² Thirdly, Bevin only followed up on this matter with the Turkish Ambassador to the UK, Açıkalın, after his return from Paris. As Bateman noted, 'the Turkish Ambassador should be told not more than that the matter is under review.'⁵³³ This explains why Bateman and Rumbold only prepared a paper for Bevin to hold a conversation with Açıkalın in order to answer Sadak's inquiry about NATO enlargement.⁵³⁴

It should be mentioned here that, in the reports by Bateman and Barclay that detail Bevin's less-favourable response towards Tsaldaris' inquiry about Greek inclusion in NATO, neither explained the reason why Bevin behaved that way. Yet this study is convinced that Bevin would not respond negatively towards Tsaldaris for no reason. Since there was no exact explanation for this situation, it is essential to look at this matter in a wider perspective in order to understand Bevin's reasoning. Apart from the subject of NATO enlargement, Bevin and the Foreign Office were at the same time dealing with the Greek government over the issue of Cyprus. As discussed in the first section of this chapter, the Greek government appeared to favour the idea of Cyprus being returned to Greece, as initiated by the Ethnarchy and AKEL in a new wave of the plebiscite movement at that time.⁵³⁵

⁵³² Ibid.

⁵³³ Foreign Office memorandum by Mr C. H. Bateman entitled 'Security of Greece and Turkey' dated 17 November 1949 enclosed in TNA, FO 371/78329/R 11079/1072/67G, 'Paper headed "Security of Greece and Turkey" prepared for the conversation between the Secretary of State and the Turkish Ambassador'.

⁵³⁴ For paper by Bateman, see Ibid. For paper by Rumbold, see TNA, FO 371/78329/R 11080/1072/67G, 'Turkey and the Atlantic Pact: Minute written in connection with the forthcoming conversation between the Secretary of State and the Turkish Ambassador', Foreign Office minute by Sir A. Rumbold, 22 November 1949.

⁵³⁵ See this chapter, pp. 142-143, footnotes 394 and 395.

The Greek government's support for the plebiscite might have irritated Bevin, because it would have seemed ironic that the Greek government was hankering after closer defence guarantees from the British government but at the same time supporting the union of Cyprus with Greece. Given that this union could jeopardise British strategic and defence interests in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East – as had been clearly outlined by Martin during his meeting with the US State Department⁵³⁶ – it seems plausible that the Cyprus issue could be the reason for Bevin's negative reaction towards Tsaldaris. What is more, the statement by the Greek Prime Minister the following month - that if Greece's international position were to be secured, the relationship with the British government must not be affected by *enosis* agitation⁵³⁷ - could also substantiate the argument that the Cyprus issue was prevalent in Bevin's thinking when he refused to consider seriously the inclusion of Greece in NATO.

The other Cyprus issue – the rapid deterioration in relations between the Greek and Turkish governments – is also believed by this study to have been influential in shaping the stance of Bevin and the Foreign Office against NATO enlargement in 1950. As mentioned earlier, this reason only became apparent after Turkey made its second request for inclusion in NATO, in August 1950, by which time the United States was ready to adopt a new stance on NATO enlargement. There are two reasons for this change in stance on the part of the United States. Firstly, the United States had, in early 1950, adopted the formal strategy of 'forward defence' that derived from NSC-68

⁵³⁶ See record of discussion on Cyprus held at the State Department on 10 July 1950 enclosed in TNA, FO 371/87722/RG 1081/158, British Embassy Washington to Sir Anthony Rumbold (Southern Department), 14 July 1950. See this chapter, pp. 182-183.

⁵³⁷ See TNA, CO 537/4978, Sir C. Norton (Athens) to Foreign Office, 21 December 1949. See this chapter, pp. 149-150.

document, which prompted the United States to create NATO's southern flank that should ideally be supported by Greece and Turkey.⁵³⁸ Secondly, the United States was greatly impressed with Greece and Turkey's contributions in the Korean War (which broke out on 25 June 1950) and believed these two countries could provide the same military commitment if they were brought into NATO.⁵³⁹ According to historian John M. Vander Lippe, 'what forced a change in American attitudes and led to Turkey's entry into NATO was Turkey's participation in the Korean War.'⁵⁴⁰

It should be noted here that Turkey used the Korean War as a stepping stone to become a member of NATO.⁵⁴¹ Lippe contends that 'the Turks tied their commitment to the United Nations effort in Korea to enter into NATO.'⁵⁴² The Korean gambit was

⁵³⁸ For in depth discussions of this matter, see Gheciu, p. 41; Smith, *NATO Enlargement during the Cold War: Strategy and System in the Western Alliance*, pp. 70-73; Yeşilbursa, p. 79; Athanassopoulou, *Turkey – Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945-1952: The First Enlargement of NATO*, pp. 174-175; Bruce R. Kuniholm, 'Turkey and NATO' in *NATO and the Mediterranean*, eds. by Kaplan, et al., pp. 215-237 (p. 215); Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, Truman Administration and the Cold War* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1992), p. 425; Lawrence S. Kaplan, 'The Korean War and U.S. Foreign Relations: The Case of NATO' in *The Korean War: A 25-Year Perspective*, ed. by Francis H. Heller (the United States of America: Regents Press of Kansas, 1977), pp. 36-75 (pp. 40-41); Robert Jervis, 'The Impact of the Korean War on the Cold War', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 24:4 (1980), 563-592 (576-578). For details about NSC-68 document, see *FRUS, 1950, National Security Affairs; Foreign Economic Policy*, Vol. I (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1950), pp. 126-492.

⁵³⁹ For further discussion of this matter, see Fisher, p. 494; Harris, *Troubled Alliance: Turkish-American Problems in Historical Perspective 1945-71*, p. 39; Harris, 'Turkey and the United States', p. 54; Lippe, pp. 96-97; Kemal H. Karpat, 'Political Developments in Turkey, 1950-70', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 8:3 (1972), 349-375 (p. 352).

⁵⁴⁰ Lippe, p. 96.

⁵⁴¹ This matter was discussed by the new Turkish Foreign Minister, Fuad Koprulu, with Bevin during their meeting at Strasbourg on 5 August 1950. See TNA, retrieved from the Brotherton Library, FO 800/507/Tu/50/6, Record of Secretary of State's conversation with the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs at Strasbourg on 5th August 1950. The Turkish government's second request to Britain for Turkey's NATO membership was shown in this record. Meanwhile, the Turkish Ambassador Erkin spoke in similar terms with Acheson. See *FRUS, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 1301, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State, Subject: Turkey's Desire to Adhere to the North Atlantic Treaty; Inadequacy of ECA Fund Allocations to Turkey, 25 August 1950. See also *FRUS, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 1286, The Ambassador in Turkey (Wadsworth) to the Secretary of States, Istanbul, 31 July 1950.

⁵⁴² Lippe, p. 96. For further discussion of this matter, see Harris, *Troubled Alliance: Turkish-American Problems in Historical Perspective 1945-71*, p. 40; William W. Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), p. 73; Athanassopoulou, *Turkey – Anglo-American*

evident when, only a week after announcing it would commit its troop to Korea (25 July 1950), on 1 August, the Turkish Democrat government requested that three key NATO allies, namely the United States, Britain and France, consider Turkey's membership of NATO. This consideration could be made in a meeting of foreign ministers in New York due to take place in September 1950, particularly given that the first request, made by the former Turkish RPP government in May 1950, had been neglected by these same foreign ministers during their London meetings. Fortunately for Turkey, the United States accepted this appeal and subsequently began to advocate for the inclusion of Greece and Turkey in NATO.⁵⁴³ Britain and France, however, were still reluctant to accept Greece and Turkey's NATO membership. France initially said that it would support the inclusion of Turkey in NATO, but changed its mind when the smaller members of NATO 'indicated opposition to extending the treaty to Turkey.'⁵⁴⁴

In the case of Britain, in particular that of Bevin and the Foreign Office, before key figures became aware of the new American position on NATO enlargement they still seemed to want to follow the American stance, believing the United States government would turn the Turkish request down again. This was noticeable on several occasions before the British Foreign Office learned about the American new position regarding Turkish, and thus Greek, membership of NATO. First, the Foreign Office prepared an

Security Interests, 1945-1952: The First Enlargement of NATO, pp. 163-164; Paul Kubicek, 'Turkey's Inclusion into Atlantic Community: Looking Back, Looking Forward', *Turkish Studies*, 9:1 (2008), 21-35 (p. 25); George C. McGhee, 'Turkey Joins the West', *Foreign Affairs*, 32:4 (1954), 617-630 (p. 623).

⁵⁴³ See *FRUS, 1950, Western Europe*, Vol. III (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1950), p. 278, The Secretary of Defense (Johnson) to the Secretary of State, 11 September 1950. See also *FRUS, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. V, pp. 1306-1309, Memorandum by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Secretary of Defense (Johnson), Subject: Admission of Turkey to the North Atlantic Treaty, Washington, 9 September 1950.

⁵⁴⁴ *FRUS, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 1310, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs (Berry), Subject: Importance to Turkey of Admission to NATO, 11 September 1950.

outline for Bevin in order to reply to the new Turkish Foreign Minister, Fuad Koprulu, if he asked about the British government's opinion of the second Turkish request for membership in NATO during their upcoming meeting in Strasbourg, in early August 1950, on the same lines as Strang's discussion of these subjects with the Turkish Ambassador to the UK, Açikalin, on 31 May 1950. The outline was as follows:

- (1). As the Turkish Government have already been informed by the United States Government, the United States cannot enter into any further political commitments at present and it would scarcely be possible for them to enter into military understandings in the absence of political commitments;
- (2). British military plans for the Middle East are dovetailed into those of the United States and military understandings between Great Britain and Turkey would have little meaning without the participation of the United States, a participation which is at present impossible because of the political commitments involved;
- (3). It is therefore at present difficult to make any definite plans for military understandings for the future, apart from contacts which already exist at Ankara between the British, the Americans and the Turks.⁵⁴⁵

Second, during the meeting between Strang and the French Ambassador on 3 August 1950, who questioned whether the Foreign Office had come to any conclusion about

⁵⁴⁵ TNA, FO 371/87949/RK 1071/24, 'Brief for the use of the Secretary of State when he meets the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs at Strasbourg', Foreign Office minute by Sir A. Rumbold, 28 July 1950.

the Turkish request for membership in NATO, Strang said that this was a very complicated question to which the Foreign Office was giving thought. Thus it was important to know 'whether the United States would be willing to assume the further commitment involved in Turkish membership.'⁵⁴⁶ Third, during the meeting at Strasbourg between Bevin and the new Turkish Foreign Minister two days later, Koprulu, Bevin's tendency to follow the American decision was obvious when he asked Koprulu whether he had discussed this proposal with the United States government.⁵⁴⁷ Fourth, every time the Turkish Ambassador to the UK, Açikalin, frequented the Foreign Office and raised the question of Turkey's desire for inclusion in NATO, the officials who had the meeting with him such as Pierson Dixon (Head of the offices of Deputy Under-Secretary of State, Foreign Office), Strang and Bevin kept giving the same answer: that this matter was under discussion and it would depend upon the view of the United States government.⁵⁴⁸ Moreover, the British Ambassador to Turkey, Charles, also spoke in similar terms when Koprulu and the Turkish Prime Minister, Adnan Menderes, asked him about this matter.⁵⁴⁹ Strang and Rumbold also maintained the same answer when other NATO members, such as France, Norway, Denmark, Belgium and the Netherlands asked them about the British Foreign Office's thoughts on Turkey's application to join

⁵⁴⁶ TNA, FO 371/87949/RK 1071/22, 'Conversation between Sir W. Strang and the French Ambassador on Turkish desire for inclusion in the Atlantic Pact', Foreign Office minute by Strang, 3 August 1950.

⁵⁴⁷ See TNA, retrieved from the Brotherton Library, FO 800/507/Tu/50/6, Record of Secretary of State's conversation with the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs at Strasbourg on 5th August 1950.

⁵⁴⁸ See TNA, FO 371/87949/RK 1071/25, 'Conversation between the Turkish Ambassador and Sir P. Dixon on Turkey's desire for inclusion in the Atlantic Pact', Foreign Office minute by Sir P. Dixon, 15 August 1950; TNA, FO 371/87949/RK 1071/26, 'Conversation between Sir W. Strang and Turkish Ambassador on Turkey's desire for inclusion in the Atlantic Pact', 15 August 1950; TNA, FO 371/87949/RK 1071/32, 'Record of conversation between Secretary of State and Turkish Ambassador on 22nd August', Conversation between the Secretary of State and the Turkish Ambassador, 22 August 1950.

⁵⁴⁹ See TNA, FO 371/87949/RK 1071/29, 'Conversation of Sir N. Charles with Koprulu and the Turkish Prime Minister', From Ankara (Sir N. Charles) to Foreign Office, 18 August 1950.

NATO.⁵⁵⁰ It is worth pointing out here that this British Foreign Office position, that any decision depended upon the stance of the United States, had disguised its own reasons for rejecting the Turkish request for membership of NATO.

Although Bevin and the Foreign Office did not clearly define their reason for not accepting the Turkish request, nevertheless their rejection was apparent in the outline they had prepared for Bevin before the Strasbourg meeting with Koprulu. Bevin also tried to convince Koprulu that Turkey's membership in NATO was less beneficial than other security solutions that had already been received by Turkey. This matter was depicted as follows:

Mr. Bevin replied that this was a new problem. In the meanwhile he thought it most important that Turkey should not under-rate the value of assurances given by President Truman under the "Truman Doctrine," which had been endorsed by both Republicans and Democrats and provided for American assistance to Turkey both in the military and in the economic field. Indeed, he felt that the "Truman Doctrine" might in some respects be more advantageous to Turkey than membership of the Atlantic Pact.⁵⁵¹

⁵⁵⁰ See TNA FO 371/87949/RK 1071/30, 'Conversation between the French Ambassador and Sir William Strang on Turkey's desire for inclusion in the Atlantic Pact', Foreign Office minute by Strang, 11 August 1950; TNA FO 371/87949/RK 1071/33, 'Conversation between Norwegian and Danish Ambassadors with Sir W. Strang on Turkey's desire for inclusion in the Atlantic Pact and possible United States reactions', Foreign Office minute by Strang, 22 August 1950; TNA FO 371/87949/RK 1071/38, 'Conversation with Prince de Mérode of the Belgian Embassy on Turkey's desire for inclusion in the Atlantic Pact', Foreign Office minute by Rumbold, 28 August 1950; TNA FO 371/87949/RK 1071/39, 'Conversation between the Netherlands Ambassador and Sir W. Strang on Turkey's desire for inclusion in the Atlantic Pact', Foreign Office minute by Strang, 30 August 1950.

⁵⁵¹ *Ibid.*

It is interesting to highlight here that there were some issues raised by Strang and Bevin during their meetings with the French Ambassador and the Turkish Foreign Minister on 3 and 5 August 1950 respectively that might hint at their reason for rejecting the Turkish request for membership of NATO. This study believes this reason was the Cyprus issue, which had caused the fractious relationship between Greece and Turkey.

The first incident that demonstrates the Cyprus issue was forefront in British thinking was when Strang talked about the possibility of including only Turkey in NATO, without its security partner Greece. This matter was reported as follows:

Turkey was a neighbour of the Soviet Union in a vital strategic area and her membership would thus import a new element into the Treaty situation (Norway was, of course, also a neighbour, but in a rather more remote sense). There was also the question whether Turkey could be brought in without Greece; and what view Persia would take if Turkey were admitted and Persia were not.⁵⁵²

Evidently, Strang did not deny to the French Ambassador that the Foreign Office agreed Turkish membership would enhance NATO's strategic and military strength in an area in close proximity to the Soviet Union. Yet, it was odd that Bevin and the Foreign Office continued to refuse Turkish requests for membership of NATO. However, since Strang mentioned that the Foreign Office had considered leaving Greece behind, even though

⁵⁵² TNA, FO 371/87949/RK 1071/22, 'Conversation between Sir W. Strang and the French Ambassador on Turkish desire for inclusion in the Atlantic Pact', Foreign Office minute by Strang, 3 August 1950.

it was well aware of the fact that these two countries were bound together in terms of security matters,⁵⁵³ this is seen by this study as proof that the Cyprus problem between Greece and Turkey was the reason the Foreign Office only favoured Turkish membership.

Though Strang did not explain why the Foreign Office did not favour having Greece in NATO, this study believes it was because these British figures were deeply concerned that the two countries, engaged in a rivalry with each other, might have brought harm to NATO. This same judgment was used as justification for Greece being less favourable for inclusion in the MEC, as outlined by the Under-Secretary for Colonial Affairs, Martin, three weeks earlier.⁵⁵⁴ Although Martin's outline was for the MEC plan, it was equally applicable to NATO because the countries (Greece and Turkey), and the problem involved (poor relationship due to the Cyprus question) were still the same. Since it was impossible to bring only Turkey into NATO, it seems that the decision not to accept the Turkish request was a move taken by the British Foreign Office to prevent the harm that these problematic countries might have brought to NATO.⁵⁵⁵

The second incident that illuminates the fact that the Cyprus problem between Greece and Turkey was evident in British thinking was when Bevin asked Koprulu about the

⁵⁵³ In an American document, it was stated that: 'any decision Turk participation shld [sic] include Greece.' See *FRUS, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 1314, The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in Turkey, 13 September 1950. See also *FRUS, 1950, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 279, Paper prepared in the Department of State, 11 September 1950.

⁵⁵⁴ See record of discussion on Cyprus held at the State Department on 10 July 1950 enclosed in TNA, FO 371/87722/RG 1081/158, British Embassy Washington to Sir Anthony Rumbold (Southern Department), 14 July 1950. See this chapter, pp. 182-183.

⁵⁵⁵ The details of the negative effects on NATO would be produced later by the Foreign Office, after it could no longer adopt the American reasons for rejection as its own. See this chapter, p. 202, quotation about three main reasons against admitting Greece and Turkey into the Atlantic Pact, point (b) (ii).

state of Turkish relations with its neighbours, in particular Greece. Koprulu's answer was as follows:

M. Koprulu said that relations with Greece were very good. It was clear that the two countries had a common destiny and that they must stick together. He was not very happy about the internal political situation in Greece and he thought that General Plastiras had a number of difficulties to face, but he believed him to be a sincere friend of Turkey.⁵⁵⁶

Seemingly, Koprulu did not admit to Bevin that the relationship between Greece and Turkey was not in good shape. Nevertheless, the discomfort in Koprulu's mention of the internal political situation in Greece indicated that a rift between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus did exist. Although Koprulu did not go into details about the domestic situation in Greece, it can be presumed that Koprulu was referring to recent developments, like the Ethnarchy delegation and the plebiscite result that favoured union with Greece, which were well-received by the Greek government in Athens just several weeks before this Strasbourg meeting.⁵⁵⁷ What is more, at the time the Strasbourg meeting between Koprulu and Bevin took place, the Greek government held a series of meetings that supported the idea of union with Cyprus, and the Greek

⁵⁵⁶ TNA, retrieved from the Brotherton Library, FO 800/507/Tu/50/6, Record of Secretary of State's conversation with the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs at Strasbourg on 5th August 1950.

⁵⁵⁷ See enclosed report by Mary Fisher of the Colonial Office to Mr R. C. Barnes of the Southern Department of Foreign Office about 'Visit of Cyprus Ethnarchy Delegations to the United States' in TNA, CO 67/370/4, From Cyprus to Foreign Office, 31 August 1950. See also SHC, Coughlan, *Volume XI, Enosis and the British: British Official Documents 1878-1950*, VIII. Visit of Cyprus Ethnarchy Delegations to the United States, 1950 (CO 67/370/4), p. 249. This matter has been discussed in an earlier section of this chapter. See this chapter, p. 144.

Orthodox Church in Athens was actively involved in the *enosis* campaign.⁵⁵⁸ As the Turkish government was strongly against *enosis* between Cyprus and Greece, these recent developments in Greece surely provoked Turkey, thus affecting the relations between these two countries. The Turkish government once asserted that if *enosis* was successfully achieved, and thus harmed Turkish interests in Cyprus, it would be impossible for Turkey to remain friendly with Greece.⁵⁵⁹

It is interesting to note here that there was evidence the relationship between Greece and Turkey was already growing bitter immediately after the Ethnarchy delegation arrived in Athens, on 24 May 1950. The delegation was warmly welcomed by the Greek government and the Greek Orthodox Church. Turkey's hostile attitude towards Greece was noticeable when Greece was omitted from a Mediterranean defence system linked to NATO. This pact was re-initiated by the Turkish Democrat government after the first Turkish request for membership of NATO was rejected, and the government was therefore uninterested in the decision to include Turkey in a regional defence of the Middle East made by Bevin and Acheson at the end of the London meetings.⁵⁶⁰ This

⁵⁵⁸ See TNA, FO 381/87723/RG 1081/175, 'Activities of the Ethnarchy delegation during their recent visit to Greece', British Embassy Athens (Mr J. C. A. Roper) to Southern Department (Mr R. C. Barnes), 10 August 1950; see enclosed report by Mary Fisher of the Colonial Office to Mr R. C. Barnes of the Southern Department of Foreign Office about 'Visit of Cyprus Ethnarchy Delegations to the United States' in TNA, CO 67/370/4, From Cyprus to Foreign Office, 31 August 1950. See also SHC, Coughlan, *Volume XI, Enosis and the British: British Official Documents 1878-1950*, VIII. Visit of Cyprus Ethnarchy Delegations to the United States, 1950 (CO 67/370/4), pp. 249-250. See this chapter, p. 144.

⁵⁵⁹ See TNA, FO 371/78427/R 11889/1022/19, From Angora (Sir N. Charles) to Foreign Office, 21 December 1949. See this chapter, pp. 144-145.

⁵⁶⁰ See TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/13, 'Transmits the view that Turkish Government consider it essential to establish a Mediterranean Defence System', From Ankara (Sir N. Charles) to Foreign Office, 9 June 1950. See enclosed extract from "*The Times*" of 5 June 1950 in TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1074/14, 'Turkish interest in Security of Eastern Mediterranean'. See also TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/16, 'An answer to a question on Turkey and the Security in the Eastern Mediterranean', a draft reply by Sir A. Rumbold to Parliamentary question by Mr Phillips Price M.P., 16 June 1950.

matter was reported by Charles, the British Ambassador to Turkey, to the Foreign Office two days after the Ethnarchy delegation arrived in Athens as follows:

3. As I [Charles] have suspected, the new [Democrat] Government will re-open the question of a Pact in the Eastern Mediterranean in which the Western Powers would be interested. I told him [Koprulu] that this was a different question and had been thoroughly considered by the Governments of Great Britain and the United States. M. Koprulu said that he was aware of this but the times were such that the President and the Cabinet were very anxious to make progress with the defence of this vital part of the World in the interests of the World and Turkey. I asked him what countries he hoped should be included in this Pact, and he replied that he referred in the first instance to the Arab countries, Israel and Turkey.⁵⁶¹

It should be noted that since the concept of a Mediterranean defence system was proposed and initiated by Turkey in early 1947, Greece was considered for inclusion in this pact. What is more, it was the Greek government that continued to push for this defence system with the British government throughout 1948 and 1949, because during this period Turkey paid more attention and interest to NATO.⁵⁶² Based on this,

⁵⁶¹ TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/10, 'Conversation with KOPRULU the new Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs at which he stated that Turkish foreign policy is unaltered by the change of Government and at which the possibility of a pact between Turkey, Israel and the Arab Countries was discussed', From Ankara (Sir N. Charles) to Foreign Office, 26 May 1950.

⁵⁶² For in depth discussion of this matter based on British, American and Turkish records, see Athanassopoulou, *Turkey – Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945-1952: The First Enlargement of NATO*, pp. 67-69 and pp. 107-113.

the new Turkish initiative of a Mediterranean system linked to NATO, in late May 1950, was the first time Greece was not considered for inclusion.⁵⁶³ However, there was no explanation for why Turkey decided to leave Greece behind. When considering the current situation in Greece, this study is convinced it was because Turkey was annoyed that Greece warmly supported the union with Cyprus, which Turkey was opposed to. This matter therefore proves that at the time Koprulu had a meeting with Bevin, in early August 1950 at Strasbourg, the Cyprus question had already affected the Greco-Turkish relationship.

On the other hand, since Bevin and the Foreign Office were already aware of the Cyprus problem between Greece and Turkey due to the report sent by Charles to the Foreign Office, it seems obvious that this knowledge could have motivated Bevin to inquire with Koprulu about the state of Turkish relations with Greece, but Koprulu denied the existence of a problem. Koprulu's move is understandable because, generally, conflicting countries were considered to be undesirable for membership because they would bring about adverse effects on NATO. It is useful to mention here that earlier, in March 1950 during the conference in Cairo that discussed the United States policy for maintaining stability and security in the Near East, the trouble between Greece and Turkey over the Cyprus question had been touched upon. The conference concluded that 'Turkish-Greek relations could be endangered if Greek agitation of this [Cyprus] issue were to show signs of achieving results. It is important that we [the United States]

⁵⁶³ During further discussions about the Eastern Mediterranean pact, Greece was still absent from the discussion regarding countries that should participate in the pact. This matter indicates that Turkey was determined to omit Greece from this pact. See TNA, FO 371/87949/RK 1071/31, 'Turkey's foreign policy, her attitude towards her neighbours and her desire for an Eastern Mediterranean defence Pact underwritten by Britain and the United States', Turkish Policy Towards the Middle East, 15 August 1950.

encourage the GTI [Greece, Turkey and Iran] states to develop their confidence in and cooperation with each other.⁵⁶⁴ Based on this recommendation, it was deemed necessary for Turkey not to admit that Turkish relations with Greece were not in good shape over Cyprus, in order to avoid its second request for membership in NATO being rejected.

At the end of the discussion between Bevin and Koprulu in Strasbourg, the latter requested British support for Turkey's application to join NATO.⁵⁶⁵ Bevin, having been advised by Strang and his Foreign Office not to commit himself to an opinion,⁵⁶⁶ replied to Koprulu that 'he would certainly discuss Turkey's application with the United States Government when he went to New York in a few weeks' time.⁵⁶⁷ This answer further demonstrated Bevin's intention to follow the United States' stance on this matter. It is interesting to note here that, at this point, Bevin might have sensed that there was a possibility the United States would accept the Turkish request, saying to Koprulu that: 'He [Bevin] knew the United States Government were re-examining the whole situation in the light of events in Korea.'⁵⁶⁸ Therefore, in response to Koprulu's request for British support of Turkey's application to join NATO, and keeping in mind an assumption that the United States would accept the Turkish appeal for NATO membership, the Foreign Office prepared a lucid account of justifications for refusing the Turkish request for membership of NATO. Their reasons were detailed as follows:

⁵⁶⁴ *FRUS, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 5, Report of the Near East Regional Conference in Cairo, Summary of Conclusions, 16 March 1950.

