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HISTORY FROM DOCUMENTS

THE GREECE OF FIFTY YEARS AGO - SMYRNA TO LAUSANNE

Two Nations Saved by A Hair's Breadth

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A new series of ^{DOCUMENTS ON} BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY ~~relating~~ relating to Greece and Turkey have been published recently by H.M. Stationery Office. (FIRST SERIES, Vol. XVIII, 1064 pages, price £11-75).

The present volume, a continuation, of course, of volume XVII, covers the period from September 3, 1922 to July 24, 1923. Like its predecessor, it is edited with ^{the} some scrupulous thoroughness by Professor Douglas Dakin who, also, supplies an introduction and summaries of the dispatches and memoranda contained in the volume. The latter precede the text and extend to total of sixty-seven pages. They are extremely useful. They enable the student to locate easily the item he is searching for, and make it possible for a busy man to get a synoptic view of the contents of the book without having to plough through a thousand pages of documents.

One great difficulty however, remains :- NAMES. The first time a name ~~is~~ appears, the editor supplies brief, relevant facts in a footnote. But one soon forgets who is who and what his office was. Personally, I would have been helped considerably if an index of names were printed without page references, only initials, post occupied and subsequent name and title where applicable.

A SHORT CRUCIAL PERIOD
A mere ~~325~~ three hundred and twenty-five days are covered by this volume. Small enough span in time measurement; immeasurably large and crucial in terms of European anxiety and in ^{the} seeding of disasters for the future of the peoples of Europe. Poincaré's blatant militarism and Mussolini's fascism made Hitler possible; ~~and~~ the second World War a natural consequence.

It was a particularly critical time for Greece. Perhaps as critical as any the country had faced in its recent history. The front in Asia Minor ^{had} collapsed. The army was disorganised and sections of it in were

revolt. The king was exiled, his government ^{was} overthrown and the principal Ministers ^{were} put to jail to await trial. [Five Ministers and the ex-Commander in Chief of the Army were executed later on]. Power was in the hands of a triumvir of serving officers, the administration was in chaotic state and the country in turmoil with thousands of utterly destitute refugees pouring in every day ^{from Turkey:} Beyond the frontiers were only enemies. Kemalist Turkey now victorious ^{was getting ready to pounce again;} Italy sullen and antagonistic; France hostile; ^{Soviet Russia actually a foe.} Only Great Britain remained steadfast for a while. She offered Greece strenuous diplomatic support. Though this support did not go beyond demarches and, occasionally, strong language, in the context of the times it was invaluable.

As far as Greece was concerned, all the signs ~~are~~ ^{were} in the autumn of 1922, unquestionably ominous. By the end of July of the following year Greece was a new country. She redeemed her defeat by her own military efforts, achieved national consolidation and viewed from this point in time, a remarkable degree of stability all round.

The basic problem which Greece faced during those difficult months was how to establish ~~the~~ viable relations with Turkey based on justice. This was partly achieved: - territorially, by the acceptance of the present Thracian frontier (Greece was compelled by the Allies to withdraw from Eastern Thrace to the Ebro line and the river remained the border between Greece and Turkey); politically, by the exchange of populations. However, one minor aspect of the problem remained which was to prove ~~a~~ ^{a few} great irritant decades later.

I refer, of course, to Cyprus. When on July 24, 1923 the Treaty of Lausanne with which this volume ends, was signed, Cyprus ^{was} in British hands. Turkey acknowledged the legality of Britain's annexation of the island / and the incontestability of British sovereignty was embodied in the Treaty. Turkey ~~was~~ renounced ~~xxxxxx~~ ^{all} claims on Cyprus. On the other hand, because ~~the island was then~~ Cyprus was then British, she was not included in the agreements ^{on} concerning the exchange of population. A Turk-

ish minority remained in Cyprus. Some unofficial efforts were made at the time to induce the Cypriot Turks to emigrate to Turkey. ^{Though the Turks were given the choice to opt for Turkish citizenship, very few did} ~~The response was meagre. This minority was used~~ ^(this minority was used a) Thirty years later ^{b)} to thwart the Greek Cypriot demand for union with Greece and to secure for Turkey a temporary foothold in the island. A Turkish contingent is now stationed there and the Turk's ambition to annex part or the whole of the island shows no signs of weakening.

The Treaty of Lausanne settled Greco-Turkish relations, ^{Unfortunately} ~~it did not finally~~ ^{it did not finally} solve the Greco-Turkish problem. This will ^{possibly finally} ~~become~~ ^{be} the ^{only} ~~consequence~~ of the solution of the Cyprus question in accordance with the expressed wishes of the Cypriots. It will then be irrevocable.

Neither country, ^{then} will have aims or claims on the other. The mass of history which stands between them dividing them, will become a point of contact ~~between them~~ drawing them closer together. What Churchill said about Frank and Teuton when launching the concept of a United Europe twenty-five years ago, applies with equal force and, potentially, ^{with} greater rewards to Greek and Turk.

LAUSANNE RENDERED MEANINGLESS

What are these rewards likely to be? Lausanne pointed the way. Venizelos, the principal architect of the Treaty, saw its possibilities. In a courageous move, half-way through his last premiership, he established friendship with Turkey. Both countries benefited from this, though the Second World War with Turkey ^{remaining neutral} ~~opting to stay out~~ and at times ^{her policy to} ~~held~~ the Germans, made ^{it} ~~meaningless~~. Cyprus proved the coup de grace. Twice during the sixties the two countries were brought to the brink of war over Turkey's air attacks on, and threatened invasion of, Cyprus. In both instances last minute strong American intervention saved the situation. It must be pointed out, however, that both in 1964 and 1967 when war between Greece and Turkey was imminent, Turkey's neighbours, Bulgaria in Europe, Soviet Russia in Eastern Asia Minor appeared to encourage Turkey. Obviously ^{they} ~~was~~ expected to benefit from a war; benefit, of course, at the expense of either combatant.

This fact alone irrespective of anything else, ought by now to have

carried the warning home to all concerned. A continuing tug-of-war between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus is bound to end in explosion. No one is likely to gain from it. Cyprus may not come under direct Soviet control and Greece may not lose Western Thrace to the covetousness of the Bulgarians for fear of ^a NATO riposte (it will be aggression against a member of the alliance) but Turkey, definitely, will suffer.

