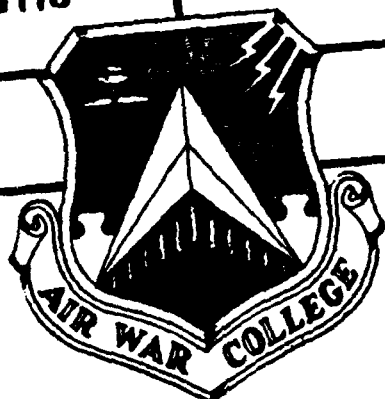


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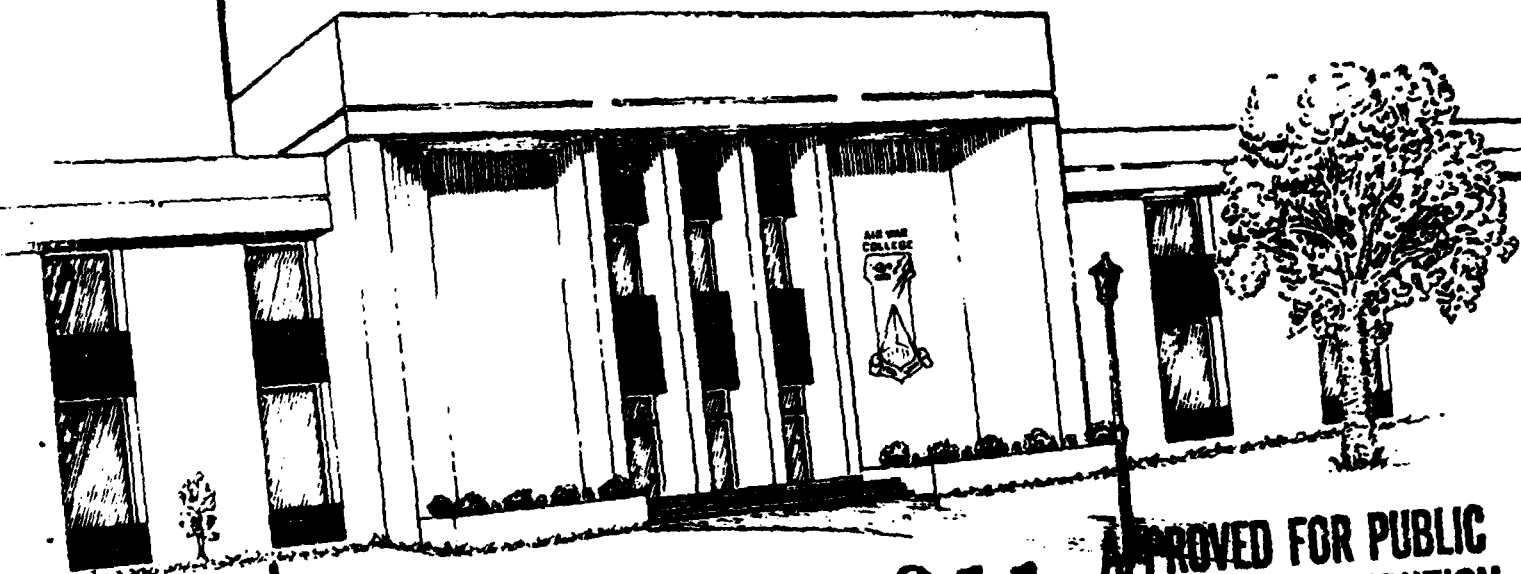
THE STRATEGIC VALUE OF AEGEAN ISLANDS
AND TODAY'S NATO POLICY

LT COL EVANGELOS P. GEORGOUSSIS

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THE STRATEGIC VALUE OF AEGEAN ISLANDS
AND TODAY'S NATO POLICY

by

Evangelos P. Georgoussis
Lt. Colonel H.A.F.