⁵⁶⁵ TNA, retrieved from the Brotherton Library, FO 800/507/Tu/50/6, Record of Secretary of State's conversation with the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs at Strasbourg on 5th August 1950.

⁵⁶⁶ TNA, FO 371/87949/RK 1071/22, 'Conversation between Sir W. Strang and the French Ambassador on Turkish desire for inclusion in the Atlantic Pact', Foreign Office minute by Strang, 3 August 1950.

⁵⁶⁷ TNA, retrieved from the Brotherton Library, FO 800/507/Tu/50/6, Record of Secretary of State's conversation with the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs at Strasbourg on 5th August 1950.

⁵⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

- (a) If Turkey is accepted into the Atlantic Pact, Greece would have to be accepted too; although the Greek Government are not pressing for admission, they would certainly do so if the Turks were admitted and it would be difficult to exclude them without causing them bewilderment and offence.
- (b) There are three main reasons against admitting Turkey and Greece into the Atlantic Pact. These are:
- (i) We would destroy the conception of the Atlantic Pact as a basis for building an Atlantic community as a political and economic association of nations having common tradition etc., and would make it clear that it was only a military alliance against Russia.
- (ii) We would spread the security risks, introduce military problems which have no relation to the main European defence theatre and would generally disturb the organisation which is just beginning to find its feet.
- (iii) Many of the existing members would be strongly opposed to any extension of their obligation to go to war.⁵⁶⁹

The apparent reason the British Foreign Office produced its own account was because it could no longer use American justifications for rejection, because it did not agree with the US decision to bring Turkey, and thus Greece, into NATO. As earlier discussions in this section show, Bevin and the Foreign Office were well aware of the disharmonious

⁵⁶⁹ See TNA, FO 371/87949/RK 1071/34, 'Turkish request that His Majesty's Government should support their bid for inclusion in the Atlantic Pact', Foreign Office minute by Sir A. Rumbold, 9 August 1950.

relationship between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus; thus, this study believes that while preparing this account, the Cyprus issue was one of many that had been considered by the British Foreign Office in order to explain why they refused to accept the Turkish request for NATO membership.

The first point in this account that indicated the Cyprus issue was dominant in British thinking is contained in argument (a): that Greece and Turkey could not be separated in terms of security matters. As discussed earlier, due to this notion, Bevin and the Foreign Office, who initially only wanted Turkey in NATO, had to give up this idea because it was impossible to leave Greece behind. Hence, this explained their decision to reject the Turkish request for NATO membership. As shown by this study, the reason the British Foreign Office refused to have Greece in NATO was due to the Cyprus problem between these two countries. Bevin and the Foreign Office thought it was undesirable to bring two countries that clashed over Cyprus into NATO, believing this problematic situation might bring harm to NATO.⁵⁷⁰ Since this account was made based on the consideration that Greece and Turkey would become new members of NATO, the harm that these countries might have brought to NATO because of the Cyprus problem was reflected in argument (b) reason (ii). Those harms were: would spread the security risks; would introduce military problems which have no relation to the main European defence theatre; and would disturb the organisation which is just beginning to find its feet.

It is interesting to point out here that, argument (b) reason (i) could also substantiate the claim that the Cyprus issue was the possible 'new military problems' meant by the

⁵⁷⁰ See this chapter, p. 196.

British Foreign Office. In point (b) (i), the British Foreign Office argued that Greek and Turkish membership would make NATO only a military alliance against Russia. This was because these two countries were constantly under Soviet military and diplomatic threat, the same threats that were facing existing members of NATO. The question then was what were the new military problems, which had no relation to the existing members, that would be introduced to them? As Greece and Turkey had increasingly grown apart from each other because of the Cyprus issue, this unpleasant situation also increased the risk of war between them. Therefore, it seems that the Cyprus issue was the possible new military problems that would have to be faced by the existing members if the Turkish request for membership of NATO was accepted.

It is worth mentioning here that, since Bevin and the Foreign Office were persistent in rejecting Turkish requests for NATO membership, in the same account, another alternative was suggested for Turkey: 'if Turkey could not be made a member of the Pact some other instrument binding the United States Government to come to the military aid of Turkey would be the next best thing.'⁵⁷¹ Seemingly, the British thought that it would be better for the United States to undertake a direct commitment to Turkey than for Turkey to be accepted into NATO. At this point, Bevin and the Foreign Office temporarily suggested a new option for Turkey, because they realised Turkey was disinterested in the idea of being included in a regional defence of the Middle East.⁵⁷²

⁵⁷¹ See TNA, FO 371/87949/RK 1071/34, 'Turkish request that His Majesty's Government should support their bid for inclusion in the Atlantic Pact', Foreign Office minute by Sir A. Rumbold, 9 August 1950.

⁵⁷² See TNA, FO 371/87948/RK 1071/13, 'Transmits the view that Turkish Government consider it essential to establish a Mediterranean Defence System', From Ankara (Sir N. Charles) to Foreign Office, 9 June 1950. See this chapter, p. 198.

On the other hand, Bevin was not mistaken about his feeling that the United States might accept the second Turkish request for NATO membership. His sense was vindicated when, in late August 1950, Franks, the British Ambassador to the United States, informed the Foreign Office about the new American position towards Greek and Turkish membership.⁵⁷³ Franks also reported that the preparatory talks discussing the Turkish application were held on 1 September 1950 and the United States affirmed that Greece and Turkey would be included in NATO.⁵⁷⁴ Since the British Foreign Office had already prepared an account of reasons for its rejection, it promptly sent a copy of a brief containing the account to the United States, endorsed by the COS, Bevin and Prime Minister Attlee.⁵⁷⁵ Then, the same brief was sent to Bevin for him to use when he attended the foreign ministers meeting in New York in the following weeks, in which the Turkish request for membership was on the agenda.⁵⁷⁶ Due to the British government's opposition to the Turkish application, the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCOS) also had the same view as the British Foreign Office in argument (b) reason (ii): that NATO was still fragile or unstable and thus would be unable to accept any new members as yet. The United States JCOS, therefore, suggested that an associate status be granted to Greece and Turkey, instead of full membership. The matter was recorded as follows:

⁵⁷³ TNA, FO 371/87949/RK 1071/41, 'Alternatives to full membership of the Atlantic Pact which might be offered to Turkey (& Greece)', From Washington (Sir O. Franks) to Foreign Office, 30 August 1950.

⁵⁷⁴ TNA, FO 371/87949/RK 1071/42G, 'Preparatory talks on the Turkish application to join the North Atlantic Treaty', From Washington (Sir O. Franks) to Foreign Office, 1 September 1950.

⁵⁷⁵ See enclosed brief on the Turkish Government's request to be allowed to adhere to the Atlantic Pact in TNA, FO 371/87949/RK 1071/42G, 'Preparatory talks on the Turkish application to join the North Atlantic Treaty', From Foreign Office to Washington, 7 September 1950. See also TNA, DEFE 5/23, COS (50) 331, Committee Memoranda, 28 August 1950.

⁵⁷⁶ See *FRUS, 1950, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 1218-1220, United States Delegation Minutes, Third Meeting of the Foreign Ministers, New York, Waldorf Astoria, 13 September 1950. See *FRUS, 1950, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 1284-1285, Paper prepared by NATO Deputies of the United States, United Kingdom, and France, New York, 13 September 1950.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff believe that the inclusion of Turkey and Greece as full members in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization might adversely affect the progress which is now evident in North Atlantic Treaty arrangements. On the other hand, the admission of Turkey and Greece now would enable the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to concert military planning and actions in the Mediterranean and the Near and Middle East with those already in progress in Western Europe. The Joint Chiefs of Staff feel that it might be possible to obtain the benefits of Turk and Greek participation in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and at the same time minimize the disadvantages thereof by according to these two nations an associate status in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Such a status would permit their representatives to participate in coordinated planning against Soviet aggression.⁵⁷⁷

Bevin and the UK representatives in the North Atlantic Council (NAC) only half-heartedly accepted the JCOS proposal for associate membership to be granted to Turkey and Greece. They complained that although US proposal represented the least bad choice, they doubted it would provide a lasting solution.⁵⁷⁸ Bevin opposed the associate membership decision because he believed it would encourage Turkey to pursue full NATO membership. British Ambassador Charles shared his apprehension and commented that 'the Turkish government had not given up their hopes of becoming

⁵⁷⁷ *FRUS, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 1307, Memorandum by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Secretary of Defense (Johnson), Subject: Admission of Turkey to the North Atlantic Treaty, Washington, 9 September 1950.

⁵⁷⁸ See *FRUS, 1950, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 327, The Acting Secretary of State to Certain Diplomatic Offices, Washington, 18 September 1950.

member of the Pact and suggested in four months time [*sic*] [the] Turkish Government would try again.⁵⁷⁹ With the Turks set on full membership, Bevin struggled in May 1950 when he proposed an alternative defence plan for Turkey.

British Ambassador Charles noted that the Turkish Foreign Minister Koprulu had told him that for months the Greeks had declined to accept the co-ordination of staff with the Turks.⁵⁸⁰ Although Koprulu did not overtly mention the reason for the Greeks attitude towards the Turks, this study has grounds to propose that it was due to their dispute over the future of Cyprus: the Cyprus question formed the only problem that troubled the Greco-Turkish inter-governmental relationship at this time.

Other evidence proves that this thorn in the side of Turkish and Greek relations was not simply a matter of Bevin's fevered imagination. We can see this during a series of meetings in Washington between the British COS and the United States JCOS. The agenda centred on the liaison between Turkey and Greece in NATO defence planning in the Mediterranean area which arose from their NATO associate membership status. At 26 October 1950 meeting, it is clear that the Cyprus issue between Turkey and Greece was one that could disturb these countries cooperation in Mediterranean. This matter was recorded as follows:

⁵⁷⁹ TNA, FO 371/87951/RK 1071/70, 'The Turkish Government had intended re-applying for full N.A.T.O. membership in four months time but Sir N. Charles has warned them not to act precipitately', From Ankara (Sir N. Charles) to Foreign Office, 26 September 1950.

⁵⁸⁰ See Ibid. The same record also retains in TNA, FO 195/2637/1073/65/50G, From Sir Noel Charles, Ankara to Foreign Office, 26 September 1950.

It was noted that the Turkish G-3 now in the United States would talk with the Standing Group on NATO planning on November 3rd. It was generally concluded that Admiral Carney, General Arnold, and the British Air Force representative in Turkey should confer in order that the planning in the area be coordinated. It was further agreed that when the Greek G-3 makes his appearance he should be directed to confer with Admiral Carney. It was also concluded that it would be desirable to bring pressure upon the Greeks to cease their agitation for the return of Cyprus to that country, and that further discussion in this latter subject should be held at the political-military talks on 26 October.⁵⁸¹

At the next meeting between the British COS and the United States JCOS in Washington on 26 October 1950, the issue about Cyprus was mentioned again as follows:

Ambassador Jessup declared that the U.S. has informed the Greek Government, and will continue so to inform them, that the present world crisis is not a proper time in which to raise the question of the status of Cyprus. Ambassador Franks said that the U.K. would appreciate it if the U.S. continues to take this line. Air Marshall Slessor urged that both the U.K. and the U.S. point out to the Greeks that Cyprus will be of great

⁵⁸¹ *FRUS, 1950, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 1688, Approved Summary of Conclusions and Agreements Reached at a Meeting of the Chiefs of Staff of the United States and United Kingdom, 'Item 5', Washington, 23 October 1950.

importance for operations in the next way, since the Greek are inclined for their own purposes to play down its military importance.⁵⁸²

Evidently, the Cyprus issue between Turkey and Greece concerned the British government. British fears centred particularly on the damage that could be done to collaboration in NATO defence planning in the Mediterranean area. This circumstance might have had strengthened Bevin's resolve not to agree to the full accession of these two countries to NATO. He remained fixed in this position until his last day in the office and in the face of Turkish resistance to inclusion in the British MEC plan. His prime concern stemmed from his fear that the two countries would prove unable to collaborate harmoniously with one another on NATO's Southern Flank. This matter will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Overall, the discussion in this section demonstrates that further archival research of British records shows that the Cyprus issue was one of the contributory reasons shaping the British Foreign Office's position towards Turkish requests for membership of NATO in 1950. This was significant because of the negative effects that Greece and Turkey might have brought to NATO due to their ongoing dispute over the future of Cyprus.

Conclusion

After NATO was successfully established in April 1949, Greece and Turkey never gave up pursuing their membership of NATO. Nevertheless, Britain remained firm in its decision

⁵⁸² Ibid., p. 1691, United States Minutes of the United States–United Kingdom Political-Military Conversations, '3. Cyprus', Washington, 26 October 1950.

that these countries should not join. The geographical issue and the MEC are two reasons usually argued by scholars in explaining why the British government continued to reject Turkish requests for membership in 1950.⁵⁸³ This study, however, views this rejection from a different perspective: the ill-feeling between these two countries because of their disagreement over the future of Cyprus. This was because, starting from late 1949 to 1950, the plebiscite movement in Cyprus that was initiated by the Ethnarchy and AKEL became more active and aggressive in achieving their goal of union with their mother country Greece. When the Greek government seemed pleased by this plebiscite campaign, this matter provoked Turkey because it believed Cyprus belonged to Turkey and not Greece. As a result, the Greco-Turkish relationship had visibly deteriorated and the British Foreign Office was well aware of this situation. This fractious relationship between these two countries, whose security matters were related to each other, was deemed likely by Bevin and the Foreign Office to bring NATO more troubles than benefits.

The discussion in this chapter shows that this Greco-Turkish conflict over Cyprus was a contributory reason that shaped the British Foreign Office's position towards Greek and Turkish membership of NATO. The MEC plan was used by these British officials as a means for preventing Turkey and its fraternal security partner, Greece, from joining NATO. The MEC regional defence pact, that was initiated by Britain, is a prominent issue that has been extensively explored by previous scholars in explaining Britain's reason for rejecting Turkish applications and appeals for membership of NATO, in May and August

⁵⁸³ For this literature, see the introduction of this dissertation, pp. 20-21.

1950 respectively.⁵⁸⁴ This study, however, shows that the MEC was used as a means, rather than a reason, for keeping Turkey, and thus Greece, outside of NATO. This matter was based on the fact that, in the early stages of forming the MEC in 1946, neither Greece nor Turkey were considered for inclusion. Only after Turkey requested membership of NATO, in early May 1950, did Bevin and the Foreign Office arrive at the decision to bring only Turkey into the MEC.

It would be true to say here that Bevin and the Foreign Office's reasons for rejection, as related to the Cyprus issue, were hardly noticed before August 1950. This was evident when they chose to echo the US position in this matter repeatedly in late 1949, when Turkey inquired about the possibility of NATO being extended. This occurred again in May 1950, when Turkey for the first time formally requested NATO membership, and again in August 1950, before it learned about the new US decision to agree to NATO enlargement. Only after the United States decided to bring Greece and Turkey into NATO, due to these countries' contribution in the Korean War, did the role of the Cyprus issue in causing Turkish requests for membership of NATO to be rejected by the British Foreign Office become apparent.

It should be noted that, in the British Foreign Office's reason for rejection as related to the Cyprus issue, the descriptions that were used by them were vague. This matter was possibly because Turkey had denied the fact that the relationship between itself and Greece was deteriorating over the issue of Cyprus so that this matter would not affect its request for membership of NATO. Considering that Turkey was still pressing hard for

⁵⁸⁴ For this literature, see the introduction of this dissertation, pp. 20-21.

British government support for their wish to join NATO, the British Foreign Office' tack not to point clearly to the Cyprus issue could be considered a prudent move by Bevin and the Foreign Office in order to avoid irritating Turkey with a reason that they themselves had refused to admit.

CHAPTER FOUR

The MEC plan, Bevin, the new Foreign Secretary Herbert Morrison and the full accession of Turkey and Greece to NATO, 1950-1952

Introduction

Historians such as Mehmet Gonlubol, Dionysios Chourchoulis, Ekavi Athannassopoulou and Behçet K. Yeşilbursa who touched on the issue of the admission of Greece and Turkey into NATO from the perspective of Britain share the view that the difficulties inherent in creating the MEC were the main reason Britain accepted Greece and Turkey as new members of NATO with full membership status.⁵⁸⁵ Gonlubol for instance said 'once Britain received word that Turkey would play a leading role in the establishment of such a pact [MEC] if admitted into NATO, England withdrew her objections.'⁵⁸⁶ Chourchoulis likewise argues that 'Turkey's definite inclusion in the European Command was finally decided only in early 1952 after strong US support, when the MEC project was not making any progress and any other solution had been considered impossible.'⁵⁸⁷ Athannassopoulou links this matter to the intransigence of the United States and Turkey in accepting the British view - that Turkish military integration in the MEC project was more appropriate than in NATO - as follows:

They [the British] failed to make Turkey's membership of the Atlantic Alliance conditional upon its simultaneous inclusion in MEC, and they

⁵⁸⁵ For this literature, see the introduction of this dissertation, pp. 22-23.

⁵⁸⁶ Gonlubol, p. 26.

⁵⁸⁷ Chourchoulis, *The Southern Flank of NATO, 1951-1959: Military Strategy or Political Stabilization*, p. 29.

had to accept Turkey's military integration into Eisenhower's command [NATO's first Supreme Commander, Europe (SACEUR)] instead of the Middle East Command. Britain's failure was due as much to Washington's lukewarm support as to Ankara's determination not to cooperate in Middle Eastern defence before Turkey was both politically and militarily fully integrated into NATO.⁵⁸⁸

Similarly, Yeşilbursa points to the reluctance of both Turkey and the United States to participate in the MEC and accept British command over it. Yeşilbursa notes that the reason the MEC held little attraction for Turkey was because 'it would afford her [Turkey] no effective increase in security.'⁵⁸⁹ With regard to the USA, Yeşilbursa states that 'the Americans, however, wished Middle East Command to be a NATO command so that the United States could join. They also suggested that Turkey should join MEC and NATO at the same time.'⁵⁹⁰ As a result of these problems, Yeşilbursa concludes that 'the Cabinet therefore agreed in principle to support the admission of Turkey and Greece to NATO and in return to ask the United States to support a Middle East Command under British auspices.'⁵⁹¹ Besides the United States and Turkey, Yeşilbursa argues that Egypt's unfavourable attitude - it 'refused to join any Middle East defence arrangement until the Canal Zone was completely evacuated by British troops'⁵⁹² - was also one of the reasons why Britain decided to accept Turkish and Greek membership in NATO. Yeşilbursa shows that in order to help the MEC plan, the new British Foreign

⁵⁸⁸ Athanassopoulou, *Turkey – Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945-1952: The First Enlargement of NATO*, p. 230.

⁵⁸⁹ Yeşilbursa, p. 81.

⁵⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

⁵⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

⁵⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 83.

Secretary Herbert Morrison proposed Turkish and Greek membership in NATO as follows:

On 14 September [1951], during another tripartite meeting, Morrison suggested that at the Ottawa meeting of the NATO Council on 14–20 September, Greece and Turkey should be asked to join NATO. Afterwards, Turkey would be approached regarding MEC. Once Turkish approval was secured, Britain would present the MEC proposals to Egypt.⁵⁹³

Historians such as Victor Papacosma state that, besides this issue of the MEC, another reason Britain agreed to the United States' proposal to grant Turkey and Greece full NATO membership was the deteriorating situation in the Middle East. He explains that 'in May 1951 Washington formally proposed that full membership should be granted to Greece and Turkey. The worsening Middle East situation, and particularly the Iranian crisis, convinced the British in July to add their backing.'⁵⁹⁴

It is worth pointing out here that these difficulties with Turkey, the United States, Egypt and the Iranian crisis that have been focused upon by historians seeking to explain why Britain eventually agreed to grant full NATO membership to Greece and Turkey could be regarded as external factors. These historians have made less effort to consider the change in British position on Greek and Turkish membership in NATO in terms of

⁵⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

⁵⁹⁴ Papacosma, p. 192.

internal factors. One such internal factor was the ignorance and inexperience of the new Foreign Secretary Morrison in handling these interrelated matters that had so far deadlocked British efforts to formulate the MEC project. This inexperience might have led him to succumb to pressure from the United States and Turkey, both of which demanded Britain grant its permission for Greek and Turkish entrance into NATO. Yeşilbursa, for instance, only mentions Morrison's diplomacy, which defers to the United States' preference for Greek and Turkish membership in NATO as a means of guaranteeing an American commitment to Middle Eastern affairs and the MEC plan. Given the lack of discussion of this internal factor and its neglect by previous historians, the object of this chapter is to detail and analyse the ignorance and inexperience of the new Foreign Secretary Morrison.

It should be noted here that this study does not deny the importance of those external factors that have been studied previously by historians. Rather, it seeks to give a full picture of Greek and Turkish admission into NATO from the perspective of Britain, by complementing those external factors with the internal factor – the inexperience of the new Foreign Secretary Morrison in handling foreign affairs when compared with his predecessor Bevin. This chapter will demonstrate that this internal dynamic also contributed to Britain's new position towards Greek and Turkish membership in NATO in 1951. To substantiate this thesis, this chapter makes reference to a variety of published primary sources, including Kenneth Younger's diaries and interview transcript. Younger was the Minister of State at the Foreign Office and served as deputy to both Foreign Secretaries Bevin and Morrison in 1950. In addition, a book written by Sir Roderick Barclay, Principal Private Secretary to the Foreign Secretary, about his

experience during his two-year service to Bevin and six-month service to Morrison is utilised. Other sources consulted include a published political diary, memoir and papers by Hugh Dalton, Minister of Local Government and Planning in 1951 (former Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1945-1947); a memoir by Sir Gladwyn Jebb, former Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office; published diaries and letters by Sir Harold Nicolson, Labour Party politician; a memoir by Dean Acheson, US Secretary of State; and the speeches from the House of Commons Parliamentary Debates regarding foreign affairs during Morrison's tenure as Foreign Secretary.

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section discusses the difficulties faced by the MEC at the hands of the Egyptian, Turkish and United States governments while Bevin was still in office. This section is essential in order to show that Bevin continued to refuse full Greek and Turkish membership in NATO, even though Turkey objected to its inclusion in the MEC plan having been granted NATO associate member status in September 1950 and the fact that it was considered for full membership by the United States in early 1951. The discussion of the difficulties with Turkey and the United States in this section also further substantiates that the Cyprus issue, namely the deterioration in the relationship between Turkey and Greece, was one of the reasons that Bevin stood firm in not accepting full Turkish membership in NATO. The second section discusses the continuous difficulties with the aforementioned governments that hampered arrangements for the MEC under the new Foreign Secretary Morrison. This section discusses first the inexperience of Morrison as head of the Foreign Office. It then discusses how Morrison's incompetence as Foreign Secretary contributed to his new approach to the issue of Greek and Turkish membership in NATO while he was

dealing with the above difficulties. Although the external factors mentioned above have been covered widely by previous historians, it is necessary that they are discussed in this chapter - it is only by exploring these external circumstances that we can understand the internal dynamic that this study attempts to argue was an additional factor in Britain's decision to grant full NATO membership to Greece and Turkey.

Bevin and the difficulties of creating the MEC, May 1950 - March 1951: Turkey and Greece remain outside NATO

Since Bevin, the Foreign Office and the COS started the initiatives towards the MEC in late 1945, the Egyptian government was the first to make the arrangements for this British defence plan difficult. This was followed by the Turkish and US governments when the plan was revealed to them in May 1950. It is worth noting here that the problems faced with the Egyptian government between 1946 and early 1950,⁵⁹⁵ and the disinterest of the Turkish government in the MEC plan between May and September 1950 have already been discussed in Chapter Three of this dissertation.⁵⁹⁶ This section, therefore, continues the discussion of the difficulty faced with regard to the Egyptian government and the increasing complexity of the MEC arrangements with regard to the Turkish and US governments while Bevin was still Foreign Secretary. By showing how committed Bevin was to handling these foreign affairs which were slowing the MEC's progress and his simultaneous reluctance to accept the full accession of Greece and

⁵⁹⁵ See Chapter Three of this dissertation, pp. 167-174.

⁵⁹⁶ See Chapter Three of this dissertation, pp. 191-194.

Turkey into NATO, this section thus adds weight to the internal dynamic thesis that will be analysed later in this chapter.

The relentless uncooperativeness of Egypt towards the MEC plan

As discussed in the previous chapter, between 1946 and March 1950 a series of negotiations between the British government and the Egyptian government on the prospect of Egypt's inclusion in a regional defence pact of the Middle East had been held, but none of these negotiations had succeeded in prompting the opening of an arrangement for the MEC. This was because both governments had failed to reach an agreement over two controversial issues, notably British troops' evacuation from the Suez Canal Zone and the unity of Egypt and the Sudan.⁵⁹⁷

Bevin, the Foreign Office and the COS continued their efforts to pursue the MEC plan with the Egyptian government by sending the Chief of the British Imperial General Staff, Field Marshal Sir William Slim, to Cairo in June and July 1950 to resolve the Anglo-Egyptian dispute over the Suez Canal Zone. A proposal for Anglo-Egyptian co-operation in the Suez Canal Zone that was prepared by the COS, in consultation with the Foreign Office, was presented before the King of Egypt, King Farouk and other Egyptian authorities. In short, the proposal suggested that the role of British troops in the Suez Canal Zone would be redefined from the term 'occupation' to 'collaboration'.⁵⁹⁸ In other

⁵⁹⁷ For further in-depth discussion of these two issues, see Chapter 6 in Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East 1945-1951: Arab Nationalism, the United States and Post-war Imperialism*, pp. 226-264.

⁵⁹⁸ For full a record of this proposal, see enclosed a copy of a personal and secret letter dated 13 July 1950 sent to King Farouk by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff before he left Cairo on 13 July in TNA,

words, the British authorities envisaged a completely new approach to defending the Suez Canal Zone based on an equal alliance between the Egyptian and British governments under the regional pact of the MEC.

Although King Farouk and the other Egyptian authorities were aware that Egypt could not defend itself and that a British base was essential to Egypt's security, Slim got the impression that the King intended to let British troops remain in the Suez Canal Zone 'for a very long period in his own [King Farouk] interests.'⁵⁹⁹ The other Egyptian authorities however, in particular the Egyptian Foreign Minister Salah ed-Din Bey, reverted again to demands for 'immediate and complete evacuation.'⁶⁰⁰ The British Ambassador in Cairo, Ralph Skrine Stevenson, in his report to Michael Wright (Foreign Office Under-Secretary) noted that the Minister of the Interior, Serag ed-Din Pasha, asked Slim and himself 'how can we, the Wafd, accept less than was offered to and rejected by Sidky Pasha?' Serag ed-Din went on to say that the offer to evacuate made by Bevin in 1946 was 'the greatest mistake we had made.'⁶⁰¹ However, given that these efforts in June and July 1950 were taking place in the midst of the Korean War, the COS

FO 371/80451/JE 1197/55, From British Embassy (Alexandria) to Foreign Office, 14 July 1950. See also TNA, FO 371/80450/JE 1197/38/G, 'Copies of two papers concerning the C.I.G.S. visit to Cairo', From Foreign Office to Prime Minister, 14 June 1950.

