

Greek-Turkish Relations in the Post-Cold War Era

Implications Of The American Response

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RÉSUMÉ

Au lieu de passer en revue les questions habituelles qui constituent l'ordre du jour des relations gréco-turques, je propose plutôt d'examiner les implications de la réponse américaine face aux problématiques qui affectent les relations gréco-turques dans la période de l'après Guerre froide et voir comment ces questions peuvent être résolues. L'analyse qui suit ne constitue pas, pour la résolution pacifique des problèmes au sein des relations gréco-turques, un effort de transfert de la responsabilité à un acteur externe comme les E.U. ou même de blâmer de tierces parties pour le manque de volonté à résoudre ces problèmes. C'est plutôt la confirmation que les politiques et les prétensions de la guerre froide ont joué un rôle crucial dans la définition et la conduite de la politique grecque, turque et américaine dans la région et que la politique américaine a constitué l'influence externe la plus significative dans les relations bilatérales de la Grèce et de la Turquie.

Les relations gréco-turques se sont détériorées depuis la fin de la Guerre froide, depuis que la Turquie a capitalisé sur les conditions du nouvel environnement international dans la région. En encourageant le rôle ambitieux que la Turquie veut se donner dans les Balkans, en Asie Centrale et au Moyen-Orient, Washington a aussi encouragé les objectifs révisionnistes Turcs dans la mer Égée et à Chypre.

ABSTRACT

Rather than reviewing the known issues that currently make up the agenda of Greco-Turkish relations, I propose to examine the implications of the American response to the issues affecting Greco-Turkish relations in the post-cold war era and how these issues may be resolved. The analysis that follows is *not* an attempt to shift the burden for the peaceful resolution of problems in Greco-Turkish relations to an external actor such as the United States, or to blame third parties for the lack of resolution of these problems. It is an affirmation, however, that Cold War policies and assumptions played a pivotal role in the definition and conduct of Greek, Turkish and American policy in the region and that American policy has been the most significant external influence in the bilateral relations of Greece and Turkey.

Greco-Turkish relations have deteriorated since the end of the Cold War because Turkey has capitalized on the conditions of the new international environment in order to promote its revisionist objectives in the region. Washington, by fostering Turkey's ambitious role in the Balkans, in Central Asia and in the Middle East has encouraged Turkey's revisionist objectives in the Aegean and in Cyprus.

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The Cold War Legacy

Let me begin with two fundamental assumptions. One is that a realistic analysis of post-cold war Greek-Turkish relations must be made not only in the context of the perceptions, assumptions, motives and policies of the two countries, but also those of the United States towards each of the countries and Turkey in particular. And, second, that post-cold war American perceptions, assumptions, motives and policies towards the two countries and their problems cannot be separated from the security considerations and perceptions that guided American policy to this region during the Cold War.

The foundations of American policy towards Greece and Turkey were laid soon after the end of World War II. First, a devastated Britain appeared unable to perform its traditional security role in the region, the political deadlock in Greece set the stage for the third round of the Greek Civil War, and the Soviet Union demanded from Turkey various strategic concessions, while the United States and the Soviet Union confronted each other over Iran. It was in this context that the U.S.S. Missouri paid its symbolic visit to Greece and Turkey in the Spring of 1946. The American commitment to the region was formalized nearly a year later with the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine on March 12, 1947. This economic and military assistance program was primarily designed to address the problems confronting Greece, while the coverage extended to Turkey was only a secondary consideration.

However, the emergence of the Cold War, and the transformation of the aid package to Greece and Turkey into America's global containment doctrine, had a catalytic effect on American relations with the two countries and on bilateral Greek-Turkish relations.

Fifty years ago, the United States was a newcomer to the politics of this region despite its earlier economic, cultural, and religious involvement in the area¹, and Woodrow Wilson's failed attempt to extend American influence in the region and to promote the aspirations of Armenians who had long suffered under the Ottoman Empire.

Political reality is influenced by the images and perceptions of policy makers.² Such images and perceptions provide a simplified world view and comforting rationalizations for choices made by policy makers. Perceptions can also cause serious policy problems if there is a wide gap between image and reality. The rise to power and the reforms of Kemal Atatürk helped redefine the negative American perceptions of the Ottoman Empire. American diplomats and missionaries³ had vividly portrayed and reported the annihilation of the Armenian and Greek minorities of the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, Turkey had sided with the Germans during World War I. Kemal Atatürk had emerged as modern Turkey's George Washington, as the leader who restored Turkey's

sovereignty, curtailed external interference, and set his country on the road to secularization, westernization and reform. Thus, the old image of Turkey soon vanished under the pressures of the Cold War and Atatürk's legacy.

Turkey was perceived as a «proud and independent country»⁴ by American officials during the debate on the Truman Doctrine in 1947. This image of Turkey in the United States has not changed since then. The inevitable conclusion of this perception has been that the Turks would not tolerate external interference in their politics and policies⁵, and that political conditions in that country limited the exercise of American influence.

Another American perception of Turkey was inherited from British imperial policy. Throughout the 19th century Britain considered the Ottoman Empire's control of the Straits as vital to the containment of Russia. During the Cold War, Washington defined in similar terms Turkey's geopolitical value. In turn, Ankara effectively exploited this strategic asset to promote and protect its interests in the United States. American officials acknowledged the interdependent strategic role of the «two sisters», Greece and Turkey. They did attribute, however, far greater strategic significance to Turkey because of its control of the Straits, its common—even though frequently impassable—land frontier with the Soviet Union, and the size of the Turkish Army. Moreover, Turkey's size and location made it a barrier to Soviet expansion in the Middle East and American stepping stone to the Middle East and to the vital Persian Gulf region.