A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
IN
FULFILLMENT OF THE RESEARCH
REQUIREMENT

Research Advisor: Colonel Jimmie L. C. Coombes

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

April, 1988

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AIR WAR COLLEGE RESEARCH REPORT ABSTRACT

TITLE: The Strategic Value of Aegean Islands and today's NATO Policy

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This study examines the strategic value of Greek Aegean islands, and how they affect the defense of the Turkish Straits. It, also, examines the geographical, historical and political background of the Southern flank of NATO, and how the Aegean islands might form the basis of a NATO strategy in a future probable conventional war to defend against the Warsaw Pact (W.P.) threat. The study looks at the problems within the region between Turkey and Greece, and the consequences of those problems. Also, the paper looks at the possibility of Turkish neutrality in that future conventional war between western allies and Warsaw Pact Forces. In that case, could the Aegean islands replace the Turkish Straits as a barrier to prevent the Soviet Black Sea fleet from gaining control of the sea lines of communication in the eastern Mediterranean.

The study concludes with a look at the potential NATO strategic profit from the exploitation of Aegean Greek islands, and how much it could increase its defense ability toward the W.P. threat.



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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Lieutenant Colonel Evagelos P. Georgoussis (HAF) was born on the island of Evia, Greece, in 1947. In 1971 he graduated from the Hellenic Air Force Academy as a fighter pilot. He was assigned to the all weather squadron with F. - 102 . In 1975 he went to France for flight training on Mirage F-1C. He has been chief of squadron training office, chief of security and intelligence wing's office, commander of Transition Flight Training School of F-1C, and for two years, vice-squadron commander and operations officer. He, also, was assigned for two years as vice-Director and Director of Defense operations division at Hellenic Tactical Air Force Headquarters. After 1986 he was assigned to the same division at General Air Force Headquarters. He has graduated from the Hellenic SOS, the Weapon and Air Tactics School as instructor, the NATO Air Defense Course, the Intelligence and Security School and the Joint Operations School. Lieutenant Colonel Georgoussis is a graduate of the Air War College Class of 1988.

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INTRODUCTION

Certain areas of our planet have the fate of having the privilege of being almost always in front stage during historical events that have world significance. The people who live in these areas are frequently influenced by conflicts that surface in different and important parts of the world, even though they may lie thousands of miles apart.

The Eastern Mediterranean region is one of these places that are constantly in the center of historic evolutions.

In 1949, to combat the threat of Soviet expansionism, the Western Allies of the Second World War formed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). As the cold war deepened and in pursuit of the United States' policy of containment towards the Soviet Union, NATO was enhanced by the admittance of Greece and Turkey to the Alliance in February 1952.

Hence, together with Italy and with U.S. support the two new NATO members formed NATO'S Southern Command- a command with responsibilities stretching 3000 miles from Gibraltar in the west, to Turkey's eastern border with the Soviet Union, and 800 miles from Sicily in the south up to the Italian/Austrian border. The addition of Greece and Turkey therefore moved the NATO defense line north from the Mediterranean to Trace, where Greece and Turkey buttressed together to form a Balkan barrier against Soviet influence in that direction.

In the early 1950's , both Greece and Turkey were very conscious of the Soviet threat ; they were therefore willing to subordinate themselves to the alliance view in the interests of collective security. Hence NATO'S Southern

Flank, backed by the U.S. Sixth Fleet, formed a unified command and control structure and worked with American help towards creating a credible deterrent to prevent war and to develop a war fighting capability should deterrence fail.

NATO'S Southern Region is separated from the Central Region by a great alpine wall. The southern flank is very large, larger in fact than the rest of NATO Europe combined. Since it is broken up geographically by the Mediterranean, the Greek territory and the Greek-controlled adjacent seas are literally the glue that holds it together.

Because the problems that there are between the States of the Southern Region it needs more attention such as its strategic importance deserves. The same is even more true in respect to its military specificities and distinct security requirements it imposes of the states of the region. Western strategic thinking and prescriptions have to take in to account of the South's geographical configuration force structures, historical sensitivities and infra-structure deficiencies that are not found in the Central front. This tendency to prescribe solutions without adopting them to the special circumstances prevailing in the South has lead to misunderstandings and a reluctance to study the prespective of the individual member countries.

Foremost among the special characteristics of NATO'S Southern Region are the extraordinary importance of national capabilities and of the maritime factor in the conduct of at least the initial phsases of an East-West conflict in the area.

