

IMPACT OF THE SAN REMO TERMS ON TURKEY AND BRITISH POLICY

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After the First World War, the victorious Allied powers were unable to dispose of the Turkish question despite months of deliberation. The rivalry of the Allied powers, particularly of Great Britain and France, over the lands of the old Ottoman Empire, the Greek occupation of Smyrna in May 1919 and the subsequent rise of the Nationalist Movement in the interior under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal ¹ which resisted the post-war Allied adjustments and defied the inability of the Ottoman government to save the country from foreign invasion, all combined to make such a treaty impossible for the Allies. When anti-Nationalist Damad Ferid Paşa, the Grand Vizier and the Sultan's son-in-law, was in power on 5 April 1920 for the fourth time, the British were confident that the Ottoman government in Constantinople was once again in their camp. In British eyes, Damad Ferid was perhaps more sincerely convinced than any other statesman of the first rank that Turkey's sole hope of salvation lay in a good understanding with Great Britain. ² Now, it was time for the Allies to complete the Turkish treaty and force Damad Ferid to sign it. The Supreme council met at San Remo on 18 April with such a purpose in mind.

At San Remo in April 1920, considerable disagreement and jealousy complicated resolution of the issues held over from the London conference

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¹ Mustafa Kemal Paşa had been the Inspector - General of the Ottoman Third Army stationed in Samsoun since April 1919. He resigned his army commission on 8 July 1919 and assumed command of the Nationalist Movement.

² FO371/6469/E5233/1/44, Rumbold to Curzon, No. 428, Constantinople 27 April 1921.

in February-March 1920.³ The main division was between those who believed that the treaty was enforceable and those who did not. In comparison to Alexandre Millerand, the French Prime Minister, Italian Premier Francesco Nitti was more moderate towards the Turks. Nitti argued against a Greek regime in Smyrna and for a wider Turkish frontier in Thrace, but he made no headway in view of the pro-Greek tendencies of Lloyd George, the British Prime Minister.⁴ The French abstained from endorsing the Italian arguments in return for British support for some of their continental policies, specifically their affairs with Germany.⁵ Lloyd George and Millerand agreed that Britain obtained a mandate over Mesopotamia and Palestine, and France over Syria.⁶ In reaching agreement at San Remo, British negotiators had completed one phase of their long and acrimonious post-war negotiations with their French counterparts.⁷ Following the award of the mandates at San Remo, Lord Curzon, the British Foreign Minister, asked Rear-Admiral Webb in Constantinople on 5 May 1920 to advise the Ottoman government to swallow their medicine as quickly as possible and then set to work to put in order such Empire as was left to them, in which task they may look for British guidance and support.⁸

The Ottoman government was invited to Paris on 10 May to receive the draft peace treaty shaped at San Remo. The Ottoman delegation included the prominent statesmen Tevfik Paşa, who was a 75 year-old diplomat by

3 Details in *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939*, First Series, vol. VIII, ed. by R. Butler and J.P.T. Bury, London, 1958. Turkish translation of the negotiations at San Remo in O. Olcay, *Sevres Andlaşmasına Doğru*, Ankara 1980, chapter III. The Turkish text of the San Remo terms in S.L. Meray and O. Olcay, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun Çöküş Belgeleri*, Ankara 1997, pp. 7-30

4 P.C. Helmreich, *From Paris to Sévres: The Partition of the Ottoman Empire at the Peace Conference of 1919-1920*, Ohio 1974, p. 309; B.C. Busch, *Mudros to Lausanne: Britain's Frontier in West Asia, 1918-1923*, New York 1976, p. 210.

5 For the disputes between the French, Italians and the British during the San Remo conference, see L. Riddell, *Intimate Diary of the Peace Conference and After 1918-1923*, London 1933, pp. 185-8.

6 The draft of the peace treaty was completed on 24 April 1920, but it would not be signed until 10 August 1920 at Sévres. The Allied programme, largely worked out at San Remo, stipulated the following: (1) Maintenance of the Sultan at Constantinople; (2) the right of the Allies to occupy European Turkey and the Straits zone; (3) the creation of an Armenian state not comprising Trebizond or Erzurum, but having access to the sea; (4) abandonment by Turkey of Syria, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Arabia and the islands of the Aegean. H.H. Cumming, *Franco-British Rivalry in the Post-War Near East: The Decline of French Influence, London 1938*, p. 98. For further information, see D. Lloyd George, *Memoirs of the Peace Conference*, vol. II, New Haven 1939, pp. 841, 862-4; Helmreich, *From Paris to Sévres*, chapter XIII; J. Nevakivi, *Britain, France and the Arab Middle East 1914-1920*, London 1969, chapter XII; E.L. Knudsen, *Great Britain, Constantinople, and the Turkish Peace Treaty 1919-1922*, London 1987, pp. 187-8; Busch, *Mudros to Lausanne*, pp. 211-2; H.N. Howard, *The Partition of Turkey: A Diplomatic History 1913-1923*, Oklahoma 1931, pp. 243-4

7 M. Kent (ed), *The Great Powers and the End of the Ottoman Empire*, London 1984, p. 190. See also C.J. Lowe and M.L. Dockrill, *The Mirage of Power*, vol. II, London 1972, p. 364.