The three million Kurds of Eastern Turkey, always restive, will be presented with a unique opportunity of striking out for their national freedom. Soviet arms, Soviet military know-how, Soviet international backing through its powerful propaganda machine will be at their disposal. Turkey will be truncated, entire provinces will be torn out of her and Soviet power through an allied or maybe, satellite Kurdistan will leap forward from Batum to Iskenderum, without the Soviet Army violating ^{international} frontier or firing a shot. All can be done by remote control and plentiful supply of weapons.

Once, on the shores of the Eastern Mediterranean the Russian dream of Moscow becoming the third Rome will be partially realised. Further progress in the way of territorial expansion will be comparatively easy.

Cyprus, for example, saved from dreaded Turkish occupation by indirect Soviet action will naturally be accommodating to the Soviets. The incipient anti-enosis policies of many of the left-wing political leaders will be strengthened and undoubtedly a number of them, even some who call themselves now nationalists and patriots, will be only too willing to play the Soviet game under the mantle of "peace", "inter-communal harmony", "self-determination" or whatever.

Any attempt by Greece or the pro-enosis overwhelming majority of the Cypriots to counter these, will be stigmatised as manifestation of Greek imperialism and ruthlessly opposed ^{to} or eradicated. In the last analysis, Soviet power will be at hand to ensure the success of its proteges whether these have sprang from the ranks of the communists or

the nationalists. Cyprus will enter the Soviet orbit. And once in it there is no ^{easy} way out of it. The Brezhnev doctrine used a posteriori to provide 'legal' cover for the enslavement of Czechoslovakia, will seek to it.

- and all dynamic Powers have their "private" ambitions -
In the pattern of long-range Soviet ambitions, Cyprus plays an important role. It will seal off the Middle East from the West. It will turn the Eastern Mediterranean into a Soviet mare nostrum - the Soviet fleet will operate from friendly ports in ~~Syria~~ Syria and Cyprus.

These explain the ~~Soviet~~ ^{/intense} interest Soviet Russia displays on Cyprus. It has espoused a viciously anti-Enosis policy; it had supported the communists quite openly and has played expertly on the anti-Turkish fears of some of the nationalists and the anti-Greek feuding of others; it went to the trouble to device and define a special policy for Cyprus, the so-called dual-community policy. ~~It~~ ^{It} means that Cyprus is not a Greek island but a Greco-Turkish one. It has enabled the Soviets, and must be admitted with some consistency, to apply it and play off one community against the other. It has alternately supported Makarios and the ~~Turks~~ Turks, sometimes the Turkish Government. But never the Greek Government. In fact it is an axiom of Soviet policy that Cyprus should ^{never} become Greek, ^{and} should ~~be~~ permanently be denied the right of self-determination. In this way the Soviets follow blindly where Sir Anthony Eden has lead with this difference: Eden tried to hold on what he possessed by adopting a short-sighted iniquitous policy; the Soviets are striving to enlarge their imperial domain by adopting the same iniquitous policy on a long-range view plan.

Recently the Soviet Government protested 'gravely' to Greece over Cyprus. It thus clumsily underlined her imperialistic stake in Cyprus. The occasion ~~was~~ was a disagreement conducted with unnecessary publicity, between two Greek Governments - that of Athens and that of Nicosia. The Soviet intervention was calculated on the one hand to exacerbate the situation and on the other to pillory Greece before world opinion ~~at~~ particularly before the captive audiences of its propoganda machine

as an aggressor State interfering in the internal affairs of a 'foreign' country and/~~make~~^{make}, by the way, some political capital in Cyprus on the cheap.

One need not be a Teiresias or gaze into a crystal ball to see what the results will be of a direct Turkish military intervention in Cyprus. The Turkish General Staff is, I understand, aware of the dangers. In any case these were broadly hinted to them ~~at the time~~ ~~in~~ in November 1967. They helped to stay their hand.

But even excluding such dire and in itself suicidal eventuality, the maintenance of the present precarious position in Cyprus is full of dangers.

For example, during the recent Greco-Cypriot quarrel over Czechoslovak arms imported into Cyprus which was blown up by Soviet and Soviet-inspired publicists into a danger flash, left-wing ^(and some persons) leaders ~~around~~ ^{tried to persuade} Makarios ~~to ask for Soviet assistance~~ him to ask for Soviet assistance. Makarios refused. Had he accepted and the Soviet Fleet sailed into Famagusta with its rocket ships and the other paraphernalia of its power Makarios would have been by now - or if not Makarios any of the suitors who happened ^{who} to be around and ~~was~~ acceptable to the Soviets - well on the way to becoming a Soviet Proconsul in Cyprus.

I don't believe for a moment that Makarios, either now or in the future, will do or countenance anything which will place the independence and hellenic character of his country in jeopardy. But will Makarios be able to exercise control and maintain restraint ^{through the process of persuasion} in the future, and for how long? With so much tinder around and so much heat generated by the incendiary policies of the Turks and the Greeks of either extreme, it will be a foolhardy man who will answer in the affirmative.

PROVISIONS TO BE HONoured ^{should}
No one ~~can~~ maintain that there is a certain historical inevitability ^{which dictates} ~~and~~ that these things will come to pass. But as long as the present uncertainty prevails and Cyprus remains a cockpit of conflicts and a hunting ground for East European persuaders occasionally operating through Third-World missions, their possibility of occurring cannot

THE LAUSANNE LONG HAWL

Fundamentally, the Cyprus Agreements of 1959, violated the spirit of Lausanne. ^{This violation} proved to be more lethal in terms of Greek-Turkish relations than the repeated violations of its letter before or since. And on this issue, I believe, no stone can be cast at the Greek Government. No one can accuse them of ever deliberately violating any section of the Treaty. The Turks, however, did; - over the cultural rights of the Greek inhabitants of the islands of Imbros and Tenedos; over the question of the functional independence of the Ecumenical Patriarchate; ^{and,} particularly, over rights and privileges of the Greeks permitted by the Treaty, to stay on in Constantinople. This has been a shocking story.