Unlike the rest of NATO area, national capavilities are bound to play an exceptionally important role in the South. This is due the fact

that the dividing line between NATO and the Warsaw Pact is less clear in the Southern Region than in Central Europe. Above all, there is no geographical continuity between the three distinct land combat areas identified by AFSOUTH: northeastern Italy, the Thrace/Straits area (Balkans) and northeastern Turkey. These theaters are only marginally related and remain isolated from each other. As noted in a Congressional Report "common threats are uncommon; common fronts are unfeasible (45:8). Moreover, in the Balkans the dividing lines are even more blurred, since the presence of non-aligned Yugoslavia and self-isolated Albania, as well as of the Soviet Navy in the near, add important complexities.

The psychological impact of the geographical configuration upon NATO States in the area causes a widespread feeling of isolation and an increased scepticism with respect to the effectiveness of speedy reinforcement in times of crises (46:13-15).

As former CINCSOUTH Admiral W.J. Crowe has noted, the land commanders in the AFSOUTH area cannot plan for mutual support, nor can CINCSOUTH shift forces from one AFSOUTH theater to another over land (47:20).

Separated land combat areas, in conjunction with the requirement to defend at national frontiers, virtually insure that, at least initially battles will be fought by national forces in defense of national soil. a very different situation from Central Europe, which so typifies coalition warfare.

The area around the Aegean Sea where two continents with their different cultures and religions meet has been an area of conflict since earliest times. Indeed, it is only in the last 66 years that Turkey has endeavoured to overcome her identity dilemma by facing westwards. An appreciation of geographical data in the eastern mediterranean is therefore helpful in understanding the strategic value of Aegean Islands relating to the Turkish Straits. This study therefore discusses the present relationship between Greece and Turkey and the existing problems between them, which impede the NATO strategy. In this paper, also, is a discussion the possibility of Turkish neutrality in a future war between West and East.

The study concludes by examining the NATO strategic profit from the exploitation of Aegean Greek Islands, in order to control the Soviet Black Sea fleet not only in the Turkish straits but continuing some 350 miles, and in all cases; peace time and war time, Turkish neutrality or not .

I, also, wish to make clear on this point, that my references in this paper to Turkish history, to Turkish behavior during World War II, to the Turkish political situation and to Turkish-Soviet relations as well, does not claim in any way to reduce the Turkish strategical value for NATO, or to increase the Greek factor. However, all of them are material for supporting my opinion that NATO should base its military defense planning not only on the value of the Turkish straits, but also on the Aegean islands as well, in order to have the capability to close the Soviet Fleet in the Black Sea in any case of possible change of Turkish political position or decision.

CHAPTER I
THE STRATEGIC VALUE OF AEGEAN SEA

NATO planners regard the Mediterranean as being of the utmost importance to the USSR for a variety of compelling political and military reasons. The sea has been a traditional Russian expansion route since the eighteenth century when Catherine the Great first became aware of the Levant.

Conversely, the Mediterranean is the West's gateway to the Black Sea and to the powerful concentration of Soviet industrial and agricultural potential. The Soviet Black Sea coastline provides access to the Ukrainian wheat-belt and the industrial complexes responsible for the production of 40 percent of Soviet steel, 34 percent of its coal and of its pig iron. (50:11)

The USSR sees the Mediterranean as the historic western attack route, as demonstrated in the Crimean War in the nineteenth century. Finally in Soviet eyes since W.W. II, the Mediterranean has been "one of the main staging areas of Western military power targeted against the Soviet Union" (12:56).

