POST-WAR WORLD: THE LAUSANNE CONFERENCE AND THE POST-COLD WAR ERA

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At the time of the Lausanne Conference in 1922-1923, one of the problems in the international arena still unresolved after World War I was the age-old Eastern Question. Begun in the eighteenth century with the gradual disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, subsequent rivalries for influence and territory among the world's great powers and the Near East's emerging states continued through the Great War. The conditions under which the Eastern Question was addressed at Lausanne, however, were dictated in part by World War I: the Hapsburg Empire had disappeared, German influence had been destroyed, and Russia had been profoundly weakened. As a consequence, neither Austria nor Germany was represented at the conference, while Soviet Russia's participation was restricted to discussions regarding the Straits.

In addition to the collapse of the three empires, other factors worked to the emerging Turkish republic's advantage. Following victory over the Central Powers, Allied solidarity had collapsed. Refusing to accept the draconian Treaty of Sèvres, Turkish nationalists had secured their Eastern front and composed their differences with the Soviet régime, which was consolidating its position in the Caucasus. Success in the East was followed by a string of successes: victory against the Greeks at the Sakarya River; agreements with France, Italy, and Soviet Russia; a final victory over the Greeks, and an armistice with Britain.

One of İsmet Pasha's tasks at the Lausanne Conference was to establish the fact of Turkey's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and so to make possible its concentration on consolidating and building the new nation that was emerging from the ruins of the Ottoman Empire. The triumph of Turkish nationalists on the battlefield in the aftermath of World War I meant

that most of the territory claimed in the National Pact -which ruthlessly limited territorial objectives- was under Turkish control, setting the stage for the success of the nationalists' diplomacy. "İsmet," the imperious Lord Curzon is reported to have told İsmet Pasha, "you remind me of nothing so much as a music box. You play the same old tune day after day until we are heartily sick of it -sovereignty, sovereignty, sovereignty."[1] The relentless pursuit of that end by İsmet Pasha, however, under the visionary and forceful direction of Mustafa Kemâl, gradually gained tha grudging respect of the conference delegates and in some cases their outright admiration. Ambassador Joseph Grew, the American delegate to the conference, subsequently described İsmet, Pasha as "Napoleonic – the greatest diplomatist in history."[2] His achievements were, in fact, considerable. "Turkey's independence," Roderic Davison asserts, "was more than technical, for with the peace and the Straits open to all, Turkey was now balanced between the West and Russia."[3] This was a position that İsmet İnönü would play to Turkey's great advantage in subsequent years.

The dogged determination of the Turks to insist on the territorial integrity and sovereignty of their heartland, meanwhile, particularly since what they claimed for the most part mirrored what they possessed, resulted in their sovereignty being unquestioned over most of the territory they claimed except Mosul, Alexandretta/Hatay, and the demilitarized Straits. The new Turkish Republic, which in a sense grew out of the Lausanne settlement, was now free to follow its own destiny- a course successfully navigated in subsequent years with the help of guidelines that renounced irredentist, expansionist, or revisionist ventures, and limited aspirations to the reconstruction of Turkish national territory. Turkey's policies were realistic, skillful, cognizant of international pressures and the global balance of power, and rooted in its own, national self-interest.[4]

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[1] Joseph Grew, **Turbulent Era: A Diplomatic Record of Forty Years, 1904-1945**, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1952, Vol. 1, p. 525.

[2] Waldo H. Heinrichs, Jr., **American Ambassador: Joseph C. Grew and the Development of the United States Diplomatic Tradition**, New York, Oxford University Press, 1966, p. 94.

[3] Roderic Davison, "Turkish Diplomacy from Mudros to Lausanne," in **The Diplomats, 1919-1939**, eds. Gordon Craig and Felix Gilbert, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1953.

[4] See M.S. Anderson, **The Eastern Question, 1774-1923**, London, St. Martin's Press, 1966; Harry Howard, **The Partition of Turkey: A Diplomatic History, 1913-1923**, Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1931; and Bruce R. Kuniholm, **The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey, and Greece**, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1980.