8 Br. Doc. XIII: 59, First Series, ed. by R. Butler and J.P.T. Bury, London 1963. Curzon to Webb, No. 406, FO 5 May 1920.

profession and an ex-Grand Vizier, Reşid Bey, the Minister of the Interior, Dr. Cemil Paşa, the Minister of Public Works, Fahreddin Bey, the Minister of Public Instruction, and Mahmud Muhtar Paşa, who was a retired ambassador and had lived in retirement in Switzerland since 1915. This delegation in its existing shape was almost certainly bound to question a Lloyd George-type harsh treaty. Its subordinate personnel contained several officials credited with the Nationalist sympathies, such as the son of Tevfik Paşa, Major İsmail Hakkı. Tevfik Paşa, the head of the delegation, was certainly subject to the Nationalist influence of his personal entourage, but the British seemed relaxed since Tevfik Paşa was attached to the Sultanate and an experienced diplomat who at his best had given proof of soundness of judgement. Tevfik Paşa's position, however, *vis-à-vis* Reşid Bey was ambiguous. Reşid had implied before his departure that he would be the business head. Reşid was regarded by the British as dangerously clever and possibly on French pay. Dr. Cemil Paşa, in comparison to Reşid Bey, was trusted much more by the British. Mahmud Muhtar Paşa was almost certainly subject to Nationalist influences.⁹

On the afternoon of 11 May the draft treaty was officially transmitted in Paris to these representatives. The President of the council made a very short speech pointing out that owing to Turks' action the war had been prolonged and many lives lost, and the Allied powers were determined to prevent any recurrence of military action on the part of the Turks. He informed the Ottoman delegation that they would have a month in which to consider the terms.¹⁰ After the San Remo terms were given, Tevfik Paşa informed the government about the hopelessness of getting the Greeks out of Asia Minor and the incompatibility of the peace terms with the principles of independence. The Ottoman government had been left little room to manoeuvre. They could only ask for a delay until July to consider them, a tactic which was probably the result of Turkish hopes that the long delay

⁹ Details in W.S. Edmonds' minute of 7 April in FO371/5045/E2746/3/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 340, Constantinople 5 April 1920; FO371/6469/E5233/1/44, Rumbold to Curzon, No. 428, Constantinople 27 April 1921; FO371/5047/E3671/3/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 494, Constantinople 9 April 1920; FO371/5239/E3952/3537/44, Webb to Curzon, No. 506, Constantinople 28 April 1920; FO371/5239/E3956/3537/44, Webb to Curzon, No. 507, Constantinople 28 April 1920; FO371/5239/E4058/3537/44, Webb to Curzon, No. 526, Constantinople 1 May 1920; FO371/5166/E4278/262/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 531, Int. report for week ending 8 April, Constantinople 14 April 1920
¹⁰ Br. Doc. XIII: 61, Derby to Curzon, No. 568, Paris 11 May 1920

in drawing up the document was evidence of inter-Allied strains.¹¹ In other words, the Turks had nothing else but to procrastinate in signing of the treaty and hope to gain some advantages, if possible, from the inter-Allied rivalry.

The severity of the San Remo terms caused Damad Ferid Paşa's government and the British the greatest difficulties. Yet the shocking effect of the Allied occupation of Constantinople in March 1920 and the announcement of the San Remo terms a month later both prompted the formation of the *de facto* government of the Grand National Assembly (GNA) of the Nationalists at Angora on 23 April, a rival government to that of the Sultan. The Nationalist organisation in Angora did not declare the Sultan-Caliph deposed, but called him an Allied prisoner to be rescued from captivity.¹² The British were clever enough to understand that the leaders at Angora were using the Caliphate as a strategic manoeuvre to gain the support of the Muslim world. The Foreign Office members denied the complete loyalty claimed by the Angora government regarding the Sultan-Caliph and the logic of loyalty to the Sultan himself, but not his government.¹³ They were also disturbed due to the fact that the Angora government worked large-scale to win other Muslim people to their struggle by emphasising an anti-British motive, a course which was very likely to sound a chord in India and the Middle East, where Muslims had been having difficulties with British intervention.¹⁴ The Nationalist newspapers published in the interior were carrying a violent anti-Entente theme directed to some extent against the French in Cilicia and Syria, but mainly against the British.¹⁵ In addition, with the newly emerging Bolshevik Rus-

11 See General Milne's opinion in Busch, *Mudros to Lausanne*, p. 213.

12 See M. Onar, *Atatürk'ün Kurtuluş Savaşı Yazışmaları*, vol. II, document no. 835 (25 April 1920), Ankara 1995. See also FO371/5049/E5858/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 733, Constantinople 22 May 1920, enclosure 2 in No. 1; FO371/5051/E6944/3/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 815, Constantinople 10 June 1920.

13 FO Minutes in FO371/5051/E6952/3/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 834, Constantinople 12 June 1920.

14 Mustafa Kemal was in constant communication with Emir Feisal, through the Kurdish chief, Ajem Paşa, on Pan-Islamic grounds. For the rumoured co-operation between Mustafa Kemal and Emir Feisal against the Allied policy of expansion, the rumour of a *jihad* (holy war), and the Nationalists' spreading of disaffection among the Indian troops in Constantinople, see CAB24/108, C.P. 1587, 'A monthly review of revolutionary movements', No. 20, June 1920.

15 For example, *Millet Yolu* (The Way of the People), the Nationalist newspaper published in Brusa, announced on 17 May that the distinguished religious authorities had proclaimed '*jihad*' against the British and Hellenes, enemies of the religion, as well as against Damad Ferid Paşa, the enemy of the country and all his acolytes. FO371/5051/E6952/3/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 834, Constantinople 12 June 1920.

sia, the Nationalists would make a common cause—the necessity to stop western intervention.¹⁶ During the talks over the peace treaty on 22 May at the GNA, Hamdullah Subhi of Adalia suggested that the Nationalists should get in touch with Bulgaria in order to prevent the Greeks from entering Thrace and with the Turks in Russia to fight against the British.¹⁷