If one looks at the grand Soviet strategy, it would appear that the USSR is attempting to control the Baltic and the Black Seas, as in the past, and, ultimately, to exercise a dominant influence in the Mediterranean Sea, together with their approaches. It is also still seeking to become the dominant power in the Turkish Straits, through which its warships must pass from the Black Sea into the Aegean Sea and then to the Mediterranean. One of the world's two superpowers, the USSR has built a super fleet and its

Mediterranean squadron is now five or six times larger than it was some years ago. In conjunction with land-based air power, the Soviet Fleet poses a serious political threat in the Mediterranean and an increasing politico-naval challenge to the American Sixth Fleet in the inland sea.(4:4)

Of capital importance to the USSR is the fact that the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles straits and the Aegean sea with its islands are controlled by NATO powers, Turkey and Greece respectively. It is a serious weakness in Soviet global strategy, and it can be assumed that in the event of major hostilities in the area, one of the first Soviet moves would be an effort to seize the Straits and all the narrow waterways through the Aegean islands.

Greece and Turkey are vital anchors on NATO'S southern flank that are of high value to the United States and NATO because of their geography, political systems and cultural ties to the West. Geographically, they form a physical unit separate from other European allies and strategically positioned between the Soviet Union and the Mediterranean and Middle East region. All the natural routes - land, sea and air - from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean and from the Balkans to the Persian Gulf lead across Greece and Turkey and in most cases, in one way or other, across the Aegean and Straits area.

Attacks against the strategic points of the area by tactical or strategic nuclear weapons from any direction would destroy people, buildings and ships, and radioactivity would bar military occupation of the area and transit of ships for some time. Because such an attack would most likely provoke a global exchange of nuclear blows, instead of a limited conflagration,

we need not speculate here on its effect concerning the geographically more restricted region of my present scrutiny.

A. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The Mediterranean is a comparatively small sea, covering only 969,000 square miles. The 17 nations along its coast represent 325 million people. On an average day, 1500 ocean-going ships and some 5000 smaller craft travel in its waters, including a great number of tankers carrying a great percentage of barrels of crude oil (4:3). It is a beautiful sea and its scenery is frequently breathtaking, particularly under the cloudless blue sky of the six month-long summer.

Greece occupies the southern part of the Balkan peninsula. She, together with Turkey, are a bridge connecting Europe with Asia and Africa. Thus from ancient times this area has been a war theater and a place where ideological, religious, political and economic currents have met and clashed. Today Greece is the only country in the Balkan peninsula which is both a member of NATO and the E.E.C.

Greece occupies an area of 132,000 sq. kms and has a population of approximately 10 million people. The Hellenic sea area includes more than 3,000 islands and islets. Both the mainland and the islands with the seas surrounding them, have over the centuries constituted an intergrated and indivisible area from a historical, ethnic, cultural, religious, economic and geopolitical point of view.

To the north, Greece has about 1,000 km of common borders with three

socialist countries of various orientations: Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. 475 km of this border-line are shared with Bulgaria, a member country of Warsaw Pact.

The Greek islands in the Aegean extend the choke-point of the Turkish Straits 375 miles southwest or southeast to the islands of Crete, Karpathos and Rhodes. The Soviet Black Sea Fleet in order to enter to the Mediterranean has to flow through these complex of islands and it has to pass five choke-points at least *

The Straits - a 17-mile waterway and the Aegean Sea which separate Europe from Asia, are vital to the USSR in other ways. About one-half of Soviet merchant shipping passes through them, including many spy ships (55:90-110). The Bosphorus and Dardanelles are unquestionably the Soviet maritime window on the Arab world, Southern Europe and Africa. But even though the Soviets attain to burst out this window they have to run a very long and very dangerous corridor with fatal obstacles.

In the Fifth century B.C. the Greek historian Herodotus gave the following description of the Black Sea and the Straits leading to it:

No sea can equal the Euxine Sea; it is 1380 miles long, and 410 miles wide in its widest part. Its mouth is half a mile wide, and the length of the Bosphorus, the narrow strait which leads into it... is nearly fifteen miles. The Bosphorus joins the Propontis, which is about sixty miles wide and one hundred and seventy miles long, and runs into the Hellespont, a narrow strait nearly fifty miles long but less than one mile wide. The Hellespont leads into the Aegean Sea. (37:270)