⁵⁹⁹ TNA, FO 371/80374/1041/68/50G, 'A record dictated by Field Marshal Sir William Slim of his talk with His Majesty King Farouk at Koubbeh Palace on the 4th June', From British Embassy (Cairo) to Foreign Office, 5 June 1950.

⁶⁰⁰ See TNA, PREM 8/1359, From Commonwealth Relations Office to Western & United Nations Department of the Foreign Office, F.2311/53 – Egypt, 14 June 1950. See also TNA, FO 371/80450/JE 1197/38/G, From Commonwealth Relations Office to Western & United Nations Department of the Foreign Office, F.2311/53 – Egypt, 14 June 1950. For full documentation about the Egyptian proposals for the defence of Egypt, see TNA, PREM 8/1359, COS (50) 233, Note by the Secretary, 'Egyptian Proposals for the Defence of Egypt', 5 July 1950; TNA, DEFE 5/22, COS (50) 233, Note by the Secretary, 'Egyptian Proposals for the Defence of Egypt', 5 July 1950.

⁶⁰¹ TNA, FO 371/80451/JE 1197/55, From British Embassy (Alexandria) to Foreign Office, 14 July 1950. See also PREM 8/1359, From Alexandria (Stevenson) to Foreign Office (Wright), 'Top Secret and Personal', 14 July 1950.

felt 'it would not be practicable to hand these over completely to Egyptian control,'⁶⁰² arguing that 'we [Britain] must continue to hold very large stocks of equipment and stores in the base installations, if we are to have any chance of achieving a rapid build-up in the early months of the next war.'⁶⁰³ It seems that, since both governments' positions regarding the Suez Canal Zone were resolute, Slim's initiatives in summer 1950 did not succeed in making any appreciable progress in an Anglo-Egyptian effort to arrange a regional defence of the Middle East.

After Slim's failure, the next initiative was carried out by the British Ambassador in Cairo, Stevenson. It was decided that exploratory conversations between Stevenson and the Egyptian Foreign Minister Salah ed-Din Bey should continue and that the latter should endeavour to put forward some practical solution to the differences between the two countries.⁶⁰⁴ Again, however, the discussions between Stevenson and Salah ed-Din Bey still failed to produce any satisfactory settlements because the latter stubbornly maintained his position - that the British forces must unconditionally withdraw from the Suez Canal Zone.⁶⁰⁵

⁶⁰² See enclosed a copy of a personal and secret letter dated 13 July 1950 sent to King Farouk by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff before he left Cairo on 13 July in *Ibid*.

⁶⁰³ TNA, PREM 8/1359, COS (50) 233, Note by the Secretary, 'Egyptian Proposals for the Defence of Egypt', 5 July 1950; TNA, DEFE 5/22, COS (50) 233, Note by the Secretary, 'Egyptian Proposals for the Defence of Egypt', 5 July 1950.

⁶⁰⁴ TNA, PREM 8/1359, From Commonwealth Relations Office to Western & United Nations Department of the Foreign Office, F.2311/53 – United Kingdom–Egyptian Relations, 27 July 1950.

⁶⁰⁵ See TNA, FO 800/457/Eg/50/15, From Foreign Office (Kenneth Younger – Minister of State at the Foreign Office and the deputy to Bevin) to Alexandria (Stevenson), 13 September 1950. This study learned about the failed Stevenson-Salah ed-Din Bey talks from this letter. In this letter, Mr Younger acknowledged to Stevenson that Sir William Strang told the French Ambassador, Monsieur Massigli, about the failed Stevenson-Salah ed-Din Bey talks, since Massigli was concerned about whether any progress had been made in the discussions between Stevenson and the Egyptian Foreign Minister. The same letter is also retained in TNA, FO 371/80454/JE 1197/107, From Foreign Office (Kenneth Younger) to Alexandria (Stevenson), 13 September 1950.

After unsuccessful attempts by Slim and Stevenson, the next step was for Bevin to see the Egyptian Foreign Minister in New York in September 1950. This new effort shouldered by Bevin could also be considered futile, since Salah ed-Din Bey persisted in his demand 'that all British forces should be evacuated from the [Suez] Canal Zone.'⁶⁰⁶ Salah ed-Din Bey then told Bevin that 'there would of course be a Defence Treaty and in time of war British troops could return to Egypt' and added that he had previously told Stevenson, off the record, the following:

He [Salah ed-Din Bey] envisaged a transition period of one year in which the efficiency of the Egyptian army would have to be increased and in which the Egyptian army would have to learn how to maintain the equipment and installations which the British would leave behind. They could then take over in the [Suez] Canal Zone.⁶⁰⁷

Salah ed-Din Bey asserted that the main object behind this proposal was to get the British to strengthen the Egyptian army, because the British had 'made little effort to build up the Egyptian army since 1937 and as a result the army was now weak [and] this was adduced as a reason why the British could not leave Egypt.'⁶⁰⁸ Although Bevin stressed that the British would find it very difficult to defend Egypt if all facilities were

⁶⁰⁶ TNA, FO 800/457/Eg/50/16, Record of conversation between the Secretary of State and the Egyptian Minister for Foreign Affairs, 28th September, 1950, Waldorf-Astoria, New York, 'Future of the British Garrison in Egypt', 28 September 1950. The same record also retains in TNA, FO 371/80455/JE 1197/133G, 'Record of conversation between the Secretary of State and the Egyptian Minister for Foreign Affairs, 28th September, 1950, Waldorf-Astoria, New York' – Future of the British Garrison in Egypt, Foreign Office minute by Mr R. Allen, 28 September 1950.

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid.

denied to them, he promised Salah ed-Din Bey that 'he would consider them [Egyptian proposals] on his return [to London].'⁶⁰⁹

Bevin, together with Stevenson, continued the next effort to discuss the issue of the Suez Canal Zone with the Egyptian Foreign Minister Salah ed-Din Bey and the Egyptian Ambassador in London, Aly Husny Effendi, in a series of talks in the Foreign Office between 4 and 15 December 1950. Unfortunately, both the Egyptian and the British representatives in these talks still failed to reach an understanding over the evacuation of British troops within a year.⁶¹⁰ Bevin argued that 'evacuation within this time limit would mean that Great Britain would be expected to undertake the defence of the Middle East in wartime without having been able to make adequate preparations.'⁶¹¹ However, Salah ed-Din Bey 'still believed that one year would suffice to enable the Egyptian Army to take over the role assigned to the British troops in the [Suez] Canal Zone under the 1936 Treaty.'⁶¹² Aside from the stalemate over the matter of evacuation, these December 1950 negotiations also reached an impasse over the issue of Sudan. This was because the Egyptian government was resolute that 'Egypt and Sudan were one country and under one Crown', leading it reject the British

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁶¹⁰ See TNA, FO 800/457/Eg/50/18, Record of a conversation between the Foreign Secretary and the Egyptian Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Foreign Office on 4th December, 1950, 'Proposed Revision of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936', 4 December 1950. The same record is also retained in TNA, FO 371/80381/JE 1054/53G, 'Record of a conversation between the Foreign Secretary and the Egyptian Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Foreign Office on 4th December on Proposed Revision of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936', Foreign Office minute by Mr Bowker, 4 December 1950.

⁶¹¹ See TNA, FO 800/457/Eg/50/19, Record of a conversation between the Secretary of State and the Egyptian Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Foreign Office on 7th December 1950, '(1) Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936; (2) Future of British Troops in the Canal Zone; (3) the Sudan', 7 December 1950. The same record is also retained in TNA, FO 371/80381/JE 1054/59G, 'Record of a conversation between the Secretary of State and the Egyptian Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Foreign Office on 7th December 1950 on Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936, Future of British Troops and the Sudan', Foreign Office minute by Mr Bowker, 7 December 1950.

⁶¹² See Ibid.

government's proclamation of self-government and self-determination for the Sudanese people.⁶¹³

Since the Anglo-Egyptian talks of December 1950 had become deadlocked again, Bevin made a new effort to end this stalemate in January 1951. Bevin told the Egyptian Ambassador Aly Husny Effendi that he had prepared a new proposal for the next stage of Anglo-Egyptian discussions - that the question of timing should be revised if British troops withdrew from the Suez Canal Zone on Egyptian terms.⁶¹⁴ The Ambassador said that this question of timing had also been causing his government anxiety and told Bevin that his government had been thinking in terms of three or four years, if some agreement could be reached.⁶¹⁵ It seems that Bevin's move struck the right note, because the Egyptian government apparently also believed that the evacuation of British troops within a year was impossible to perform. Bevin's proposal was agreed by the COS and was to be his last initiative as Foreign Secretary. When this proposal was discussed and approved in the Cabinet in the first week of April 1951, Bevin attended the meeting as Lord Privy Seal, a position to which he was appointed on the day of his resignation, 9 March 1951. The new Foreign Secretary at that time was Morrison.

⁶¹³ See TNA, FO 800/457/Eg/50/20, Record of conversation between the Secretary of State and the Egyptian Minister for Foreign Affairs at 12 noon on 9th December, 1950, '(1) The Sudan; (2) Future of British Troops in the Canal Zone', 9 December 1950. The same record also retains in TNA, FO 371/80381/JE 1054/60G, 'Record of conversation between the Secretary of State and the Egyptian Minister for Foreign Affairs on 9th December on Future of British troops and the Sudan', Foreign Office minute by Mr Bowker, 9 December 1950. See also TNA, FO 371/90129/JE 1051/1G, 'Record of conversation between the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Egyptian Minister for Foreign Affairs on 15th December on Anglo-Egyptian relation and the Sudan', Foreign Office minute by Mr Bowker, 1 January 1951.

⁶¹⁴ TNA, FO 371/90129/JE 1051/5G, Conversation between the Secretary of State and the Egyptian Ambassador, 'Political Issues between the United Kingdom and Egypt', 8 January 1951.

⁶¹⁵ Ibid.

It would be fair to say here that Bevin's initiative in January 1951 can be seen as his last effort to ease the difficulty in bringing Egypt into the MEC plan. It seemed that, until the last weeks before Bevin's death in April 1951, he still continued to develop original solutions to the Suez problem. Yet Turkey, another prospective member of the MEC, at the same time deeply rejected its inclusion in the British plan because it was eager to obtain full NATO membership status, having been granted associate membership in September 1950. The problems that the Turkish government posed to the British government regarding the inclusion of Turkey in the MEC plan during Bevin's term as Foreign Secretary will be discussed in the next subtopic.

The antagonism of Turkey towards the MEC plan

As analysed and discussed in the previous chapter, due to the Cyprus issue between Turkey and its security partner, Greece, Bevin and the Foreign Office refused both Turkish applications for membership in NATO in 1950.⁶¹⁶ Bevin, however, was fully aware that without support from the Western powers, Turkey would not be able to defend itself from Soviet aggression. He thus offered an alternate defence plan to Turkey - the MEC plan - that was simultaneously publicised by him and Acheson on 19 May 1950. Unfortunately, Turkey proved to be too difficult to convince and it is possible to argue that Turkish enthusiasm for joining NATO was the greatest obstacle faced by Bevin, the Foreign Office and the COS in their MEC efforts.

⁶¹⁶ See Chapter Three of this dissertation, pp. 195-205.

The first sign that Turkey had little interest in Bevin's plan was when the Turkish Ambassador Açikalin, who found out about the inclusion of Turkey in the MEC from the newspaper, complained about this decision being made without first telling or consulting the Turkish government.⁶¹⁷ This criticism is understandable, given that Turkey was expecting the result for its first application for membership in NATO but Bevin unexpectedly decided to bring Turkey into the MEC plan instead. Logically, it would have been impossible for Turkey to change its long interest in joining NATO and agree to join the MEC, a plan that was still only on paper at that time. The disinterest of Turkey towards the MEC plan became more overt when it sent its second request for membership in NATO in early August 1950, less than three months after the first application received no response from the three NATO key allies, namely Britain, the United States and France. Although the North Atlantic Council (NAC) rejected Turkey's second application for membership at the September 1950 meetings in New York, it was however granted associate membership status.⁶¹⁸

This study believes the decision to grant associate membership caused British efforts towards the formation of the MEC to progress at a slow pace. The utmost problem that emerged from Turkish associated membership was that Turkey became more keen to demand full NATO membership. Given the fact that Turkey had struggled to secure its place in NATO since its inception years, NATO associate membership status could only partly satisfy them. The British Ambassador to Turkey, Sir Noel Charles, told Bevin 'the

⁶¹⁷ See Chapter Three of this dissertation, pp. 179-180.

⁶¹⁸ *FRUS, 1950, Western Europe*, Vol. III, pp. 1284-1285, Paper Prepared by NATO Deputies of the United States, United Kingdom, and France, 'Proposed Directive to the Defense Committee of the North Atlantic Council', New York, 13 September 1950. See also TNA, FO 195/2637, From New York (United Kingdom Delegation to United Nations) to Foreign Office, 'Memorandum No. 41 of the 14th September from the United Kingdom Deputy on the North Atlantic Council', 20 September 1950.

Turkish government would more than probably, indeed certainly, accept the proposition [associate membership] which they considered as a first step towards the attainment of their wish to become full members of the pact.⁶¹⁹ This matter led Turkey to set in motion a chain of events that made arrangements for the MEC difficult and complicated.

The first problem posed by Turkey after it was granted limited membership of NATO happened in early 1951, when Turkey refused to be put under British command in the British Middle East Headquarters,⁶²⁰ even though at the same time it showed interest in the closest co-ordination and liaison on strategic planning with the British for the defence of the Middle East.⁶²¹ It is worth mentioning here that, in order to attract Turkey to the MEC plan, Bevin, the Foreign Office and the COS conducted a policy that linked the MEC plan to NATO via the NATO Standing Group (the permanent NATO steering body, with the membership of the United States, Great Britain and France).⁶²² Previous historians such as David R. Devereux and Behçet K. Yeşilbursa argue that linking the MEC to NATO was a British strategy to attract the Arab states, and Egypt in

⁶¹⁹ TNA, FO 371/87951/RK 1071/69, 'Turks will more than probably accept offer of military associateship to N.A.T.O. as their first step to their desire for full membership', From Sir N. Charles (Ankara) to Foreign Office, 26 September 1950.

⁶²⁰ See *FRUS, 1951, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1951), p. 31, State Department Draft Minutes of Discussions at the State-Joint Chiefs of Staff Meeting, January 30, 1951, Washington, 6 February 1951.

⁶²¹ See TNA, FO 195/2637/1073/104/50G, From Sir Noel Charles, Ankara to Foreign Office, 14 December 1950. See also enclosed report by the Joint Planning Staff, 'Brief for General Robertson on his visit to Turkey', JP (51) 22 (Final), 9 February 1951 in TNA, FO 371/95284/RK 1073/24/G.

⁶²² See enclosed report entitled 'Discussion with Turkish Officials in Washington on collaboration in N.A.T.O. planning and Egypt and Middle East defence' dated 14 November 1950 in TNA, FO 371/87951/RK 1071/80/G, From Southern Department (Mr H.S. Stephenson) to Western Organisation Department, 20 November 1950. See also TNA, DEFE 4/36, JP (50) 138, Committee Minutes, 13 October 1950; TNA, FO 371/90030/WU 11923/3/G, 'Chiefs of Staffs' views on the ways in which Greece and Turkey could be associated with N.A.T.O. military planning in the Mediterranean', From Ministry of Defence, London to B.J.S.M. [British Joint Services Mission] Washington, 17 October 1950.

particular, to the MEC plan.⁶²³ Since this study analyses this matter from the perspective of Bevin and the other British authorities who refused to accept Turkish applications for membership in NATO, and given that the MEC was used by these British authorities as a means to prevent Turkey from joining NATO, thus it could be true to say that this MEC–NATO *démarche* was also a British strategy to persuade Turkey to accept the MEC plan, since Turkey could regard itself as part of NATO through its membership in the MEC.

The second obstacle to the MEC plan was when Turkey played the “neutrality card” in order to pressure the United States into giving its support for Turkey’s full accession to NATO. Since September 1950 the Turkish President, Mahmut Celâl Bayar, had hinted that Turkey might reinstate its neutral position if its application for membership in NATO was rejected. President Bayar said to the United States Ambassador to Turkey, George Wadsworth, that:

Does your Government not realize that we Turks will consider further deferment of favourable action on our request by the Atlantic Pact powers as a refusal and as unwillingness to accept us as equal partners in meeting jointly any threat of aggression? We have shown our good faith by forthright action towards meeting the Korean crisis. I fear frankly that, if Atlantic Pact Council of Foreign Ministers turns down our request, our morale will be seriously affected.⁶²⁴

⁶²³ See David R. Devereux, *The Formulation of British Defence Policy towards the Middle East, 1948-56* (London: Macmillan Academic and Professional Ltd., 1990), p. 47; see Yeşilbursa, p. 76.

⁶²⁴ *FRUS, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 1312, The Ambassador in Turkey (Wadsworth) to the Secretary of State, Istanbul, 12 September 1950. See also McGhee, *The US-Turkish-*

In February 1951, President Bayar once again stated in stark terms that a pro-US Turkish foreign policy might have to be re-thought if a firm United States guarantee of support was not forthcoming.⁶²⁵ In other words, Turkey threatened to adopt a policy of neutrality. This neutrality threat was taken very seriously by the US State Department and the JCOS because ‘Turkish neutrality “would deny us [the United States] access to the shortest and most expeditious routes to the nerve center of the plague that afflicts us”’.⁶²⁶ As a consequence of the Turkish neutrality threat, the United States JCOS saw that this matter could be prevented by bringing Turkey into NATO, and after that point, the United States JCOS demanded that Turkey be brought into NATO and placed under Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) as opposed to in the MEC–NATO plan under British command in the British Middle East Headquarters.⁶²⁷ It seems that the Turkish neutrality threat had benefitted Turkey in terms of its place in NATO but had adversely affected the British MEC plan.

The third obstacle to the British MEC plan brought about by Turkey, in particular by Prime Minister Adnan Menderes, Foreign Minister Koprulu and the Turkish Chief of Staff

NATO Middle East Connection: How the Truman Doctrine and Turkey’s NATO Entry Contained the Soviets, p. 73.

⁶²⁵ See Smith, *NATO Enlargement during the Cold War: Strategy and System in the Western Alliance*, p. 78. See also *FRUS, 1951, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 1120, National Intelligence Estimate, ‘Turkey’s Position in the East-West Struggle’, Washington, 26 February 1951.

⁶²⁶ NA, RG 218, CCS 092 (8-22-46), sec. 53, JCS 1704/49, “Analysis of Military Aid Program to Turkey”, Report by General Collins, 1 May 1951. Cited from Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, Truman Administration and the Cold War*, p. 425.

⁶²⁷ See *FRUS, 1951, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, pp. 103-104, Memorandum by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs (Berry) to the Secretary of State, ‘Conclusions and Recommendations of the Middle East Chiefs of Mission Conference, Istanbul – Tab B: Summary of the Strategic Implications of the Istanbul Conference Agenda by Admiral Robert B. Carney, Commander in Chief, United States Naval Forces, Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean’, Washington, 15 March 1951. See also *FRUS, 1951, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 1150, Statement of Policy Proposed by the National Security Council, ‘Turkey’, Washington, undated.

General Nuri Yamut, was when they insisted before General Sir Brian Robertson (Commander-in-Chief of the British Middle East Land Forces) that they would desire to join NATO first 'for psychological reasons and because further assistance to Turkey might result' before they would be ready to play their part in the MEC plan.⁶²⁸ It seemed that Turkey had attempted to make a bargain with the British government for full Turkish accession to NATO by using the MEC plan as its pawn. Seemingly, the Turkish attitude further complicated the British MEC efforts, as Bevin and the Foreign Office up to this point still refused to accept Turkey as a member of NATO. As noted by the Head of the offices of Deputy Under-Secretary of State, Pierson Dixon, before General Robertson's visit to Ankara: 'if we want to work towards this solution [associating Turkey with NATO defence planning] we should try to prevent the idea of Turkey joining N.A.T.O. from being further aired between now and the Malta conference.'⁶²⁹

Since there were no new reasons for rejection presented by Bevin and the Foreign Office at this stage, it is possible to say here that their reasons –the Cyprus issue between Turkey and Greece as discussed and analysed in the previous chapter – remained the same. However, unfortunately for Bevin, the Foreign Office and the COS, the insistence of the United States JCOS that Turkey be granted full NATO membership in early 1951 had disturbed their efforts to bring Turkey into the MEC plan. In the midst

⁶²⁸ See TNA, FO 371/95284/RK 1073/30, 'Conversation between Gen. Robertson & Gen. Yamut on Turkish Defence', From Ankara (Sir N. Charles) to Foreign Office, 26 February 1951. See also TNA, FO 371/95285/RK 1073/39/G, 'General Robertson visit to Ankara – Reports on the programme of the visit and the discussions with the President, the Prime Minister, the Chief of Staff and the U.S. General Arnold', From Sir N. Charles (Ankara) to Foreign Office, 26 February 1951.

⁶²⁹ TNA, FO 371/95284/RK 1073/31/G, 'Anglo/US co-operation and Turkish association with N.A.T.O. Defence Schemes', Foreign Office minute by Sir Pierson Dixon, 22 February 1951.

of increasing difficulties in creating the MEC plan because of the attitudes of the Turkish and US governments, Bevin was forced by Prime Minister Attlee to retire in early March 1951 due to his deteriorating health condition. The issues with the United States government that engendered continuing difficulty in creating the MEC plan while Bevin was Foreign Secretary will be touched upon in the next subsection.

The unfavourable attitude of the United States towards the MEC plan

When Bevin told Secretary of State Acheson that the MEC plan was an alternative option for Turkey instead of joining NATO at the tripartite London Meetings of Foreign Ministers in May 1950, he actually revealed the British plan for the defence of the Middle East to the United States. The United States government, however, did not easily give its political and military support to this British regional defence plan.

The first issue that Bevin and the other British authorities had to deal with was a lukewarm response from the US State Department, in particular the Bureau of Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs (NEA) to this regional defence plan. This was due to two reasons. Firstly, as mentioned in previous chapters, the United States did not see the security of the Middle East as its priority, rather seeing it as primarily a British responsibility.⁶³⁰ Secondly, the Bureau of NEA saw this British initiative as untimely because the United States had already committed itself to the security of Europe through NATO and it was impossible to extend its commitments to the Middle East. As remarked by the Ambassador at Large Philip C. Jessup to Acheson: 'We [the

⁶³⁰ See Chapter Three of this dissertation, p. 160.

Subcommittee on Near East] again suggested this was a far-reaching question with implications extending beyond NE [the near east] and that we felt it should be discussed with those responsible for NAT [NATO] negotiations.⁶³¹ The Bureau of NEA also asserted that ‘the area [the Middle East] lacks a power center on the basis of which a pact could be built.’⁶³² As a result, the Bureau of the NEA said ‘that we neither encourage nor discourage the spontaneous creation of any Eastern Mediterranean grouping for defensive purposes.’⁶³³ However, due to the outbreak of hostilities in Korea in June 1950, the United States decided to take a more active role in the Middle East. As noted by the National Security Council (NSC), what was needed was ‘an examination of the whole Middle East problem, covering both political and military aspects, without prejudice as to what nations should provide the forces required in the various eventualities.’⁶³⁴ This new approach to the Middle East was adopted by the United States because it believed ‘the USSR has the military capability to occupy any country on its periphery, to invade Western Europe and the Near and Middle East, to make direct attacks upon the United Kingdom and Alaska.’⁶³⁵

⁶³¹ *FRUS, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 144, The Ambassador at Large (Jessup) to the Secretary of State, London, 3 May 1950.

⁶³² *Ibid.*, p. 156, Report Prepared in the Department of State, ‘Regional Security Arrangements in the Eastern Mediterranean and Near Eastern Areas’, Washington, 11 May 1950. See also Hahn, *The United States, Great Britain, and Egypt, 1945-1956: Strategy and Diplomacy in the Early Cold War* p. 97; Peter L. Hahn, ‘Containment and Egyptian Nationalism: The Unsuccessful Effort to Establish the Middle East Command, 1950-53’, *Diplomatic History*, 11:1 (1987), 23-40 (26).

⁶³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 157-158. See also Roger Bullen, et al. (eds.), *Documents on British Policy Overseas: Series II Volume II, The London Conference, Anglo-American Relations and Cold War Strategy* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1987), p. 262. The full account of this is in Annexes in No. 65.i, Ministerial Talks, UK/US, 7 May 1950. See also Devereux, p. 46; Yeşilbursa, p. 72. For detailed discussion of the United States’ less favourable stance towards the MEC plan, see George C. McGhee, *Envoy to the Middle World: Adventures in Diplomacy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983), pp. 205-212.

⁶³⁴ *FRUS, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 191, Agreed United States–United Kingdom Memorandum of Discussions on the Present World Situation, ‘Actions To Be Recommended’, Washington, 25 July 1950.

⁶³⁵ *FRUS, 1950, National Security Affairs; Foreign Economic Policy*, Vol. I, p. 377, Report by the National Security Council, ‘The Position and Actions of the United States with Respect to Possible Further Soviet Moves in the Light of the Korean Situation’, Washington, 25 August 1950.

The second issue between the British and the United States governments was their differences in strategic preoccupation with the Middle East. The US State Department was disappointed with the British military strategic preoccupation with the Middle East, namely the 'Inner Ring' strategy that envisaged defending only Egypt instead of an 'Outer Ring' strategy, primarily that Iran and Turkey could defend the Middle East as a whole.⁶³⁶ The reason the British Authorities opted for the 'Inner Ring' strategy was because the 'Outer Ring' strategy was logistically too much for Britain, which was still suffering from economic and military weakness.⁶³⁷ Similarly, the United States JCOS, which thought that Iran and Turkey would be the first two countries that would come under attack if the Soviet Union wanted to expand its sphere of influence in the Middle East region, rejected the British position and instead recommended the 'Outer Ring' strategy as a basis for Anglo-American cooperation in the Middle East.⁶³⁸ Britain, accordingly, agreed to review the 'Outer Ring' strategy but due to 'their limited capabilities' asserted that this strategy should adopt concerted measures between Britain and the United States to defend the Middle East efficiently.⁶³⁹

⁶³⁶ See *FRUS, 1950, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 190, Agreed United States–United Kingdom Memorandum of Discussions on the Present World Situation, 'U.S./U.K. Discussions on Present World Situation' – Middle East, Washington, 25 July 1950. See also Toru Onozawa, 'Formation of American Regional Policy for the Middle East, 1950-1952', *Diplomatic History*, 29:1 (2005), 117-148 (p. 123). For further discussion and analysis on the development of the British military strategy see Chapter 6 in Michael J. Cohen, *Fighting World War Three from the Middle East, 1945-1954* (London: Frank Cass, 1997); Ritchie Owendale, *Britain, the United States, and the Transfer of Power in the Middle East, 1945-1962* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1996), pp. 33-35; Devereux, pp. 39-42.