In contrast to Turkey, Greece, during the Cold War failed to assert its independence and/or its strategic importance.⁶ Ideological biases and the dependence of Greek political elites on American support for their political survival created conditions confirming the American perception that Greek politics could be externally manipulated. Thus, if a policy choice had to be made between Greece and Turkey, Washington believed especially prior to 1974 that the negative Greek reactions could be adequately managed.⁷

Cold War realities and domestic needs confirmed Washington's perceptions of Greece and Turkey. On September 20, 1951, despite European objections, the North Atlantic Council recommended the accession of Greece and Turkey in NATO. By 1953 both countries had concluded bilateral defense cooperation agreements with and granted bases to the United States. Both countries engaged Yugoslavia in a short lived Balkan political and strategic cooperation agreement in 1953,⁸ and dispatched troops to Korea.⁹ Turkey became NATO's southeastern anchor and America's partner in the quest for a Middle East alliance that culminated in the formation of the Baghdad Pact (CENTO) in 1955.

Turkey's pragmatic policies during the first twenty years after the end of World War II were a departure from Atatürk's foreign policy. They were designed however to attain specific policy objectives which included the American

guarantee of Turkey's security, the modernization of its armed forces, the development of the Turkish economy, and the full acceptance of Turkey in the Western family of nations. Turkey, through astute diplomacy in World War II¹⁰ escaped the ravages of the war but could not escape its consequences. This is why Turkey sought America's commitment to both its security and its economic and social modernization. During the Cold War then, Washington, Ankara and Athens at one level pursued complementary objectives. Shared Cold War interests could not however withstand the pressures of Greco-Turkish relations and Cyprus. Washington made its policy choices on the basis of Cold War needs and not on the merits of the issues involved in these disputes. A few examples of America's policy choices follow.

Manifestations of the Cold War Legacy

Cyprus became the first issue to test the cozy relationship that had emerged since 1946 between the United States, Greece and Turkey. England and Turkey effectively exploited Washington's Cold War concerns and gained her support for their objectives on the island. Thus, the interests of the Cypriots were sacrificed on the altar of the Cold War as Washington sought the resolution of the problem at any cost and in a way that met NATO's and Turkey's concerns. Solutions proposed through NATO and/or American mediation sought to avoid a Greco-Turkish conflict and promoted positions demanded by Turkey. American diplomacy was also mobilized to oppose resolutions upholding Cypriot objectives at the United Nations, to water down or defeat resolutions critical of Turkey, and since 1974 to avoid the imposition of sanctions on Turkey for its violations of international law.¹¹

The logic behind these policies had been that external interference would increase Turkey's intransigence and would harm its strategic relationship with the United States. It also reflected the American belief that Turkish politics and policies were not open to external manipulation. With little sympathy for Cyprus during the Cold War because of its independent actions, and the ability of the United States to manipulate Greek politics prior to 1974, Washington threw its weight behind Turkey's policy priorities in the Cyprus problem. Thus, Washington's assumptions about Turkey and Cyprus have remained relatively constant over the last four decades.

Another manifestation of American policy since the beginning of the Cold War has been the attempt to appear even-handed during Greco-Turkish crises. Characteristic was the American response to the Turkish government sponsored pogroms against the Greeks of Istanbul and Izmir in September 1955. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles' response to the anguish felt in Greece in the aftermath of these pogroms was a terse cable addressed to both governments calling

on them to «mend their fences», to concentrate on the fight against communism, and to seek a compromise over Cyprus in the interest of allied solidarity.¹² Dulles' cable placed on an equal footing the victim and the perpetrator of the crime. By placing the burden of responsibility equally on both governments Washington adopted a response pattern that was to be repeated over the next forty years. Because of America's perceptions of Turkey, Washington avoided confronting Turkey over its violations of international law in the name of allied solidarity and of the cooperation of Turkey in America's Cold War policies in the region. Throughout the Cold War Washington appeared far more concerned over Turkey's reactions to American policies than those of Greece.

A final example of the greater strategic significance attached to Turkey by the United States has to do with the negotiations for the reintegration of Greece in NATO's military wing (1975-1980). Throughout these negotiations Washington backed Turkey's claims for revisions to NATO's operational and control areas in the Aegean because of changed circumstances since the founding of the alliance. However, Turkey's demands had direct implications on the resolution of other bilateral Greco-Turkish issues such as that of the Greek territorial waters, the Greek airspace, et. al. In all these issues Washington pressed Greece to show flexibility to Turkey's emerging security and economic concerns, and to negotiate with Turkey over these issues regardless of their legal merit or effect on Greek sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The Deviations from the Rule

Despite the coincidence of American and Turkish objectives during the Cold War, and the assumptions about the limited influence the United States possessed over Turkey, there are at least three instances of policy disagreements that challenge these assumptions. It is the author's view, however, that these three instances were deviations from the rule required by circumstances that affected broader American interests. While Turkey exploited these disagreements to enhance its independent foreign policy and its bargaining power in the international system, Washington found itself apologizing to Turkey for upholding the rule of law and for offending Turkish sensibilities.

The first case of discord involved Lyndon B. Johnson's June 5, 1964, «ultimatum»¹³ to Turkey that stopped the impending invasion of Cyprus. What motivated the American action was not, however, a disagreement with Turkey's objectives on Cyprus, but with its tactics which risked a confrontation with the Soviet Union less than two years after the Cuban missile crisis. The continuity of the American assumptions and objectives in the Cyprus dispute was shown that Spring with George Ball's mission, with the NATO plan on Cyprus, and with the Acheson plan.¹⁴

The second example involves the pressures exerted in 1971 on the weak government of Nihat Erim by the Nixon administration to suspend the cultivation of opium in return for a three year assistance package to Turkish farmers affected by the ban. The decision by the Nixon administration was in response to public and Congressional pressures about the influx of drugs from Turkey in the United States. The ban was unilaterally revoked by the Ecevit government that emerged from the inconclusive 1973 elections. Despite protests, Washington did not take any further steps to penalize Turkey. An unanticipated consequence of this dispute turned out to be that it temporarily blemished Turkey's image in the United States as America's loyal ally and assisted those seeking the imposition of an arms embargo on Turkey following the 1974 Turkish invasion of Cyprus.