Twenty years ago the Turks of Western Thrace whose stay in Greece was also guaranteed by the Treaty of Lausanne, numbered ninety thousand; today they number 103 thousands. The Greeks of Constantinople numbered one hundred thousand; today they number about twelve thousand. The rest have been ^{elbowed out,} forced to leave, burned out, ^{or} murdered and bloodily ejected as it happened during the anti-Greek riots of September 1955.

There are a number of bodies in this country ^(GT BRITAIN) interested themselves in Greek problems. All of them enjoy support from M.P.s., T. Unionists, Men of Letters and various ^{other} prominent figures. There is not a single body, committee, even ^{an} individual person or jurist who interests himself in the fate of the Greeks in Turkey. And if there was one - and I speak here from experience - I doubt whether any Member of Parliament, Public Personage or Academic will give him moral backing. By this, is so, it is impossible to go into in this article. Yet here is a case made to measure for any one looking for a moral cause to uphold. All the compositional elements are there to launch a movement, lift ^{it} off the ground and sustain its momentum towards some effective goal. For it is an issue of human rights, of the defence of a small, vulnerable national minority threatened with total liquidation, of the upholding of

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cannot be argued away and should not be ignored.

The only way to eliminate them completely is to attempt to solve the problem as quickly as possible. If Turkey were to declare tomorrow that she intends to honour the provisions of the Treaty of Lausanne where she surrendered all claims to Cyprus and, further, that she will not stand in the way of Cyprus self-determination provided the Cypriot Turks have cast-iron guarantees as to their rights and liberties, the day after tomorrow there will not be such a thing as a Cyprus problem.

And then? Anything, including great things, can happen. The rewards are bound to be immense provided statesmanship is prepared to tap the source-potential of benefits.

A vitally important and, internationally, ultra sensitive area of the Globe will be stabilised; outside power pressures will cease being effective; economic advance will be accelerated - one can hardly visualise what will accrue in sheer volume of wealth by a joint Greco-Turkish opening up of Anatolia, Southern Turkey, Eastern and Western Thrace; a wider grouping of states including Yugoslavia (the only way Yugoslavia is likely to preserve her independence vis-a-vis Russia), ^{Albania to begin with and later} ~~and~~ some of the Arab ~~States~~ ^{countries}, ~~to begin with~~, either as loose association or Confederacy will become feasible; peace in Central and Eastern Mediterranean will be immeasurably strengthened.

All these depend, of course, on Greek and Turk coming together, and they can only come together by courageously eliminating the last obstacle which keep them apart and by both solemnly promising to accept the treaty of Lausanne as the last and lasting document which regularised territorial, minority and religious-cultural problems between them. Reversion to ^a ~~the~~ strict observance of the provisions of that Treaty will make possible the re-establishment of friendship between them founded by Venizelos and Ataturk in 1930 ^{and which was} based, squarely, on the scrupulous adherence to Lausanne by either side.

treaty obligations.

infingements
Apart from the above ~~xxxxxxxx~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~provisions~~ of the Treaty of Lausanne and a minor rectification of the Turkish frontier at the expense of Syria when that country was still a French mandated territory, the settlements reached at Lausanne proved amazingly durable. In fact the Treaty of Lausanne is the only one of the series of Treaties which followed the First World War that survived, practically in toto, without any of its fundamental provisions being secretly or overtly violated.

This is one of the reasons why it should not remain for ever an international legal document - a sort of real estate covenant - but should become the basis for new advance, maybe for a leap into the future.

It was, of course, a negotiated and not an imposed Treaty. Hence the reason for its viability. Chief protagonists were Venizelos for Greece, Ismet ^{Pasha,} ~~Cater~~ Imet Inönou for Turkey. But the dominant personalities in terms of power whether at the Conference or outside it were Lord Curzon and Raymond Poincaré, invariably at loggerheads, and way behind Benito Mussolini and Chicherin of Soviet Russia. Of these only Curzon supported the Greek case; supported it, that is, on and off. The rest ranged themselves ~~xxxxxxxx~~ against Greece. Negotiations were stubborn and protracted. Clauses were fought over to the last comma. But with it all the Conference was business-like and mostly down to earth. It lacked both the histrionics and the sense of occasion that characterised the gatherings at Versailles and St. Germain. There was not a lot of rhetoric but much legal wrangling.

The Crux

Repeatedly the Conference was saved by the dexterity of Venizelos. He had not a good hand to start off with, but he played with risky courage. Gradually the Revolutionary Government in Greece doled him ~~him~~ out some trumps in the shape of a reorganised Greek Army and he compelled the Turks to acknowledge the facts of the situation.

After months of negotiations, however, the Conference reached crisis. The economic and financial sections of the Treaty in which

the Allies were vitally interested, ^{became a stumbling block.} The Kemalists took strong exception to them. Writes professor Dakin in his introduction:

"On these matters, at least, Lord Curzon hoped he would receive some support from the French, whose financial stake in Turkey was considerable, and even from the Italians, who had dreams of securing concessions under the continuance of an economic régime resembling the pre-war Capitulations. Here, however, he was disappointed. The French and Italians were inclined to yield on almost every issue.... Only at the last moment, when almost every conceivable concession had been made, did the French stand firm on what were really trivialities, and, in doing so, they seriously jeopardized the armistice, fondly hoping that if hostilities broke out the British and the Greeks would fight their battles for them." p. VIII.

Neither The Greeks nor the British were prepared to fight Poincaré's battles for him. Venizelos ~~xxxxxx~~ decided to take the bull by the horns. By mid-June 1923, the Conference ground itself to halt. The Allies were adamant and dis-united. The Greek delegation had settled their questions with Turkey; now, they were ready to conclude preliminaries of peace with their enemy. Venizelos sounded out the British delegation and tried to enlist their support to that end.