This brief description has hardly lost its pertinence for our present age. The length of the Dardanelles is about 36 nautical miles. The Sea of Marmara, an oval-shaped inland sea, connects the Dardanelles with the Bosphorus. Its extreme length is approximately 150 miles and its breadth at its widest part is about 40 miles. It is a relatively deep sea with a current running in the east-west direction at a rate of one-half to one knot. The Bosphorus, as already mentioned, connects the Sea of Marmara with the Black Sea. The length of this waterway is about seventeen miles and at its narrowest point it is only 750 yards wide, while its average width varies between one and four-and-a-half miles. There are no islands in the Black Sea facing the mouth of the Bosphorus. On the other hand, three islands lie near the entrance of the Dardanelles in the Aegean: northeast of the tip of the Gallipoli Peninsula is Imbros (Turkish), south is Tenedos (Turkish) and west of Imbros is Limnos (Greek).

Turkey has the longest frontier with the USSR of any NATO member (380 mountainous miles) and another 625 miles of Black Sea coast. It also shares borders with Greece, Bulgaria, Iran, Iraq, and Syria.

B. GREEK AEGEAN ISLANDS AND TURKISH STRAITS

General of the Army, Omar Bradley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in a statement on January 15, 1952 to the Foreign Relations Committee of the United States Senate made some interesting observations concerning the military importance of both Greece and Turkey:

"From the military viewpoint, it is impossible to overstate the importance of these two countries. The Free Nations which

have joined together for mutual security would be strengthened considerably by their presence, and their presence would lend stability to an area which we consider to be extremely vital. Greece and Turkey occupy strategic locations along one of the major east-west axes. They offer to the NATO large and capable military forces in being. Their territories are suitable for the conduct of defensive operations essential in the event of an aggression. Turkey has a common boundary with Soviet Russia and her satellite state of Bulgaria, Greece is situated at the southern end of the Balkan Peninsula immediately adjacent of the satellite states of Albania and Bulgaria.

Therefore, both occupy key positions in a sound Atlantic Defence System. Located as they are, and allied with the free nations they serve as powerful deterrents to any aggression directed toward Southern Europe, the Middle East or North Africa. The successful defense of those areas-any one or all of them- is dependent upon control of the Mediterranean which an aggressor might endeavor to use should they decide upon a thrust there. Greece, as the map will show, presents a barrier along the overland route from the Balkan states located to the north. "...(1:265)

Secretary of State Acheson sounded much the same note, stressing the Soviet Pressures upon both Greece and Turkey and emphasizing their strategic importance:

"The known determination of Greece and Turkey to maintain their independence and national integrity, and to develop their strength has

made them increasingly effective barriers to Soviet expansion in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East areas. Their continued alignment with the free world and the integration of their strength with that of the collective strength of the present NATO members thus has great significance in terms of their own security ". (1:266)

Some defense analysts, today have argued that for geographic reasons, Turkey and the U.S. bases in Turkey are more important than Greece and the U.S. bases in Greece. This author however , finds little strategic relevance in such judgements because the base functions are complementary and inter-related . U.S. bases in Turkey are generally designed to identify and counter a Soviet ground, naval and air threat from the north through the Balkans, the Black Sea and the Caucasus Mountains. Bases in Greece are designed to support operations in the Eastern Mediterranean. Bases in Turkey would help protect the Sixth Fleet and would divert the brunt of attack against Greece, while the Sixth Fleet and air bases in Crete would be essential to support the defense of Turkey. While U.S. bases in Turkey are generally used passively for intelligence collection and deterrence, U.S. bases in Greece, in general, provide direct operational support for the U.S. Sixth Fleet.

It is the NATO capability that is derived from the interrelationship of these bases that is critical to the defense of both Greece and Turkey. Maintaining this capability is more important to both the U.S. and to NATO than is any individual base in either country. (5:9).

The importance to the Western Alliance as a whole of the U.S. bases which were established in Greece under a bilateral agreement of 1953 should not , therefore, be underestimated. The existence of the bases offers substantial advantages to the United States in dealing with the defense problems of the eastern Mediterranean. The bases facilitate

its naval control of the eastern part of the Mediterranean and the Aegean. In addition to providing a link with the remaining NATO forces in the area, they guarantee the sixth fleet the supplies it needs and provide the aircraft with the basic supplies which are necessary for their missions. They also provide facilities for the monitoring of Warsaw Pact Forces in the region, including the activities of the Soviet Union's Black Sea Fleet.