The third and final example involves the imposition of a limited arms embargo on Turkey by the U.S. Congress in 1975, following Turkey's invasion of Cyprus. This limited arms embargo was the result of Congressional action in response to pressures from various constituencies.¹⁵ The embargo was imposed despite the opposition of the Executive branch which had traditionally been Turkey's proponent in the United States. The Executive branch systematically opposed the embargo, took steps to subvert it through NATO and other allied countries, and systematically campaigned on behalf of Turkey for the lifting of the embargo. Arguing that the lifting of the embargo would bring greater flexibility in Turkey's policies on Cyprus, the Carter administration succeeded in its efforts in 1978.

What these three examples suggest is that Washington confronted Turkey only when Turkey's actions risked broader American security interests, as in the case of the 1964 «ultimatum», or when domestic pressures prevailed over the traditional political and security preferences of the Executive branch. Turkey, however, has effectively manipulated the Executive branch, Congress and American public opinion and placed Washington on the defensive by claiming that the American actions had hurt Turkey's national pride, and that Turkey could not count on the reliability of the American commitment. On the basis of this argument Turkey also rationalized restrictions placed on the use of American military facilities in Turkey, its close association with the Soviet Union during the 1973 Middle East crisis, and its acceptance of Soviet economic assistance. During the Cold War successive American administrations took pains to reaffirm the continuing American commitment to Turkey, and to acknowledge that the 1964 «ultimatum» and the embargo were mistakes that would not be repeated again.

What this brief look into the Cold War experience suggests is that this period set the basic assumptions and parameters of the American relationship to Turkey and Greece. Despite the end of the Cold War, these assumptions continue to guide U.S. policy towards the two countries. It should also be noted that Turkey, capitalizing on the evolving conditions of the Cold War, eagerly demonstrated its independent foreign policy in order to protect its national interests.

The Post-Cold War Experience

Greece entered the post-cold war era with a sense of optimism. It anticipated that the «new world order» would restore balance in the American assessments of Greece and Turkey given the absence of the Soviet threat and the emphasis placed by the United States on the rule of law. Moreover, the outbreak of the Gulf War and the American-led response to that crisis, displayed once more the strategic value of Greece and Cyprus in such contingencies.¹⁶

The Greek optimism proved short lived. Realpolitik continued to dominate American policy considerations despite the absence of the Soviet threat. Moreover, the American rule of law rhetoric excluded Cyprus and the outstanding Greco-Turkish issues. Greece, however, faced additional problems that affected its international standing. In addition to the long list of outstanding Greco-Turkish issues,¹⁷ Greece faced serious economic problems that affected her standing in the European Union. The crisis in the former Yugoslavia directly impacted on Greece because of its ties to Serbia and its policy on the recognition and the denomination of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Greece was also concerned about the fate of the Greek minority in Albania, about Turkey's involvement in the Balkans, and the rise of nationalism and irredentism in the region. The combination of all these problems along with some of the Greek responses to the crisis in the Balkans undermined the role of Greece as a source of stability in the region, and as a promoter of economic, social, and political change among the former communist states in the Balkans.¹⁸

Turkey underwent its own soul searching as the Cold War came to an end. Turkey's foreign policy elite feared that the end of the Cold War would diminish Turkey's strategic value and thus its leverage with the superpowers. The collapse of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, the charismatic presence and vision of the late president Turgut Ozal combined with the Gulf War, helped Turkey redefine its role in the post-cold war era and project its new look in positive terms which were compatible with the objectives of the sole surviving super power, the United States.

What were the elements of this post Cold War image that was so effectively cultivated by Turkish leaders, by American media and by other supporters of Turkey in the United States and Europe? Ozal envisioned a Turkey whose influence and role extended from the Adriatic to the Wall of China. The 21st century was to be the «century of the Turks». Turkey was the source of stability and regional leadership in a region of instability which encompassed the Balkans, the Middle East and the Turkic republics of Central Asia. It was a regional role model for others in the area in terms of its economic and political development, especially because Turkey was an Islamic country that was also secular and democratic. In view of its location and its cultural and political ties to the Balkans and

to the Turkic republics of Central Asia, Turkey saw itself as a conduit for trade and investment to this developing region. Turkey stood ready to abandon dated policies such as statism, to espouse free markets and privatization and consolidate democratization not only at home but in the region at large.

To the United States and Europe Turkey presented its foreign policy as one of moderation and responsibility, and of a commitment to an international order based on commonly shared values and a common European «mind set». Turkey's leadership, prior to the rise of Erbakan to power in 1996, while down playing the Islamic threat at home and in the region, promoted itself as both a bridge to that region and as a barrier to turmoil in the European fringe. Thus, former prime minister Tansu Ciller reminded her audiences of the dilemma that would have faced the members of NATO if a stable Turkey was absent from this «sea of turmoil», or if a nation of a «different character» was in Turkey's place. Finally, depending on the receptivity of the European Union to Turkey's overtures for membership, Turkey also courted the United States with a reminder of Turkey's important and continuing role in NATO, an organization still serving security needs.¹⁹

Turkey's significance to the United States has another dimension, although less advertised: access to Caspian Sea oil. The United States has consistently opposed alternative oil transportation routes through Russia, Iran or Iraq and has backed the transportation of this lucrative new source through Turkey and Turkey's Kurdish region.²⁰

Turkey, despite its serious domestic economic and political problems succeeded where Greece failed: i.e. in selling this glorified image to the United States and to a limited degree in Europe. The mere compatibility of Turkey's new image to America's emerging objectives in the region, provided US policy makers with the appropriate rationalizations to continue their cozy relationship with Ankara on even stronger terms than those seen during the Cold War.