With the end of the Cold War, much of the world is still sorting out the post-Cold War settlement. Lausanne followed in the wake of four empires, two of which rose again from their ashes. The current settlement has to deal with the end of only one: the Soviet empire. But where notions of the balance of power after World War I were little changed from those which preceded it, or from those which followed in the wake of World War II, the post-Cold War era may well be very different. The Soviet Union's demise has ended the stabilizing effect of a bipolar balance of power and unleashed numerous regional/ethnic conflicts. If World War II diminished the threat posed to Turkey by countries other than the Soviet Union, and if the end of the Cold War has diminished the threat posed by Russia, whose territory no longer borders Turkey, it has unleashed wars among Turkey's neighbors -in the Balkans, in the Caucasus, and in Iraq- none of which would have been likely during the Cold War and each of which has the potential to draw Turkey into bloody conflicts.

One of the best historians of the Cold War, John Gaddis, has noted that the rivalries of the Cold War have given way to a new contest: that between the forces of integration and fragmentation in the international environment.[5] On the one hand, political, economic, technological and cultural forces are breaking down barriers that have historically separated nations and peoples; the logic of these forces, undergirded by support for the open market, suggests economic integration. These forces for integration are compelling to Turkey, which has actively sought to associate itself with them: the Western European Union; the European Community; the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Region (which the Turks initiated); and the Economic Cooperation Organization, to name a few. Whether for security (the WEU and NATO), economic prosperity (the EC, the BSECR, and the ECO), or management of common environmental problems (the BSECR), such organizations promise to improve Turkey's lot.

On the other hand, forces such as religion, self-determination and nationalism are exacerbating old frictions and creating new barriers -in some cases where none existed. The logic of these forces suggests political fragmentation. Such forces are also gnawing at Turkey, threatening to undermine not only its aspirations for integration with the international economic community, but its very national identity. It is Gaddis' belief that the end of the Cold War has resulted not in an end to threats, but in the diffusion of them; that the problems we will confront are more likely to arise not from the kinds of competing ideologies that existed during the Cold War, but from the competition between the forces of integration and

[5]John Lewis Gaddis, "Toward the Post-Cold War World," **Foreign Affairs**, 70/2 (Spring 1991), pp. 103-122.

fragmentation.[6] The contradiction between abandoning control of our economic lives (suggested by market theory) and taking control of our political lives (suggested by democratic theory) is profound; according to Gaddis, the fault line between the forces of integration and fragmentation may be "as long, as deep, and as dangerous...[as] the one between democratic and authoritarian government that preoccupied us through so much of the twentieth century."[7]

Whether or not Gaddis is right, it is clear that the new international environment that Turkey confronts is much more complicated and very different from that which it faced seventy years ago. At that time, the policies advocated by Mustafa Kemâl -and in particular those that cautioned against irredentism and counselled extraordinary caution when dealing with foreign affairs- made good sense. Caution always makes sense. This was clearly demonstrated in the interwar years when Turkey sought adjustments to the Lausanne Treaty; during World War II when İsmet İnönü's masterful diplomacy served the nation well; and during the early years of the Cold War, when Turkey's alliance with the West was dictated by necessity. But times have changed, and once dominant concerns such as the convention regarding the Straits, which requires continuing adjustment, while still very important, have been subsumed by larger concerns.

Turkey is surrounded by countries (or former countries) that are dominated by the forces of fragmentation. These countries (or the remnants of former states) are undergoing massive upheavals and are often antagonistic toward their neighbors. As a result, the Turks increasingly confront the fact that cautious diplomacy could leave them out in the cold.[8] Thwarting Saddam Hussein's aggression in Kuwait and deterring future aggression by Iraq in the region, for example, required forceful collective action, without which Iraq today would have been an extraordinary threat to Turkey. An activist diplomacy, on the other hand, consistent with Turkey's self-image as an emerging regional power, requires tough choices about its friends and its enemies. This holds true in the Balkans, the Black Sea, the Caucasus, the Caspian Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Middle East. Such choices always involve risks because one's allies tend to determine one's enemies, and

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[6] **Ibid.** See the discussion of some of these themes in President Clinton's address to the United Nations, September 27, 1993.