" Monsieur Venizelos explained that he made his request out of loyalty to H. Majesty's Government, but that he did not consider himself under any obligation to Italians who have been avowed enemies of Greeks, or to French whose conduct during last two years had not been that of allies" (Sir H. Rumbold, Lausanne, reporting to Lord Curzon on interview with Venizelos and Greek Foreign Minister Alexandris on June 28. 1923. p. 908)

Four days later, the British Representative in Athens C.H. BENTINCK - the British Minister was withdrawn the previous autumn in protest against the execution of the six - ^{telegraphed} as follows:-

"Whilst it is true that our action ~~xxxxxx~~ served Greece last autumn it seems to me difficult to contend that it has brought her any advantage during the last three or four months. On the contrary, as far as my information goes, we have for the third time in two years stood between Greece and Constantinople and thus prevented her from striking a blow at Turkey and perhaps settling whole question in ~~xxx~~ a manner satisfactory to herself as well as to us without any cost to ourselves.

At present, whether we acknowledge it or not, we are using the menace of Greek Army to secure our ends at Lausanne and, of course, presence of that army on the Maritza must strengthen our position at Constantinople. Demobilisation must perforce weaken efficacy of that menace....

If after all that had passed - our failure to save Greece from

Ismet Pasha on disengagement. If Greece and Turkey arrived at a bilateral agreement, then the troops could go home.

Venizelos wanted to secure the prior approval of the British Government. He got no sympathy from Great Britain.

"Objection to opening Greco-Turkish negotiations at ~~this~~ this stage is to my mind as great as ever" Sir H. Rumbold ~~was~~ from Lausanne told Lord Curzon in London, and added:- "They could only stiffen Turkish attitude towards Gt. Britain France and Italy and would probably be regarded by Turks as precursor of similar separate negotiations with Roumania and Serbia. Responsibility of our continuing to discourage them, however, is increasing. It occurs to me that possibly ~~we~~ we might now represent matter to M. Venizelos as follows:

Two alternatives face us - signature of peace or breaking up of conference"(p.907).

In other words Venizelos was not to be allowed to have any choice whatsoever. He could not make war, he could not make peace, he could not demobilise his armies, and he could have no financial assistance. Stripped of its diplomatic good manners and expressed in uncircumlocutory Billingsgate lingo - it would have accorded admirably with the sentiments behind it - the Allied message to Greece at this juncture amounted to a brusque: "Shut up and dont interfere, or you are finished. You bloody well have to wait till we get our money from the Turk and then we can all go home. Till then not a murmur out of you".

Fortunately, and due chiefly to Venizelos's influence Pangalos was restrained, the Balkan delegates began to give expression to restiveness at the ~~prolonged~~ protracted economic wranglings which concerned them very little - the fear of the Allies ^{that the Balkan} ~~their~~ countries might decide to come to direct understanding with Turkey outside/big-Power tutelage acted as factor for compromise - more realistic attitudes prevailed all-round, proceedings at Lausanne were activated and within three weeks after the negotiations appeared to have reached complete impasse, the treaty of Peace was signed. The unknown imponderable of the Greek Army; - was it to march forward or home? either possibility unwelcome and positively unhelpful to the Allies, ^{plus British reluctance to under-write French obstinacy} ~~Doubtless~~ compelled drastic re-thinking which helped to expedite matters considerably.

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THE DOCUMENTS

The present Series of Documents shed considerable light on the events and machinations of the period.

Of particular significance is the role of the French premier Raymond Poincaré. Behind him stood the sinister figure of Franklin Bouillon, brilliant, cold, enigmatic and in the last analysis nothing more than a Turkish agent within the French establishment. The French were not above even to leaking Greek top-secret information to the Turks. They were adamant in yielding to every Turkish demand save the last on economic and financial questions, either through expediency or policy.

The following, taken from the Notes of a Conference held in Paris between the French Premier and the British Foreign Secretary, is characteristic of French policy all the way along:

"Lord Curzon has understood ^M/Poincaré to say that it was impossible for the Allied

military forces to stop Kemal from crossing the Straits and the Sea of Marmora, and in consequence his advice was that the Allies should abandon the game and accede to Kemal all his demands in advance of the Conference. He would therefore ask M. Poincaré to hear Lord Beatty's opinion on this subject. He would be in a position to explain that the British naval forces on the spot would soon be ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ quite sufficient ^(Din) to prevent Kemal from crossing the waters between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. Meanwhile, he, Lord Curzon, would ask M. Poincaré to consider seriously what value a Conference would have if Kemal were to be allowed in advance to take possession of Thrace, Constantinople and Gallipoli." (p. 46). This exchange took place on September 22, 1922, following hard on the burning of Smyrna by the Turks.

Soon afterwards Kemal had a meeting with a British representative in which he brusquely told the latter that he considered himself at war with England. ~~Grudgingly~~ Asked to put that in writing he was taken off guard but was shrewd enough to refuse. Later on he sent one of his men to argue his "outburst" away and ~~then~~ cajole the British. Fear of the British navy was a paralysing factor. Its use would have stopped Kemal's career in mid-stream and would have resulted in more just and equitable frontiers being drawn - Greece in Europe, Turkey in Asia.

Unfortunately, the British Navy was never used. Its threat, even as an unquantifiable contingency factor was effectively by French policy. The Turks knew of this; they could act sure-footedly, certain they could never be forcibly opposed.

But what was even worse was that the Greek Navy was never allowed to deploy its power and bottle up Kemal in Asia. The Franklin Bouillon policy of friendship with Turkey ensured that. Britain, ^{at best} ~~though~~ ~~reluctantly~~ reluctantly, followed where France led. For some inexplicable reason, which no one as yet has gone into, ever since 1915 the collapse of the Gallipoli campaign in 1915 France made all the running in the Balkans. Britain was content to follow; follow ^{up} along way behind.

By the time the Allied and Associated Powers which won the war took their places round the Conference table at Lausanne ^{they} were neither associated nor "allied" except in name. Their interests have clashed in many parts of the Globe and more ^e directly, in the Middle East. Each, to put it crudely, was looking to what it could get out of the conference at the expense of both or either combatant. Greece was a member of that Alliance and legitimately took her place among the victors in Paris in 1919. At Lausanne, however, she was a pariah. With the exception of Great Britain and at times ^{certain} dubious support from Yugoslavia and Roumania, she faced only opposition.