⁶³⁷ *Ibid.* See also Hahn, *The United States, Great Britain, and Egypt, 1945-1956: Strategy and Diplomacy in the Early Cold War*, p. 103; Zach Levey, 'Britain's Middle East Strategy 1950-52: General Brian Robertson and the 'Small' Arab States', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 40:2 (2004), 58-79 (60).

⁶³⁸ See *Ibid.*, pp. 190-191.

⁶³⁹ See *Ibid.*, pp. 217-221, Memorandum by the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs (McGhee) to the Ambassador at Large (Jessup), 'British Review of Middle East Policy and Strategy', Washington, 19 October 1950.

The third issue that prevented arrangements for the MEC from going smoothly was when the British recommendation for Anglo-American cooperation in the Middle East proved hard to put into effect. This was because the United States JCOS 'are opposed to any measures which would commit or tend to commit U.S. forces to the Middle East in the event of global war.'⁶⁴⁰ They also 'consider[ed] that the Middle East is a British responsibility in case of a hot war.'⁶⁴¹ As a result, until the end of 1950, the United States government was still hesitant about providing military assistance to the MEC plan. As expected, the 'Outer Ring' strategy proved to be too costly for Britain. According to Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs McGhee, 'the UK, which has primary responsibility for the defense of the area, lacks both manpower and resources to successfully defend the area and has no plans for defense of the Saudi Arabian oil fields and the Dhahran Air Base.'⁶⁴² Since McGhee had a soft spot for the British and their MEC plan,⁶⁴³ he then tried to find a solution to the lack of military support given to the MEC plan by the United States government thus far. He proposed to Acheson and the United States JCOS a combined US-UK command structure which would stimulate basic cooperation among the states of the area because it 'would include the naming of a British Commanding Officer, the naming of a US Deputy Commander and, if possible, the naming of US country advisers or commanders for the combined UK-US structures in Greece, Turkey, Iran and Saudi

⁶⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 218. See also *FRUS, 1950, Western Europe*, Vol. III, pp. 1686-1687, Approved Summary of Conclusions and Agreements Reached at a Meeting of the Chiefs of Staff of the United States and United Kingdom, Washington, 23 October 1950.

⁶⁴¹ *FRUS, 1950, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 1693, United States Minutes of the United States–United Kingdom Political-Military Conversations, Washington, 26 October 1950.

⁶⁴² *FRUS, 1951, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 4, Memorandum by the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs (McGhee) to the Secretary of State, 'Proposed US Political and Military Actions Required to Assist the Countries of the Middle East in the Defense of the Area Against Aggression', Washington, 27 December 1950.

⁶⁴³ Devereux, p. 48.

Arabia.⁶⁴⁴ Obviously, McGhee was suggesting an immediate action that could be taken by the United States to defend the Middle East was to provide full political and military support for the British MEC plan.⁶⁴⁵ McGhee also added that the US State Department had 'serious doubts about the ability of the U.K. to defend them [the Middle East]' because 'it is very difficult for them [the British] to get cooperation of the Arab States' in the midst of increasingly strong nationalist sentiments, particularly in Egypt.⁶⁴⁶ Acheson warmly welcomed McGhee's proposal,⁶⁴⁷ but the United States JCOS remained 'unalterably opposed to putting forces' in the Middle East because they saw it as 'a job which the U.K. and the Commonwealth have got to do.'⁶⁴⁸

The associate membership of Turkey, that allowed it to have coordination on strategic military planning in the Mediterranean area, brought about the fourth issue between the United States and British governments that further complicated the British MEC efforts. The issue appeared when the United States JCOS did not agree with the British preference for placing Turkey under General Robertson in the British Headquarters Middle East Command. This was interpreted by the British COS as evidence that 'the

⁶⁴⁴ *FRUS, 1951, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 6, Memorandum by the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs (McGhee) to the Secretary of State, 'Proposed US Political and Military Actions Required to Assist the Countries of the Middle East in the Defense of the Area Against Aggression', Washington, 27 December 1950; *FRUS, 1951, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 29, State Department Draft Minutes of Discussions at the State-Joint Chiefs of Staff Meeting, January 30, 1951, Washington, 6 February 1951.

⁶⁴⁵ For further documentation regarding McGhee's recommendation for the United States' support for the MEC plan, see *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7, Paper Drafted in the Department of State, 'Re-Evaluation of US Plans for the Middle East', Washington, undated; see *Ibid.*, pp. 24-26, Paper Drafted in the Bureau of Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs, 'The Middle East', Washington, undated. See also Hahn, 'Containment and Egyptian Nationalism: The Unsuccessful Effort to Establish the Middle East Command, 1950-53', p. 28.

⁶⁴⁶ *FRUS, 1951, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, pp. 30-31, State Department Draft Minutes of Discussions at the State-Joint Chiefs of Staff Meeting, January 30, 1951, Washington, 6 February 1951.

⁶⁴⁷ See Acheson, pp. 562-563.

⁶⁴⁸ *FRUS, 1951, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 33, State Department Draft Minutes of Discussions at the State-Joint Chiefs of Staff Meeting, January 30, 1951, Washington, 6 February 1951.

U.S. Military mission, of which the U.S. Ambassador is the nominal head, nourished the ambition of taking over the command.⁶⁴⁹ This matter became more apparent when the United States 1st Chairman of the JCOS, General Omar Bradley, argued that Turkey itself was not willing to accept the British MEC plan or place its forces under British command in the British Middle East Headquarters. Admiral Sherman reckoned that NATO command under Admiral Carney, the United States Sixth Fleet Commander and Commander of NATO's Southern Flank, would be more suitable for Turkey and its security partner, Greece.⁶⁵⁰ To make matters worse, the US State Department stressed that the British would only get the United States' full cooperation in planning for Middle East defence *after* their differences over the command structure were resolved.⁶⁵¹ It is fair to say here that, like Turkey, the US government also issued an ultimatum that caused the British MEC efforts to become more difficult. If Turkey, which associated with NATO strategic military planning in the Mediterranean area, was placed under the British Headquarters Middle East Command it would become easier for Bevin and the other British authorities to persuade Turkey to join the MEC plan, as this British command would become the Headquarters of the MEC after it was established. Unfortunately, neither the United States nor Turkey agreed to or accepted Turkey being placed under British command.

The fifth issue that made the situation more difficult for the British MEC plan was when, in early 1951, the United States JCOS had come to the decision to grant full NATO

⁶⁴⁹ TNA, FO 371/95285/RK 1073/39/G, 'General Robertson visit to Ankara – Reports on the programme of the visit and the discussions with the President, the Prime Minister, the Chief of Staff and the U.S. General Arnold', From Sir N. Charles (Ankara) to Foreign Office, 26 February 1951.

⁶⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 32 & p. 40.

⁶⁵¹ TNA, FO 371/95284/RK 1073/31/G, Minute by Sir Nicolas J.A. Cheetham (Head of the Southern Department), 1 March 1951.

membership to Turkey following its neutrality threat. The United States JCOS believed the best solution to avoid Turkish neutrality, and also the most desirable form of reciprocal security arrangement, was to include Turkey in NATO as a full member.⁶⁵² As noted by the United States JCOS, 'if an offer [of full NATO membership] is not made soon, there is reason to believe that Turkey will veer towards a policy of neutralism.'⁶⁵³ Apart from the Turkish threat of neutrality, the US State Department asserted that 'Congress might more readily accept extension of existing N.A.T.O. umbrella than direct United States guarantees to Turkey and Greece which "would set a new pattern".'⁶⁵⁴ Therefore, these US authorities wished to place Turkey, together with Greece, under Admiral Carney's command of NATO's Southern Flank.

However Bevin, the Foreign Office and the COS, in particular General Robertson, did not agree with the United States authorities' decision to bring Turkey and Greece into NATO and place them under Admiral Carney's command of NATO's Southern Flank. Historians such as Behçet K. Yeşilbursa and David R. Devereux argue that the reason for Bevin and Robertson's hostility to Admiral Sherman's plan was that they instead wished to include Turkey in their MEC plan due to the country's manpower resources and strategic position in the Middle East.⁶⁵⁵ From the point of view of this study, another reason Bevin and the other British authorities stood firm against the inclusion of Turkey and Greece in NATO was because they believed these two countries would be unable to

⁶⁵² *FRUS, 1951, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 1150, Statement of Policy Proposed by the National Security Council, 'Turkey', Washington, undated.

⁶⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 52, Agreed Conclusions and Recommendations of the Conference of Middle Eastern Chiefs of Mission, Istanbul, February 14-21, 1951, 'I. Strategic Interests and Roles of the United States and the United Kingdom in the Middle East, and the Problem of Achieving more Positive Cooperation from the Area in Support of United States Objectives', Istanbul, undated.

⁶⁵⁴ TNA, FO 371/95285/RK 1073/38, 'United States attitude towards Turkey', From Washington to Foreign Office, 2 March 1951.

⁶⁵⁵ See Yeşilbursa, p. 79; see Devereux, p. 49.

cooperate harmoniously in NATO's Southern Flank due to the Cyprus issue. This matter was axiomatic on many occasions. Firstly, as already mentioned in previous chapters, Turkey told the British that Greece refused to cooperate with them, meaning Turkey was relieved when the NAC had not yet offered the same associate membership to Greece.⁶⁵⁶ Secondly, during the meetings between the British COS and the United States JCOS in October 1950 about the cooperation of Turkey and Greece in NATO defence planning in the Mediterranean area, the Cyprus issue was mentioned twice. In short, both the British and US parties agreed that the Cyprus issue, if being agitated by Greece, could disturb the cooperation of these two associate membership countries in the Mediterranean.⁶⁵⁷ Thirdly, at the meeting between the United States JCOS and McGhee in early 1951, General Bradley also remarked on the same problem between Turkey and Greece as follows:

GENERAL BRADLEY: We have, of course, had discussions with the U.K. Chiefs on those problems and have been trying to get together with them on our plans for the area. We also called in representatives from Greece, Turkey, and Iran in an effort to achieve coordination with these countries first. It is very difficult to persuade the Turks to engage in any

⁶⁵⁶ See TNA, FO 195/2637/1073/65/50G, From Sir Noel Charles, Ankara to Foreign Office, 26 September 1950. See TNA, FO 371/87951/RK 1071/70, 'The Turkish Government had intended re-applying for full N.A.T.O. membership in four months time but Sir N. Charles has warned them not to act precipitately', From Ankara (Sir N. Charles) to Foreign Office, 26 September 1950. See also Chapter Three of this dissertation, p. 207.

⁶⁵⁷ See *FRUS, 1950, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 1688, Approved Summary of Conclusions and Agreements Reached at a Meeting of the Chiefs of Staff of the United States and United Kingdom, 'Item 5', Washington, 23 October 1950. See *FRUS, 1950, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 1691, United States Minutes of the United States–United Kingdom Political-Military Conversations, '3. Cyprus', Washington, 26 October 1950. See also Chapter Three of this dissertation, pp. 207-209.

planning with Greece and Iran. The Turks have a very simple mobilization plan—everyone turns out to fight and that is all the plan amounts to.⁶⁵⁸

Fourthly, in the same meeting, when the issue of the Turkish request for membership of NATO was brought up, McGhee stated that ‘it was thought that an extension of NATO to this area would place excessive requirements and organisational problems on NATO.’⁶⁵⁹ Given that McGhee was an outspokenly pro-British official, it could be true to say that his comment on the ‘organizational problems on NATO’ might have referred to the same concern of British officials about the disadvantages that Greece and Turkey might have brought to NATO as a result of their strained relationship over the future of Cyprus. When combined with the reasons for Britain’s rejection of Turkey’s second application for membership; the fact that Turkey would not be disappointed if Greece were not invited to join NATO; and the agreement between the British COS and the United States JCOS that the Cyprus issue would hamper these countries’ cooperation in NATO defence planning in the Mediterranean, - it seems the Cyprus problem was the most plausible reason why Bevin, the Foreign Office and the COS insisted on bringing Greece and Turkey into the MEC plan instead of NATO.

It is imperative to acknowledge here that, at this stage, Bevin and the other British authorities hadn’t seriously considered including Greece in the MEC plan, as only Turkey was confirmed to be included.⁶⁶⁰ It should be noted here that when the NAC decided to grant limited membership to Turkey, it was widely agreed that ‘what was done for

⁶⁵⁸ *FRUS, 1951, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 31, State Department Draft Minutes of Discussions at the State-Joint Chiefs of Staff Meeting, January 30, 1951, Washington, 6 February 1951.

⁶⁵⁹ *FRUS, 1951, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 38.

⁶⁶⁰ See Chapter Three of this dissertation, pp. 181-183.

Turkey must also be done for Greece, even though the latter had made no similar request [for membership of NATO].⁶⁶¹ This matter might have put pressure on the British authorities not to exclude Greece if they were determined to bring Turkey into the MEC plan. If Bevin, the Foreign Office and the COS believed the Cyprus issue between Turkey and Greece would render these countries' cooperation ineffective and therefore justify their decision to keep these countries out of NATO, therefore it is interesting to question 'what is the difference between Turkey and Greece being part of NATO's Southern Flank and Turkey and Greece being part of the MEC plan,' since the same problem would surely occur in the MEC.

One can argue that the expected participation of many other countries in the MEC, such as Egypt, Israel, Britain and the United States, was the distinctive factor that would differentiate this regional defence pact from NATO's Southern Flank that consisted only of Greece and Turkey, and later Yugoslavia.⁶⁶² Greece refused to engage in any planning with Turkey in a small system that only involved these two countries – like that of NATO's Southern Flank – unless they were part of a larger system which included Britain, France, the United States and Italy.⁶⁶³ It could be true to say that, based on Greece's attitude, Bevin and the other British authorities might have perceived that Greece and Turkey could still cooperate in the MEC plan in spite of the Cyprus issue

⁶⁶¹ TNA, FO 195/2637, From New York (Sir G. Jebb, United Kingdom Delegation to United Nations) to Foreign Office, 'Memorandum No. 41 of the 14th September from the United Kingdom Deputy on the North Atlantic Council', 17 September 1950.

⁶⁶² For further discussion of the countries involved in NATO's Southern Flank, see Chourchoulis, *The Southern Flank of NATO, 1951-1959: Military Strategy or Political Stabilization*, pp. 48-60.

⁶⁶³ See TNA, FO 371/87951/RK 1071/70, 'The Turkish Government had intended re-applying for full N.A.T.O. membership in four months time but Sir N. Charles has warned them not to act precipitately', From Ankara (Sir N. Charles) to Foreign Office, 26 September 1950. See also TNA, FO 195/2637/1073/65/50G, From Sir Noel Charles, Ankara to Foreign Office, 26 September 1950.

because this regional defence plan would not only consist of the two countries, hence their decision to let Greece to join the MEC together with Turkey.

To sum up, the Cyprus issue was one of the apparent reasons why Bevin, the Foreign Office and the COS remained reluctant to grant full NATO membership for Greece and Turkey. It seems that Bevin believed that the hostile Greco-Turkish relationship over Cyprus would become 'a thorn in the flesh' in their collaboration within the Southern Flank of NATO. Such animosity would cause the Southern Flank to become unstable and ineffective in safeguarding the Mediterranean area. Yet the Turkish and United States governments preferred for Turkey to join NATO, a matter which hindered smooth arrangements in creating the British MEC plan. Nevertheless Bevin, the Foreign Office and the COS stood firm in their position - that the best place for Greece and Turkey was not NATO's Southern Flank but the British MEC plan. After Bevin left office, the new Foreign Secretary Morrison agreed to accept full Greek and Turkish accession to NATO. Such a *démarche* intended to obtain Turkish and American cooperation for formulating the British MEC plan. Therefore, in the historiography of the admission of Greece and Turkey to NATO, the MEC plan is seen by previous historians as a significant factor.⁶⁶⁴ Morrison's role in this admission is given less attention and this internal dynamic will be analysed in the next section.

⁶⁶⁴ For this literature, see the introduction of this dissertation, pp. 22-23.

Foreign Secretary Morrison and the continuous troubles in forming the MEC, March 1951

- October 1951: Towards the full accession of Greece and Turkey to NATO

According to historian John W. Young, it is generally accepted that Morrison was not a favourite choice for replacing Bevin due to his lack of experience in foreign affairs.⁶⁶⁵

This was because he had spent most of his political career in domestic affairs, for instance as Home Secretary in Churchill's Inner War Cabinet.⁶⁶⁶ He was then appointed Leader of the House of Commons and Deputy Prime Minister in Attlee's governments of 1945 to March 1951. With Morrison's substantial experience in domestic affairs, it is fair to say that Morrison was not a favourite to be named as Bevin's successor. It is interesting to ask here why Morrison was appointed Foreign Secretary if he was unsuitable for the position. It should be noted that Morrison had been involved in some foreign affairs in 1946 in regards to the issue of Palestine in which he, together with the United States ambassador Henry F. Grady, proposed 'The Morrison Plan'.⁶⁶⁷ In 1949 he was also appointed the leader of the Labour delegation to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.⁶⁶⁸ Nevertheless, these experiences were insufficient for Morrison to be as competent as Bevin in dealing with foreign affairs.

⁶⁶⁵ See John W. Young, *Britain, France and the Unity of Europe 1945-51* (Great Britain: Leicester University Press, 1984), p. 177.

⁶⁶⁶ David Howell, 'Morrison, Herbert Stanley, Baron Morrison of Lambeth (1888-1956)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edition, January 2011 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com.wam.leeds.ac.uk/view/article/35121>, accessed 31 January 2016], 1-15 (p. 7).

⁶⁶⁷ See Howard M. Sachar, *Europe Leaves the Middle East, 1936-1954* (London: Allen Lane, 1974), pp. 474-485. For further discussion about 'The Morrison Plan', see Zachary Karabell, 'Morrison-Grady Plan (1946)', in *Encyclopaedia of the Modern Middle East and North Africa* <<http://www.encyclopedia.com>> [accessed 22 May 2016].

⁶⁶⁸ Avi Shlaim, et al., *British Foreign Secretaries since 1945* (London, David & Charles Ltd., 1977), p. 71.

In Morrison's autobiography, he noted that Attlee told him about the fact that his appointment to the Foreign Office was merely "the inevitable choice" due to his seniority within the Labour government when compared to other candidates, such as trade-unionist James Griffiths and Hector McNeil, Secretary of State for Scotland, who were recommended by Bevin to be his successor but were regarded as too young.⁶⁶⁹ Senior Cabinet members also considered that Kenneth Younger, the Minister of State at the Foreign Office and the deputy to the Foreign Secretary, might have succeeded Bevin as Foreign Secretary, but his name was dismissed because they claimed that his status as junior minister meant he lacked maturity and judgement.⁶⁷⁰ Although Morrison said in his autobiography that he did not know what was in Attlee's mind, he himself felt that Attlee might have preferred Griffiths,⁶⁷¹ which indirectly implies that the reason Attlee was hesitant in appointing him as Foreign Secretary was because he did not have a clear grasp of foreign affairs compared to Griffiths, who was a highly competent Secretary of State at the Colonial Office where he did well for over a year.⁶⁷²

Before this section continues the discussion of how Morrison dealt with the continuous difficulties that obstructed the MEC, it is worth first discussing here how differently Morrison and Bevin were in conducting the Foreign Office. This matter sheds light on

⁶⁶⁹ See Herbert Morrison, *Herbert Morrison: An Autobiography by Lord Morrison of Lambeth* (London: Odhams Press Limited, 1960), pp. 273-274. [hereafter Morrison's autobiography]. See also Francis Williams, *A Prime Minister Remembers: The War and Post-War Memoirs of The Rt Hon. Earl Attlee – Based on his Private Papers and on a Series of Recorded Conversations* (London: Heinemann, 1950), p. 243.

⁶⁷⁰ See Ben Pimlott (ed.), *The Political Diary of Hugh Dalton 1918-40, 1945-60* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1986), pp. 501-502 & pp. 505-506. [hereafter Dalton's political diary].

⁶⁷¹ Morrison's autobiography, p. 274.

⁶⁷² See Dalton's memoirs, p. 359. See also Hugh Dalton diaries, 19 and 20 February 1951 (Dalton papers, I/39, British Library of Political and Economic Science). [hereafter Dalton's diary].

the internal dynamic thesis argued by this study regarding the issue of full admission of Greece and Turkey into NATO.

Criticism of Morrison's suitability as Foreign Secretary

The criticism that Morrison was not as competent as Bevin in handling foreign affairs was voiced not only by the Opposition and the Press, but also by Morrison's colleagues in the Labour Party and his own office. Historians such as David R. Devereux and Kenneth O. Morgan argue that Morrison was not at home in the Foreign Office in the same way that Bevin had been and he was generally regarded as 'a poor Foreign Secretary.'⁶⁷³ These historians, however, did not see this matter as an important factor that had led Morrison to become a catalyst for the change of Britain's position over full Greek and Turkish NATO membership. To elucidate this internal dynamic thesis, this subtopic will analyse first Morrison's lack of characteristics to make a good Foreign Secretary. This study by no means suggests that Morrison was a weak minister, but his lack of experience in foreign affairs seems to suggest that he was incapable of handling foreign affairs efficiently.

The first and the foremost element of this was Morrison's ignorance about foreign affairs. As noted by Sir Roderick E. Barclay, Principal Private Secretary to the Foreign Secretary who worked for both Bevin and Morrison, 'one unexpected complication was Morrison's extraordinary ignorance of most of the Foreign Office problems of the

⁶⁷³ Devereux, p. 101. See also Morgan, pp. 464-465.

moment.⁶⁷⁴ Similarly, Kenneth Younger, the Minister of State at the Foreign Office and deputy to both Bevin and Morrison, professed in his diary that 'he [Morrison] is probably more ignorant of foreign affairs than any other member of the Cabinet.'⁶⁷⁵ Barclay also criticised Morrison for his lack not only of background knowledge but for his inability to comprehend the essentials of the problems regarding foreign affairs, even though he had been supplied with all important Foreign Office telegrams and despatches before his appointment as Foreign Secretary due to his capacity as a senior Cabinet Minister.⁶⁷⁶

The second characteristic of Morrison that was incomparable to his predecessor Bevin was his passion, commitment and devotion as Foreign Secretary. Morrison's lack of enthusiasm in foreign affairs was evident on many occasions. For instance, he continually asked his Private Secretary Barclay to reduce the volume of reading material that went to him; he constantly suggested offloading some of the work onto the junior ministers; he went on holiday at the time the Foreign Office needed him most; and, being parochial, he kept occupying himself with the matter of the Festival of Britain rather than foreign affairs.⁶⁷⁷ As mentioned above, Morrison had every opportunity to keep himself informed but he still failed to have a full grasp of foreign affairs before he became Foreign Secretary. This matter also substantiates the notion that Morrison was uninterested in foreign affairs – although he did say in his autobiography that he had a

⁶⁷⁴ Sir Roderick E. Barclay, *Ernest Bevin and the Foreign Office* (London: Great White End, Latimer, 1975), p. 96.

⁶⁷⁵ Geoffrey Warner, *In the Midst of Events: The Foreign Office diaries and papers of Kenneth Younger, February 1950-October 1951* (Abingdon: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2005), p. 68. [hereafter Younger's Foreign Office diaries]. See also Kenneth Younger, transcript interview, p. 72.

⁶⁷⁶ See Barclay, p. 96.

⁶⁷⁷ See *Ibid.*, pp. 96-99; see Jebb's memoirs, p. 252; see Acheson, p. 563.

great interest in foreign affairs and the post of Foreign Secretary would bring balance to his experience of domestic administration.⁶⁷⁸ Thus, the rumours that Morrison was attracted to the post of Foreign Secretary due to his ambition to become Prime Minister, even though the position was not easily suited to his expertise and skills,⁶⁷⁹ seems plausible. Bevin, in contrast, had devoted his life to his job as Foreign Secretary. He always came into the office on Saturday and 'normally stayed till 2 or 3 o'clock, foregoing lunch.'⁶⁸⁰ The fact that Bevin was forced to retire and he was upset by this dismissal further proved his passion for his job. As commented by one of his staff, 'he [Bevin] wanted to die in the Foreign Office.'⁶⁸¹

The third criticism of Morrison was his lack of skills to run the Foreign Office and his lack of aptitude for managing foreign affairs. For example, he was slow in making decisions on urgent matters, he cared little about developing a long term policy and strategy and he failed to perform strongly in the House of Commons, where he gave ineffective concluding speeches and failed to give a clear picture of the policy the British government was following.⁶⁸² In an interview with Barclay that was conducted by Morrison's biographers, Barclay said: 'With Bevin you just got a simple yes to one alternative and no to the others.'⁶⁸³ In addition, Morrison was also exposed to excessive criticism from middle-class, university-trained observers from among the Opposition on the grounds that he pronounced 'Tigris' as rhyming with 'pig' and 'Euphrates' as 'You

⁶⁷⁸ See Morrison's autobiography, p. 273.

⁶⁷⁹ See Shlaim, p. 70; Barclay, p. 106.

⁶⁸⁰ Ibid., 44. Pierson Dixon, Head of the offices of Deputy Under-Secretary of State also noted in his diary that he too missed lunch - at least on the first Saturdays after Bevin's arrival at the Foreign Office in 1945. See Piers Dixon, *Double Diploma: The Life of Sir Pierson Dixon* (London: Hutchinson, 1968), p. 23.

⁶⁸¹ Dalton's memoirs, p. 359.

⁶⁸² See Ibid., p. 361; see Barclay, pp. 96-97; see Jebb's memoirs, p. 252.

⁶⁸³ Interview, Sir Roderick Barclay. Cited in Bernard Donoughue and George W. Jones, *Herbert Morrison: Portrait of a Politician* (London: A Phoenix Press Paperback, 2001), p. 513.

Frates' in the House of Commons.⁶⁸⁴ This was because to pronounce these words 'in that way indicates not only lack of education, but also the fact that one has never heard the Middle East discussed by men of experience',⁶⁸⁵ Labour Party politician Sir Harold Nicolson said in his published diary. According to Dalton, someone who worked with both Bevin and Morrison said 'Ernie can't pronounce the names either. But he does know where the places are.'⁶⁸⁶

With Morrison's lack of characteristics to make him an effective Foreign Secretary, it could be true to say here that complicated foreign affairs such as Korea, Anglo-Soviet relations, Egypt, German rearmament and Iran were way too much for him to handle so early in his term as Foreign Secretary. This scarcity of qualities shaped Morrison's conduct when he was dealing with the troubles posed by the Egyptian, Turkish and the United States governments that slowed the MEC efforts down. Since most historians - Behçet K. Yeşilbursa to name just one - argue that there was a linkage between Turkey (and Greece)'s participation in the British MEC plan and its admission to NATO, this study believes that there was also a linkage between Morrison's ineptitude in handling the challenges posed by those aforementioned governments regarding the MEC plan and his eventual decision to grant full NATO membership for Greece and Turkey. This matter will be analysed in the next subtopic.