The policy adopted on the Turkish question caused a great amount of dissension and uneasiness among the British cabinet members who had already been further strained over the question of Irish home rule and were already very tired of dealing with tensions in Iran, Egypt and Palestine.¹⁸ Most Near Eastern policy-makers did not fail to realise that the drastic nature of peace was likely to throw the elements in Constantinople who had hitherto opposed the Nationalists into their arms and render the signing of the treaty even more impossible. The first person with ardent opposition to a harsh treaty was Edwin Montagu, the Secretary of State for India. Up to the last moment in which decisions were about to be taken at San Remo, Montagu resisted. He drew up a memorandum on 9 April for circulation to the San Remo conference and recalled the Prime Minister's declaration of January 1918 and his reference to this on 26 February 1920 that in fulfilment of their pledge the British must leave Thrace, including Adrianople, and Smyrna under Turkish sovereignty. Montagu also stressed the view that, apart from the pledge, the proposed terms could not be permanent and could not be enforced. But Lloyd George would not give in.¹⁹ Besides Montagu, the military, too, resisted. Winston Churchill, the Secretary of State for War, drew attention to how the British would cover the expenses of enforcing such a treaty.²⁰ Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, the post-war Chief of the Imperial General Staff, confided his anger to his diary: the "Frocks (politicians)" had again lost their heads over a policy completely out of touch with reality.²¹ Even Lord Curzon who described himself as 'an unswerving critic and opponent' of the Turks, said that with

16 FO371/5048/E5582/3/44, Milne to FO, No. 1. 8676, Constantinople 27 May 1920.

17 FO371/5071/E8567/262/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 984, Int. report for week ending 1 July, Constantinople 8 July 1920.

18 Helmreich, *From Paris to Sèvres*, p. 317; Knudsen, *Great Britain*, p. 188.

19 S.D. Waley, *Edwin Montagu*, London 1964, pp. 244-6. For Lloyd George's speech of 5 January 1918, see Lloyd George, *Memoirs*, II, p. 809. For Montagu's memorandum of 9 April, see CAB24/103, C.P. 1046, Secretary of State for India to Hankey, 9 April 1920.

20 Knudsen, *Great Britain*, pp. 195-6.

21 Busch, *Mudros to Lausanne*, p. 211.

the Greeks in Smyrna and Greek divisions carrying out Prime Minister Eleutherios Venizelos's plan of marching about Asia Minor and fighting the Turks everywhere, "I know this to be impossible." ²²

But Lloyd George was confident that if the Greeks were adequately supported, they could undertake to enforce the treaty in Thrace and Asia Minor. ²³ He had replies for Montagu and the military. As far as Montagu was concerned, to break his case was, no doubt, difficult; however, Montagu had long been suspected by many Conservatives as dangerously pro-Indian in his political views, and there were some who openly declared that this could be explained by Montagu's own racial antecedents. ²⁴ Lloyd George's reply to the military, on the other hand, was formed in the words told Lord Riddell, the British Press reporter, on 26 June: "... the military are against the Greeks. They always have been. They favour the Turks. The military are confirmed Tories. It is the Tory policy to support the Turks". ²⁵

Ignoring the opposition, on 29 April 1920 Lloyd George appeared before the House of Commons and cheerfully spoke: "We have to guard the Straits-that is our charge-Palestine and Mesopotamia, including Mosul; the French have got to protect Cilicia; and the Italians undertake to protect the district of Adalia". He concluded that the conference of San Remo 'marked a new step in this convalescence'. ²⁶

The voices of opposition had been stifled, and they were not merely in his cabinet. The Italians had already showed their uneasiness during the conference. While confirming France's adherence to the provisions of the San Remo terms, the outspoken language used by Millerand, on the other hand, carried no expression of opinion as to the value of the agreement reached. ²⁷ Nevertheless, in a month's time, General Gouraud, the French

22 M.L. Smith, *Ionian Vision: Greece in Asia Minor 1919-1922*, London 1973, p. 123.

23 Lowe and Dockrill, *Mirage*, II, p. 367; Smith, *Ionian Vision*, p. 121.

24 R. Blake, *The Unknown Prime Minister: The Life and Times of Andrew Bonar Law 1858-1923*, London 1955, p. 421.

25 Riddell, *Intimate Diary*, p. 208

26 Cumming, *Franco-British Rivalry*, pp. 98-9.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 99.

High Commissioner in Syria, arranged for, and his Secretary-General Robert de Caix negotiated an armistice with Mustafa Kemal for a twenty-day cease-fire to go into effect on 30 May.²⁸ According to the article in the Paris edition of the *Chicago Tribune*, the armistice occurred because the British government insisted on recognising the Soviet government in Russia by means of the conversations in London between Krassine and Lloyd George.²⁹ This actually sounded like an excuse more than a reason. However, this much was certain that whatever reason the French had for such an action, a great power had made an agreement with the Nationalists, and this was a victory for Mustafa Kemal, constituting a type of unannounced *de facto* recognition of the Angora government. The signing of the cease-fire was also a blow both to Allied unity and the legitimacy of the Constantinople government.³⁰

The Damad Ferid Paşa government was shocked at the provisions of the treaty. The Sultan and his administration would be placed in an extraordinarily difficult position seeking to impose on the Nationalists in Asia Minor and Thrace a treaty which everyone alike considered unjust.³¹ The peace terms were so unfavourable that even if he signed the treaty, Damad Ferid could not hope to gain support from Turkish public opinion.³² At a meeting on 10 May Damad Ferid Paşa told Admiral de Robeck, the British High Commissioner in Constantinople, that the Constantinople government would never consent to the loss of Thrace and Smyrna and was

28 Br. Doc. XIII: 75, Grahame to Curzon, No. 663, Paris 4 June 1920 and Br. Doc. XIII: 76, Robeck to Curzon, No. 654, Constantinople 4 June 1920. See also Knudsen, *Great Britain*, p. 201. The French abandoned Cilicia, the subject of conflict with Italy in 1917, as the fighting with Mustafa Kemal's Nationalist army was proving a severe strain on her resources. Lowe and Dockrill, *Mirage*, II, p. 364.