~~But~~ After all is said and done, ^{however was,} what is utterly base and morally completely indefensible even in ordinary, normal relations between States let alone relations between allies, was the determination of the Allied Powers to use Greece for their own ends to the bitter end. No country has suffered more at the hands of its enemies than Greece at the hands of her friends. The student of history can look round and compare the treatment meted out to ex-enemy countries like Bulgaria, Turkey, Austria Hungary even Germany herself, with the treatment of Greece. He will find it of ~~some~~ interest and may wish to delve into the reasons why?

At least as far as this writer is concerned, searching ^{into} ~~through~~ the cold realities of fifty ^{years} ago to find some valid reason why Greece should be the object of such venomous hostility by her allies, he could find none. Not even anything tangible which affected basic Allied interests and ^{which} could be cited ~~for~~ justification. Greece simply, both as a name and as a country, must have acted like the proverbial red rag to the European bull!

True, the conference at Lausanne was conducted ~~within~~ a climate of political amorality. It was the climate of the times. British and French imperialisms then at their zenith, joined by a raw third, ~~that~~ of Italy were searching for consolidation and further expansion. The Middle East conquered and parcelled up was effectively in the bag. France was the dominant power in the Balkans, through the Little Entente. Greece and Turkey could be ^{of} help or ^{of} hindrance to either major Power in their Balkan and Middle-Eastern policies. Along ^{with} amorality there was, ^{as} one finds through a careful reading of the documents, ~~a~~ progressive brutalisation of sentiment. World statesmen beset by growing problems, some direly lethal, others contrived by them out of their own imaginings acted like automata relying on reflex action dictated to their ~~tired~~ brains by prejudice and bile masquerading as self-interest. Binding obligations "solemn" declarations and promises, the sanctity of treaties, the pledged word, everything, in fact, which statesmen invoke for the upholding of civilised standards were thrown out of the window. This paralysis of moral concern extended also to the home economic and social problems of every country.

In France there was Raymond Poincare, ^{sour, neevish,} an ~~an~~ aridly intellectual, harsh imperialist and obsessive anti-German. In Italy, Benito Mussolini was just inaugurating his bellicose career of international banditry. Sometime afterwards he would bombard the open town of Corfu and eighteen years later launch himself on a war against Greece which was to seal his fate. In England the Conservatives were in power after ~~x~~ six-years of coalition government; they had no foreign policy of their own. The world has paid and is still paying, a heavy price for the actions of the statesmen of Europe during 1922-1923.

All these, however, do not quite explain away allied attitudes towards Greece. Irrational atavism had also played its role.

VENIZELOS'S WORDS

It may come as a surprise to many readers to hear of Venizelos criticising France in no uncertain terms, and of condemning Italy. Besides, on another occasion, he accused all three Western powers of anti-Greek bias.

Venizelos was, after all, vilified by his opponents as a creature of France. He was never that, but to see the reason why he had been driven to these conclusions it is necessary to touch briefly upon what went on before. Indeed, with the publication of the latest series of documents ^{from} ~~in~~ the British Foreign Office/^{archives} the historian, is, at present better situated, to write as fully as facts allow the story of the Greek involvement in the first World War, of the Anatolian tragedy and of the Lausanne Treaty.

From the Greek side there are many volumes of memoirs by various generals and politicians and considerable mass of material which can be culled from newspapers, articles and serials, eye-witnesses accounts, the proces-verbal of the Trial of the Six ^{etc.} ~~and others~~. Many of the relevant documents of the Quay D'Orsay have been published. There is also available in English a ~~three~~ ^{three} volume-selection of Soviet documents on foreign policy and, of course, documents from American and Italian sources. The English documents add considerably to the list of material. They should, undoubtedly they will, stimulate renewed interest in the period and enable a more accurate assessment of its importance and ^{of} its blunders to be made, for many of these blunders are still with us. They can be faced more clear-headedly ~~not~~ ^{not} necessarily ^{not} more energetically, if their origins are known and the whys of their perpetration and by whom, were laid bare.

"DICHASMOS"

The only thing I can do here is to attempt to provide a framework to the story. For this it is necessary to look back.

As a result of the two liberatory wars of 1912 and 1913 Greece doubled her territory and her population. She had reached her present frontiers; the present frontiers, that is, if we exclude Western Thrace and the Dodecanese.

The decisive majority of the population of the new State were Greeks but there were also a number of national minorities, the most numerous being the Turks.

The problems facing the new State, legal, administrative, educational, economic and monetary, including the problem of national integration, were of a back-breaking character. These were tackled ^{with zeal.} ~~on a daily basis~~. At the same time Greece, afraid of renewed Turkish attack, had to see to her army and navy. However, before any of these tasks were even half-completed, war broke out in Europe. The small countries, living under the shadow of the Big Powers, now had to face the realities of power; they were pressurised to enter the war on the side of whoever was doing the pressurising.

Turkey, then the Ottoman Empire, for years under German influence, joined Germany. Though Germany was never unpopular in Greece this settled matters for ^{her, for} Greece would never fight along ~~side~~ Turkey and, in any case, her remaining claims could only be satisfied at the expense of Imperial Turkey.

Venizelos believed the natural interests of Greece to be compellingly pro-Allied. No one disagreed with that view though the actual involvement of Greece in the war, ~~as~~ distinct from the political identification with it, was not, for some time, a pressing issue.

But the fiasco of Gallipoli - Greece's offer of military help which as we now know, having the benefit of hindsight, would have been decisive was arrogantly rejected -, the allied efforts to win over Bulgaria by offering her Greek territories - the efforts failed; Bulgaria joined the Central Powers - cooled public sympathy for the Allies. The paradox is that when this cooling began to manifest itself the Allies redoubled their efforts to bring Greece into the war.

Venizelos, the Prime Minister, was for joining. Constantine, the King of Greece, married to the Kaizer's sister, was at first hesitant, then reluctant, then against. This sounds like progressive estrangement. So it was. The King's refusal to accede to the demand of his Prime Minister was greeted ^{with} ~~by~~ fierce hostility by the French press. It was echoed in Greece. Political differences within Greece, fanned by agents, venal newspapers and fed also, in part, by passionate beliefs in the correctness of given policies, hardened into a national division. The Greeks called it dichasmos (split down the middle) and still refer to it with unconcealed pain.