The Southern littoral of the Mediterranean is extremely important to the USSR. A quick look at a map shows its political fragmentation and military alignment: Pro-Soviet Syria, which could serve as the route to the Arab heartland; chaos-torn Lebanon; pro-U.S. Israel; Egypt dependent on the United States, but seeking better ties with the Arab world; strongly anti-U.S. Libya, with its vast arsenal of Soviet weapons; Tunisia leaning toward the United States; quasi-radical, Soviet equipped Algeria; and finally pro-Western Morocco.

While to the USSR the Mediterranean is the "politically unreliable path to its back door" (12:2) to the U.S. the sea is also of vital importance. Not only it is part of NATO'S Southeastern flank (the largest and perhaps most unstable of the alliance's three major European theaters) it is also a barometer of the international political climate, a testing ground for ideologies, and a maritime route for 17 countries. Warren Christopher deputy Secretary of State on May of 1978 said:, "The Eastern Mediterranean is the junction point of several critical areas-Western Europe, the Soviet Union, the Balkans, and the Middle East. The strategic significance of this area is clear. A strong and effective NATO alliance posture throughout the Southern flank is essential to protect our interests and those of our NATO partners." (11:6)

The NATO countries which constitute its Southern flank form a chain with three rings. The ring which keep the other two together is Greece.* Greece is the only link between the West and Turkey. A neutral or hostile Greece would effectively isolate Turkey from its NATO Allies.

The occupation of Greece and its islands-and especially Crete- by Warsaw Pact forces would present a bleak prospect. With air and missile bases in mainland Greece, and Crete under Soviet control, the Aegean and Ionian Seas and the sea around Crete , and the coast of Africa would become a virtually prohibited zone for the West's naval forces. This would minimise the strategic importance of the Bosphorus and make it difficult to exercise effective control over the Suez Canal. The Soviet Navy would obtain bases on Greek soil which would be invulnerable from the land, whilst the U.S. Sixth fleet, having lost its Greek bases, would be forced to rely on Italian , Turkish and Egyptian facilities. With Greece in enemy hands the sixth fleet's efforts to protect the shipping lanes would become a burdensome and much riskier operation. At the same time a neutral Greece, or a Greece which was firmly under the control of the Soviet Union, would lead to the isolation of Turkey, rendering it much more vulnerable to Soviet pressure. The lines of communications in the Eastern Mediterranean would be cut off; Southern Italy would be threatened; Yugoslavia, if not already overrun would be in a very difficult position, and the entire Middle-East area, the Suez Canal and North Africa would be under the direct threat of Warsaw Pact Forces. Greece is strategically located for the NATO alliance and for Middle-East contingencies. While Turkey can control the Soviet Black Sea fleet, Greek islands in the Aegean Sea might also serve a similar function. Greece's position in the

* see chart two (2)

Eastern Mediterranean makes it important to the control of naval and air routes throughout the region. It, too is located near the Middle East, and air bases there proved useful during the Iranian evacuation of February, 1979 (5:29).

Admiral Needet Uran, Turkish, Navy said:

"Against the backdrop of the strategical and political importance of the Black Sea, the Aegean and the Eastern Mediterranean, is the focal point- the Turkish Straits, the only exit from the Black Sea to the h i g h S e a s ... So long as this gateway is held, Turkey is able to deny a potential enemy entry into the Mediterranean." (57:77,83)

This quotation is expressly appropriate to the influence of the Straits on naval strategy in the Eastern Mediterranean . That is true, but it is not true that the Straits are the only focal point, from the Black Sea to the high seas. The Soviet Black Sea Fleet, in order to come out into the Eastern Mediterranean, has to transit more than 350 miles through the Aegean islands. The width of Marmara Sea is two times more than the widest point between any Greek Aegean islands. Thus, the zone of the Straits, as a matter of fact, has become much more enlarged and now extends at least as far as the island of Crete in the Aegean. (12:11) This zone of influence was appropriately demonstrated in modern history when occupation of Crete and other Aegean islands by Germany in World War II, effectively closed the straits to the passage of allied shipping (38:150-177).