29 FO371/5049/E5869/3/44, Derby to Curzon, No. 661, Paris 4 June 1920. In May a Russian Trade Delegation headed by Kameneff and Krassin arrived in London. Further information in H. Nicolson, *Curzon: The Last Phase 1919-1925*, London 1937, pp. 203-10.

30 Helmreich, *From Paris to Sévres*, p. 316.

31 FO371/5048/E5401/3/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 627, Constantinople 27 May 1920.

32 For example, even the Entente Liberal Party (ELP), which served as a counter-weight to the Nationalist Movement in a manner much like their opposition to the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) which had governed Turkey before and during the First World War, eagerly protested the harshness of the peace terms, especially on the basis of the culpability of the CUP for Turkey's entry into the war. FO371/5048/E5427/3/44, Webb to Curzon, No. 672, Constantinople 13 May 1920. At the meeting of 21 May the resolutions were adopted under auspices of the ELP to appeal for reconsideration of the peace terms, which were handed to Sir Andrew Ryan by Rıza Tevfik Bey, who then expressed the abhorrence of the methods of the CUP, and the existing National Movement methods, from which he and his friends dissociated themselves utterly. FO371/5050/E6635/3/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 765, Constantinople 27 May 1920.

met with the not unnatural rejoinder that, in that case, it was difficult to understand why he was fighting the Nationalists. That was the whole matter in a nut shell.³³ Robeck did not justify the peace treaty whatsoever, but he reminded Damad Ferid that neither he nor his predecessor, Rear-Admiral Webb, had betrayed him in terms of giving any misrepresentations of a soft treaty.³⁴ But to Damad Ferid Paşa, a treaty which deprived Turkey of her arms and her legs would be rigorous enough in all conscience, even though it left a head and trunk; but a treaty which deprived her of Smyrna and Thrace, struck at vital parts of the head and trunk as well, and such a treaty was something more than rigorous.³⁵ That such an admittance was made by the head of the Ottoman administration was actually a means for understanding the degree of the stress in Turkish circles due to the peace treaty.

Probably to avoid bloodshed, the Grand Vizier tended to maintain the authority of his government over the small remaining area and to leave no peaceful means untried to secure at least technical recognition of it further afield. Although Damad Ferid Paşa denied it in front of Robeck, Nureddin Paşa, formerly Governor of Smyrna, visited Mustafa Kemal to negotiate, with the knowledge of Damad Ferid.³⁶ But Kemal would not tolerate the Constantinople government not ceasing hostilities towards the Nationalist Movement and not accepting the participation of the Nationalists in the negotiations with the Allies for the peace treaty.³⁷ In addition, both the Sultan and Damad Ferid made efforts to ameliorate the peace terms. Through an individual appeal made on 27 May to the King of England, the Sultan,

33 FO371/5049/E5858/3/44 (FO406/43/E5858/3/44), Robeck to Curzon, No. 733, Constantinople 22 May 1920.

34 When Damad Ferid Paşa was considered to be a candidate for the Grand Vizierate, the British representatives in Constantinople were strictly instructed, by the Foreign Office, not to bring to mind of Damad Ferid's expectations of a lenient treaty. Br. Doc. XIII; 52, Hardinge to Robeck, No. 355, FO 20 April 1920. On 1 April, a member of Admiral Webb's staff impressed on Damad Ferid most strongly that the change in the government would bring no alteration to the general lines of the peace. Reşid Bey was similarly warned, though in his case the French displayed some anxiety not to discourage him completely. FO371/5047/E4407/3/44, Webb to Curzon, No. 575, Constantinople 22 April 1920.

35 FO371/5050/E6636/3/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 766, Constantinople 27 May 1920.

36 FO371/5049/E6376/3/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 794, Constantinople 5 June 1920; FO371/5049/E5858/3/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 733, Constantinople 22 May 1920. Damad Ferid probably tolerated, if not organised, Nureddin Paşa's activities. Nureddin Paşa might have backing from the Sultan and some elements in the ELP.

37 Mustafa Kemal. A Speech delivered by Ghazi Mustapha Kemal, October 1927, Leipzig 1929, pp. 392-5.

Mehmed Vahideddin, asked him to intervene with the other Allied powers in order to alleviate the severity of the treaty clauses and to save at least the Turkish-speaking provinces from partition.³⁸ The reply of the King of England was politic.³⁹ Similarly, Damad Ferid's appeal to the King of Spain and the Queen Mother with a view to getting mitigation on the peace terms went nowhere.⁴⁰

In mid-June the Constantinople government was even more desperate since the Nationalists were poised to attack Constantinople. By the middle of June Nationalist forces dominated the immediate coastline on the Asiatic side of the Sea of Marmora. Moreover, they were in direct contact with British troops garrisoning a line across the Ismid peninsula.⁴¹ Hoping for the support of the Muslim world and Bolshevik Russia, Mustafa Kemal professed confidence that sooner or later justice would triumph and that Europe would soon be aware of the great difference between a delegation with a nation behind it, and one with no support of any kind.⁴² Actually, the Nationalists were not the only source of tension in the Turkish capital. There was a good deal of rivalry between the British High Commissioner and the Commanding British General, Milne, who accepted orders from the War Office and neither was communicating with, nor consulting Robeck.⁴³ There was also a new source of Anglo-French tension concerning the defense of Constantinople. The French advocated a division of defensive responsibilities in and around the capital. The British wanted unity of command, that is, a supreme commander who would hopefully be Milne.⁴⁴

As the Nationalist forces inched toward the British position, the use of the Greek army for the enforcement of the peace terms in Thrace and Anatolia became more popular in British political circles. Even though Sir

38 FO371/5050/E6636/3/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 766, Constantinople 27 May 1920.

39 The King of England replied that the future of Turkey was in the hands of the Allied governments, who had devoted long and patient effort to the construction of an equitable treaty of peace, and who may be trusted to act with justice to all parties and interests concerned. FO371/5048/E5441/3/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 628, Constantinople 27 May 1920.