Manifestations of the Post-Cold War Legacy

The post-cold war trends in the attitudes of the United States towards Greco-Turkish relations have been manifested in at least four areas: i.e., the Imia crisis and the on-going Turkish military challenge in the Aegean; the Kurdish insurrection; Cyprus and Erbakan's rise to power.

The Imia Crisis and the Turkish Military Challenge in the Aegean

Starting late in 1973 Turkey undertook a coordinated campaign to revise the status quo in the Aegean which had been defined under international agreements. The challenge to the status quo included the delimitation of the

Aegean continental shelf, the airspace, the Greek territorial waters, the militarization of certain Greek islands in the Aegean, etc. The attempt to revise the Aegean status quo was carried out in conjunction with Turkey's efforts to revise NATO's command and control areas in the Aegean, with American support, during the negotiations for Greece's re-entry to NATO's military wing.

The January 1996 Imia crisis was not the first «hot» incident in the Aegean that required American intervention to prevent the outbreak of Greco-Turkish hostilities. It had been preceded by the Summer 1976 Chora incident and the March 1987 Sismik incident. However, in the post-cold war period there has been an escalation of the violations of the Greek airspace by armed aircraft of the Turkish air force that have led to the loss of aircraft and pilots by both sides. Moreover, on June 8, 1995, the Turkish Grand National Assembly authorized the government of Turkey to use force to prevent Greece from extending its territorial waters to 12 miles, following the ratification of the latest Law of the Sea Treaty.

During the January 1996 crisis over Imia, the intervention of the White House prevented a Greco-Turkish conflict. It is instructive to see the American response to this crisis, its motives, and policy implications.

a) Once the crisis was defused, the White House called for a resort to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) or another form of international arbitration. The White House explicitly stated that it did not recognize Turkey's claims to sovereignty over Imia, and that it opposed the threat or use of force for the resolution of bilateral differences in the Aegean. However, president Clinton went on to question Greek sovereignty over Imia based on doubts expressed by his legal advisors as to interpretations of documents and agreements dating back several decades. Thus, the resort to the ICJ was recommended in order to «weigh impartially the legal arguments of both sides.»²¹ This response was a classic example of the American policy of maintaining «equal distance» among the parties in the dispute. In reality, however, Washington's position agreed with the Turkish challenge of Greek sovereignty over Imia. This was a serious error because, in order to satisfy Turkey, Washington undermined a fundamental rule of American foreign policy, i.e. the respect for established boundaries and for the continuing validity of international agreements. That was the principle involved in the Imia crisis and Washington dismissed it in order to appease Turkey.

b) Because of the escalating incidents in the air and at sea in the Aegean, Washington urged the implementation of confidence building measures (CBM) to reduce the chances of accidental war.²² This included a bilateral Greco-Turkish agreement to suspend military exercises in the Aegean from July 1 to September 1, 1996. However, Washington continued arming Turkey at an alarming pace with sophisticated weapons with the justification that such

armaments were needed because of threats emanating from the region.²³ In addition, Turkey has received technical assistance and investments from the United States to develop a sophisticated arms industry. Both of these developments threaten peace and stability in the region and undermine the military balance between the two countries.

c) Having attained its goal to challenge Greek sovereignty in the Dodecanese through the Imia case and through the American position questioning earlier international agreements, Turkey, in the Summer of 1996, presented new claims of contested sovereignty in the Aegean. These included the island of Gavdos, and some one hundred other islands in «grey areas» of the Aegean on the grounds that they were not specifically listed in the treaties ending World Wars I and II.

This latest set of claims brought a measured American response during press briefings at the U.S. Department of State²⁴, attributing these claims to a low level Turkish official assigned to NATO, and to contingency games in a Turkish military academy. The press spokesman, Nicholas Burns, confirmed the Greek sovereignty over Gavdos, but proceeded to qualify his response by indicating that questions of sovereignty should be discussed between Greece and Turkey. Seeking campaign support from the Greek-American community, President Clinton issued a statement on October 19, 1996, in which he repeated the known positions on the issue of Imia. He also criticized «frivolous territorial claims» such as those over Gavdos.

The ambivalence of American policy has encouraged Turkish claims. On October 22, 1996 we had another manifestation of this ambivalence when State Department press spokesman Nicholas Burns spoke of the existence of islands in the Aegean that may not belong to either Greece or Turkey under international agreements. He went on to suggest that the Greco-Turkish boundaries should be respected and that any changes should come peacefully and by mutual consent. In the storm of protest that followed these comments, which contradicted those of the president to the Greek-American community, the Department of State spokesman on October 24, 1996, attributed his comments to an error and emphasized once more the traditional position about a resort to the ICJ.

d) Turkey, consistently since 1974, has attempted to force Greece into negotiations questioning its borders. Turkey has mastered the art of creating incidents and provocations which are systematically followed by calls for negotiations in a show of goodwill and peaceful international conduct. If Greece rejected these offers it was accused of intransigence. These tactics have found a sympathetic ear in Washington. Since 1974, the policy of the United States has been to urge negotiations regardless of the motives and of the validity of Turkey's demands. Washington's implied questioning of earlier international agreements, its ambivalence over Turkey's actions in the Aegean, and the praise given to Turkey for its role in the post-cold war era, have encouraged Turkey's revisionism in the Aegean and thus the risks to peace in the region.