⁶⁸⁴ See *Hansard*, 30 July 1951, Vol. 491, cc962-6, pp. 965-966.

⁶⁸⁵ Nigel Nicolson (ed.), *Harold Nicolson: Volume III of the Diaries and Letters, 1945-1962* (London: Collins, 1968), pp. 192-193.

⁶⁸⁶ Dalton's memoirs, p. 361.

*The link between Morrison's ineptitude in handling difficulties in MEC efforts and Turkey
(and Greece)'s full admission into NATO*

When Morrison came to the Foreign Office in March 1951, three prospective members of MEC - Egypt, Turkey and the United States – continually caused problems that hindered smooth arrangements for this British-led regional defence plan. The first two governments, for instance, refused to accept the MEC as long as the British did not comply with their demands, namely the Suez Canal Zone and the Sudanese issue for Egypt and Turkey's full membership in NATO. As for the United States government, it was still hesitant in providing political and military support to the MEC plan. It is worth noting here that Morrison's new decision to support the full admission of Greece and Turkey into NATO was made around two months after he came to the Foreign Office - he started to believe that Britain should acquiesce to the Turkish and the United States' pressure regarding this issue on 1 May 1951 in order to help the MEC plan.

To expound the link between Morrison's new decision on Turkish (and Greek) membership in NATO and his lack of experience in foreign affairs when compared to Bevin, this discussion is focused on two main events that occurred simultaneously between March 1951 and May 1951: first, Turkey's determination to obtain full membership in NATO and the United States' strong support for them; and secondly, Morrison's mismanagement of the problems with the Egyptian government. This study believes that Morrison's lack of experience in dealing with the Anglo-Egyptian dispute, combined with his mishandling of the issue regarding the Iranian oilfields, caused the Egyptian government to become more resolute in rejecting the MEC plan. This caused

British efforts to formulate the MEC plan with Egypt to reach an impasse. To help the MEC plan, Morrison had little choice but to get help from Turkey and the United States in convincing Egypt to accept the MEC plan, hence his decision to agree to full Turkish membership in NATO.

Situation I: Turkish and American pressure for full Turkish accession to NATO

To start the discussion, this subtopic touches first upon how Turkey had come to a decision to press for full membership of NATO, even though it had already been granted NATO associate membership in September 1950. Fundamentally, this was because Turkey was concerned with the delay in associating Turkey with Western defence planning in the Mediterranean area. This delay was due to the clash of opinion between the British COS, General Robertson and the United States JCOS, and Admiral Carney over which command would best suit Turkey. It is worth mentioning here that this dispute had emerged between these two officials since the Malta meetings that were held between 22 and 24 January 1951. This issue also complicated British efforts to bring Turkey into the MEC plan as discussed earlier in Bevin's section.⁶⁸⁷

When General Robertson and Admiral Carney met again in the Malta meetings between 12 and 13 March 1951 – three days after Morrison was appointed as Foreign Secretary – to discuss the defence possibilities of the Middle East countries, these two representatives still failed to reach an understanding over their differences of opinion over whether Turkey should be put under General Robertson in the Middle East or

⁶⁸⁷ See this chapter, pp. 235-236.

under Admiral Carney in the Mediterranean. Accordingly, no planning for the cooperation of Greece and Turkey in the Mediterranean area could be set up as long as both the British and the United States governments had not worked out their differences regarding this command issue.⁶⁸⁸

Given that the initiative for associating Turkey in NATO defence planning in the Mediterranean was progressing slowly, and the fact that neither the Turkish nor Greek representatives were invited to participate in the Malta meeting in March 1951, Turkey therefore became anxious and began to doubt the sincerity of the Western powers in granting it associate membership in NATO. The Turkish Ambassador to the UK, Açıkalın, asserted that it was a very long delay in fitting Turkey into the NATO planning organisation.⁶⁸⁹ Turkey's uneasy feeling regarding this delay became even more evident when Açıkalın repeatedly pressed the British government regarding what further steps were contemplated to associate Turkey with NATO planning for the defence of the Mediterranean area.⁶⁹⁰ To calm Açıkalın, Morrison, as advised by the Foreign Office, expressed his regret at the delay which had taken place in implementing the decision of the NAC in September 1950 to associate Turkey with the NATO planning, and explained

⁶⁸⁸ See TNA, DEFE 5/29, COS (51) 167, Cabinet Memoranda, 28 March 1951. See also TNA, FO 371/95286/RK 1073/60/G, 'Association of Turkey with N.A.T.O. defence planning, liaison between Turkish HQ and British HQ Middle East', Notes for discussion with the Turkish Ambassador of the Question of Turkish participation in Mediterranean and Middle East defence planning by Pierson Dixon to Herbert Morrison, 11 April 1951. See also Yeşilbursa, p. 79.

⁶⁸⁹ See TNA, FO 371/95285/RK 1073/56, 'Conversation between Turkish Ambassador and Sir A. Noble – Military talks in Ankara', Conversation with Turkish Ambassador, 20 March 1951. For further discussion about Turkey's concern over this delay, see Mustafa Bilgin, *Britain and Turkey in the Middle East: Politics and Influence in the Early Cold War Era* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2008), pp. 153-154.

⁶⁹⁰ See TNA, FO 371/96539/WU 11923/14/G, 'Standing Group discussions with Greece & Turkey', Reports from Chiefs of Staff Committee, 21 March 1951; see TNA, FO 371/95285/RK 1073/54, 'Conversation between Sir W. Strang and the Turkish Ambassador who raised the question of Turkey's place in Middle east defence planning', Conversation between Turkish Ambassador and Sir William Strang, 28 March 1951.

how this had been held up pending the outcome of the US/UK talks in Malta on Middle East strategy and also owing to the delay in the appointment of a Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean.⁶⁹¹

Nevertheless, Turkey lost its patience regarding this delay and decided to press for full NATO membership instead in order to secure its participation in Western defence planning. Subsequently, the Turkish Foreign Minister Koprulu made a new appeal for the admission of Turkey into NATO on 2 April 1951. Koprulu said that Turkey's efforts to secure admission had not been made in the interests of its own security alone, but the Turkish government had also in mind the contribution which Turkey could make to the security of the rest of the world. Koprulu also expressed his regret towards those members of NATO who rejected the Turkish application, arguing these countries 'failed to understand the needs of the hour.'⁶⁹² This matter was explicit evidence of the bitterness of Turkey over the delay in joining NATO defence planning in the Mediterranean area. Koprulu's criticism also indicated that Turkey was actually aware that 'Britain and France, with some support from the Scandinavians, are playing the principal part in opposing the admission of Turkey, whereas American official opinion is becoming increasingly favourable towards it.'⁶⁹³ It seemed that Turkey wanted to put more pressure on the British government, since full political support from the United States government was already forthcoming.

⁶⁹¹ TNA, FO 371/95286/RK 1073/60/G, 'Conversation between M. Açıkalın and Mr Morrison – association of Turkey with N.A.T.O. defence planning, liaison between Turkish HQ and British HQ Middle East', Conversation with Turkish Ambassador, 12 April 1951. See also Bilgin, p. 157.

⁶⁹² TNA, FO 371/96539/WU 11923/17, 'Admission of Turkey into the Atlantic Pact', From Mr. David Scott Fox (Ankara) to Herbert Morrison (Foreign Office), 10 April 1951.

⁶⁹³ *Ibid.*

This new Turkish effort for full admission into NATO indicated that the chances for bringing Turkey into the MEC plan became even more remote. Furthermore, this new Turkish application for full membership in NATO was made against the backdrop of booming American support for full Greek and Turkish membership in NATO. This issue was evident in reports by the British Embassy in Washington to the Foreign Office between March 1951 and April 1951. The reports explained that Congress and the American public had come to hold the same opinion as the United States JCOS and the US State Department – that Greece and Turkey should be brought directly into NATO instead of being linked to NATO through the British MEC plan.⁶⁹⁴ Senator Cain, for instance, argued that:

You do not have to be a soldier to know the great value which would accrue to freedom within the United States by including these countries, Spain, Turkey, Greece, and Yugoslavia.⁶⁹⁵

Similar unanimity was shown by those officers now on the retired list. For example, Governor Dewey stated that:

⁶⁹⁴ See TNA, FO 371/95002/R 1071/6, 'Speculation in the American press about the extension of some further United States guarantee to Turkey and Greece', British Embassy Washington (Mr B.A.B Burrows) to Southern Department of Foreign Office (Nicholas John Alexander Cheetham, Head of the Southern Department), 21 March 1951; see TNA, FO 371/95002/R 1071/8, 'Transmits Congressional Record of 21st March and report of Senate Committees on Foreign Affairs and Armed Services – comments on indications that U.S.A desire Turkey and Greece to be included in NATO planning', British Embassy Washington (Mr B.A.B Burrows) to Southern Department of Foreign Office (N.J.A. Cheetham), 2 April 1951; see TNA, FO 371/95002/R 1071/9, 'Mr Finletter, U.S. Secretary for Air strongly in favour of extension of NATO to include Turkey and Greece (conversation with Earl Jellicoe)', British Embassy Washington (Mr B.A.B Burrows) to Southern Department of Foreign Office (N.J.A. Cheetham), 7 April 1951.

⁶⁹⁵ The Congressional Record–Senate, Vol. 97, No. 51, Washington, Wednesday, March 21, 1951, p. 2843, enclosed in TNA, FO 371/95002/R 1071/8, 'Transmits Congressional Record of 21st March and report of Senate Committees on Foreign Affairs and Armed Services – comments on indications that U.S.A desire Turkey and Greece to be included in NATO planning', British Embassy Washington (Mr B.A.B Burrows) to Southern Department of Foreign Office (N.J.A. Cheetham), 2 April 1951.

I should like to say also that that answer would apply to Yugoslavia, and I should like to see Greece and Turkey brought into the North Atlantic Treaty at the earliest possible moment consistent with the diplomatic problem involved.⁶⁹⁶

The Foreign Office however, in particular the Head of the Southern Department Sir Nicholas John Alexander Cheetham, firmly asserted that the Foreign Office at present did not favour the admission of Greece and Turkey into NATO. The Foreign Office believed Greek and Turkish membership in NATO would destroy the Atlantic character of that organisation and that Turkey's inclusion in NATO would upset Iran, which would also expect equivalent defence guarantees from the Western powers.⁶⁹⁷ The United States however, in particular US Secretary of the Air Force Thomas K. Finletter, pointed out to British diplomat in Washington, George Earl Jellicoe, that a non-Atlantic power – Italy - was already a member of NATO. Finletter added that in regard to Iran, the United States believed that NATO associate membership would be a preferable solution if Turkey was to become a full member of NATO.⁶⁹⁸ Mr Jellicoe told Mr Finletter that the British Foreign Office preferred the extension of a direct American guarantee to Turkey, or American association with the existing Anglo-French-Turkish Treaty of 1939.⁶⁹⁹

⁶⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 2847, enclosed in Ibid.

⁶⁹⁷ See note by Mr Cheetham on the British attitude towards the admission of Turkey and Greece into N.A.T.O dated 19 April 1951 in TNA, FO 371/95002/R 1071/9.

⁶⁹⁸ See enclosed minute by George Earl Jellicoe who had a conversation with US Secretary of the Air Force on 2 April 1951 in TNA, FO 371/95002/R 1071/9, 'Mr Finletter, U.S. Secretary for Air strongly in favour of extension of NATO to include Turkey and Greece (conversation with Earl Jellicoe)', British Embassy Washington (Mr B.A.B Burrows) to Southern Department of Foreign Office (N.J.A. Cheetham), 7 April 1951.

⁶⁹⁹ Ibid. See also Jacob C. Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East: A Documentary Record: 1914-1956, Vol. II* (New York: Princeton, 1956), pp. 226-228.

Although Mr Finletter did not deny that this would meet Turkey's wishes, he indicated that, from the standpoint of the United States government, Turkish (and Greek) full membership in NATO would be more preferable because of two reasons that were noted by Mr Jellicoe as follows:

- (a) Since Congress would be far more likely to accept Turkish association with NATO than a direct United States guarantee. Congress might very well object to an old-fashioned alliance on the 19th Century pattern.
- (b) Since what the United States wanted from Turkey was the right to use Turkish bases. They wanted to be able to use these bases as soon as, or before, a war broke out. Mr. Finletter clearly feels that the United States are more likely to be able to obtain the required base facilities from Turkey if that country is a member of NATO.⁷⁰⁰

Seemingly, the United States government was convinced that Turkish neutrality was a real danger, hence its decision to grant full membership in NATO to Turkey and Greece. It could be true to say here that Turkey's threat to revert to neutrality was its most successful initiative in that it managed to get the most powerful NATO allies, namely the United States, to side with Turkey in its efforts to press Britain to give its consent for Turkey to enter NATO before the MEC plan. These two governments' insistence that Turkey should be brought directly into NATO, instead of being linked to NATO through the MEC plan, caused the British MEC efforts to become more difficult and the discussion with the Egyptian government regarding the MEC to end in stalemate.

⁷⁰⁰ Ibid.

Turkey's pressure for full membership of NATO and its support from the United States brought great tension to newly appointed Morrison, who at the same time was struggling with the continuous troubles posed by the Egyptian government's refusal to accept the MEC plan as long as the British maintained the presence of its troops in the Suez Canal Zone. This study believes that efforts to create the MEC with the Egyptian government had reached further deadlock because Morrison mishandled the situation with Egypt and Iran. This was because the problems with Egypt and Iran were beyond his grasp. Anthony Eden, the new Foreign Secretary after Morrison, said in his memoir of the Anglo-Egyptian settlement by the Labour government: 'the position I had to face in Egypt was more forbidding than anything which was happening in Persia. I was convinced that there the situation had been made worse by some unimaginative mishandling, which I believed could be remedied.'⁷⁰¹

Situation II: Morrison's mishandling of the issues with Egypt and Iran

Morrison's first misconduct in dealing with Anglo-Egyptian relations was shown at his first appearance as Foreign Secretary in the House of Commons, on 12 March 1951, when he left the Chamber right before the foreign affairs session discussing British troop withdrawal from the Suez Canal Zone. Kenneth Younger, who was at that time a junior minister, answered the questions on his behalf. This matter was shown as follows:

⁷⁰¹ Sir Anthony Eden, *The Memoirs of the Rt. Hon. Sir Anthony Eden: Full Circle* (London: Cassell & Company LTD, 1960), p. 226.

Mr. T. Reid asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if, in view of the fact that Britain is bound by treaty to come to the aid of Egypt if attacked, he will ask the Egyptian Government to desist from its demand that British troops at the Suez Canal should leave Egypt, since that is the place which they and Egyptian forces might have to defend in a sudden emergency.

The Minister of State (Mr. Younger) Both His Majesty's Government and the Egyptian Government are very conscious of the need to ensure the proper defence of this area, and the discussions to which my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary referred in his answer to a question by the hon. Member for Hitchin (Mr. Fisher) on 29th January are aimed particularly at reconciling the need for active defence measures in peace-time with the political difficulties raised in Egypt by the presence of foreign military forces in their territory.

Mr. T. Reid Is the Minister aware that if our troops were removed from Egypt it would cause consternation in Egypt, especially among politicians?

Mr. Younger I am aware that this is a very important and complicated matter, but I cannot go further than what I have said while these discussions are in progress.

Mr. Eden Will the hon. Member represent to the Foreign Secretary, whom I am sorry to see leaving the Chamber during Foreign Office

Questions, that the question of the hon. Member represents views strongly held by hon. Members on both sides of the House?

Mr. Younger I will certainly take that into account.⁷⁰²

Morrison's action was widely criticised as being parochial, since before the foreign affairs session he had answered questions on domestic issues, in particular the Festival of Britain. As noted by Morrison's biographer, David Howell 'characterizations of him as parochial seemed vindicated when he spent more time on the Festival of Britain on London's south bank than on his departmental affairs.'⁷⁰³ Morrison's lack of passion for foreign affairs contrasted sharply with Bevin, who though ill at that time, still sought the best settlement with the Egyptian government until his last day in office and even the last day of his life. In Bevin's last encounter with the Egyptian Ambassador, Amr Pasha, in February 1951, he told the latter that 'I [Bevin] had wished to assure him [Amr Pasha] that in spite my illness I had been giving much thought to this problem and was most anxious to help to bring about a solution.'⁷⁰⁴ Moreover, Bevin still attended the Cabinet meeting on 2 April 1951 as Lord Privy Seal when his January 1951 proposal – a phased withdrawal of British forces from the Suez Canal Zone starting in 1951 and to be completed in 1956 – and the COS's proposal – that British forces re-enter Egypt in an

⁷⁰² *Hansard*, 12 March 1951, Vol. 485, cc1062-3, pp. 1062-1063. See also TNA, FO 371/90130/JE 1051/31, 'Mr. Younger replied to the Parliamentary question by Mr T. Reid', Foreign Office minute by Mr R. Allen, 12 March 1951.

⁷⁰³ Herbert Stanley Morrison (1888-1965): doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/35121, p. 11.

⁷⁰⁴ TNA, FO 371/90130/JE 1051/25, 'Conversation between the Secretary of State and the Egyptian Ambassador', Anglo-Egyptian Relations, 19 February 1951.

emergency – were discussed and approved by the Cabinet.⁷⁰⁵ Bevin died in the following weeks, on 14 April 1951.

Morrison's lack of aptitude in managing Anglo-Egyptian problems effectively was evident when he did not make a quick decision regarding this matter. For instance, Minister of Works (and new Lord Privy Seal after Bevin died in April 1951) Richard R. Stokes, had sent a telegram to Morrison that urged the latter to figure out the best settlement for the issues with Egypt in late March 1951.⁷⁰⁶ Morrison replied that he would only 'go into the question [of Egypt] more fully after Easter.'⁷⁰⁷ As a consequence, Stokes put forward his own proposal for an Anglo-Egyptian settlement on 4 April 1951 and requested his paper be put in the next day's Cabinet meeting.⁷⁰⁸ Barclay commented about this occasion in his book as follows: 'In Ernie's day it would have been unthinkable for a colleague to trespass on his domain in such a way.'⁷⁰⁹

The situation with Egypt became more difficult when Morrison mismanaged Anglo-Egyptian problems by deciding to take "a firmer line" than his predecessor, exactly the conduct the Egyptian government had feared would happen since it learnt about

⁷⁰⁵ See TNA, CAB 128/19, CM (51) 23rd Conclusions, Cabinet 23 (51), 2 April 1951. See also newspaper cutting from *Daily Telegraph* in TNA, FO 371/90131/JE 1051/57, 'Report that Cabinet has decided that British troops will leave Egypt', Extract Daily Telegraph – British troops will leave Egypt, Cabinet Approves: Return if war imminent, 6 April 1951.

⁷⁰⁶ See TNA, FO 371/90131/JE 1051/59, 'Suggestions of main points of settlement with Egypt', Mr Stokes M.P. to Secretary of State (Morrison), 21 March 1951.

⁷⁰⁷ TNA, FO 371/90131/JE 1051/59, 'Suggestions of main points of settlement with Egypt', Secretary of State (Morrison) to Mr Stokes M.P., 22 March 1951.

⁷⁰⁸ See Mr Stokes' proposals for an Anglo-Egyptian settlement and Mr Stokes' draft paper for the Cabinet on Egypt in TNA, FO 371/90131/JE 1051/60, 'Mr Stokes draft paper on Egypt for submission to the Cabinet', Mr A.W. Cunliffe to Mr Barclay, 4 April 1951.

⁷⁰⁹ Barclay, p. 102.

Morrison's appointment to the Foreign Office. As reported by the British Embassy in Cairo, both the Egyptian government and the Egyptian press believed that:

the new Foreign Secretary intends to introduce substantial changes in British policy in the Middle East, based on firmness and violence if necessary; although he believes in the independence of the Middle East countries, he wants to restore to Britain the international respect which she is about to lose; he has made it a condition of his appointment that he should be allowed a free hand in Middle East affairs and the Egyptian question in particular.⁷¹⁰

The Egyptian government was convinced that Morrison would 'prefer to "betray" Egypt rather than risk the downfall of the [British] Government.'⁷¹¹ This conviction was vindicated when Morrison decided to adopt a number of demands in the new proposal for Anglo-Egyptian settlement, presented to the Egyptian government on 11 April 1951, which left the Egyptian government with the impression they were being given an ultimatum. Those firm demands were: the British government would only perform a phased withdrawal after the conclusion of a new treaty; the British government insisted on treating the Sudan issue as a separate issue from defence; and the British government would stand firm with its aim for the Sudanese to obtain self-governance at the earliest practicable opportunity and that no understanding can be reached with

⁷¹⁰ TNA, FO 371/90130/JE 1951/52, 'Reactions of Egyptian press to the appointment of new Secretary of State', British Embassy Cairo to African Department of Foreign Office, 30 March 1951.

⁷¹¹ *Ibid.*

Egypt which interferes with this objective.⁷¹² The Egyptian Foreign Minister, Salah ed-Din Bey, felt these new proposals 'were far worse than anything he had received previously.'⁷¹³ As a result, the Egyptian government rejected the British proposals and announced that it would 'take the form of a reiteration of the Egyptian slogans of complete Evacuation and the Unity of the Nile Valley.'⁷¹⁴ It could be true to say here that, due to Morrison's firm conduct, Bevin and the COS's initiative to execute a withdrawal of British forces on Egyptian terms, with the hope that in return the Egyptian government would be ready to cooperate with Britain in the MEC plan, was rendered pointless.

According to historian Wm. Roger Louis, the reason Morrison adopted a firm line with Egypt was because he 'was perplexed with criticism that he should take a more aggressive line, especially since at heart he agreed.'⁷¹⁵ Since Morrison agreed with the opinions of Mr R. T. Paget (Member of Parliament) that were sent to him in April 1951 regarding the issues with Egypt, he then became more comfortable in carrying out a firm policy with Egypt. Mr Paget's lines that shaped Morrison's attitude towards the Egyptian government were as follows:

⁷¹² See TNA, FO 371/90131/JE 1051/76, 'Anglo-Egyptian negotiations', From Foreign Office to Washington, 24 April 1951; TNA, FO 371/90131/JE 1051/82, 'Anglo-Egyptian Treaty negotiations: Copy of British proposals for a defence settlement handed to Egyptian Foreign Minister on 11th April', Sir R. Stevenson (Cairo) to Foreign Office, 11 April 1951.

⁷¹³ TNA, FO 371/90131/JE 1051/81, 'The Egyptian Foreign Minister does not take the new British proposals', From R. Stevenson (Cairo) to Foreign Office, 16 April 1951.

⁷¹⁴ TNA, FO 371/90131/JE 1051/88, Foreign Office minute by R.H.G. Edmonds, 'Anglo-Egyptian Treaty Negotiations', 30 April 1951.

⁷¹⁵ Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East 1945-1951: Arab Nationalism, the United States and Post-war Imperialism*, p. 724.

The M.E. is not an area in which it pays to reward your enemies and to neglect your friends. The governments of Egypt, having no social policy, are committed to competitive anti-Britishness. For purely internal reasons no Egyptian Government can be appeased. Evacuation will be followed by a demand to nationalise the [Suez] Canal, for the Sudan and then for Uganda and the upper waters of the Nile. [...] This is not 1946. Since then Egypt has wasted her substance and our money on the maintenance of a system of social injustice that should have disappeared a century ago. [...] Surely it's time to get tough. We control the Nile water; we supply much of the money on which the Pasha Government live; we have an army and a navy!⁷¹⁶

However, Morrison's firm conduct brought about unfortunate results - the Egyptian government felt offended by his approach and no settlement for Anglo-Egyptian problems could be achieved in the near future. Given that the Egyptian government stood firm in its position - that it would only join the British in formulating the MEC plan after the evacuation of British forces from the Suez Canal Zone was complete - MEC arrangements with the Egyptian government remained deadlock.

Another way in which Morrison mismanaged the Anglo-Egyptian problems was in his apparent disagreement with Bevin's phased withdrawal proposal. This matter was evident when he only considered offering to resume negotiations with the Egyptian

⁷¹⁶ TNA, FO 371/90133/JE 1051/128, 'Mr. Paget is withdrawing his question gives his views on the U.K.'s policy in Egypt, and the Middle East', Mr. Paget, M.P., to Mr. Morrison, 9 April 1951.

government on the basis of the COS proposals in his March memorandum and during the Cabinet meeting on 2 April 1951.⁷¹⁷ Morrison was convinced that bowing to Egyptian pressure would further weaken Britain's position in the Middle East. Morrison accordingly suggested to the British Ambassador in Cairo, Stevenson 'to keep these discussions going for some time on the basis of the proposals approved by the Cabinet on 5th April.'⁷¹⁸ In point of fact, this conduct indicated Morrison's shallow understanding and lack of care for developing a long-term policy with Egypt. This was because, since the Suez Canal Zone dispute emerged in 1945, the Egyptian government was persistent in its demand for unconditional British troop withdrawal. As argued by Lord Privy Seal Stokes:

The Lord Privy Seal said that, from his personal knowledge of conditions in Egypt, he was satisfied that no agreement could be reached with the Egyptian Government unless we were prepared to give an assurance that all combatant British troops would be removed from the [Suez] Canal Zone within a reasonable period. [...] The proposals which His Majesty's Ambassador had put forward in pursuance of the Cabinet's decision on 5th April, had been regarded by the Egyptians as an ultimatum rather than a basis for negotiation; and he feared that no progress could be made unless we could satisfy the Egyptians that we were prepared to

⁷¹⁷ See TNA, CAB 129/45, CP (51) 95, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 'Egypt – Defence Negotiations', 30 March 1951; see TNA, CAB 128/19, CM (51) 23rd Conclusions, Cabinet 23 (51), 2 April 1951.

⁷¹⁸ See TNA, CAB 128/19, CM (51) 39th Conclusions, Cabinet 39 (51), 31 May 1951.

make some concession towards their point of view regarding the evacuation of combatant troops from the [Suez] Canal Zone.⁷¹⁹

Stokes then pointed out that the protracted nature of the talks on the Suez Canal Zone would also have an effect on the Sudan, and thus, complicate the situation further.

Stokes' argument was as follows:

In these circumstances he [Stokes] saw no advantage in putting forward at this stage proposals regarding the future of the Sudan which would be equally unacceptable to the Egyptians. This was likely to exacerbate feelings still further and thus increase the difficulties of reaching any agreement on the Treaty [of 1936].⁷²⁰

It is worth mentioning here that the Egyptian position on the Suez Canal Zone was strengthened by Morrison's simultaneous mishandling of issues with Iran, in particular the question of nationalising the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company that had emerged since January 1951. Like his policy in Egypt, Morrison also took a tough line with Iran by adopting an approach of 'qualified sabre-rattling.'⁷²¹ Morrison opted to send troops to Iran in order to secure British property and personnel at the Abadan refinery and in the southern Iranian oilfields.⁷²² Morrison's ignorance of diplomatic protocol in handling the issue with Iran was strongly criticised by Dalton and Attlee. As Attlee said to Dalton, 'his

⁷¹⁹ Ibid.