The Straits do not always operate in favor of NATO and United States strategy. With the powerful Russian Black Sea Fleet operating in and through the straits, they form an area in which Soviet power directly

presses on NATO and the American position in the Mediterranean. Primary consideration must consequently be given to the use that can be made of the straits, and the Aegean islands as well, to restrain Russia within her boundaries and to check the expansion of Soviet influence into the Eastern Mediterranean. NATO complete control over the Eastern Mediterranean is crucial. Admiral David L. McDonald, U.S. Navy has stated:

"The greatest strategic area of interests of the Sixth Fleet is the Southeastern part of Europe, Western Asia and northern seas of the Middle East. The Mediterranean gives the Fleet the necessary mobility and flexibility while shifting its striking forces in tactical operations incident to carrying out its NATO and national responsibilities. The two elements of access and mobility are its strong points. (58:43)

The control of the Eastern Mediterranean and its littoral states is basic naval strategy. Additionally, the importance of the lines of communications across the Middle East are essential to link the Mediterranean with Europe, Asia, and Africa.

In contrast with the monopoly enjoyed by the Sixth Fleet until the early 60's, the Soviet Union has steadily increased its military presence in the Mediterranean. Its Black Sea Fleet and its Mediterranean Squadron are now capable of challenging NATO control of these maritime areas in wartime. (4:4)

The importance of this change should not be underestimated. The Eastern Mediterranean is the land, sea and air bridge between Europe, Asia and Africa- the natural corridor for international sea lines of communi-

tions. It is the route for the flow of oil. A real or threatened interruption of oil flow across the Mediterranean could mean disaster for the industrial and defensive strength of the West (Europe) . Even in this age of satellites, supertankers and long range aircraft, maintaining open sea lines of communications depends upon free access to the area.

The Soviet Union has concentrated primarily on development of two perceptible major routes; one involving a north-south axis over the Mediterranean and south into Africa, and the other an East-West axis connecting Moscow's allies from Algeria to India along the Mediterranean - Red Sea - Indian Ocean littorals (51:9). Greece, and particularly the island of Crete, lies exactly at the nexus of these two strategic axes of Soviet presence.

This new state of things upsets many of the assumptions on which the Alliance's strategy had been based during the previous years, particularly as regards the Southern Region. As a result, in time of war, freedom of movement and the operational flexibility of the Sixth Fleet would be considerably hampered, and consequently its ability to contribute to the defense of the Southern Flank, at least at initial stage of operations, could be seriously threatened.

The increased Soviet naval presence in the Mediterranean could raise the question, whether the Straits have in fact constituted an effective barrier to an expanded Soviet role southwards. May be several developments could support the view that the strategic importance of the Straits has diminished.

First, during every Middle East contingency, the Soviet Union has been able to spectacularly increase the size of its Mediterranean Fleet. This

has been accomplished by a careful management of Montreux convention declarations through the Straits and by extending deploying periods for ships already in the Mediterranean. Indeed, the most significant shift in the military balance between the Warsaw Pact and NATO in the Southern Region has come about because of the marked growth of Soviet naval forces.

The interpretation of the terms of the Montreux convention by Turkey has permitted the transit of a new generation of Soviet aircraft-carriers such as the KIEV. The issue of access will soon acquire new dimensions as the KREMLIN-type true aircraft carrier (about 70,000 tons) enters into service (56:15).

Second, the Soviet Union has developed a significant airborne and airlift capability for purposes of force projection in the Med. and other theaters.

Third, through significant arms transfers to its Middle East allies (Libya and Syria in particular) Moscow may have created a logistics base for its own use, leapfrogging the straits barrier.