40 FO371/5049/E6119/3/44, Derby to Curzon, No. 683, Paris 7 June 1920.

41 Helmreich, *From Paris to Sevres*, p. 316. The British troops passed into the British defence position at Ismid, disarmed and despatched by sea to Constantinople. FO371/5050/E6855/3/44, Milne to WO, No. 1.8820 (Part I), Constantinople 17 June 1920.

42 FO371/5051/E7156/3/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 736, Constantinople 23 June 1920.

43 Knudsen, *Great Britain*, p. 197.

44 *Ibid.*, p. 202.

Henry Wilson, who was against supporting the Greek campaign, conceded at a conference of ministers held on 18 June, that assistance was desperately needed and that Greece was the only available source from which such help could come.⁴⁵ In view of the fears that the Nationalists were under the impression that they had driven the French out of Cilicia, and the British back in the Işmid Peninsula, the Cabinet meeting decided that the retirement from Constantinople before a bandit like Mustafa Kemal would deal a shattering blow to British prestige in the East.⁴⁶ This was surely a happy hour for Lloyd George to assume a policy of punishment by giving Greece authority to break up the armed Nationalist menace, and that Veniselos presented himself as the good fairy only encouraged Lloyd George. His hopes were further encouraged by the French occupation of Zonguldak on 18 June and thus the break-down of the Franco-Nationalist cease-fire. Lloyd George expected that Millerand might now be more receptive to a Greek offensive into Asia Minor. His hope was realised and at the Hythe conference on 20 June Millerand agreed with Lloyd George and the Allies lifted their veto of a Greek campaign.⁴⁷ However, the Allied meeting at Boulogne on 21 June indicated that Italy was still restless over the planned operations, since the operations would considerably increase the area of Greek occupation.⁴⁸

With the realisation of Lloyd George's dream of intimate Anglo-Greek cooperation, the Greek army corps advanced on 22 June from Smyrna, and by early July the Greeks forced the Nationalist forces to retreat from the whole of south-western Anatolia. While the Greeks were carrying out their invasion policy, Lloyd George made it clear at the Spa conference in the beginning of July that there was no use in keeping the Turks in Constantinople if the whole body of the Turkish nation refused to obey the government's orders.⁴⁹ This was an open threat to the Constantinople government; in other words, the Turkish position, both in Constantinople and Angora, was at stake.

45 Helmreich, *From Paris to Sèvres*, p. 317.

46 Kent (ed), *Great Powers*, p. 192.

47 Knudsen, *Great Britain*, pp. 201-3.

48 Buesh, *Mudros to Lausanne*, p. 229; Smith, *Ionian Vision*, p. 125.

49 Knudsen, *Great Britain*, p. 209.

Notwithstanding all his desire to keep the Nationalists in order and to confront the situation created by the Greek advance in the Smyrna area Damad Ferid Paşa was helpless. He hurried off to Paris on 10 June. Just before leaving, Damad Ferid made an urgent appeal on 9 June to Robeck for revision of the terms in a sense which would leave to Turkey all areas in which the Turkish language predominated. Damad Ferid asserted his conviction—which had been confirmed by what passed in Paris in 1919 and by the statements of Lloyd George and Arthur Balfour, Lord President—that the Allies did not hold the Turkish dynasty or people responsible for the Turks' entry into the war, and that they contemplated peace with justice, not with punishment. Damad Ferid also urged Robeck that Turkey should retain Thrace, the country east of Maritza, where majority was Muslim as in Thrace, Adrianople, Smyrna and Armenia. He deprecated the creation of the Straits zone, which would be in effect the only sovereign state between the Sultan and his dominions in Asia. But, Robeck was in the habit of avoiding making any promises to the Grand Vizier as to the prospect of future support from Britain. He was, however, in the belief that the modification should be represented as a concession to the Sultan, which would enhance the prestige of the Sultan who would be the best instrument to use in the future to mobilise the moderate elements round him and to ease the dissatisfaction of Indian Muslims with the peace terms.⁵⁰

On 16 June, Reşid Bey hurried back to Constantinople from Paris. The opportunity for Reşid to direct the policy of the Constantinople government was thus furnished in the Grand Vizier's absence. He became the centre of a party in the cabinet which was opposed to acceptance of the peace terms and leant towards the Nationalist cause. At the council meeting held on 21 June, Reşid Bey made a suggestion that the Constantinople government and the Nationalist representatives should meet at Angora to try once again to bring about a reconciliation in order to decide on the replies to be given to the peace conference.⁵¹ The British rightly suspected that Reşid Bey, who disliked Damad Ferid, might be a convenient instrument in French hands since there were indications that the pro-Nationalist element in the high French circles had gained ascendancy. Due to the Nationalist capture of the Ottoman peace delegation subordinate

⁵⁰ See Curzon's Private Papers, FO800/157, enclosure: Robeck to Curzon, No. 683, Constantinople 10 June 1920. See also Br. Doc. XIII: 78, Robeck to Curzon, No. 681, Constantinople 10 June 1920.