The Kurdish Insurrection

The first challenge to the post-cold war order was Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Despite Turkey's delayed and reluctant support of the actions of the United States and its coalition allies, Turkey gained significant American recognition for its important strategic role and participation in that war. One aspect of the war that was of interest to Turkey and to the United States was the issue of Kurdish autonomy in Iraq. Turkey had been embroiled in massive military efforts to eradicate the Kurdish insurrection in southeastern Turkey. It asked and received American support for the unity of Iraq. Splitting off the Kurdish sections of Iraq would set a negative precedent for Turkey. Despite the massive evidence by international human rights organizations, and by the U.S. Department of State *Report on Human Rights Practices* about the gross violations of Kurdish human rights in Turkey, Washington developed a hypocritical and contradictory policy on this issue. On the one hand Washington supported the Turkish army's repression of the Kurdish insurrection in Turkey as well as its cross border raids into Iraq and provided Turkey with intelligence, supplies and political support. This was done in the name of combating terrorism, a common goal of Turkey and the United States. On the other hand, Washington launched Operation Provide Comfort out of bases in Turkey for the protection of the Kurds in Iraq whose insurrection against Saddam Hussein gained them the designation of «freedom fighters».

Strategic considerations in the context of Turkey's upgraded role in the post-cold war era gave Turkey a free hand to deal with its Kurdish problem despite its gross violations of international law.

Cyprus

The Cyprus issue has been and continues to be the issue that exemplifies the American assumptions about Turkey both before and after the end of the Cold War. I will only provide five examples of the manifestations of American policy since the end of the Cold War. In this period we have witnessed the active engagement of the United States in the search for a solution with the dispatch of presidential emissaries, the appointment of State Department Coordinators on Cyprus, and other diplomats to the region. Presidents Bush and Clinton have stated that the status quo in Cyprus is unacceptable. In the heat of the 1996 presidential campaign statements have been made indicating that the Cyprus problem is a high priority of American policy and that president Clinton would consider the lack of a solution of the Cyprus problem as a «personal failure».²⁵

Without disputing the significance and the necessity of the American involvement in the search for a solution of the Cyprus problem, the reality remains that the substance of American policy and its fundamental assumptions about Turkey's interests in the Cyprus dispute have not changed. Here are some characteristic examples:

a) In the aftermath of the Kuwait crisis and the American policy of implementing all the United Nations resolutions on Kuwait and Iraq, Cyprus failed to get the same consideration from Washington. Official Washington responses were framed in superfluous legal arguments that attempted to separate United Nations resolutions adopted under Chapter VI from those adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter. These arguments could not, however, hide the fact that Washington has consistently opposed the implementation of United Nations resolutions on Cyprus, especially when they contained goals that differed from those of the United States and Turkey.

b) Although much effort was exerted in the search for a solution in cooperation with the United Nations, the American position did not substantially differ from that of Turkey on the issues of the constitutional structure of the republic and on the issue of the external guarantees. The American position amounted to an acceptance of Turkey's views regarding a loose confederation and the continued presence of significant numbers of Turkish troops in the occupied part of the island. The only serious disagreement with Turkey was over the territorial concessions to be made to the Greek Cypriots in return for their acceptance of the Turkish endorsed confederation proposals. To increase the pressure on the Greek Cypriots for the acceptance of these proposals threats were implied of more formal ties with the unrecognized regime of the occupied areas, and the linkage of a constitutional solution to the Cypriot application for membership in the European Union.

c) The United States has opposed the unified defense dogma that has placed Cyprus within the Greek defense space. It has also opposed the holding of joint military maneuvers between Greece and Cyprus, and the arms purchase programs of the Cyprus National Guard. Washington has objected to these activities, much like Turkey has done, on the grounds of their impact on the process of resolving the Cyprus problem. It is ironic, however, that Washington has not complained publicly to Turkey about the impact of the continued presence of 35,000 heavily armed Turkish troops in the occupied area. Only recently did the U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Madeleine Albright²⁶ speak of the «illegality of the Turkish Army's occupation» of Cyprus. Welcome as this statement may have been, it is doubtful that it reflects the administration's policy. The Albright statement may have been motivated by electoral considerations and by the Ambassador's personal ambitions.²⁷

d) During the fall of 1996, a number of incidents occurred in the neutral zone in divided Cyprus during which unarmed Greek Cypriots were murdered in cold blood by Turkish Cypriot security operatives and Turkish right-wing thugs brought into Cyprus by the Denktash regime in cooperation with the government of Turkey. The lukewarm reaction of the United States to the first murder in Dherynia clearly encouraged the repetition of Turkey's violent

conduct. When pressed for a reaction to these killings the Department of State spokesman called for «mutual restraint». His qualified response implied that Turkey's actions were in response to Greek Cypriot provocations. Washington also used these killings as a pressure tactic on the government of Cyprus to reopen a face to face dialogue at the highest level with the Turkish Cypriots, and to open talks for military disengagement along the dividing line.

These pressures, however, failed to account for the absence of common ground in the positions of the two parties, and that a limited disengagement along the dividing line did not address the issue of the withdrawal of the Turkish occupation forces from Cyprus. Finally, the condemnation of these killings that was included in the statement of President Clinton to the Greek-American community has to be seen in the context of the president's re-election campaign. If this statement reflected American policy, it would have been made a lot earlier and in an unequivocal manner by the Department of State spokesman. This did not occur.

e) The Clinton administration reversed the position of earlier administrations on the involvement of the European Union in the search for a solution of the Cyprus problem. It has also expressed its support for the eventual membership of Cyprus in the E.U.

The shift in the Clinton policy would be welcome if it were intended to develop new options in the search for a solution of some of the intractable issues in the negotiations such as those of human rights (three freedoms), the issue of guarantees, borders, etc. Washington, working in cooperation with Britain, has clearly linked the accession of Cyprus to the European Union with that of the political solution of the Cyprus problem. This, despite the fact that Washington has no voice in the E.U.'s membership policies. Moreover, the linkage implied in the American policy contradicts positions adopted by the E.U. that the Cypriot membership is not "hostage" to Turkey. Washington's policy then is clearly intended to use the incentive of E.U. membership to impose the kind of political settlement demanded by Turkey. Throughout the discussions between the E.U. and Turkey over the latter's membership application and the debate over the Turkish Customs Union agreement, Washington actively lobbied on behalf of Turkey.