The more the division deepened, the more anxious was Venizelos to join the Allies and the more determined grew the King to keep Greece out - for the time being,

salute the Allied flags, the starvation - for a hundred days not a bushel of wheat or a ton of coal was allowed to reach Greek ports - were primarily his doings. His actions solidified Greek feeling against the Entente. It made the division unbridgeable because many Greeks equated Sarrail with the Venizelists.

By the time the King was sent into exile and Venizelos installed in power, Greece ^{was} ~~became~~ in fact two hostile nations - there was a Constantinist Greece and a Venizelist Greece. Nothing ^{could bring the two halves together; "dichasmos"} ~~succeeded in bridging this gulf; it~~ remained the bane of Greek politics for a generation.

With Constantine out of the way and many of the so-called pro-German politicians exiled - with the exception of Ioannis Metaxas ~~if~~ I doubt whether any one else was really pro-German; all proved to be Greek patriots - ~~yet~~ Greece did not cease to be viewed with suspicion by the Entente, particularly by the French.

Venizelos, on assuming power, offered to contribute twelve divisions to the Macedonian front. This was made conditional on the Entente providing the necessary equipment in heavy guns, supplies and general stores.

Writes Lloyd George :

"Unfortunately, General Sarrail...was by no means in favour with his authorities at home, and as a result his efforts to get material and food for the Greeks were muddled, neglected and brought to nought. At a Conference of the Supreme War Council on December 1st, 1917, we learnt from M. Venizelos that his inability to redeem his promise of raising 12 divisions was due to the failure of the French to provide what had been promised. The result was that only three divisions had so far been mobilised, and even these were short of heavy guns and other equipment.....As soon as the attention of the Supreme Council was called to this stupid neglect, the Governments concerned put it right, but meanwhile six months had been lost."

Sarrail was succeeded by General Guillaumat. The situation began to improve marginally, at least on the military side. War material and supplies started coming in.

New Greek divisions were formed and in a few months the Greek Army took the offensive and won the first allied victory of that war. It was a short, sharp but successful attack on a seven mile front in the Skra-di-Legen area; ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ west of the Vardar. It was carried out on May 30, 1918. The Greek army pushed forward one and a quarter miles and captured 2,000 prisoners. In terms of western-front battles it was a small affair but in itself highly significant. For one thing, it was a clear-cut victory; secondly, it focussed attention among the Entente Governments on the possibilities of the Balkan theatre of war.

The final assault in the Balkans came on September 15, 1918 under General Franchet d'Esperey. He followed General Guillaumat. This offensive, ^{thoroughly well} ~~well planned and~~ ^{prepared} ~~organized~~, carried all before it. The French and the Servians attacked on the Western sector of the front. They moved forward rapidly. The British and the Greeks were given the Doiran front "the most strongly held sector of the whole enemy line." It constituted the pivot of Bulgarian defence. After four days of hard fighting the Bulgarian front collapsed and by the 29th of September Bulgaria accepted an imposed armistice.

".... the collapse of Bulgaria, which was followed by that of Austria-Hungary, completely changed the situation of the German Army in the field. From then on, every attempt to obtain peace by purely military means was obviously in vain" wrote General Ludendorff.

Had Bulgaria withstood the Greco-British assault it is certain that the war could have dragged on for another six months or so. The blow at the "soft under-belly" of the Central Powers, though late in coming, proved killing. ~~xxxx~~

With Bulgaria out of the way, Turkey cut off from Germany and beaten on the Syrian front, had to sue for an armistice. Soon, Austria-Hungary fell apart and Germany was left with no alternative to continuing a suicidal war to its physical conclusion except capitulation. She accepted the Allied terms for surrender and on the 11th of November 1918, the War came ^{finally} ~~firmly~~ to an end.

British, French, Italian and Greek troops entered Constantinople. The French, at first, were bent on being the first if not the sole occupiers of Constantinople ~~for fear~~ for that ~~xxx~~ if the British were in possession of the city they would not hold it for the Sultan but would make their own plans for its ultimate disposal.

Lloyd George raised the matter with Clemenceau and it was decided, as a result, that the armies marching on Constantinople should be commanded by

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"a British General, who shall himself be under the orders of the Allied Commander in Chief."

At first glance this may appear ^a sound decision. It was a fatal one. The "subject" of Constantinople was removed from the area of immediate politics and was frozen into a military limbo to wait, ultimately, for the peace settlements. The claims of Greece to the former capital of the Greek-Byzantine World and at the time a city in which about 50% of its inhabitants were Greek, were effectively squashed. Time played into the hands of both French and Turks. When the unratified Treaty of Sevres was signed two years later, Constantinople was left to Turkey.

Not only French policy operated in favour of the enemy Turkey and against Greece during this period - a sudden and cynical volte-face if ever there was one - but also that of the British Conservatives.

Winston Churchill relates how the pro-Greek and pro-Turkish members of the Cabinet operated. Spokesman for the first was Lord Curzon with the weight of the liberal Foreign Office tradition behind him codified in the slogan of the Turk being thrown "bag and baggage" out of Europe; ^{for} the second, ~~the~~ Edwin Montagu of the India Office, who cared for the "public opinion of India", the "sensibilities of the Mohammedan World" the "pro-Turkish propensities of the Conservative Party" and the sudden discovery by the Aga Khan and many highly-paid journalists that Britain was a great Moslem power and her duty was to the Moslem world represented by the Caliph at Constantinople.

"The combat was sustained" wrote Churchill. "According to Mr. Montagu, the expulsion of the Turks and the Caliph from Constantinople with the assent, even with the connivance of England, would strike a last fatal blow at the diminishing loyalties of the two or three hundred peoples and religious sects who inhabit the Indian Peninsula. According to Lord Curzon they would not mind at all. Some would rather like it; most would be indifferent; while the Mohammedans, who were alone concerned, had not hesitated to fight with vigour and courage in various theatres of war against the armies of the said Caliph. On the question of the reconsecration of San Sophia, Mr. Montagu ^u argued that it had been a Mohammedan Mosque of great sanctity for upwards of 469 years. We were all much swayed by this until

Lord Curzon rejoined that it had been previously a Christian Church for 915 years. Then the argument seemed very nicely balanced; a substantial modern title against twice as lengthy an original prescription!"