[7] John Gaddis, "The Tragedy of Cold War History," **Diplomatic History**, 17/1, pp. 1-16,

[8] Bruce Kuniholm, "Turkey and the West," **Foreign Affairs**, 70/2 (Spring 1991), pp. 34-48.

Turkey's choices have generated criticism both within the government and without.[9]

But risks must sometimes be taken, as was the case, I would argue, in the Gulf War.[10] If Turkey had not opposed Saddam, it would have seriously damaged its alliance with the West and lost its claim on Western resources. The costs associated with inaction would have outweighed the benefits. If Turkey had not provided some degree of protection for the Kurds in Iraq, the result would have been a flood of Kurdish refugees into Turkey -a problem somewhat analagous to the millions of refugees from the Balkans flooding into Europe, only in Turkey's case they would have exacerbated an already serious internal problem. Cautious diplomacy, in short, would have been self-defeating.

In the period after Lausanne, Turkey avoided adventurous policies, and occupied itself with nation–building. As Eric Rouleau has observed, Kemâl Atatürk sought to impose on Turkey's citizens a "dogma of the homogeneity of the Turkish nation." Eliminating ethnic and cultural differences by fiat was a means to an end: creating the cohesion necessary for the modern Turkish state. Such cohesion, fostered through both persuasion and repression, helped to create a national identity that enabled Turkey to withstand threats to its territorial integrity and sovereignty in the years following Lausanne.[11]

In recent years Turkey has come into its own as a regional power. More secure about its identity, it has begun to address some of the existential problems that were submerged in the process of nation-building and to reconcile itself with its past. Where most of the immediate threats to Turkey's existence in the period following World War I and for most of the twentieth century were geopolitical, those most prominent in the post-Cold War era are fundamentally different: cross-cutting forces that can be construed as being either integrating or fragmenting --pan-Islam, pan-Turkism, and Kurdish separatism and nationalism in its many manifestations.

While pan-Islamic movements are seen by their advocates as integrating movements, this view is not shared by others. In Russia, for example, fear of fundamentalist Islam was sufficient to cause the government to send troops to Tajikistan. Their purpose, the Russian Defense Minister

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[9]See Selim Deringil, "Turkish Foreign Policy Since Atatürk," in **Turkish Foreign Policy: New Prospects**, Cambridgeshire, England, The Eothen Press, 1992, pp. 1-8.

[10]See Bruce Kuniholm, "Turkey and the West", and Graham Fuller and Ian Lesser, **Turkey's New Geopolitics: From the Balkans to Western China**, Boulder, Westview Press, 1993, pp. 168 ff.

[11]Eric Rouleau, "The Challenges to Turkey," **Foreign Affairs**, 72/5, (November/December 1993), pp. 110-126.

General Pavel Grachev has said, is "to block the spread of militant Islamism from Tajikistan to other Central Asian republics and toward Russian borders."[12] Many Turks, and particularly secularists, worry about the spread of religious fundamentalism and its fragmenting affects on their society. Riots in Sıvas during the Summer of 1993 fueled their concern. Some analysts see the appeal of fundamentalist Islam as a result of the decay of ideology, the decline of political parties on the Left and Right, and the failure of mainstream parties to fulfill expectations. Whatever its appeal, however, religious parties normally receive only 10-15% of the vote.[13]

Religious fundamentalism, in and of itself, therefore, does not seem to be a major threat –at least not yet. As Eric Rouleau has pointed out, the resurgence of Islam in Turkey may not be that different from the resurgence of the Orthodox Church in Russia, and the electoral strength of the Islamist Prosperity Party is no more substantial than France's rightist National Front.[14] Rather than regarding Islam as a substitute for or a threat to the nationalist-oriented secular political order, therefore, one could also see its electoral expression as a safety valve for concerns that otherwise might follow a more subversive course; and its public expression, under secular control, as a source of support for that order- at least to the extent that it meets an inner need for meaning not satisfied by Turkey's political culture. President Özal, however, before he died, sounded a cautionary note: fundamentalist Islam could be encouraged by any of a number of factors, including continued rejection by the European Community of Turkey's application for membership. Failure to address Turkey's difficult economic and political problems also could begin to undermine support for the principle of secularism in Turkey, and the resulting despair could leave many more susceptible than they are now to fundamentalist Islam.