Washington's policy on both of these issues parallels and reinforces that of Turkey which objects to the entry of Cyprus in the E.U., not only prior to a political solution on the island but also prior to the entry of Turkey in the E.U.

The Rise and Challenge of Erbakan

The rise to power of Turkish Islamists in the spring of 1996, provides a classic example of the inherent rationalizations and the contradictions of American policy towards Turkey. The United States had extended its full support to Tansu Ciller for being a reformist, female, westernizing prime minister of an Islamic democratic state which was facing economic and political instability as well as a serious challenge from the rising Islamic movement. Ciller was therefore promoted as the pro-Western barrier to the Islamic takeover of Turkey. To Washington's great surprise, the coalition between Ciller and Erbakan brought to power the very nemesis of the United States.²⁸ Erbakan's anti-American, anti-western and anti-Israeli views, and his support of Islamic movements that threatened America's Middle Eastern allies distinguished him from all other Turkish politicians.

Erbakan challenged the United States soon after coming to power. In an attempt to bolster ties with radical Islamic states Erbakan set out to visit and to strike new business deals with countries such as Libya, Iran and Nigeria. Not only were these countries on Washington's black list for sponsoring terrorism, but they were also the object of new American sanctions that were imposed in the Summer of 1996. In his visit to Iran, Erbakan struck a \$21 billion gas pipeline deal that violated American sanctions. In Libya, while visiting Qaddafi's home that had been bombed by the United States in 1986, Erbakan described Libya as the «victim of terrorism» rather than the «sponsor» of terrorism. He also struck a \$2 billion deal that violated American sanctions. Erbakan also remained silent while Qaddafi criticized Turkey for its ties to the United States, NATO and Israel, and described Turkey as a country «under Western occupation». Qaddafi also called for the establishment of an independent Kurdish state.

Erbakan, along with Ciller, had expanded their political and economic cooperation with Iraq on the basis of inadequate Western compensation for losses suffered by Turkey since the Gulf war. Moreover, Ciller and Erbakan urged the Iraqi regime to end Kurdish autonomy in Iraq and obstructed the use of Turkish bases by Operation Provide Comfort and for the enforcement of the no-fly zone over Iraq by arbitrarily implementing ATC regulations.

Erbakan's exploits were criticized during press briefings at the Department of State²⁹ by press spokesman Nicholas Burns. He found Erbakan's statements and actions to be «objectionable», «off base», «unwarranted», and that they sent the «wrong message» to countries such as Iran. He apologetically indicated that it was «unusual to speak this way about a NATO ally» but «given the circumstances...we had no choice». Burns was quick to point out that the United States conveyed similar messages privately. The United States did not wish to involve itself in the internal Turkish debate, and Mr. Burns expressed the «hope» that Erbakan's actions were not in violation of American sanctions. The press spokesman concluded that the United States stood by Turkey, a country victimized by terrorism, and felt that Turkey should do the same for the United States.

Despite the frustration expressed by the press spokesman of the Department of State, official Washington stood ready to rationalize the situation in Turkey³⁰ along the following lines:

- 1) That the majority in Turkey remains secular and pro-Western.
- 2) That the Erbakan-Ciller coalition was temporary and the result of internal political maneuvering rather than support for Erbakan.
- 3) That Turkey should be treated with sensitivity. While keeping the Islamists at «arms length», avoid alienating and undermining America's «real allies» in Turkey.
- 4) That the Turkish Army was the ultimate guarantee of secularism.
- 5) That Erbakan would self destruct by his actions, and
- 6) That the United States needed Turkey's military facilities more than ever before and that it should not do anything to strain its relations with a «very important ally» located in a «tough neighborhood». Other apologists for Turkey³¹ continued to describe Turkey as the «antidote to Islamic fundamentalism and Russian imperialism» and that it was in the Western interest to be frank with the Turks but keep them as friends and to help them practice a «comfortable form of Islam».

In the final analysis, wishful thinking and rationalizations of Turkey's behavior characterized Washington's post-cold war assessments of Turkey. Moreover, Washington failed to appreciate the Erbakan Ciller gambit, the continuing abandonment of Atatürkism, the internal reaction to the failures of secular politicians, and the fact that the rank and file of the Turkish military may not be as unified as in earlier periods of Turkish politics. Decades of contradictions, ambivalence, and the conflicting priorities of American policy towards Turkey³², and the unqualified support extended to Turkey for its geopolitical importance, especially since the end of the Cold War, have contributed to Ankara's self-importance and arrogance. Thus, the United States has been the most important contributor to Turkey's international misconduct.

Implications for Greece and Cyprus

Despite the frustration felt in Washington because of prime minister Erbakan's behavior and challenge to American policy, American officials appear prepared to ride the storm and wait for him to self-destruct or for the Turkish military to remove him from power by direct or indirect action. Washington is not likely to upset its long-term relationship with Turkey by interfering in Turkish politics. Nor is it likely that Turkish political elites would welcome such interference. Thus, it is anticipated that Turkish-American relations will remain in the domain

of bureaucratic policy whose parameters have already been outlined.

With stable governments in Greece and Cyprus American pressures are likely to be exerted in the direction of Athens and Nicosia rather than in Ankara in the search for solutions to regional problems. Another reality check for Athens and Nicosia ought to be the fact that despite promises by American presidential candidates and/or the president elect, in the absence of a crisis, Greco-Turkish relations and Cyprus will remain bureaucratic problems. Generalized pronouncements affected by campaign needs should not be confused with the fundamental American assumptions as to how the Greco-Turkish problems and Cyprus might be resolved. These assumptions have not changed.