Churchill does not refer to any specific Cabinet Meeting. He gives the gist of the argumentation which went on over a period of time. The sad thing is that it was at such low level.

However, hard as Lord Curzon and the Prime Minister David Lloyd George tried to keep their colleagues to the path which their war-time declarations prescribed, they were unable to shake their pro-Turkish bias.

On January 9, 1920, at a full Cabinet meeting and after prolonged and far-ranging discussion, the British Cabinet decided by an overwhelming majority that Constantinople should remain in Turkish hands.

At that moment Turkey won the war she had lost, and Greece and the 2½ million Greeks of the Ottoman Empire lost the war they thought they had won. Without the historical, emotional and national anchorage that Constantinople represented for the Greeks their war-effort could not be consummated. The war would remain part of a continuing struggle. The Greeks of the Ottoman Empire, of course, lost something more than a war. They lost country, homes, land and possessions and hundreds of thousands of ^{them} their lives too; they were all, to a man, pro-allied.

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THE ASIA MINOR VENTURE.

Meanwhile, during May 1919, a couple of Greek divisions were landed in Smyrna. ~~There~~ ~~was~~ ~~resistance~~ by Turkish troops and irregulars and in the ensuing fight a few hundred Turks were killed - the exact number never became known but no authority I know of, puts it beyond the three figures.

This was climactic. As momentous historically for Greece as the crossing of the Rubicon by Caesar, only with reverse effect.

Greece went to Smyrna at the behest, and with the authority, of the allies,

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

For threefold purposes:

- (a) To restore peace. There were a lot of demobilised Turkish soldiers roaming about in Anatolia at the time, ~~was~~ living off the population. Some had no ~~country~~ country to go to. The Greeks were the principal victims of these marauders.
- (b) To fulfil Allied promises. As early as 1915 the Asquith Government in Britain had decided that on the defeat of Turkey Smyrna and its hinterland should be given to Greece. A historical Greek right was thus officially recognised.
- (c) To forestall other would-be occupiers. There were suspicions among the peace delegates in Paris that the Italians might make a descent upon Smyrna.

Smyrna was part of irredentist Hellenism. Venizelös wanted to occupy it. He suggested it and he was requested to occupy it on behalf of the Allies. With this request the Italian Orlando conditionally associated himself. Once given the go-ahead, Venizelos acted with speed. Smyrna and its environs were occupied within a few days. But there were the ~~killings~~ killings. Not unjustifiable, but good for sensational headlines in the Paris and London Press. The pro-Turkish sympathies of both establishments which went back three centuries re-surfaced after the ~~hostlings~~ hostlings they received during the war. The Turks found friends. And their diplomacy, excellently conducted, in Paris, London and Constantinople, particularly in the latter where they had ample opportunity to seduce and influence politicians and commanders - a diplomacy which, as the earlier volume of these documents clearly shows, was compounded in equal measure of sycophancy, servility and braggadocio; there is nothing more sweetly servile than a defeated Turk and equally nothing more moronically vicious than him when authority and power are on his side - helped them a great deal. And these friends were not only the reactionaries and the extreme left, but also well-meaning but befogged academics and even persons of the calibre of the historian Arnold Toynbee, ~~etc.~~

As long as Venizelos remained in power, ^{this} pro-Turkish ^{attitude} ~~stance~~ of the Western press did not take on an overtly anti-Greek ^{stance} ~~bias~~. The Treaty of Sevres was signed but never ~~was~~ ratified - ample proof that none of the Allied Powers intended to honour their signature, for none wanted to see an aggrandised Greece and a relatively enfeebled Turkey. There were, of course, exceptions, and Lloyd George was the most outstanding exception. On the question of Greece he was the only statesman of

magnitude who remained true to his war-time declarations and who never ~~deserted~~ ^{questioned} the inherent justice of the Greeks to liberate their fellow Greeks from Ottoman rule.

Venizelos, however, was dismissed from office by the Greek electorate barely three months after signing the Treaty of Sèvres. Constantine was restored to ^{exactly} the throne. This was/what was needed for the French politicians and the French press (the French primarily, to a much lesser extent the British politicians and press) to shed their inhibitions concerning Greece. Their ally Greece for no other reason except the one that her people exercised their incontestable right to have at their head a government of their choice — good or bad, is immaterial; it was their choice and their government — became, at once, an enemy.

If this god-sent excuse was not provided by the Greek electorate, it is conceivable that the French would have looked for another. They could have easily engineered one. As it happened, they grasped the opportunity with indecent haste and resurrected old hoary stories about the ~~king~~ King, about the treachery and unreliability of the Greeks, the killing of French marines and anything else they could lay their hands on.

But this was the smokescreen. Behind it, French diplomacy began to work to dismantle the Treaty of Sèvres. The term used was, of course, not dismantling but revision. The round-about-face would thus be less obvious.

It is not my purpose to catalogue here Allied actions ^{following the restoration of Constantine} against Greece. It would be a dismal story. And in any case this is the theme of the book under review and of the one which preceded it. One can get an accurate view of what went on in the Allied capitals from the restoration of Constantine till the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne.

One thing, however, should be touched upon, even in passing:— the attitude of the Greeks i.e. of the royalist politicians and soldiers.

Did the hostility of France ~~ex~~ in particular, become apparent to them? I believe it did. They had plenty of indications. But I don't think that any of them quite realised the depth of that hostility and even dared contemplate that France would secretly but none the less persistently help Greece's enemy. At worst

they might ^{expected} have political opposition, no financial support and no arms. Neither the Greek press of the period nor the memoirs of many protagonists allow one to reach a different conclusion. The Greek political world did not lose faith in France entirely. Consequently, one has to absolve the Greek royalist politicians of at least half their failure on the grounds that they did not really know what their "friendly" governments — governments on ~~which~~ the goodwill of which they expected and had a right, ultimately, to rely — were "cooking up" for them.

But even if they knew, it is difficult to see ~~what~~ they could have done to save the situation. They inherited a commitment and an inescapable fact. ^{The Greek} ~~Army~~ was in Asia Minor. Turkey and the Allies signed a peace. No one was prepared to abide by it or see it legally enforced. Without peace the war simply had to go on. To the Greeks, the dictate of history at that moment was either to get on with the war or to get out.