The emergence of Turkic-speaking republics in the Trans-Caucasus and Central Asia has reinvigorated Turkey's interest in the world's Turkic-speaking population, which by some estimates may include as many as 180 million people in a region that stretches from Albania to China. The emergence of these republics has generated a lot of rhetoric about Turkey regaining its historic mission as a great power. Pan-Turanism, like pan-Islam, can be seen as an integrating movement, but it can also be seen -

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[12]Daniel Sneider, "Old Clash of Empires Still Echoes," **Christian Science Monitor**, September 13, 1993.

[13]Bruce Kuniholm, "Turkey an NATO: Past, Present, and Future," **ORBIS**, Summer 1983, pp. 421-445, esp. 435-436; Morton Abramowitz, "Dateline Ankara: Turkey After Özal," **Foreign Policy**, 91 (Summer 1993), pp. 164-181, esp. pp. 176-178; and Rouleau, "The Challenges to Turkey," pp. 119-121.

[14]Rouleau, **op. cit.**

particularly by Russia and Iran (which has a substantial population of Turkic-speaking people in Azerbaijan)- as a disintegrating movement. Not least of the impediments to Pan-Turanism are a population of 11 million Russians in the Central Asian Republics, and Russia's interest in their welfare. Indications of that interest have been suggested in a warning by Albert Chernyshev, the Russian Ambassador to Turkey, that a Pan-Turanian movement could provoke a Pan-Slavic reaction, leading to unconstructive confrontations (there are still 20 million Muslims living in Russia).[15] In July 1993 Russian Vice Premier Alexander Shokhin reminded the Central Asian republics of Russia's interest.[16]

Some Turks imagine that Pan-Turanism is Turkey's destiny and a potential counter to political Islam. Pro-Azeri and pro-Bosnian "lobbies" have advocated a more activist posture toward the conflicts that involve their brethren in the Caucasus and the Balkans. But Turkish leaders, while emerging out of semi–isolation, nonetheless have been careful to deny Pan-Turkish aspirations and emphasize commonalities of civilization, culture, language, and belief; and a shared interest in democracy and a market economy. Much of the initial euphoria over the connection with the Central Asian régimes, moreover, has subsided as pragmatic concerns have underscored Turkey's limited means and Russia's continuing influence in the region.[17] Turkish leaders are also well aware that Pan-Turanism, like Kurdish nationalism, cuts both ways. For its advocates, it can be a force for fragmentation, with devastating consequences.

The Kurdish question was not addressed at Lausanne but it has become Turkey's most profound problem.[18] At Sèvres, Woodrow Wilson's promise of autonomous development to non-Turkish minorities of the Ottoman Empire was seemingly applied to the Kurds. The Allies, for reasons of their own, made the question of independence for the Kurds in "Kurdistan," or what is now southeastern Turkey, contingent on the wishes of a majority of the population and on the Council of the League's judgment as to the Kurds'

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[15] See Bruce Kunihalm, "After the Gulf War: Turkey and the East," in **The Persian Gulf War: Views from the Social and Behavioral Sciences**, University Press, Lanham, Md., 1993, Herbert Blumberg and Christopher French, eds.

[16] CSM, September 13, 1993.

[17] Kuniholm, "After the Gulf War: Turkey and the East,"; Philip Robbins, "Between Sentiment and Self-Interest: Turkey's Policy toward Azerbaijan and the Central Asian States," **Middle East Journal**, 47/4 (Autumn 1993), pp. 593-610; and Rouleau, **op. cit.**, pp. 111-114.