⁷²⁰ Ibid.

⁷²¹ Morgan, p. 467.

⁷²² See TNA, FO 371/91550, Foreign Office minute by E. A. Berthoud, 21 June 1951; TNA, CAB 128/19, Cabinet Conclusions, 21 June 1951; TNA, DEFE 4/45, Confidential Annex to meetings of Chiefs of Staff Committee, 11 July 1951. Cited in Morgan, pp. 468-469. See also Acheson, pp. 506-507.

[Morrison's] ignorance was shocking. He had no background and knew no history.⁷²³

Similarly, Dean Acheson, US Secretary of State, professed in his memoir about Morrison's ignorance in handling the issue with Iran as follows:

As Mosadeq made his entrance upon the stage, my trusted and admired friend, Ernest Bevin, left it. He resigned as Foreign Minister on March 9, 1951, and died on April 14, being succeeded by Herbert Morrison. Mr. Morrison was a long-time House of Commons man and a great expert on the government of London, the London County Council, of which he had been an early architect. He knew nothing of foreign affairs and had no feel for situations beyond the sound of Bow bells. Perhaps to compensate for a sense of insecurity, he accentuated a natural abrasiveness of temperament. The change was not a fortunate one at this tense period.⁷²⁴

When Morrison eventually realised that his military intervention policy was unwise, he then urged a phased withdrawal from Abadan.⁷²⁵ The British evacuation from Abadan surely had a great impact on Egypt, which since 1945 had demanded a British withdrawal from the Suez Canal Zone. As believed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Hugh Gaitskell and the Minister of Defence, Emanuel Shinwell at the time, the situation

⁷²³ Dalton's diary, 16 September 1951.

⁷²⁴ Acheson, pp. 504-505.

⁷²⁵ See TNA, CAB 128/20, CM (51) 51st Conclusions, Cabinet 51 (51), 12 July 1951. See also Morgan, p. 470. For Morrison's further comments on his policy towards Persia [Iran], see his election campaign speech at Lewisham on Monday morning, 8th October, 1951, enclosed in The Papers of Herbert Morrison, Morrison/2/9, British Library of Political and Economic Science.

in Iran could lead to the nationalisation of the Suez Canal Zone and therefore the collapse of the British position in the Middle East.⁷²⁶

In addition to the fact that British dominance in Iran and Egypt was being undermined by nationalist movements in those countries,⁷²⁷ the United States competition for oil and influence made matters worse. In Iran, for instance, when negotiations between Britain and Iran over the Anglo-Iranian oil agreement in April 1951 went negatively,⁷²⁸ the US Assistant Under-Secretary McGhee pressured Morrison, who was ready to take military action in Iran, for an early British withdrawal from Iran and a total surrender to the Prime Minister of Iran, Mohammad Mussadiq.⁷²⁹ Morrison felt irritated by this pressure because, according to Morrison's deputy Younger, if the British were forced out of the Iranian oilfields 'it will be pretty damaging to British prestige, & of course also to the government, & to Herbert in particular.'⁷³⁰ Meanwhile in Egypt, the British Embassy in Cairo reported to the Foreign Office that during McGhee's visit to Egypt, between 29 March 1951 and 1 April 1951, McGhee denied before the Egyptian press

⁷²⁶ See Shinwell's view in annex in TNA, DEFE 4/41, COS (51), Committee minutes, 23 May 1951; Hugh Gaitskell, *The diary of Hugh Gaitskell, 1945-1956* (London: Cape, 1983), 11 May 1951.

⁷²⁷ For more information on the nationalist movement in the Middle East, see Jacob C. Hurewitz, *Middle East Dilemmas: The Background of United States Policy* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953), pp. 7-99; Hahn, *The United States, Great Britain, and Egypt, 1945-1956: Strategy and Diplomacy in the Early Cold War*, pp. 102-116; Morgan, pp. 465-474; McGhee, *Envoy to the Middle World: Adventures in Diplomacy*, pp. 365-387; Monroe, pp. 170-173; Hahn, 'Containment and Egyptian Nationalism: The Unsuccessful Effort to Establish the Middle East Command, 1950-53', pp. 25-34; Sachar, *Europe Leaves the Middle East, 1936-1954*, pp. 410-427.

⁷²⁸ See McGhee, *Envoy to the Middle World: Adventures in Diplomacy*, pp. 334-336.

⁷²⁹ See DOS Bulletin, 10 May 1951, Memorandum: Anglo-American Talks on Persian Oil, April 12, 1951. Cited in McGhee, *Envoy to the Middle World: Adventures in Diplomacy*, p. 337. See also Morgan, p. 467; Jacob Abadi, *Britain's Withdrawal from the Middle East, 1947-1971: The Economic and Strategic Imperatives* (New Jersey: The Kingston Press, Inc., 1982), pp. 77-78. For more information on the American new policy towards Iran, see *FRUS, 1952-1954, Iran, 1951-1954*, Volume X (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989), p. 73, Memorandum Prepared in the Office of National Estimates, Central Intelligence Agency, 'Iranian Development', Washington, 1 May 1951.

⁷³⁰ Younger's Foreign Office diaries, p. 79.

that the United States considered Egypt and the Arab States to be a British zone of influence. McGhee's statement was noted as follows:

If this had been so he would not have made his present tour. America had promised in the Tripartite Declaration of May 1950 to reconsider applications from the Middle Eastern countries for the supply of arms, provided that they were required for legitimate defence. Britain was not solely responsible for the defence of this area.⁷³¹

Indeed, the Egyptian government was pleased that the United States wanted to win friendship with Egypt. This was apparently because the Egyptian government believed the United States could help Egypt in defence matters far better than the British. This was evident when the Egyptian General Secretary, Azzam Pasha, 'sent a personal message to Mr. Truman through Mr. McGhee urging America to "take care of Arab interests in order to maintain Arab friendship and preserve world peace".'⁷³² It could be true to say that the British authorities might have felt less offended regarding this matter because, as they said later in July 1951, 'we no longer possess sufficient economic and military strength to consider the Middle East as a purely British sphere of influence [and] it is therefore only reasonable that our future Middle East policy should, as far as possible, be devised in conjunction with the Americans.'⁷³³ All these matters might have encouraged Morrison to seek the United States' help in approaching Egypt

⁷³¹ TNA, FO 371/90131/JE 1051/83, 'Account of Mr. McGhee's visit to Cairo', Mr. Wardle Smith (British Embassy, Cairo) to African Department of Foreign Office, 9 April 1951.

⁷³² Ibid.

⁷³³ TNA, FO 141/1442/JE 1077/24/51G, From Sir R. Stevenson (British Embassy, Alexandria) to R.J. Bowker (Foreign Office), 31 July 1951. For more information on the British could no longer stand alone in the Middle East, see Abadi, pp. 76-78.

with the MEC proposal, and subsequently, led to his new attitude towards Turkey's place in NATO.

Morrison yielded to Turkish and American pressure to help the MEC plan

Based on the above discussion of two parallel situations that were faced by Morrison, it is clear that Morrison's hands were full and that the problems with the Turkish, US and Egyptian governments left British efforts towards formulating the MEC plan showing no satisfactory progress. It is worth remembering here that the Turkish government was resolute in obtaining full membership of NATO *before* it would give its cooperation in the British MEC plan, and this Turkish intransigence received full support from the United States government. In the midst of difficulties creating the MEC plan with those aforementioned governments, a growing problem with Iran with regards to the oilfields worsened the situation. The crisis with Iran indicated that Britain had become more desperate to form the MEC as soon as possible.

However, there was no sign that the Egyptian government would accept British proposals so that defence arrangements between these two countries could be carried out. On the contrary, the Egyptian government responded favourably to the US Assistant Under-Secretary McGhee's statement during his visit to Egypt - that the United States government was anxious to form a bloc of Middle Eastern countries to side with the democracies in the coming war. Apparently, this was because McGhee had promised the Egyptian General Secretary, Azzam Pasha, that he would 'persuade

America to render to Egypt and the other Arab states the help they required.’⁷³⁴ This was in contrast to the British government, in particular Morrison, who refused to carry out the British troop withdrawal from the Suez Canal Zone on Egyptian terms.

It could be true to say here that the Egyptian acceptance of US intervention in the defence of the Middle East might have given Morrison the idea that the United States could help Britain to persuade Egypt to accept the MEC plan. For this reason, the British government’s decision to bow to the US demand for full Turkish membership of NATO was seen by Morrison as a necessary action. As argued by historian Behçet K. Yeşilbursa, ‘the new Foreign Secretary, Herbert Morrison, indicated that the admission of Turkey and Greece to NATO might be the only way in which the United States government could persuade Congress to accept further United States commitments in the Middle East.’⁷³⁵ However, Yeşilbursa did not see this matter as an internal factor that led Britain to change its long-standing opposition to full Turkish (and Greek) accession to NATO.

The first explicit evidence that shows Morrison had started to believe that the British government should acquiesce to the American proposal for the full admission of Turkey and Greece to NATO is found in the Foreign Office file, in a draft memorandum Morrison prepared for the Defence Committee dated 1 May 1951. In this paper, Morrison drew attention to the pressure being exerted by Turkey and, to a lesser extent by Greece, for admission into NATO. Morrison also pointed out that the weight of American opinion, both military and political, was on the side of their admission. At the

⁷³⁴ TNA, FO 371/90131/JE 1051/83, ‘Account of Mr. McGhee’s visit to Cairo’, Mr. Wardle Smith (British Embassy, Cairo) to African Department of Foreign Office, 9 April 1951.

⁷³⁵ Yeşilbursa, p. 81. Historian Mustafa Bilgin also argues the same. See Bilgin, p. 163.

end of the draft, Morrison said that he had reached the following conclusion regarding the issue of full membership:

- (a) that we should continue, if necessary in high-level talks with the Americans, to press our objections to full Turkish and Greek membership of N.A.T.O.;
- (b) but that if we fail to carry the Americans with us, and they insist that, from their point of view, the only practical solution to the Turkish and Greek problems is full membership of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, we should acquiesce.⁷³⁶

What is more, in the same file there is the Foreign Office minute by Dixon, Head of the offices of Deputy Under-Secretary of State, that also mentioned the tendency of Morrison to yield to American pressure over the issue of membership in NATO. Dixon noted that 'the Secretary of State [Morrison] has, therefore submitted to the Defence Committee the attached paper which recommends that we should continue to press the objections to full Turkish and Greek membership of N.A.T.O., but seeks authority [from the COS] to revise this attitude in the event of strong American pressure.'⁷³⁷ At the end of this minute, Dixon said that at present, the United States would only give a guarantee to Turkey within the NATO framework. He accordingly reckoned that the COS

⁷³⁶ See enclosed a Draft Defence Committee Paper – Turkey and Greece and the North Atlantic Treaty in TNA, FO 371/96541/WU 11923/37, 1 May 1951.

⁷³⁷ TNA, FO 371/96541/WU 11923/37, Foreign Office minute by Pierson Dixon, 7 May 1951.

might have to be ready to revise their previous view regarding membership as suggested by Morrison.⁷³⁸

After being presented to the Foreign Office, Morrison's suggestion for yielding to American pressure was circulated to the Cabinet of Defence Committee and Prime Minister's Office Papers, both on 4 May 1951. To the former, Morrison mentioned that the purpose of his paper was to inform the Defence Committee of recent developments with regard to the association of Greece and Turkey with NATO and to seek their authority for a change of policy should this become necessary in the near future. The same memorandum was forwarded to the Prime Minister's Office, with the addition of a comment that explicitly mentioned Morrison's preference to acquiesce:

Up to the present time we have resisted the inclusion of Turkey and Greece as full members of N.A.T.O. for the reasons enumerated in paragraph 9. The Foreign Secretary feels that these reasons still hold good and that we should continue to press our objections, but not to the point of a deadlock. In fact, the Foreign Secretary suggests that if the Americans insist that the only practical solution is to admit Turkey and Greece into N.A.T.O., we should acquiesce.⁷³⁹

⁷³⁸ Ibid.

⁷³⁹ TNA, PREM 8/1379(Part 3), From Foreign Office to Prime Minister, 'Memorandum by the Foreign Secretary for the Defence Committee', 4 May 1951.

It is worth noting here that in paragraph 9, as mentioned above, there was a list of reasons why Britain objected to Greek and Turkish membership in NATO contained in Morrison's memorandum. Those reasons were as follows:

Our main objections to the admission of Turkey and Greece to full membership of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation are:

- (i) it will require the consent of all the N.A.T.O. Powers, many of whom, such as Norway and Denmark, would probably be reluctant to extend their commitments. We know that the French are opposed to it in principle, and would be particularly reluctant to be faced with a Parliamentary debate on the North Atlantic Treaty (which would be necessary for the admission of new members) just before their elections;
- (ii) the extension of the North Atlantic Treaty to the Middle East which Turkish membership would involve might well provoke similar requests for membership from other Middle East countries;
- (iii) the work of the various N.A.T.O. agencies would be greatly complicated by the addition of two more countries, particularly when those countries differ so considerably in their social and political structure from the existing members of the Treaty;
- (iv) by the admission of Greece and Turkey the alliance would tend to lose its "North Atlantic" character as an association of like-minded democratic nations with a common historical background, and tend to become an encircling alliance of countries bordering on the

Soviet Union. Turkey, in particular, is situated in a dangerous area and is a direct neighbour to Russia. At present there is no point (except Norway) at which the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation directly touches the Soviet frontiers. Events may force us to bring the area into direct contact with the Soviet Union, e.g., by the admission of the German Federal Republic. But when that event had taken place, it will undoubtedly increase the danger of a clash.⁷⁴⁰

It should be noted here that since Morrison told his office about his preference for acquiescing to the American proposal, the latter seemed to agree with this matter. This was evident in Strang's minute regarding his answer to the French Ambassador Monsieur Massigli's inquiry about the British government's position towards the question of Greek and Turkish accession to NATO. Strang told the Ambassador that 'it was possible that while maintaining our objections to Greek and Turkish accession, we might be prepared to acquiesce if there were no other way of securing American commitment in the Eastern Mediterranean area.'⁷⁴¹ The same acquiescence was also mentioned in the letter to Dixon (Head of the offices of Deputy Under-Secretary of State) from the Western Department of the Foreign Office as follows:

Opposition to the admission of Greece and Turkey to N.A.T.O. is in effect our existing policy, and known to be such by the Americans. There is not really, therefore, any need for a new expression of that point of view. If

⁷⁴⁰ TNA, CAB 131/11, DO (51) 57, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 'Turkey and Greece and the North Atlantic Treaty', 4 May 1951.

⁷⁴¹ TNA, FO 371/96541/WU 11923/41, 'Association of Turkey & Greece with the N.A.T.O.', Foreign Office minute by Sir W. Strang, 10 May 1951.

there is to be any change in our policy, it is likely to be in the direction of acquiescing in the admission of these two countries if the United States Government insist that this is the only solution.⁷⁴²

Morrison's memorandum and his suggestion that the COS revise their opposition towards full Turkish membership in NATO was then discussed in the Defence Committee meeting (DO (51) 12th Meeting, Minute 4). The Minister of Defence, Emmanuel Shinwell, reported that the Defence Committee decided the matter should be referred to the Cabinet, who should also have before them a memorandum giving the views of the COS on the military implications of the question. It is interesting to point out here that Shinwell seemed to agree with Morrison's proposal to yield when he noted that 'as for the criticism that might be made that we are extending N.A.T.O. far wider than was originally intended, I regard this as inevitable.'⁷⁴³ Besides Shinwell, the COS' conclusion at this stage also seemed favourable to Morrison's suggestion when it concluded that the military advantages of including Greece and Turkey in NATO outweighed the disadvantages. Those advantages were outlined as follows:

- (a) The extension of N.A.T.O. to include Turkey would commit the United States to assist in the defence of Turkey and so tend to involve her in the defence of the Middle East.

⁷⁴² TNA, FO 371/96541/WU 11923/41, 'Association of Turkey & Greece with the N.A.T.O.', From the Western Organisation Department to Sir P. Dixon, 11 May 1951.

⁷⁴³ CAB 129/45, CP (51) 132, Note by the Minister of Defence, 'Turkey and Greece and the North Atlantic Treaty', 17 May 1951.

- (b) Under present circumstances in the event of war Greece and Turkey could adopt a position of armed neutrality, but if we included them in N.A.T.O. their active co-operation against Russia would be more certain. The armed forces of Turkey in particular could make a substantial contribution.
- (c) The extension of N.A.T.O. to cover Turkey would give confidence to the Middle East countries.
- (d) Military contribution with Turkey and Greece would be made easier. Turkey would be less reluctant to plan with the Middle East since she would no longer fear the loss of American support. Further, the United States Military Mission in Ankara would have no further cause to dissuade Turkey from collaborating with the Middle East as it is alleged to be the case at present.⁷⁴⁴

Seemingly, the COS' argument in point (a) - the military advantage if Turkey was granted full membership of NATO - indicates that they agreed with Morrison's judgement that by agreeing to the American preference for Greek and Turkish membership in NATO, the British government could obtain an American commitment to Middle Eastern defence affairs and thus help the MEC plan.

Later, during the Cabinet meeting on 17 May 1951, Morrison prepared another memorandum and asserted that the purpose of this paper was to seek the authority of

⁷⁴⁴ Memorandum by the Chiefs of Staff – Turkey and Greece and the North Atlantic Treaty, attached in CAB 129/45, CP (51) 132, Note by the Minister of Defence, 'Turkey and Greece and the North Atlantic Treaty', 17 May 1951.

the Cabinet for the British government's acceptance of the US proposal for full membership of NATO for Turkey and Greece. According to Morrison, two days earlier, on 15 May 1951, the United States Ambassador handed an *aide-mémoire* to the Foreign Office informing him that the United States government favoured the admission of Greece and Turkey to NATO for reasons that have been discussed earlier in this chapter.⁷⁴⁵ Morrison also stressed that the United States government was only prepared to extend a guarantee to Greece and Turkey in the context of NATO, or precisely, through full membership of NATO. This was apparently a three-point programme for Turkey, namely Turkish association with NATO's Mediterranean Command; Turkish cooperation with the British MEC plan; and a unilateral American guarantee supplementing the existing Anglo-French-Turkish Treaty of 1939, would be difficult to realise.⁷⁴⁶ One of Morrison's reasons for the British government to change its attitude and accept the American proposal was his objective to bring the United States into Middle Eastern affairs and help the MEC plan. This matter was outlined by Morrison as follows:

⁷⁴⁵ See this chapter, pp. 252-254. See *FRUS, 1951, European Security and the German Question (in two parts)*, Vol. III, Part 1 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1951), pp. 520-522, The Embassy in the United Kingdom to the British Foreign Office, 'Aide-Mémoire', London, 15 May 1951. The *aide-mémoire* was also attached in Morrison's new memorandum. The copy for the Foreign Office is retained in TNA, FO 371/96541/WU 11923/40/G, 'Aide-Mémoire by the U.S. government on the desirability of strengthening the security commitments between the Western powers and Greece and Turkey', From U.S. Embassy to Mr R.E. Barclay – Aide-Mémoire handed by the United States Ambassador to Sir W. Strang on 15th May, 1951: Greece, Turkey and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, 15 May 1951.

⁷⁴⁶ See TNA, CAB 129/45, CP (51) 130, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 'Admission of Greece and Turkey to the North Atlantic Treaty', 17 May 1951. See also *FRUS, 1951, European Security and the German Question (in two parts)*, Vol. III, Part 1, pp. 511-515, Memorandum by the Assistant Secretaries of State for Near Eastern and African Affairs (McGhee) and for European Affairs (Perkins) to the Secretary of State, 'Subject: Greek-Turkish Security Commitment', Washington, 24 April 1951.

- (i) It would extend American military commitments into the Eastern Mediterranean area. This has always been our object, and the admission of Turkey and Greece to N.A.T.O. must be regarded as the price we have to pay for it if the United States will not extend their commitments in that area in any other way.⁷⁴⁷

Morrison's conclusion at the end of the memorandum was explicit evidence of his *démarche* to follow the American decision on the issue of full membership of Greece and Turkey in NATO. Morrison said: 'I therefore ask my colleagues to agree that we should accept the American proposal for the admission of Turkey and Greece to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and should support it when the question is raised by the North Atlantic Council Deputies.'⁷⁴⁸

Morrison's suggestion that the British government acquiesce to the American proposal regarding Greek and Turkish membership in NATO was discussed in a Cabinet meeting on 22 May 1951. Morrison, however, was absent from this meeting and his place was taken by the Minister of State Younger. The Cabinet was also supplemented with memoranda by Morrison (CP (51) 130) and notes by Shinwell with attached memoranda by the COS (CP (51) 132). Upon realising the advantages that could be obtained by Britain the Cabinet, which also realised that the MEC plan itself still failed to attract Turkey, was ready to accept the place of Greece and Turkey in NATO. The Cabinet invited Morrison to handle the question of admission in the manner outlined by Prime

⁷⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁸ Ibid.

Minister Attlee. This was firstly, that the British government at this stage should not go further than to indicate to the United States government that it did not disagree in principle with the admission of Greece and Turkey, and that it was prepared to give full consideration to the issues involved before the matter came up for decision at the next meeting of the North Atlantic Council. Secondly, the British government should ask that the NATO Standing Group should work out the military implications of the admission of these two countries. Thirdly, the British government should seek from the United States authorities a clearer statement of their views on Middle East defence and the organisation of a Supreme Allied Command, Middle East, and their assistance in working out effective defence arrangements with Middle East countries. Fourthly, the British government must make it clear that the admission of Greece and Turkey into NATO should not be regarded as paving the way for the admission of Spain.⁷⁴⁹

It should be noted here that Attlee's third suggestion apparently indicates that the Cabinet authorities agreed with Morrison's argument - that the British permission for full Greek and Turkish membership of NATO was a practical *démarche* to draw the United States closer to Middle Eastern affairs and thus help the MEC plan. On another note, it is interesting to point out here that by the Cabinet authorities agreeing to acquiesce to the American proposal as suggested by Morrison, this meant that the British government had changed its long-standing opposition to Greek and Turkish membership of NATO. In-depth analysis and discussion throughout Morrison's section demonstrates that the new position of the British government regarding the issue of Greek and Turkish admission to NATO was evidently influenced by Morrison.

⁷⁴⁹ See TNA, CAB 128/19, CM (51) 36th Conclusions, Cabinet 36 (51), 22 May 1951.

The Greco-Turkish Cyprus issue and military implications for NATO

Morrison's inability to grasp foreign affairs and his lack of consideration for a long-term strategy was seemingly also evident in relation to his conduct in the issue of admission. Given that Morrison was new to the issues regarding Turkey, Greece, NATO and the Cyprus issue that rendered these countries hostile to one another, Morrison might have had little idea about the disadvantages that might be brought to NATO by including two countries quarrelling with one another, hence his decision to yield to the American proposal. Although the Cabinet authorities had agreed to bring Greece and Turkey into NATO, it seemed that they were still anxious about the disadvantages of including them in NATO.

The Minister of Defence Shinwell, for instance, raised the issue that the military implications of including Greece and Turkey in NATO had not been fully studied during the Cabinet meeting on 22 May 1951,⁷⁵⁰ the meeting in which the Cabinet authorities had come to the decision to acquiesce to the American proposal. As a consequence, Attlee stressed in his second proposition that the British government should urge the NATO Standing Group to carefully study the military implications of admitting these two countries into NATO. It is worth mentioning here that, in memoranda by the COS (CP (51) 132) for the Cabinet, one of the military disadvantages of admitting Greece and Turkey into NATO was related to the problems between these two countries as a result of the Cyprus issue. The COS outlined this disadvantage as follows:

⁷⁵⁰ Ibid.

(d) The inclusion of Greece and Turkey in N.A.T.O. would add two extra members to an already large team and would present additional security and administrative problems. It would also add two additional members to those N.A.T.O. Committees on which all Nations are represented.⁷⁵¹

Although the COS did not mention explicitly why Greek and Turkish membership of NATO would present additional security and administrative problems, this study believes it was the same problem discussed earlier - that these two countries would be less capable of working together efficiently in NATO's Southern Flank due to the Cyprus issue.⁷⁵² The COS' concern about the Greco-Turkish dispute over Cyprus became more apparent when, in August 1951, the British diplomat in Athens reminded the United States Ambassador about this issue. This matter was noted by Montegale Stearns, American diplomat and Ambassador to Côte d'Ivoire and Greece, as follows:

A month before the Ottawa meeting, the British Embassy in Athens raised with United States Ambassador John Peurifoy the desirability of warning the Greeks 'to refrain from stirring up issues (i.e. Cyprus) that might cause difficulties with fellow members'. Peurifoy pointed out 'the Department's reluctance appears to attach conditions on any kind to

⁷⁵¹ Memorandum by the Chiefs of Staff – Turkey and Greece and the North Atlantic Treaty, attached in CAB 129/45, CP (51) 132, Note by the Minister of Defence, 'Turkey and Greece and the North Atlantic Treaty', 17 May 1951.

⁷⁵² See this chapter, pp. 237-239.

Greco-Turkish adherence to NATO and presumed this would apply to any formal change of Greek policy re[garding] Cyprus.⁷⁵³

The above indicates that the British government was still worried that the Cyprus problem between Greece and Turkey could bring harm to NATO. However, the United States remained resolute in bringing Turkey (and with it Greece) directly into NATO. This attitude came as no surprise to the British government. As stated earlier by the Minister of Defence Shinwell, 'it was not unusual for the United States government to press for the acceptance of such commitments without full exploration of their military and political consequences.'⁷⁵⁴

Another occasion that could substantiate the concern that the rupture between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus could bring military implications to NATO was when British representatives in the NATO Standing Group opted for these two countries to be put under separate commands. As a result, the NATO Standing Group had reached an agreement that Turkey would be placed under the Supreme Allied Commander, Middle East (SACME), and this command would be responsible for the NATO Standing Group (later this would be transferred to SHAPE). Greece, on the other hand, would be placed under the SACEUR southern flank under Admiral Carney's responsibility.⁷⁵⁵ This decision

⁷⁵³ As quoted in 'NATO's Achilles Heel: Is the Southeastern Flank Beyond Repair?' by Monteagle Stearns, discussion paper for Workshop/Seminar on 28 May 1987, organised by the Foreign Service Institute, Washington, D.C., p. 5. Cited in James Brown, *Delicately Poised Allies: Greece and Turkey – Problems, Policy Choices and Mediterranean Security* (London: Brassey's, 1991), p. 4.

⁷⁵⁴ TNA, CAB 128/19, CM (51) 36th Conclusions, Cabinet 36 (51), 22 May 1951.