The latter implied voluntary defeat. It is hard for a nation to accept defeat on its own choosing ~~or~~ without risking degenerative ~~and~~ disillusionment and possibly destructive internal upheavals.

And so, in the summer of 1921 the Greeks found themselves compelled to take action. They attacked on a wide front and at speed with the purpose of destroying the Kemalist army. This army had to be destroyed if peace were to be achieved. They effected a deep penetration into the interior of Asia Minor and ~~was~~ ^{came to} within an inch of success. The Greek plan was brilliantly conceived and ^{was} executed with commendable skill despite some last minute errors. The Greeks were successful in every encounter. But they exhausted themselves. Militarily they defeated the Turks all along the line; strategically they failed in their ultimate aim. They did not have enough reserves to deliver the final blow. The army retired to its winter lines for 1921-22 to await upon political developments. It was becoming obvious that with Kemal still in the field, with Russia and others supplying him with arms, a repeat of the previous years campaign was unthinkable and would be unprofitable, even if from the morale point of view, it was at all feasible. Then on October 20, 1921 Franklin-Bouillon signed a "friendly" agreement with Kemal. France was to supply arms, ^{openly} now. And France had plenty of small arms and ~~the~~ ^a staggering amount of heavy guns, the last badly needed by Kemal, to dispose of. The fate of the Greek Army was sealed.

And at its back that ~~Greek~~ army had about 350 thousand hostile Turkish "civilians". They were a standing danger. If the Greeks, politicians and soldiers, were men of shrewd calculation and ruthless enough they ought to have pre-taken a leaf out of Stalin's book and ^{do} to the Turks what Stalin did to the Volga Germans, the Crimean Tartars ~~etc.~~ twenty years after, ^{or} what the Czechs and the Poles did to the Germans after World War II, ^{and} ~~on~~ for that matter, what the Turks did to the Greeks a year later - that is, ^{they ought to} herd them together and send them to Kemalist territory.

This would have had the effect:

- (a) of creating difficulties for Kemal by blocking roads, congesting ~~the~~ traffic and dipping into his food reserves
- (b) of releasing Greek troops from garrison duty in towns and villages and from guarding lines ~~of~~ of communication.

Such a move would have been absolutely justified on two complementary counts, one military, the other moral - ^{there was, in the first place, the imperative necessity for} ~~on the need to provide~~ the Greek army to be with ^{the} maximum security ^{possible by the} by safeguarding its rear and ^{secondly} ~~on the need to~~ rely on friendly population and ^{thus} bringing home to them the realisation that the liberated land was theirs, that the invading Turks had, after five centuries, been thrown out, and that they had the right and the duty to defend their land and turn it into a sanctuary for persecuted Greeks in other parts of Anatolia. Liberty would then have come to the Asia Minor Greeks - they constituted slightly less than two thirds of the population behind the Greek lines - ^{and would have been,} ~~legally and factually~~ assured.

It is to the credit and humanity of the Greek leaders, though, with the experience of what happened afterwards in Europe, not of their accumen, that such a move was not thought of, let alone contemplated, as a political measure. One can imagine what would have happened if the Greeks adopted the policy of expelling the Turks. Governments and individuals would have shouted themselves ~~xxx~~ hoarse with protests, the Greeks would have been pilloried and the Western Powers would have been asked to intervene. 350 thousand Turks thrown out of their half-a-thousand-year ^{old} homes would have been ^{an} intolerable ^{blow} to western conscience.

Four times as many Greeks - not to mention the countless ^{of} thousands murdered - ~~were~~ thrown out of their three-thousand years-old-homes after the Greek defeat of 1922, provoked hardly any protest and had raised no demand for intervention to save them.

Why? It is all tied up with ^aperverted tradition ^{augmented} at that instance ^{in time}, by policy. This hostile Allied policy continued right through the period of the Greek-Turkish war and ~~through~~ through the period of the ^{negotiations} ~~at Lausanne~~ at Lausanne till the moment the Treaty was signed. Never, during those four years, i.e. from the autumn of 1920 till the summer of 1923, was Allied pressure on the nerve and body of Greece relaxed for a single moment.

The Documents, ~~with~~ their terse, unemotional tone do not fail to reveal to the reader who has the patience to ^{read them} go through ~~them~~, the depth of duplicity, of double-standard behaviour and of treachery of the Allies as they do not fail ^{to reveal} the avoidable human tragedy of the Greek populations of Asia Minor; both were without parallel in the history of modern Europe till the Second War and its aftermath, the Cold War.

We now have a mass of facts before us. We can construct the truth.

DOROS ALASTOS

P.S. Perhaps I ought to make a point or two here. This article is very critical of the policy of the French Governments of fifty years ago. It does not go beyond what the facts warrant. However, vindictive and often criminal as French policy was, it ~~did~~ not basically affect the feelings of the Greek people towards France. French culture saw to it. France as the country of the enlightenment and of the rights of man reinforced it. The Greeks remained pro-French despite the damage France did to Greece.

I spoke also of the need for a Greco-Turkish rapprochement. How do I square this with what I write about the Turks and Turkish policies, past and present?

First I don't believe that friendship should be based on falsehood or on the emasculation and re-writing of history. No one should or must, ask the French to forget Hitler, to ignore the Concentration Camps, to whitewash German militarism; or the Germans to make a historical detour round the two Napoleons, Poincare, the Ruhr and the famine. On the contrary: the more the common history of neighbouring peoples is examined and investigated, the more clearly will they see their past, learn the causes of their misfortunes, ^{→ By weighing them on the scales of the requirements of civilisation,} morally quantify their actions and profit by them. Besides, cooperation between Greece and Turkey and others, is dictated by necessity, ~~and~~ not by sentiment. And the more close their cooperation becomes, the more clearly it will be realised that history, by not papering over brutal facts but by examining them in their developing processes, ceases to be sterile and confining, and becomes stimulating, creative and liberatory. ^{or, on the human level, unifying;} Greeks and Turks share half-a-thousand years in common! What a challenge it will be to re-examine that past; to study it, dissect it and learn more from it, ~~and to do it in the~~ ~~subtle~~.

D.A.