Greece and Cyprus have sought Washington's involvement in the region's problems because of the influence Washington potentially possesses in Ankara. Neither country should expect that Washington will abandon Turkey. Both countries do expect American policy to show greater balance and take a clear stand on issues that affect longterm American foreign policy principles, such as the respect for international frontiers and for international agreements. In view of the experience with American policy in the Aegean and Cyprus during 1996, both countries ought to be prepared to face pressures for the conclusion of a package deal settlement accommodating Turkey's demands in the Aegean and in Cyprus.

What can Greece and Cyprus do?

a) Avoid the temptation of package deal solutions. While positive movement on Cyprus may contribute to an improvement in the Greco-Turkish political climate, Cyprus cannot be held hostage or be blackmailed because of the serious issues raised by Turkey's revisionism in the Aegean. Greco-Turkish issues have their own dynamics.

b) Greece must not engage in another interminable dialogue with Turkey until Ankara renounces the threat or the use of force in its relations with Greece, and acknowledges in unequivocal terms the validity of the frontiers and of the status quo established in the region under relevant international agreements since the end of the Balkan Wars. Turkey must renounce any claims as to «grey areas» in the Aegean.

c) Cyprus must not venture into another high level meeting with the Turkish Cypriots until some common ground has been established and the Turkish Cypriot side has renounced claims to sovereignty. Further, prior to entering into another round of high level talks, Cyprus must not repeat the tactical error of making concessions up front prior to the commencement of negotiations and without any reciprocal concessions by the Turkish/Turkish Cypriot sides.

d) Neither Greece nor Cyprus should be drawn into «Camp David» or «Dayton style» negotiations. Their sovereignty and territorial integrity is likely to be affected in such talks.

e) Greece and Cyprus should not suspend or renounce their defense cooperation agreement until such a time as a definite timetable for the withdrawal of Turkish forces has been agreed upon, and appropriate international provisions have been agreed upon for demilitarization and for the presence of an expanded international peacekeeping force. Moreover, the presence of such an international force cannot subvert the sovereignty of Cyprus or the standing of its government, as it was the case with the NATO plan of 1964, and it is the case with the current Bosnian model.

f) Turkey has mastered the art of creating threats of conflict and later retreating to calls for peaceful negotiations in order to display to the international community its peaceful intentions. There are issues over which negotiations are appropriate, as in the case of the delimitation of the Aegean continental shelf. There is no room for negotiations or for resort to arbitration over Greece's established sovereign rights and/or its frontiers.

g) Cyprus will soon have to respond to American and European initiatives for a political solution of the problem. Cyprus must stand firm against a Bosnia style solution that will only confirm and legitimize the partition of the island. Instead, proposals ought to be presented capitalizing on new options available to resolve what may have been major obstacles in earlier negotiations. For example, NATO and the E.U. can provide creative new alternatives on issues such as human rights (three freedoms), borders and guarantees.

h) Even though the integration of Cyprus in the E.U. is a top Cypriot priority, Cyprus ought to be prepared to tell its European partners that it will not pay any price in return for membership. Cyprus cannot be victimized twice.

i) Greece and Cyprus can cooperate with the United States in the search of defining ways to reduce tensions in the Aegean and along the dividing line in Cyprus. Moratoria in active military exercises, cooling off periods, hot lines, arms limitations and deconfrontation arrangements are possible once Turkey acknowledges the Aegean status quo and renounces the use or the threat of force in its relations with Greece and Cyprus. Further, deconfrontation and demilitarization proposals in Cyprus and the Aegean are meaningless if they are not mutual and in depth. This includes the withdrawal of the occupation forces from Cyprus and arms limitations along Turkey's Mediterranean and Aegean coasts.

What this paper has argued is that American policies have contributed to the inflation of Turkey's ego and self-importance and, thus, to Turkey's revisionism in the Aegean and Cyprus both before and after the Cold War. America's assumptions about Turkey have remained relatively constant since the end of

World War II. This is why Athens and Nicosia ought to be realistic about forthcoming American initiatives in the region. Athens and Nicosia can protect their fundamental interests in the post-cold war environment by pursuing realistic, consistent and credible policies. These policies ought to place their national interests above party and personal interests, and build on the strengths both countries bring to the post-cold war international environment.

NOTES

1. Stephen A. LARRABEE, *Hellas Observed: The American Experience of Greece 1775-1865*. New York: New York University Press, 1957.
2. There is a large body of work on this subject. See the pioneering work by Kenneth E. BOULDING, «National Images and International Systems», *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 3, June 1959, pp. 120-131.
3. George HORTON, *The Blight of Asia*. Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill and Co., 1926. Henry MORGENTHAU, *Ambassador Morgenthau's Story*. Garden City: Doubleday, Page and Co., 1918.
4. United States Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, *Legislative Origins of the Truman Doctrine*, Hearings held in Executive Session on S938, First Session, 80th Congress, Historical Series. Washington, DC: G.P.O., 1973, pp. 78-80.
5. Van COUFOUDAKIS, «Turkey and the United States: The Problems and Prospects of a Post-War Alliance», *Journal of Political and Military Sociology*, Vol. 9, No. 2, Fall 1981, pp. 179-196. Harry J. PSOMIADES, «American Images of Greece and Turkey Since 1945» in Theodore A. COULOUMBIS and John O. IATRIDES (eds), *Greek American Relations: A Critical Review* (New York: Pella Publishing Co., 1980), pp. 91-106.
6. Despite the small size of Greece, its strategic significance during the Cold war was even more important than that of Turkey, especially in relationship to Turkey's control of the Straits and the presence of the 5th Eskadra in the Mediterranean. Van COUFOUDAKIS, «The Eastern Mediterranean in the Defense of the West-The Case of Greece», *NATO's Sixteen Nations*, October 1986, Vol. 31, No. 6, pp. 34-39. Also: «The Essential Link: Greece in NATO», *NATO's Sixteen Nations*, July-August 1988, Vol. 32, No. 4, pp. 35-44. Jesse W. LEWIS, Jr. *The Strategic Balance in the Mediterranean*. Washington, DC: The American Enterprise Institute, 1976.
7. Theodore A. COULOUMBIS, *Greek Political Reaction to American and NATO Influences*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1966.
8. John O. IATRIDES, *Balkan Triangle-Birth and Decline of an Alliance*

Across Ideological Boundaries. The Hague, Paris: Mouton, 1968.