⁷⁵⁵ See *FRUS, 1951, European Security and the German Question (in two parts)*, Vol. III, Part 1 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1951), pp. 528-535, United Kingdom Record of a Meeting between the British Chiefs of Staff and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Bradley), London, 8 June 1951; *FRUS, 1951, European Security and the German Question (in two parts)*, Vol. III, Part

to place the two under separate command was accepted by the NAC during the Ottawa meeting in September 1951.⁷⁵⁶ It seems that this separate command for the two countries, whose security matters were interlinked, would be a workable solution to prevent the Cyprus from affecting NATO's Southern Flank operation.

Turkey: The issue of command and towards full admission

It should be stressed here that this chapter is not about the establishment of the MEC plan by the British government, but rather how the MEC's entanglements became an advantage to Turkey (and Greece) in their acceptance as full members of NATO. This chapter, therefore, will not discuss further the continuous difficulties with the Egyptian government that left British efforts towards the creation of the MEC deadlocked, since to do so is outside the scope of this study. Rather, the chapter will continue to discuss the outcome of the British government's decision to succumb to the American proposal.

It could be true to say that Morrison's *démarche* to support the full accession of Greece and Turkey to NATO achieved full American support for the British MEC plan. A day after the Foreign Office told Washington that the Cabinet authorities were ready to give

1, pp. 535-546, United States Minutes of a United States-United Kingdom Meeting on Questions of Atlantic, Mediterranean and Middle East Commands, Washington, 19 June 1951. See also Onozawa, p. 129. Both SACME and SACEUR were SHAPE's subordinates. Before the establishment of SHAPE, the MEC plan was linked to NATO via the NATO Standing Group – the permanent NATO steering body, with the membership of the United States, Britain and France.

⁷⁵⁶ See Ibid., pp. 1262-1268, United States Delegation Minutes of the Second Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the United States, United Kingdom, and France Held at Washington, 'Atlantic, Mediterranean, and Middle East Commands', 12 September 1951.

their support for the American proposal,⁷⁵⁷ the US State Department informed the Foreign Office that the United States government was now ready to provide political and military support to the British MEC plan and was also ready to help the British in persuading Turkey to be integrated into the plan.⁷⁵⁸

What is more, the United States government also agreed to compromise with the British government regarding the command issue for Turkey over which both governments' military staff had previously clashed.⁷⁵⁹ This was apparently because the British government had used their consent for full Greek and Turkish membership of NATO as its pawn in forcing the United States to agree that Turkey should not be placed under the SACEUR southern flank. As noted by Dixon, the British should 'use our eventual acceptance of Turkish and Greek membership as a bargaining counter in our negotiations with the Americans over the N.A.T.O. Commands in the Mediterranean and Middle East.'⁷⁶⁰ Accordingly, when the British government joined the United States government in establishing a consensus on how Greece and Turkey were to be brought into NATO, between June 1951 and the Ottawa meeting of the NAC in September 1951, as discussed above, the United States government agreed to place Turkey under SACME as was preferred by the British government, whereas Greece would be under SACEUR.

⁷⁵⁷ TNA, FO 371/96542/WU 11923/67G, 'Cabinet decision concerning the admission of Greece & Turkey to the N.A.T.O.', From Foreign Office to Washington, 23 May 1951.

⁷⁵⁸ See *FRUS, 1951, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 144, Working Paper Drafted by the Policy Planning Staff, 'Command Structure in the Middle East', Washington, 23 May 1951.

⁷⁵⁹ See this chapter, pp. 235-236 & pp. 249-250.

⁷⁶⁰ TNA, FO 371/96542/WU 11923/75/G, 'Admission of Greece & Turkey to NATO – Brief for the Minister of State at the Cabinet meeting on 22.5.51', Foreign Office brief by Sir Pierson Dixon, 19 May 1951.

In addition to the British COS' preference for placing Turkey under SACME, the United States JCOS agreed that it would be better to put Turkey in SACME than in SACEUR.

Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1st SACEUR, for instance reckoned that:

Despite the important contribution Turkey can make to the defense of my southern flank, I consider it militarily impracticable to watch over the interests and development of the Turkish armed forces from SHAPE, and to control operations from this headquarters. I, therefore, believe that it would be in the best interests of NATO and of Turkey itself if Turkey should be included in the Middle East Command.⁷⁶¹

As for the Bureau of NEA, one of its arguments regarding this matter was as follows:

The problem is to plan for the defense of the Middle East, the real prizes of which are the Persian Gulf oilfields and the Cairo-Suez area, and which is particularly vulnerable from an invasion through the Caucasus. The command should, therefore, face thus squarely and embrace at least Eastern Turkey, Iran, the Arab States and Israel. Since the defense of this area is not directly related to defense of the NATO area, and none of the

⁷⁶¹ See *FRUS, 1951, European Security and the German Question (in two parts)*, Vol. III, Part 1, p. 593, Memorandum by the Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe (Eisenhower). Paris, 9 October 1951.

countries except, we hope, Turkey, are members of NATO, it should not be a NATO command.⁷⁶²

Furthermore, the continuing decline of British prestige in the Middle East, the small number of British troops that still remained in the area and the inevitable delay in a build-up of Commonwealth forces were also seen by the NEA as additional factors that meant Turkey must be placed under SACME.⁷⁶³

Turkey, however, was uninterested in SACME. Turkey worried that under SACME it would be identified as a Middle Eastern entity when it wanted to be identified as European, after a policy of Westernisation - to have equality in status, civilisation and prestige - had been implemented by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.⁷⁶⁴ Turkey opted for SACEUR so that its Westernisation policy could be successfully achieved. On another note, Turkey also felt that being under SACME would mean it shouldered dual responsibilities and could be called upon in any operation in relation to NATO on one hand and the Middle East on the other.⁷⁶⁵ Turkey accordingly became hesitant to enter NATO, even though it had been given the 'green light' by the NAC, along with Greece.

⁷⁶² Ibid., p. 552, Draft Memorandum Prepared by John Ferguson of the Policy Planning Staff, 'Command in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East', Washington, 6 July 1951. For the rest of the NEA arguments see pp. 553-554.

⁷⁶³ Ibid., p. 554.

⁷⁶⁴ For further discussion about the Turkish Westernisation policy, see Smith, *NATO Enlargement during the Cold War: Strategy and System in the Western Alliance*, p. 64; Feroz Ahmad, *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy, 1950-1975* (London: Hurst, 1997), p. 390; Nuri Eren, *Turkey Today and Tomorrow: An Experiment in Westernization* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1963), pp. 268-248; Ferenc A. Váli, *Bridge Across the Bosphorus: The Foreign Policy of Turkey* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1971), p. 54; David Barchard, *Turkey and the West* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985), pp. 8-12 and 41-43.

⁷⁶⁵ See TNA, CAB 129/47, CP (51) 266, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Minister of Defence, 'Bilateral and Tripartite Talks in Washington and Atlantic Council Meeting in Ottawa, 10th-20th September, 1951', 22 October 1951. This dual responsibilities was also mentioned earlier in *FRUS, 1951, European Security and the German Question (in two parts)*, Vol. III, Part 1, pp. 554-555, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Acting Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs (Bonbright), Washington, 6 July 1951.

As a result, the admission of Greece and Turkey to NATO remained pending. The Turkish Prime Minister Menderes said that:

in view of the fact that the NATO organization already existed, whereas the Middle East Command was only a project, it would be logical for Turkey, upon admission into NATO, to take her place within the existing Command organization of NATO. Any other solution would cause Turkey to feel that she was being treated in a different manner.⁷⁶⁶

Menderes' argument was reasonable, since at that time the MEC had yet to be established because the British government had still failed to reach satisfactory settlements with the Egyptian government regarding the Suez Canal Zone and the Sudanese issue. In recent events, the Egyptian government had rejected the British invitation, on 13 October 1951, for Egypt to join the MEC as a founding member.⁷⁶⁷ With this Egyptian attitude, it seemed that the prospect for the MEC plan to come into existence in the near future was still far from reach. Nevertheless, the British government was resolute in placing Turkey under SACME. In late October 1951, the Joint Planning Staff of the British Ministry of Defence proposed the creation of a new Eastern Mediterranean Command, an Aegean command as a substitute to SACME in

⁷⁶⁶ *FRUS, 1951, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 218, Record of the Conference of United States, United Kingdom, and French Representatives with Turkish Prime Minister and Staff at Ankara on October 13 and 14, 1951, Ankara, undated.

⁷⁶⁷ See Yeşilbursa, p. 89.

order to satisfy Turkey over its place in NATO Command under SHAPE and at the same time secure Turkey's integration into the MEC.⁷⁶⁸

This Aegean command proposal, however, received little support from Prime Minister Churchill and Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, who had come into office after the Conservative Party won the British general election on 25 October 1951. In spite of this, Eden continued to pursue the MEC plan and continued the previous government's policy in granting Greece and Turkey full membership in NATO. In regard to an Aegean command, both Churchill and Eden agreed that the new command was not perfect and was less effective than SACME. Considering that there was a risk that Turkey could be directly brought under SHAPE without going through the MEC plan, Churchill and Eden were convinced the proposal for this new command should be presented to the NATO Standing Group and the United States government so that an agreement could be reached and the MEC plan could come into effect.⁷⁶⁹ Fortunately for Britain, the United States JCOS accepted this proposal and strongly recommended this new command be organised under SACEUR.⁷⁷⁰

Following this positive response from the United States JCOS, the British COS asserted that they wanted an Aegean command and the MEC to be established simultaneously so that the two could be linked together.⁷⁷¹ Again, the United States government accepted the British COS proposal without protest. With warm support from the United

⁷⁶⁸ See TNA, DEFE 4/48, JP (51) 174, Committee Minutes, 25 October 1951; TNA, DEFE 4/48, COS (51) 178, Committee Minutes, 29 October 1951. See also Athanassopoulou, *Turkey – Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945-1952: The First Enlargement of NATO*, p. 222.

⁷⁶⁹ See Ibid.

⁷⁷⁰ See Ibid.

⁷⁷¹ See TNA, DEFE 4/49, COS (51) 185, Committee Minutes, 14 November 1951. See also Bilgin, p. 171.

States government for an Aegean command, the NATO Standing Group and the NAC also easily agreed to this new command during the Rome meeting of the NAC, at the end of November 1951. In the Rome meeting, General Bradley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, on behalf of the United States JCOS stressed that several matters were important for the United States JCOS: firstly, to establish an Aegean command under SHAPE; secondly, to establish the MEC plan and set up its Headquarter in Cyprus, not Egypt; and thirdly, to link these two commands under one commander.⁷⁷² It should be noted that it was initially recommended by the United States JCOS that the Aegean command be placed under SACEUR. However, it had to be moved directly to SHAPE in order to ensure an Aegean command could be closely linked to the MEC, which was itself under SHAPE. Following the establishment of this new command, the NAC asserted that Turkey could choose to either participate in an Aegean command under SHAPE, or an Eastern Mediterranean command under SACEUR. Foreign Secretary Eden preferred for Turkey to choose the former, but General Bradley insisted that the decision should be made by Turkey.

In terms of the positive outcome of the Rome meeting, on paper, the planning for the creation of the MEC seemed likely to come to a conclusion for the first time since its inception in late 1945. However, the reality was far more complicated. At the end of January 1952, the British government 'concluded that there was no immediate prospect of getting Egypt to join the MEC as a founder member.'⁷⁷³ As the British government insisted that there should be no further delay in creating the MEC, it therefore told the

⁷⁷² See TNA, DEFE 5/35, COS (51) 726, Cabinet Memoranda, 6 December 1951. See also Athanassopoulou, *Turkey – Anglo-American Security Interests, 1945-1952: The First Enlargement of NATO*, p. 227; Bilgin, p. 172. For the issue regarding the new MEC Headquarters in Cyprus, see Devereux, p. 63.

⁷⁷³ Yeşilbursa, p. 92.

United States government that it had decided to proceed with the MEC without Egypt by proposing a nucleus Middle East Command Organisation in Cyprus.⁷⁷⁴ The British government urged the other six sponsoring countries of the MEC plan - the United States, France, Turkey, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa – to open discussions of a new version of the MEC plan.⁷⁷⁵ However, Sir Knox Helm, the new British Ambassador to Turkey, who replaced Sir Noel Charles in late 1951, informed the Foreign Office that Turkey would refuse to take part in any discussions before it officially entered NATO.⁷⁷⁶ Accordingly, the British government was willing to let Turkey be placed under SACEUR–NATO’s Southern Flank, as opposed to an Aegean–SHAPE agreement, as a strategy to nudge Turkey to join the discussions for the new version of the MEC. Yeşilbursa notes the following:

The British view was that the Council should agree that Turkey and Greece should form part of Admiral Carney’s Southern Command, and should pass a resolution to this effect, to come into force automatically on their entry into NATO. From the British point of view, this would allay Turkey’s fear that she would be side-tracked into the MEC before her position in NATO was firm. It should also win Turkey’s agreement to start discussions on the MEC immediately after Lisbon.⁷⁷⁷

⁷⁷⁴ See *FRUS, 1952-1954, The Near and Middle East (in two parts)*, Vol. IX, Part I (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1986), pp. 178-184, Memorandum of Conversation, by the Deputy Director of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs (Kopper), ‘British Views on the Early Establishment of the MEC’, Washington, 31 January 1951. See also Devereux, p. 66.

⁷⁷⁵ These six sponsoring powers agreed to become co-founders of the MEC plan after they had been successfully persuaded by Britain to do so. Britain’s initiative to persuade these countries happened throughout 1951.

⁷⁷⁶ See TNA, FO 195/2679, From Ankara to Foreign Office, 21 January 1952.

⁷⁷⁷ Yeşilbursa, p. 92.

Apparently, faced with great difficulties in establishing the MEC plan, the British government eventually yielded to the Turkish demand for its place under SACEUR–NATO’s Southern Flank rather than an Aegean–SHAPE. What is more, as the MEC plan or an Aegean command had not yet been established, the British government had to accept Turkey into NATO first, in order to push Turkey to be involved in the MEC plan. In light of this, SACEUR–NATO’s Southern Flank was the apparent command that suited Turkey after its accession into NATO. It is worth mentioning here that the British deputy of SACEUR, Field Marshall Bernard Montgomery, argued that ‘it would be impossible for Carney to control concurrently a battle on the Italian front and another on the Turkish one.’⁷⁷⁸ Historian Chourchoulis also notes that ‘Montgomery believed that “when the MEC is finally set up, this fourth command of SHAPE could be transferred en bloc to the MEC, where it really belongs”’.⁷⁷⁹

On the other hand, Churchill himself seemed likely to agree to Turkey being placed under SACEUR–NATO’s Southern Flank when he suggested that the commander of SACEUR also command a British Headquarter of the MEC plan.⁷⁸⁰ Under this condition that the commander of SACEUR also be commander of the MEC plan as Churchill proposed, if Turkey agreed to participate in the MEC plan, whether or not it had been accepted into NATO, Turkey would be placed under and commanded by SACEUR. On top of this, the British initiatives towards establishing a nucleus of the MEC plan in

⁷⁷⁸ Dionysios Chourchoulis, ‘High Hopes, Bold Aims, Limited Results: Britain and the Establishment of the NATO Mediterranean Command, 1950–1953’, *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 20:3 (2009) 434-452 (442).

⁷⁷⁹ *Ibid.*; see also TNA, WO 216/498, CIGS/BM/43/5430, CIGS Marshal Slim to CAS Air Marshal Slessor and First Sea Lord Admiral McGrigor, 28 January 1952.

⁷⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

Cyprus, and its suggestion for Turkey and Greece to be included under Admiral Carney of NATO's Southern Flank, were supported by the United States. Turkey eventually joined NATO on 18 February 1952, together with Greece. It is worth mentioning here that, even after Turkey officially entered NATO and was involved in arrangements to create a nucleus of the MEC plan, this regional pact still failed to be established successfully. According to Athanassopoulou, 'differences of approach with the Americans and the lack of interest by the Arab countries led finally to the collapse of the idea [the MEC plan] in 1953.'⁷⁸¹

Conclusion

It cannot be denied that, from the point of view of Britain, the MEC plan was a significant reason that led to the successful accession of Turkey and Greece to NATO. This study however has demonstrated that the MEC plan was not the only prominent feature in the story of this admission. The internal dynamic, namely the inexperience of new Foreign Secretary Morrison, was also a contributory factor that should not be neglected or regarded as a side issue. The fact is, he played an appreciable role in the accession of Greece and Turkey into NATO. His predecessor Bevin had maintained the position that Greece and Turkey must remain out of NATO, even though the MEC plan was becoming increasingly difficult to form throughout 1950 and until his resignation in early March 1951.

⁷⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 228. For more information on the fall of the British regional defence plans of the MEC, see Bilgin, pp. 180-225.

Morrison, however, within merely two months of becoming Foreign Secretary, yielded to external pressure by agreeing to grant Greece and Turkey full membership of NATO. Morrison hoped that this diplomacy would help Britain settle the differences with both the United States and Turkish governments and result in these two powers supporting the MEC plan. As a result, the Cabinet authorities agreed to approve Morrison's suggestion to acquiesce to the American proposal. The British government subsequently abandoned its long-standing opposition to full Greek and Turkish accession to NATO and started a new policy in support of this aim.

This shift in British policy regarding the admission of Greece and Turkey into NATO took place when Morrison was Foreign Secretary. Changes in British strategic thinking could be seen as another significant factor that contributed to Britain's eventual acceptance of Greece and Turkey to NATO. It is generally accepted that this new direction in British policy towards the issue of admission was initiated by Morrison because he wanted to ease the difficulties of forming the MEC. Nevertheless, it still failed to be founded. It is interesting to point out here that Bevin had endured the difficulties in forming the MEC far longer than Morrison, but he did not succumb to either the United States or Turkish governments' pressure or change his decision over the place of Greece and Turkey in NATO.

Bevin's determination to sustain his opposition to Greek and Turkish admission was influenced by his long entanglement with this issue since NATO's inception years. This experience enriched Bevin with deep knowledge of affairs involving Turkey, Greece and NATO. Hence, Bevin had done his best in keeping Greece and Turkey out of NATO as

long as he could and sought rather to obtain a unilateral United States guarantee to their defence. Bevin maintained this strategy until he left office in March 1951. Even after Bevin's retirement, the other British authorities, for instance the Foreign Office officials and the COS, continued to pursue this strategy. It seemed that although efforts towards the establishment of the MEC had almost reached an impasse, Bevin and the other British authorities remained optimistic that this problem could be worked out by demanding the United States' direct commitment to Greece and Turkey. Morrison, however, less than three months after he came into office, easily gave in to pressure from the Turkish and United States governments.

CONCLUSION:

The British Foreign Office – Rejection and Acceptance of Greek and Turkish membership of NATO

This thesis has analysed the admission of Greece and Turkey into NATO, which involved two significant themes – rejection and acceptance – from the perspective of Britain, in particular the Foreign Office and its two Foreign Secretaries, Bevin and Morrison. As shown in Chapter One, Greece and Turkey were of great importance to British strategic interests in the Mediterranean and Middle East and were among the two earliest ‘victims’ of Soviet encroachment. Considering these facts, the British decision not to invite Greece and Turkey to join NATO was highly questionable. This led this study to look for other motivations for Britain’s policy, in particular from the point of view of Foreign Secretary Bevin and the Foreign Office.

It is worth noting here that it was Bevin who initiated the idea of NATO and the one who put immense effort into its establishment. According to historian Martin H. Folly, it was Bevin who initiated negotiations for creating NATO in the face of considerable American reluctance and the one who kept the idea alive from March to July 1948, when there was also a lack of enthusiasm for the plan from elsewhere.⁷⁸² Similarly, Lord Ismay stated in his memoir that Bevin ‘was one of the principle architects of the North Atlantic Alliance.’⁷⁸³ Therefore, an approach which focused on the internal perspective

⁷⁸² Folly, ‘Breaking the Vicious Circle: Britain, the United States and the Genesis of the North Atlantic Treaty’, p. 60.

⁷⁸³ Lord Ismay, *The Memoirs of Lord Ismay* (London: Heinemann, 1960), p. 354. The same expression about Bevin and the Atlantic Treaty was said by the Prime Minister Attlee in his broadcast tribute to Bevin

of Britain, in particular Bevin and his Office, was appropriate in seeking to offer a comprehensive account of the issue of Greek and Turkish admission, which thus far has been missing from the literature and historiography of this topic.

In regard to Foreign Secretary Bevin and the matter of rejection, this study discovered two distinguishable periods in which Bevin refused to accept Greece and Turkey as members of NATO, with different reasons given in each period. Previously, historians such as Ekavi Athanassopoulou and Abdulkadir Baharçiçek have merged these two periods and put forward the same argument for both - that Greece and Turkey were excluded from NATO due to geographical considerations, the prospect of a Mediterranean pact and the British MEC plan.⁷⁸⁴ It is clear that these historians have approached the matter of rejection thematically and, in doing so, neglected its chronology. This thematic approach led these historians to neglect other factors that were far more significant than geographical considerations and the prospect of a Mediterranean pact during NATO's negotiation years. It also led them to regard the MEC as a reason for keeping Greece and Turkey outside NATO, rather than a means by which to do so, during the early years after NATO was successfully established.

With regard to the first phase of rejection, during NATO's negotiation years between 1948 and early 1949, this study has rejected geographical considerations as a factor. As expounded in Chapter Two, this reason cannot be seen as Bevin's primary motivation for rejecting Greece and Turkey when Italy, another Mediterranean country that was

after Bevin's death. See Attlee's speech enclosed in his memoir, Clement R. Attlee, *As it Happened* (London: Odhams Press, 1954), p. 237.

⁷⁸⁴ For this literature, see the introduction of this dissertation, pp. 19-20.

supposed to be included in a Mediterranean pact, was invited to join NATO as an original member. Further scrutiny of Foreign Office files (FO 371) and Bevin's private papers (FO 800), found two key factors that shaped the British decision not to invite Greece and Turkey to join NATO during its formative years: Bevin's preference for forming NATO swiftly which was impaired by delays during negotiations and the Cyprus dispute between Greece and Turkey. It is important to point out here that these aspects were not studied by previous historians in justifying Britain's attitude towards inviting Greece and Turkey to join NATO.

In FO 371 file 71458, it is noted that the reason Bevin was eager to form NATO promptly was the increasing Communist threat in Czechoslovakia, Finland and Norway.⁷⁸⁵ Furthermore, in FO 371 file 78328, Bevin asserted that NATO could help Britain recover from its economic and military weakness,⁷⁸⁶ adding to his determination to avoid any further delays. However the many delays that occurred during the negotiation years - including American hesitation to form NATO quickly and trouble over Italian and Algerian membership - diminished Bevin's ability to form NATO as soon as possible. Bevin therefore had no intention of inviting Greece and Turkey to join NATO, even though they were of great importance to British strategic interests in the Mediterranean and Middle East. Bevin's conduct was based on two circumstances: first, Greece and Turkey were in dispute over Cyprus at the time; and second, during the negotiations the United States and Canadian representatives strongly rejected the

⁷⁸⁵ See TNA, FO 371/71458/N 3001/3001/63/G, 'Establishment of an Atlantic Security System', From Foreign Office to Washington, 10 March 1948.

⁷⁸⁶ TNA, FO 371/78328/R 1843/1072/67/G, 'Turkish interest in proposed North Atlantic Pact (Record of conversation with S of S)', Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs (conversation), No. 26, Top Secret, 14 February 1949, pp. 2-3.

prospect of any countries suffering from domestic difficulties becoming members of NATO.⁷⁸⁷ Bevin, who was keen that the arrangements for NATO were not delayed any further, was convinced that inviting Greece and Turkey to join would bring about another possible delay to its formation due to these two abovementioned circumstances.

Bevin's concern about the possibility of a new delay if Greece and Turkey were invited to join NATO is clearly shown in his answer to Turkish Foreign Minister Sadak during their conversation in February 1949.⁷⁸⁸ However, it should be noted here that Bevin did not explicitly mention that his concern was the result of the Greco-Turkish Cyprus dispute, neither to Sadak nor to Stikker (Foreign Minister of the Netherlands), who had also asked Bevin why Greece and Turkey were not considered eligible to join NATO. Bevin used vague terms such as 'Turkey and Greece might present some [political] difficulties' to explain his decision to Stikker.⁷⁸⁹ Given that Cyprus was the only issue present at that time which made Greece and Turkey hostile to one another, this study therefore believes it was this rupture over Cyprus that Bevin was alluding to in his conversation with Stikker.

By adding these reasons to the current literature – namely Bevin's personal aim to form NATO swiftly and the Cyprus dispute between Greece and Turkey – this study has

⁷⁸⁷ See TNA, CAB 129/23, CP (48) 6, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 'The First Aim of British Foreign Policy', 4 January 1948.

⁷⁸⁸ See TNA, FO 371/78328/R 1843/1072/67/G, 'Turkish interest in proposed North Atlantic Pact (Record of conversation with S of S)', Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs (conversation), No. 26, Top Secret, 14 February 1949.

⁷⁸⁹ See TNA, FO 800/448, Record of Meeting on Thursday, 27th January, 1949, at 10:30 A.M. (Full Session), p. 8.

provided a new angle to the reasons for Britain's rejection of their membership. This study has also elucidated Bevin's pivotal role in the process of forming NATO and his significant efforts in ensuring its prompt and successful formation, and in doing so has called into question the assertion of historians such as Lawrence A. Kaplan and Peter Foot - that the United States played a more crucial part than Britain during NATO's negotiation years.⁷⁹⁰

For the second phase, after NATO was established, this study has focused on Bevin's continual rejection of Greek and Turkish membership of NATO between late 1949 and early 1951. This study has a different opinion to previous historians who have discussed this period, such as Ekavi Athannassopoulou, Behçet K. Yeşilbursa, S. Victor Papacosma, Dionysios Chourchoulis and Mehmet Gonlubol, who posit that the MEC plan was the main reason Bevin and the Foreign Office rejected Turkish applications for membership of NATO in 1950.⁷⁹¹ As explicated in Chapter Three, this study has propounded the idea that the MEC plan was used as a means of preventing Turkey and its security partner, Greece, from joining NATO rather than a reason that they couldn't join. This is derived from a thorough analysis of the Foreign Office files of FO 371 (file 87948, 87949 and 87975), Bevin's Private Papers of FO 800 (file 457 and 477) and the Cabinet Office Papers (CAB 131/9). After paying painstaking attention to these primary materials, several salient aspects of the MEC plan were identified that uphold this hypothesis and demonstrate that it from the outset of the MEC plan the British government did not consider either Greece or Turkey as potential members. Only after the Turkish government had formally requested its membership of NATO, in the first week of May

⁷⁹⁰ For this literature, see the introduction of this dissertation, pp. 17-18.

⁷⁹¹ For this literature, see the introduction of this dissertation, pp. 20-21.

1950, did Bevin abruptly come to the decision to bring Turkey into the MEC, a decision which was announced to the public in mid-May 1950 without first informing Turkey.