[18] See Paul Henze, "Turkey: Toward the Twenty-First Century," **A Rand Note**, Santa Monica, Rand, 1992, pp. 24 ff.

ability to manage their affairs.[19] Lausanne, however, proved that the situation on the ground was the decisive factor. The National Pact called for a plebiscite in occupied parts of the Ottoman Empire that had an Arab population. Other parts with a Muslim majority were to remain united under Turkish rule.[20]

While İsmet Pasha initially characterized Turkey as a "homeland of Kurds and Turks," the definition subsequently became more restrictive (or, depending upon how one looks at it, more inclusive). The French nation-state concept, on which the Turkish system was modelled, based citizenship on individual identity (as opposed to either ethnic or religious identity). As a result, legal status was not given to minorities, and the dictates of nation-building made Kurds (the Laz, Circassians, Islamicized Georgians, Chechens, Kabardans, Karachays, Nogays, Kumyks, Lezgins, Avars, etc.) all Turks by decree.[21] This republican approach, one analyst has observed, in effect extended the Ottoman principle that Islam took precedence over nationality among Muslims. In so doing, it contradicted both the Turkish Republic's emphasis on "Turkishness" and its de-emphasis on religion.[22]

But times have changed. As Paul Henze has observed, the Kemâlist position that gave official minority status to Christians and denied it to Muslims is obsolete. Steps taken by President Özal before he died and policy pronouncements on the Kurds by the Demirel-İnönü coalition government when it came into office have made it virtually impossible to turn back the clock.[23] The challenge of devising a constructive strategy for Turkey's Kurdish problem is daunting because, if badly managed, it could open up a pandora's box of difficulties involving the many ethnic groups that make up the population of Turkey. Anecdotal evidence and various polls suggest that the views of ethnic Turks and ethnic Kurds as to the root of their differences are widely disparate. Turks of Kurdish origin blame current problems on Ankara's "repressive policies," while ethnic Turks believe that the problem stems from the activities of foreign-supported terrorists.[24]

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[19] Mehrdad Izady, **The Kurds: A Concise Handbook**, Washington, Crane Russak, 1992, p. 59.

[20] Martin van Bruinessen, **Agha, Shaikh and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan**, London, Zed Books, Ltd., 1992, p. 273.

[21] **Ibid.**, p. 274; Rouleau, **op.cit.**; Michael Gunter, **The Kurds in Turkey: A Political Dilemma**, Boulder, Westview Press, 1990, p. 12.

[22] See Henze, **op. cit.**

[23] See Fuller and Lesser, **op. cit.**, pp. 21-27.

[24] See Foreign Broadcast Information Service, WEU-92-075, 17 April 1992, pp. 29-30.

Turkish governments, cognizant of what they have to do to improve their human rights record and institutionalize democracy if Turkey is to be accepted as a member of the EC, have been increasingly sensitive to the minority rights of Kurds. They have belatedly recognized the cultural identity of Kurds and have continued to plow billions of dollars into the Southeast Anatolia Project that promises to meet half of their energy needs and raise the standard of living in southeastern Turkey. But Abdullah Öcalan, leader of the separatist Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) in Turkey, is waging an all-out war against the central government and is provoking a virtual civil war. The government's determination to crush this relatively small but growing separatist movement with military means has often resulted in harsh tactics and collateral damage that has also killed innocent victims and gained the PKK some sympathy among Turkey's Kurdish population.