⁵¹ FO371/5051/E7156/3/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 736, Constantinople 23 June 1920.

ranking, Robeck urged Reşid Bey and Dr. Cemil Paşa on 23 June that the best thing the delegates could do was to get to Paris quickly and satisfy the Allies that the Constantinople government had no connection with the Nationalists and that the delegation really represented the Sultan and his people and not rebels against its authority.⁵² But Reşid Bey would not budge so easily. The council of ministers on 24 June decided to instruct Damad Ferid Paşa to approach Lloyd George in order to obtain a few days' delay until the arrival of Reşid Bey in Paris and to make no communication to the peace conference until Reşid Bey's arrival.⁵³ This was actually a distinct victory of Reşid Bey's faction. But when the Turkish desire for an extension was transferred to the Foreign Office by Robeck on 25 June, the Foreign Office replied the next day that the Allied conference had decided to accord no further extension.⁵⁴ Reşid Bey's plans thus resulted in a fiasco. He immediately prepared to leave; however, till the moment he left for Paris, he was still active. On 25 June he made another appeal to the Nationalists through Nureddin Paşa, who had been sent by the Constantinople government a few months previously to negotiate with the Nationalists. In his letter, the necessity of uniting round the throne and the Caliphate was emphasised. On the same day the Sultan also sent a letter to the Nationalist leader to implore him to yield unconditional obedience to the efforts which the British government was making to safeguard the higher interests of the country and to place his army at the disposal of the Constantinople government.⁵⁵ Also a petition was addressed by Sadık Bey, the President of the ELP, to the Sultan on 28 June urging that Turkey's best policy was one of friendship with Britain. The petition was probably prepared in order to defeat the role which Reşid wished to play.⁵⁶

After his arrival in Paris, Reşid Bey persuaded Damad Ferid Paşa to go

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ FO371/5071/E8567/262/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 984, Int. report for week ending 1 July, Constantinople 8 July 1920. The Turkish counter-proposals were gone over by the council of ministers on 24 June and were approved. In its final form the counter proposals were as follows: the cession of any territory to Greece, *viz.* Thrace and Smyrna, was unacceptable; the independence of Armenia was recognised; the independence of the Hejaz and the articles concerning Morocco and Tunis were agreed to.

⁵⁴ FO371/5051/E7107/3/44, FO to Robeck, No. 580, Constantinople 26 June 1920; FO371/5051/E7232/3/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 744, Constantinople 25 June 1920.

⁵⁵ FO371/5071/E9649/262/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 1044, Int. report for week ending 15 July, Constantinople 25 July 1920.

⁵⁶ FO371/5054/E9655/3/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 1056, Constantinople 27 June 1920.

back to Constantinople by indicating the necessity of curtailing the absence of the Grand Vizier and the three ministers from the conduct of affairs at Constantinople, and the probability of delay in the Allied reply to the Turkish counter-proposals.⁵⁷ The real reason was, no doubt, Reşid's wish to get the upper hand this time in the peace negotiations.⁵⁸ By disqualifying the Grand Vizier, he would, no doubt, according to the British, please the French and strengthen his popularity.⁵⁹ Damad Ferid and most of the delegates returned to Constantinople on 14 July. Reşid Bey was the only plenipotentiary remaining in Paris. Before leaving for Constantinople, the Grand Vizier wanted to go to London. But his desire was discouraged by the French, and the British concurred with the French.⁶⁰ Damad Ferid must have got the clue that his time was about to end. Something had to be done quickly and decisively.

Following his return to Constantinople, since an appeal to arms was out of the question, the economic state of affairs was critical and Nationalist actions at Mersin and Ismid had ruined his earlier hopes of obtaining concessions, Damad Ferid Paşa convinced himself to sign the treaty hoping that the British would help restore order in the interior. Although the temptation of using the fear of Mustafa Kemal as a lever for concessions in the peace treaty was almost irresistible, Damad Ferid was clever enough to see the dangers of it, for the Allies might too easily come to discount his government. At the cabinet council held on 15 July, the Grand Vizier urged the immediate arrangement for the meeting of a *Divan* or crown council. This suggestion was adopted.⁶¹ At a special cabinet council at Yıldız Palace on 22 July, it was decided to sign the treaty.⁶² The crown council

57 FO371/5052/B7941/3/44, Derby to Curzon, No. 784, Paris 2 July 1920.

58 Upon Damad Ferid's coming to Paris and his insufficient presentation of the Turkish case, Reşid Bey had an argument with Damad Ferid. M.K. İnal, *Osmanlı Devrinde Son Sadrazamlar*, vol. XI, İstanbul 1950, p. 1732. In his memoirs, Reşid Bey indicated that his argument with Damad Ferid was to prevent Tevfik Paşa from Damad Ferid's interference in the peace negotiations and from his single-handed attitude. He also states that upon Damad Ferid's leaning towards the signing the peace, he himself desired to resign. A.R. Rey, *Gördüklerim-Yaptıklarım (1890-1922)*, İstanbul 1945, pp. 288-97.

59 There was information that Reşid Bey had several private conversations with Millerand in the course of which the latter advised that Turkey should insist on the retention of Thrace and Smyrna and that the Turks would receive the support both of France and of Italy in this direction. FO371/5052/E7941/3/44, Aubrey (Parliamentary question), London 5 July 1920.

60 *Ibid.*

61 FO371/5170/E10014/262/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 1107, weekly report for week ended 22 July, Constantinople 7 August 1920.