This study saw Bevin's *démarche* - to bring Turkey into the MEC plan - as a subtle way of ensuring Turkey remained out of NATO. The reason behind this decision is believed to be the Cyprus dispute between Greece and Turkey. Extensive scrutiny of the Foreign Office files of FO 371 (file 78329, 78427, 87722, 87723, 87948, 87949 and 87951), Bevin's Private Papers of FO 800 (file 507), Colonial Office Papers of CO (file CO 67) and Defence Ministry Papers of DEFE (file DEFE 5) found that the Greco-Turkish Cyprus dispute is seemingly the most plausible reason for Bevin's continued rejection of Greek and Turkish membership of NATO. Bevin, who had dealt with the increasing difficulties in Cyprus since 1947 and the question of NATO membership since its inception in 1948, expected that Greece and Turkey would be unable to work harmoniously in NATO due to their bitter disagreement over Cyprus. In spite of the United States government's determination to bring Greece and Turkey into NATO and place them together under the forthcoming Southern Flank, Bevin believed these two countries would bring more problems to NATO than they would benefits. This resulted in the decision to reject the second Turkish request for membership, in August 1950, and accordingly a set of reasons for the rejection were produced by the Foreign Office. Phrases like '[it] would destroy the conception of the Atlantic Pact', '[it] would spread the security risks', it could 'introduce military problems which had no relation to the main European defence theatre', and 'the existing members would be strongly opposed to any extensions of

their obligation to go to war'⁷⁹² that were used by the Foreign Office to reject the Turkish application are believed by this study to have been hinting at the Cyprus issue between Greece and Turkey. Again, Bevin and the Foreign Office did not say explicitly that their worries about Greece and Turkey being accepted as new members of NATO were due to the Cyprus issue. This omission was presumably undertaken because Bevin and the Foreign Office wanted to avoid irritating the Turkish government with their reasons for rejection.

Bevin's expectation that Greece and Turkey would refuse to cooperate in the military field due to their clash over Cyprus was vindicated in September 1950, when the Turkish Foreign Minister Koprulu told the British Ambassador Charles about Greece's disinclination to accept staff co-ordination with Turkey.⁷⁹³ This problem seemed difficult to settle, as indicated by the fact that it was repeatedly discussed during military talks between the British COS and the United States JCOS in October 1950 and in January 1951. Both agreed that the Cyprus issue could disturb Greek and Turkish cooperation as two associate member countries in the Mediterranean area.⁷⁹⁴ Due to the difficulty of getting Greece and Turkey to work jointly towards NATO defence planning in the Mediterranean, it could be true to say that the same problem could occur in NATO's

⁷⁹² See TNA, FO 371/87949/RK 1071/34, 'Turkish request that His Majesty's Government should support their bid for inclusion in the Atlantic Pact', Foreign Office minute by Sir A. Rumbold, 9 August 1950.

⁷⁹³ See TNA, FO 371/87951/RK 1071/70, 'The Turkish Government had intended re-applying for full N.A.T.O. membership in four months time but Sir N. Charles has warned them not to act precipitately', From Ankara (Sir N. Charles) to Foreign Office, 26 September 1950; TNA, FO 195/2637/1073/65/50G, From Sir Noel Charles, Ankara to Foreign Office, 26 September 1950. See also Chapter Three of this dissertation, pp. 207-209.

⁷⁹⁴ See *FRUS, 1950, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 1688, Approved Summary of Conclusions and Agreements Reached at a Meeting of the Chiefs of Staff of the United States and United Kingdom, 'Item 5', Washington, 23 October 1950; *FRUS, 1950, Western Europe*, Vol. III, p. 1691, United States Minutes of the United States–United Kingdom Political-Military Conversations, '3. Cyprus', Washington, 26 October 1950; *FRUS, 1951, The Near East and Africa*, Vol. V, p. 31, State Department Draft Minutes of Discussions at the State-Joint Chiefs of Staff Meeting, January 30, 1951, Washington, 6 February 1951. See also Chapter Four of this dissertation, pp. 237-239.

Southern Flank. Thus, the collaboration between Greece and Turkey in the Southern Flank of NATO seemed doomed to fail. This might have encouraged Bevin to do his best to prevent them from joining NATO and explain his refusal to accept the Turkish appeals for membership of NATO. Bevin remained resolute in this decision until he left office in early March 1951 due to his poor health.

By demonstrating that the Cyprus issue further encouraged Bevin and the Foreign Office to continue their policy of rejecting Greek and Turkish membership of NATO, this thesis has produced a novel understanding of the issue. What is more, it has also conveyed a message to historians such as Dionysios Chourchoulis, Bruce R. Kuniholm and George R. Harris, who only paid attention to the Cyprus problem *after* Greece and Turkey had been admitted to NATO, in particular the 1955 Cyprus Emergency,⁷⁹⁵ that this Greco-Turkish problem also had an effect long before their admission into NATO.

The second subject in this issue is the matter of acceptance. The significant change in policy of the British government - from complete rejection to supporting full Greek and Turkish membership of NATO - happened in May 1951, during Morrison's foreign secretaryship. In existing literature on Greek and Turkish accession to NATO from the point of view of Britain, the MEC plan has been the main focus of historians. Mehmet Gonlubol, Dionysios Chourchoulis, Ekavi Athannassopoulou, Geoffrey Lewis and Behçet K. Yeşilbursa, for instance, contend that the obstacles to forming the MEC had pushed the British government to accept Greece and Turkey as new members of NATO.⁷⁹⁶

Those obstacles were: that the Turkish government urged the British government to

⁷⁹⁵ For this literature, see the introduction of this dissertation, pp. 21-22.

⁷⁹⁶ For this literature, see the introduction of this dissertation, pp. 22-23.

accept Turkey in NATO first, before Turkey accepted its obligations as part of the British MEC plan; that the Egyptian government was resolute in its position that the Anglo-Egyptian dispute over the Suez Canal Zone and the unity of Egypt and the Sudan must be settled prior to any arrangements for Egypt's participation in the MEC plan being made; and that the United States government remained non-committal, notably in terms of military support, towards the British MEC plan. This study perceives the difficulties with these three governments as external factors.

With regard to Foreign Secretary Morrison and his eventual acceptance of Greece and Turkey into NATO to assist the formation of the MEC, this study has not rejected such external factors. As elucidated in Chapter Four, this study has instead focused on Morrison's role in the issue of admission, which is perceived as an internal factor. In conjunction with careful appraisal of private papers, diaries and memoirs by Morrison's colleagues in the Labour government detailing their criticism of Morrison's conduct as Foreign Secretary, as well as the Foreign Office files of FO 371 (file 90130, 90131, 90133, 95002, 95285, 95286, 96539, 96541 and 96542), Foreign Office files of FO 141 (file 1442), Defence Ministry Papers of DEFE (file DEFE 4 and DEFE 5), Cabinet Office Papers of CAB (CAB 128/19, 128/20, 129/45 and 131/11), Prime Minister's Office Papers of PREM 8 (file 1379) and *HANSARD*, this study has found that Morrison's ineptitude in handling difficulties faced during efforts to form the MEC, in particular the problems with the Egyptian government, led him to accept full Greek and Turkish admission to NATO. Such a *démarche* was undertaken in order to obtain the United States' help in convincing the Egyptian government to accept the British MEC plan.

Morrison came to the Foreign Office with different characteristics and a different diplomatic stance from his predecessor Bevin. His lack of experience in handling foreign affairs, his ignorance of issues that involved the MEC, Egypt, Turkey, Greece, Cyprus and NATO and his lack of care for developing a long-term strategy meant he easily yielded to outside pressures from the United States and Turkish governments that were pushing for full admission of Greece and Turkey into NATO. Morrison's decision to follow America's lead on this issue was made less than three months after his appointment as Foreign Secretary. Therefore, it cannot be denied that the British government changed its long-standing opposition to the accession of Greece and Turkey to NATO after Morrison came into office as the new Foreign Secretary. In other words, Morrison's incompetence as Foreign Secretary as a result of his lack of experience in foreign affairs is another important factor in the admission of Greece and Turkey into NATO. This internal dynamic is seen by this study as an additional factor justifying Britain's eventually agreement to grant full membership of NATO to Greece and Turkey and represents a new contribution to the literature on this issue.

Overall, by demonstrating that Bevin had contributed significantly to Britain's rejection of Greece and Turkey from NATO, both before and after it was established, while Morrison subsequently played an appreciable role in the full accession of Greece and Turkey to NATO, this thesis has produced an original set of arguments to be added to the literature discussing the issue of their admission. The originality of this thesis is in its emphasis on the role of the two Foreign Secretaries, Bevin and Morrison, the delays faced in forming NATO and the rift between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus. This study has shown that Bevin was resolute in his opposition to Greek and Turkish entry into

NATO because he believed the Cyprus conflict would have brought about a further delay to its creation. He also believed this would have affected Greece and Turkey's commitment to military operations in NATO's Southern Flank and affected NATO's stability as a whole. It was ultimately his successor, Morrison, who came to the decision to acquiesce to the American proposal, without considering thoroughly the military implications of this admission. Morrison's intention was merely to keep the MEC project alive in the face of unfavourable responses from the United States, Turkey and Egypt. Unfortunately, the MEC still failed to be founded successfully and remained on paper by the time Greece and Turkey eventually joined NATO, on 18 February 1952, and was terminated for good in the following year.

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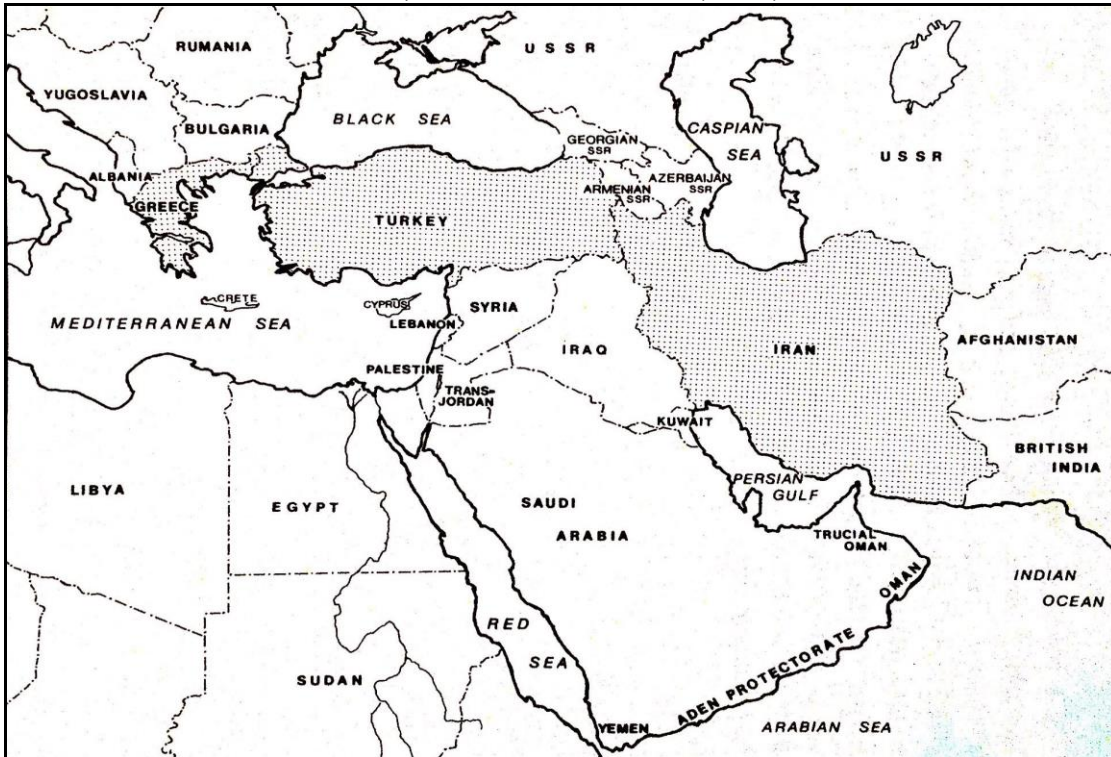
The New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com>

The Sydney Morning Herald, <http://trove.nla.gov.au>

The Times

Appendix A

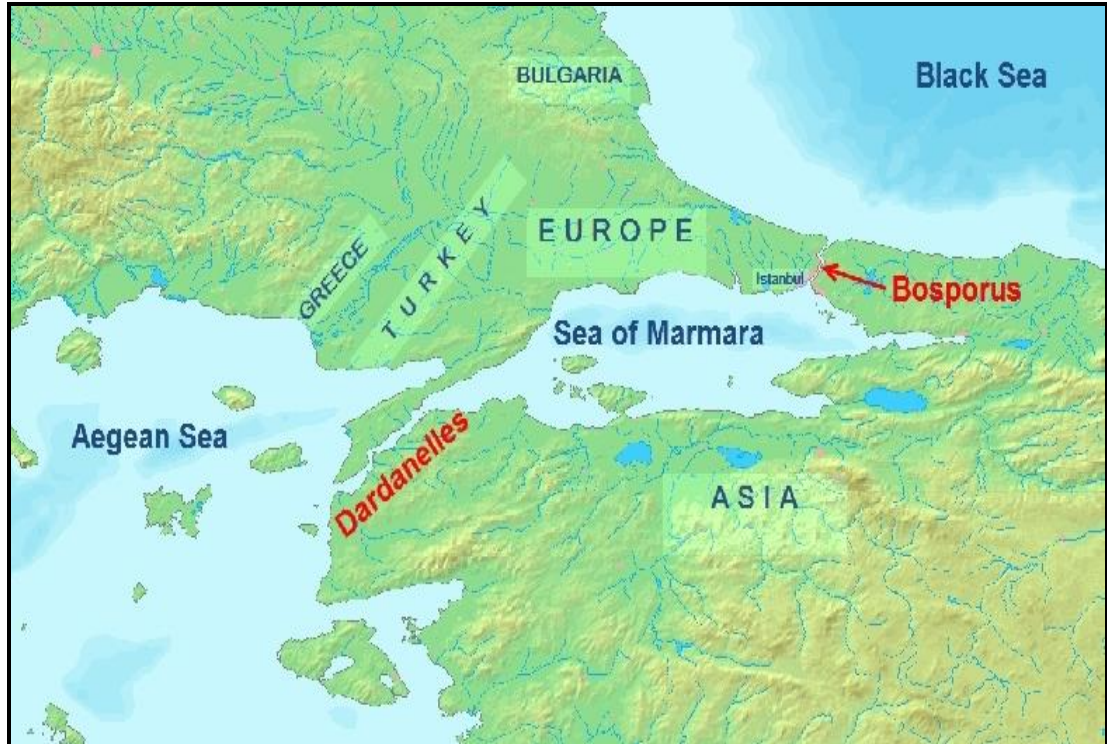
Map 1: The Northern Tier (1946)



[From Bruce R. Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey and Greece* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. xiv]

Appendix B

Map 2: Dardanelles and Bosphorus



[Adapted from www.globalresearch.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/turkish-straits-2.gif.jpeg]

Appendix C

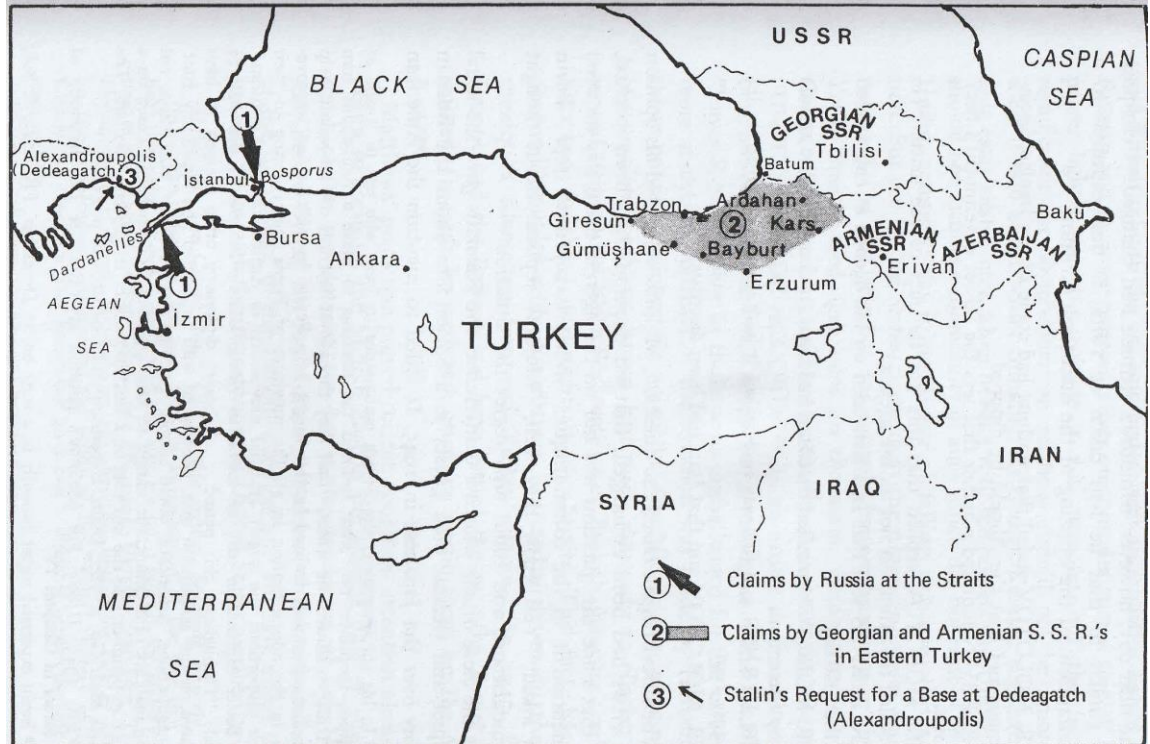
Map 3: The Mediterranean Area



[Adapted from www.thewallmaps.com/continents/mediterranean_political/]

Appendix D

Map 4: Soviet claims on Eastern Turkey and demands on the Straits (1945-1946)



[From Bruce R. Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey and Greece* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 289]

Appendix E

The Third Force memos

TOP SECRET

C.P. (48) 6

4th January, 1948

CABINET

THE FIRST AIM OF BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY

Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

It must be recognised that the Soviet Government has formed a solid political and economic block behind a line running from the Baltic along the Oder, through Trieste to the Black Sea. There is no prospect in the immediate future that we shall be able to re-establish and maintain normal relations with European countries behind that line. As I have explained in a separate paper these countries are dominated by the Communists, although they are only a minority in each country. Indeed we shall be hard put to it to stem the further encroachment of the Soviet tide. It is not enough to reinforce the physical barriers which still guard our Western civilisation. We must also organise and consolidate the ethical and spiritual forces inherent in this Western civilisation of which we are the chief protagonists. This in my view can only be done by creating some form of union in Western Europe, whether of a formal or informal character, backed by the Americas and the Dominions.

The Situation

In another paper I have attempted to give my colleagues a sober and factual account of Russian policy. It is clear that from secure entrenchments behind their line the Russians are exerting a constantly increasing pressure which threatens the whole fabric of the West. In some Western countries the danger is still latent but in German, France, Trieste, Italy and Greece the conflicting forces are already at grips with one another. In each country the issue is still in doubt and we must act resolutely if we are to prevail. The Soviet Government has based its policy on the expectation that Western Europe will sink into economic chaos and they may be relied upon to place every possible obstacle in the path of American aid and of Western European recovery. Our course is equally clear. I have done and will continue to do all I can to bring the Marshall Plan to fruition. But essential though it is, progress in the economic field will not in itself suffice to call a halt to the Russian threat. Political and, indeed, spiritual forces must be mobilised in our defence.

The Western Union

I believe therefore that we should seek to form with the backing of the Americas and the Dominions a Western democratic system comprising, if possible, Scandinavia, the Low Countries, France, Portugal, Italy and Greece. As soon as circumstances permit we should of course wish also to include Spain and Germany, without whom no Western system can be complete. This may seem a somewhat fanciful conception, but events are moving fast and the sense of a common danger drives countries to welcome tomorrow solutions which appear unpractical and unacceptable today. Almost all the countries I have listed have been nurtured on civil liberties and on the fundamental human rights. The recent proceedings of the Human

Rights Commission at Geneva have shown that of the eighteen States represented, all except Russia and three satellites were in substantial agreement with the British draft of an International Convention for the protection of these civil liberties and human rights. Moreover, most Western European countries have such recent experience of Nazi rule that they can apprehend directly what is involved in their loss. All in a greater or lesser degree sense the imminence of the Communist peril and are seeking some assurance of salvation. I believe therefore that the moment is ripe for a consolidation of Western Europe. This need not take the shape of a formal alliance, though we have an alliance with France and may conclude one with other countries. It does, however, mean close consultation with each of the Western European countries, beginning with economic questions. We in Britain can no longer stand outside Europe and insist that our problems and position are quite separate from those of our European neighbours. Our treaty relations with the various countries might differ, but between all there would be an understanding backed by power, money and resolution and bound together by the common ideals for which the Western Powers have twice in one generation shed their blood.

I am aware that the Soviet Government would react against this policy as savagely as they have done against the Marshall Plan. It would be described as an offensive alliance directed against the Soviet Union. On this point I can only say that in the situation in which we have been placed by Russian policy half measures are useless. If we are to preserve peace and our own safety at the same time, we can only do so by the mobilisation of such a moral and material force as will create confidence and energy on the one side and inspire respect and caution on the other. The alternative is to acquiesce in continued Russian infiltration and helplessly to witness the piecemeal collapse of one Western bastion after another.

The policy I have outlined will require strong British leadership in order to secure its acceptance in Europe on one hand and in Dominions and the Americas on the other. Material aid will have to come principally from the United States, but the countries of Western Europe which despise the spiritual values of America will look to us for political and moral guidance and for assistance in building up a counter attraction to the baleful tenets of communism within their borders and in recreating a healthy society wherever it has been shaken or shattered by the war. I believe that we have the resources with which to perform this task.

Provided we can organise a Western European system such as I have outlined above, backed by the power and resources of the Commonwealth and of the Americas, it should be possible to develop our own power and influence to equal that of the United States of America and the U.S.S.R. We have the material resources in the Colonial Empire, if we develop them, and by giving a spiritual lead now we should be able to carry out our task in a way which will show clearly that we are not subservient to the United States of America or to the Soviet Union.

I have already broached the conception of what I called a spiritual union of the West tentatively to Mr. Marshall and M. Bidault, both of whom seemed to react favourably without of course committing themselves. I now propose, if my colleagues agree, to ventilate the idea in public in my speech in the forthcoming Foreign Affairs Debate and thereafter to pursue it, as occasion demands, with the Governments concerned.

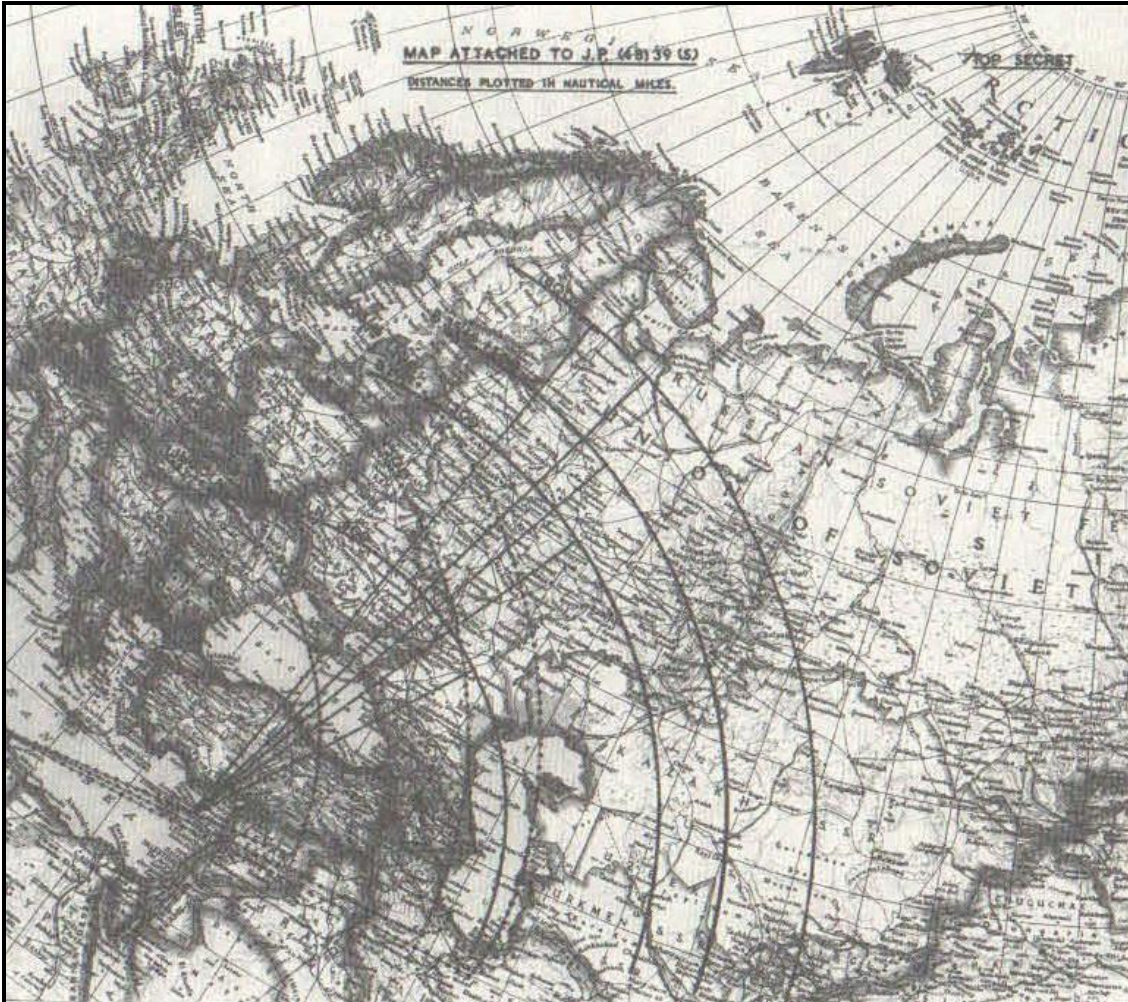
E. B.

*Foreign Office, S.W.1,
4th January, 1948.*

[Adapted from TNA, CAB 129/23, CP (48) 6, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 4 January 1948]

Appendix F

Map 5 – Map for an atomic attack



British target map for an atomic attack on the Soviet Union from bases in Cyprus, 1948, TNA, DEFE 2/1654, JP (48) 39 [From Richard J. Aldrich and John Zametica, 'The Rise and Decline of a Strategic Concept: the Middle East, 1945-51', in *British Intelligence, Strategy and the Cold War, 1945-51* ed. by Richard J. Aldrich (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 236-274 (p. 257)]