9. Turkey's decision to send troops to Korea was made by its top leadership without the sanction of the Grand National Assembly. It was a calculated decision to gain American support for Turkey's admission to NATO. See Feroz AHMAD, *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy, 1950-1975*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1978, p. 391.

10. Turkey remained neutral during the war having failed to meet its treaty obligations to Greece and Britain. Turkey joined the allied powers days before the 1945 Yalta conference. During the war Turkey courted both Germany and Britain, but neither country was willing to meet Turkey's strategic and territorial demands. Frank G. WEBER, *The Evasive Neutral-Germany, Britain and the Quest for a Turkish Alliance in the Second World War*. Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1979. Edward WEISBAND, *Turkish Foreign Policy 1943-1945-Small State Diplomacy and Great Power Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973.

11. Van COUFOUDAKIS, «U.S. Foreign Policy and the Cyprus Question: An Interpretation», *Millenium-Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 3, Winter 1976-77, pp. 245-268.

12. Theodore A. COULOUMBIS, *Greek Political Reactions...*, op. cit., pp.95-97.

13. For the text of this unusually strongly worded letter to Turkish Prime Minister Inonu see Republic of Cyprus, Public Information Office, *Cyprus: The Problem in Perspective*. Nicosia: PIO, 1969, pp. 36-37.

14. Van COUFOUDAKIS, «U.S. Foreign Policy and the Cyprus Question...», pp.245-268.

15. Clifford P. HACKETT, «The Role of Congress and Greek-American Relations», in Theodore A. COULOUMBIS and John O. IATRIDES (eds.), op. cit., pp. 131-148. Lawrence STERN, *The Wrong Horse-The Politics of Intervention and the Failure of American Diplomacy*. New York: Times Books-Quadrangle, 1977.

16. Nearly 90% of the logistical support of the allied operations in the Gulf moved through the Mediterranean. Greek and Cypriot facilities played a major supporting role in these operations.

17. These issues included: the Muslim minority in Western Thrace; the Greek minority of Istanbul and the Ecumenical Patriarchate; the delimitation of the Aegean continental shelf; the width of the Greek airspace; the extension of the Greek territorial waters to 12 miles; NATO command and control areas; search and rescue areas in the Aegean; and the militarization of certain Aegean islands.

The Cyprus issue is also part of the Greco-Turkish agenda, even though it is not a Greco-Turkish issue per se.

18. Van COUFOUDAKIS, «Greek Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era: Issues and Challenges», *Mediterranean Quarterly*, Vol. 7, No. 3, Summer 1996, pp. 28-29.

19. Among the many recent studies and statements promoting Turkey's «new role» see Dr. Tansu CILLER, «Turkey and NATO: Stability in the Vortex of Change», *NATO Review*, No. 2, April 1994, pp. 3-6; Graham E. FULLER and Ian O. LESSER (eds.), *Turkey's New Geopolitics-From the Balkans to Western China*. Boulder: Westview/RAND, 1993; and Andrew MANGO, *Turkey-The Challenge of a New Role*. Westport: Praeger, 1994.

20. See the paper presented at the Conference on Security in the Eastern Mediterranean by Fiona HILL, «Pipeline Politics, Russo-Turkish Competition and Geopolitics in the Eastern Mediterranean» held at Intercollege, Nicosia, Cyprus, January 17, 1996.

21. See the letter of president Clinton, dated February 26, 1996, to Angelo Tsakopoulos and other leaders of the Greek-American community.

22. See the letter of president Clinton to Greek prime minister Simitis dated July 1, 1996.

23. See the Clinton letter of February 26, 1996, to the Greek-American leadership. In addition to weapons acquired by Turkey under NATO's cascading policy, Turkey received from the United States air tankers for the refuelling of its F-16's in flight, the new short range ATACM missiles and attack helicopters. All these systems pose a clear and present danger to the Greek islands in the Aegean and in Cyprus.

24. Daily Press Briefing, U.S. Department of State, June 17, 1996.

25. See president Clinton's statement to the Greek-American community of October 19, 1996.

26. In a speech to the Annual Awards Gala of the Cyprus Federation of America in New York, September 28, 1996.

27. Washington political observers consider Albright as a contender for the position of Secretary of State in a new Clinton cabinet. Ed. note: This article predates the last American presidential elections.

28. Jim HOAGLAND, «Political Con Game in Turkey», *The Washington Post*, July 11, 1996. By this unholy alliance Ciller may have escaped prosecution for various financial scandals from her previous administration.

29. Especially in those of October 7 and October 8, 1996.

30. An excellent example of this rationalization is the op-ed by Alan MAKOVSKY, a Turkish expert who held various official positions in Washington. See his «Responding to Turkey's Eastward Drift», *The New York Times*, August 17, 1996.

31. Amos PERLMUTTER, «Turkey's Strategic Mideast Position», *The Washington Times*, September 23, 1996, and Andrew MANGO, op. cit., pp. 85 and 133.

32. For example: the subordination of human rights to security considerations.