62 Br. Doc. XIII: 101, Robeck to Curzon, No. 839, Constantinople 22 July 1920. Details in Meray and Olcay, *Osmanlı*, pp. 35-40.

consisted of about 50 selected persons. It bore no resemblance to the traditional *Divan* formerly convoked by the Sultans of Turkey in times of danger and looked as if it was so constituted in an attempt to exclude uncompromising elements.⁶³

Upon his acting with unusual celerity in taking measures to prepare for the task of fulfilling the peace conditions, Damad Ferid Paşa encountered severe reactions from people with Nationalist sympathies and tried to convince the people of his good faith. On 24 July the Grand Vizier sent a communication to four Turkish officers explaining that failure to fulfil the condition to sign the treaty would involve the suppression of the Nationalist insurrection and might eventually result in the loss of Constantinople.⁶⁴ Damad Ferid Paşa also found it necessary to assure reasonable men from the Sultan downwards that Britain would help the Constantinople government to restore order in Turkey after the signing. On 16 July Damad Ferid Paşa told Robeck that reasonable men could see no alternative to the signing except total destruction; but the country was full of irresponsible madmen who took the line that the treaty was a death-sentence and fixed their hopes on the support of the Islamic world and the Bolsheviks. If they were not assured of British help, even reasonable men would be against the signing.⁶⁵ This meant that the Sultan would probably lean towards the signing of the treaty, but he was beset by opposing influences. Therefore, Damad Ferid gave the impression that it was necessary to convince the Sultan that British support was to be given after the signing. From the conversation, Robeck got the impression very clearly that the signing of the treaty was near. But it was also clear that the Constantinople government must be given assistance afterwards. The other Allied High Commissioners, too, agreed with Robeck.⁶⁶ Meanwhile, upon the Nationalist troops at Adrianople laying down their arms on 26 July, Lloyd George cheered in the House of Commons that the Turks were broken beyond repair. This triumphant justification of Lloyd George was too much for the

63 FO371/5170/E10707/262/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 1154, weekly report for week ended 29 July, Constantinople 16 August 1920.

64 *Ibid.*

65 FO371/5053/E8431/3/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 829, Constantinople 17 July 1920.

66 For the Allied High Commissioners' meeting of 29 July, see FO371/5054/E10006/3/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 1086, Constantinople 2 August 1920. See also FO371/5054/E9172/3/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 871, Constantinople 30 July 1920.

nerves of the French and Italians, and had a bad effect upon Allied unity.⁶⁷ It also affected the nerves of the Nationalists. Mustafa Kemal claimed that the 'retreat' was a perfectly orderly strategic movement to the rear and in no sense a defeat, and that the vanguard of the Islamic world against Christianity was gaining time in order to continue combined actions.⁶⁸ Although the Nationalists suffered a number of defeats and were unable to occupy Thrace and Constantinople, the Nationalist Movement was not dead. However, to avoid complete destruction, the Nationalists were in need of arms and supplies and turned to the Bolsheviks, their southern neighbours and other Allies.⁶⁹

Damad Ferid Paşa had been having difficulties in attaining both unity within his cabinet and a united policy to be taken towards the signing of the treaty. If he signed the treaty, both Reşid Bey and his faction might use it to elicit criticism to weaken Damad Ferid's position.⁷⁰ Damad Ferid resigned on 30 July and returned to power on the following day with a cabinet in which Reşid Bey had no place.⁷¹ The reconstruction was predominantly desired by Damad Ferid to strengthen the authority of his cabinet and to be able to gain British support to crush the Nationalists. There was also a possibility that the Sultan, too, was predominantly occupied with Nationalist fear and therefore wanted to see the Grand Vizier's policy triumph.⁷² Finally, Damad Ferid's policy of accompanying the acceptance with a final appeal for relaxation of the terms, but implying to the Allies that the treaty would be signed whether this appeal was entertained or not, was on the Allied table. But following events would show that

67 Nicolson, *Curzon*, p. 250.

68 There were indications that the Nationalists expected that in a month's time the Red Army would succeed over Poland and join hands with the German army to bring reason to the despots. FO371/5170/E10707/262/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 1154, weekly report for week ended 29 July, Constantinople 16 August 1920. The Nationalists set hopes on the Bolsheviks. See Onar, *Atatürk'ün*, II, document no. 887 (20 June 1920) and no. 899 (2 July 1920).

69 Knudsen, *Great Britain*, pp. 206-8.

70 The Grand Vizier annulled the proceedings that had taken place during his absence in Paris, in which Reşid Bey and Edhem Bey, president of the state council, were instrumental in an attempt to transfer the Bosphorus Steamer Company, partly a Turkish state enterprise, to a French syndicate. FO371/5170/E10707/262/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 1154, weekly report for week ended 29 July, Constantinople 16 August 1920.

71 FO371/5054/E9184/3/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 876, Constantinople 1 August 1920. Apart from Reşid Bey, the Grand Vizier had not got on well with Dr. Cemil Paşa due to a personal character conflict.

72 FO371/5054/E10023/3/44, Robeck to Curzon, No 927, Constantinople 16 August 1920, *Times* of 2 August 1920.

Damad Ferid was disillusioned even from the start that he could get any relaxation as regards the harsh peace terms, if he professed his determination in regards to the acceptance of the treaty.

Damad Ferid Paşa committed a great error in hoping that Great Britain could afford to back a more lenient peace settlement. But he committed even a greater error by alienating the sympathies of almost all leading political parties in Turkey. Instead of attempting to end the dualism between Constantinople and the interior, Damad Ferid put into action stringent political and religious measures to oppose the Nationalist organisation more vigorously, though it was not yet clear whether the organisations in the government's hands would succeed undertaking any military expeditions against the Nationalists and whether London would give public backing. Even the ELP leaders, his supporters, feared that Damad Ferid's general unpopularity might provoke the provincial Nationalists.⁷³ Without gaining the support of the traditional Turks, Damad Ferid had to rely on the sole support of Great Britain, thus putting himself on uncertain ground.