Henze's prescription for Turkey's dilemma is for its leaders to study closely other political systems, to develop a better understanding of their unique political/ethnic problems, to eschew the ethnic structuralism which existed in (and contributed to the dissolution of) the Soviet Union or Yugoslavia, and to develop a societal and legal order which recognizes that ethnic groups are entitled to some degree of identity. One possible model could be a federal one, based not on ethnicity but on regionalism -a concept that he sees as flexible enough to accommodate rapidly changing societies such as Turkey's with its substantial internal migration. "One generalization," Henze observes, "seems certain: by the year 2000, Turkey is likely to have evolved a different concept of the internal organization of the republic and a different relationship between politics and ethnicity than it has today."[25]

No one should be deluded into thinking that this will be an easy task. Turks widely acknowledge that they know very little about the Kurds. Even defining who is and who is not a Kurd is not an easy matter. If a citizen of Turkey had one grandparent who was a Kurd as was the case with President Özal- does that make him Turkish, or Kurdish, or both? Brothers and sisters have different answers to that question. There are other problems. As a Ditchely Conference Report concludes, "There are no reliable figures for the number of Kurds in Turkey. The State Institute of Statistics extrapolates a total of 6 million Kurds from the 1965 census statistics, but sources in the military and the Presidential palace have sometimes cited a figure of around 12 million."[26] It is widely believed that at least half of Turkey's Kurds live outside of the southeastern region and that hundreds of thousands of Kurds

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[25] Fuller and Lesser, **op. cit.**, pp. 26-27.

[26] Ditchley Conference Report No. D93/7, "Turkey: Problems and Prospects," by David Barchard.

live in Turkey's major western cities. Clearly, the task of addressing the Kurdish problem is daunting.

Selim Deringil has argued that, since the disappearance of the Ottoman Empire, Turkey has had a recurring "identity crisis" that emerges in times of economic, social, and political strife, and recedes when Turkish elites feel sure of themselves and their future.[27] If that is the case, it is reasonable to assume that the Kurdish problem will be the cause for a profound identity crisis. Even under the best of circumstances it would take a lot of self-confidence to deal constructively with such an enormous problem. The very act of addressing it will also severely challenge the self-confidence that is required to deal with the problem in the first place.

In coping with the so-called forces of integration and fragmentation - and we should be clear about the fact that the terms are no more than heuristic attempts to capture a number of complex trends that defy simplification- caution is clearly warranted. Jumping to conclusions that either one or the other is desirable, Gaddis argues, could be a mistake. Many might assume that any force for integration -the EC, for example- is a good thing. But forces for integration (the international markets in oil and armaments) were also what made possible the threat posed by Saddam Hussein. The logical consequence of a fully integrated world, to cite another example, could be the loss of national severeignty and identity, submerging state autonomy within a larger economic order. The consequence of a fragmented world, on the other hand -and the Kurdish question if badly managed could go in this direction- could be a state of virtual anarchy shattering state authority. It is Gaddis' conclusion that instead of balancing states and ideologies, what must now be balanced are processes that tend towards integrationist and fragmentationist extremes; nations must weigh the advantages and disadvantages of these processes.[28]

The conflict between these two processes -and the object of their struggle is no less than the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the nation state- constitutes a fundamental challenge to the international state system. It means that individual countries must reassess who they are, the assumptions upon which they have been founded, and the mechanism by which their citizens have organized themselves. In Europe and the United States, debates over the Maastricht Treaty and the North American Free Trade Agreement have raised precisely these questions. In the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, movements for self-determination have led to the dissolution of those states, while the new "states" they have spawned must work out the question of

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[27] Deringil, **op. cit.**, p. 7.
[28] Gaddis, **op. cit.**

whether or not, and if so the extent to which, they, too, must be further divided.

Such questions are not always so apocalyptic for every country. Nonetheless, the questions posed are very difficult and have no simple answers. In the United States, the question of secession, and the decision of the North to oppose it, led to a civil war - a war which, even 130 years later, did not totally resolve some of the fundamental problems that contributed to it. The debate in the United States over NAFTA, as noted, has gone to the very heart of how we think of ourselves as a nation, the responsibilities and obligations of our leadership, and the relationships between our nation and the larger economic and political international order. Nation-building isn't easy. Nation-saving isn't either.

For Turkey, the problem of balancing processes that tend toward integrationist and fragmentationist extremes means supporting those that advance its general interests; opposing, modifying, or accomodating those that threaten its sovereignty or territorial integrity, and, where action is necessary, doing what has to be done to restore its equilibrium and make possible its ability to meet the challenges of the post-Cold War era.