CONCLUSION

The San Remo settlement bore the unmistakable imprint of Lloyd George's support for the Greeks and his contempt for and dismissal of 'expert' advice and warnings, whether from the British Foreign Office or the military.⁷⁴ The peace terms settled at San Remo were unrealistic in their conception of what was within the Allies' capability to enforce. The terms were also drastic in their effect on Turkish sovereignty and the Constantinople administration. Although many among Britain's policy-makers recognised the inequity and dangers inherent in the award of Smyrna and Thrace to Greece,⁷⁵ the negotiators at San Remo seemed almost unconcerned about the Nationalist Movement. The fact that they un-

⁷³ FO371/5166/E4270/262/44, Robeck to Curzon, No. 520, Constantinople 12 April 1920. This view was also held at the palace, where there was said to be strong feeling in favour of a cautious policy. FO371/5046/E3543/3/44, British representative, political report no. 17 for week ending 21 March, Constantinople 23 March 1920.

⁷⁴ M. L. Dockrill and J.D. Goold, *Peace Without Promise: Britain and the Peace Conferences, 1919-23*, London 1981, p. 213.

⁷⁵ See, for instance, Kent (ed), *Great Powers*, p. 191; Smith, *Ionian Vision*, pp. 120-3.

derestimated the Nationalist Movement as a political force was surely an oversight which would cause not only to the British, but also the Constantinople government, incurable problems in the long term.

Although it looked as though there might be a happy ending to Anglo-French differences at San Remo, the opposite happened: Italy and France shattered the whole scheme shaped at San Remo in a short period of time. Hoping to make Turkey a bulwark on the route to India and have the key to the Muslim world through controlling the Sultan-Caliph, Mehmed Vahideddin, and his government, Great Britain intensified her political action in Constantinople not only over-exciting Turkish nationalism but also estranging the other Allies. The Greeks, Italians and French had joined in the assault upon Anatolia with the British, but Britain alone retained the privileged role, trying to follow an impossible and irrational policy-'to be close to the two absolutes, the Greeks and the Turks'.

The San Remo terms practically united and reinforced the Nationalist Turks. The Constantinople government was so powerless that Mustafa Kemal and his associates operated freely in Asia Minor, where every effort was made to persuade public opinion that they themselves alone fought for Turkey's salvation. Thus, the reason for Nationalist existence was aggravated by the San Remo terms. On the other hand, it seems... reasonable to deduce that either submissive or not the Constantinople government's attitude towards the British may be reasonably attributed to the obligation to make peace with the Allies and also to Constantinople's own fears, of finding a means of existence of the imperial system in Turkey *vis-à-vis* the Nationalists. Damad Ferid, therefore, hoped to find a guide in the signing the treaty. But this eventually brought the collapse of the policies of the Constantinople government and the British on Turkey.

ÖZET

SAN REMO KARARLARININ TÜRKİYE VE İNGİLİZ DIŞ POLİTİKASI ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ

Nisan 1920 tarihinde San Remo Konferansı'nda alınan kararlar, başta

İngiliz dış politikasının olmak üzere, İtilâf devletlerinin savaş mağlubu olan Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'na son öldürücü darbeyi indirme arzularının en belirgin örneğini teşkil etmektedir. Ancak, diğer taraftan, sonuçları açısından hem İtilâf devletlerinin kendi aralarındaki ilişkilerine yönelik mevcut çalkantılarının daha da artmasına, hem de İngilizlerin ve onlarla yakın bir dialoga giren İstanbul'daki Damad Ferid Paşa hükümetinin Türk kamuoyu nezdinde yoğun eleştirilere maruz kalmasına yol açtı. Dahası, Türkiye üzerinde izlenen ve İngiliz Başbakanı Lloyd George'un başını çektiği yoketme politikası konusunda rahatsızlık duyan İngiliz dış politika mekanizmaları ve askerî kanadı kaygılarını haklı olarak dile getirirken Lloyd George, hükümetine olan desteğin zayıfladığı, Türkiye'ye yönelik politikasının bizzat kendi kabine üyelerince sorgulandığı ve İtilâf kanadındaki iletişimde güvenin yitirildiği bir dönemde, Yunan ordusunun tekrar devreye girmesine umut bağlamak gibi vahim bir hataya yöneldi. Bu arada İngilizlerin San Remo barış şartlarının kabul edilmesi yolundaki telkinleri altında bunalan ve iç politikada da Ankara'da kurulan Kemalist hükümetin tehdidi altında saltanatın geleceğine ve hükümetinin saygınlığına yönelik derin endişeler duyan Damad Ferid Paşa, muhaliflerine karşı daha sert bir politika izlemeye devam etti. Dolayısıyla hem iki farklı Türkiye hem de iki farklı İngiliz dış politika eğilimi arasındaki mücadele, San Remo Konferansı sonrası daha da net bir şekilde gözlenmeye başlandı. Lloyd George'un muhalefete rağmen kendi damgasını vurmaya başladığı Türkiye politikası ve İstanbul hükümetinin izlediği iç politika hem Türkiye hem de İngiliz dış politikası açısından aklı selim olanın düşünülüp izlenmesi boyutundan ziyade mevcut güç dengelerinin kendi lehlerine sürdürülmesi gibi hırslı bir saplantıyla güdülendiğinden, Mustafa Kemal Paşa ve Ankara hükümeti imparatorluk sisteminin ne koşulda olursa olsun yaşamasını savunanlara ve sadece kendi çıkarları için bunda fayda gören İngilizlere karşı yürüttükleri haklı savaşta Türk halkının desteğini almayı başararak daha da güçlendi. Varolmak için verilen bu savaş, sonunda, İtilâf kanadının tamamen parçalanıp Fransız ve İtalyanların Kemalistlere destek vermesine kadar ileri bir noktaya geldiği gibi, hem Lloyd George hükümetinin hem de Osmanlı imparatorluk sisteminin sonunu getirdi.