In any event, the increased and diversified presence of the Soviet Fleet in the Mediterranean has in itself upgraded the strategic importance of the Aegean. As noted by two British specialists "today 3000 Greek islands in the Aegean still extend the choke-point of the Turkish Straits several hundred kilometers south-west to the islands of Crete, Karpathos, and Rhodes" (39:750)

Another important point which increases the value of the Greek Aegean islands related to the Turkish straits is that they are less vulnerable to a W.P. land attack. As we know the most powerful

Warsaw pact forces are the land forces. As history has proven the Straits area is exposed more to the assaults of land forces than to operations from the sea (9:9)

Any direct attack from the land side that would jeopardize Turkish control of the Straits would come from the Bulgarian frontier. But an attack need not come only across the border between Bulgaria and Turkey; it might also be carried out by an advance into Greek Western Thrace. At one point Bulgaria is just 25 miles across Greek territory from the Aegean. This sensitive Thracian Turkish-Greek border region has given many headaches to planners. It has been argued that in case of an attack from Bulgarian territory, contact between Turkish and Greek forces could not be maintained; Turkish forces would have to retire to defend Istanbul and the Straits (33:434-39). It is "fact that to a great extent Turkish defenses against any Warsaw pact thrust depended on Greece". Istanbul (Constantinople) was threatened several times from across the Thracian plain in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In 1828-29 and again in 1877-78 Russians captured Adrianople (Edirne), the gateway to the Golden Horn, the second time even approaching the outskirts of the Ottoman capital. During the Balkan War of 1912-13, Forces reached the outer defense girdle of Constantinople. (9:9)

The Straits area, including Constantinople-Istanbul is also highly vulnerable to potential attack from the east, from the Anatolian plateau. "The highlands of Asia Minor loom over the nodal Straits area like a mountain fortress over a fertile and wealthy river valley". In the past whenever the Straits are and western Anatolia lived under different political or military control the master of the Anatolian stronghold eventually was

able to extend his mastery over the low lands of the Bosphorus. In such a way the ruler of Nicaea recaptured Constantinople from the Latins in 1261, the Ottoman Turks conquered the rump Greek-Byzantine State, and more lately the Government of the Grand National Assembly under Mustafa Kemal regained possession of the city of the Sultans in 1923 (9:10)

The decision to transfer the capital from the Bosphorus to Ankara, on the Anatolian plateau was made only partly for strategic reasons. Ankara some 220 miles from the Bosphorus, is strategically better protected than Constantinople, which lies 16 miles from the Black Sea and 80-100 miles from the Bulgarian frontier (9:10).

It should be obvious that even if the straits were occupied by Warsaw Pact Forces, communications between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean could not be established without the seizure of the Aegean islands complex. As far as the battle in northern Greece is concerned these islands provide the strategic and tactical depth required to support the land battle.

The Turkish General Staff cites its opinion about the strategic value of Greek Aegean islands related to the straits: The island of Tenedos located in front of the Dardanelles together with Tavsan islands at its north and the islands of Imbros and Lemnos (Greek) play a considerable role in the defense of the straits and control the sea lines of communications connected with the Straits (40:8).

The islands belonging to the Eastern Sporades Lesbos, Chios, and Samos (all Greek) located east of the Northern Aegean Sea surround the area of the Aegean Sea along Anatolia coasts. These islands are located opposite the approaches to Anatolia, constitute the "outpost" for the defense of Anatolia, and in case of attack against Anatolia they play the role of

points of passage of lines (40:8).

Northern Sporades consisting of 80 small islands and islets (all Greek) located in the western area of the Northern Aegean Sea, the islands of Evia and Andros (also Greek) in case of an attack to be launched from the Aegean Sea against the Greek coast, play the role of points of passage of lines and constitute an outpost of the Greek territories on the European continent, (40:8)

The Cyclades... through which all ships are bound to pass... These islands together with the Dodecanese, secure the control of all sea lines of communication from North to South (40:9).

The island of Crete is the largest island of the Aegean Sea. Together with Cythera and Anticythera in the west as well as the islands of Kasos, Karpathos and Rhodes in the east, it blocks the Aegean Sea from the South... The most important ports are located in its northern part. The island of Crete which from a strategic point of view constitutes the key to the Aegean Sea from the South, controls all the sea lines of communications in the Mediterranean and the ships sailing in and out of the Aegean Sea. We can term it the "unsinkable aircraft carrier" (40 : 10).

* See chart three (3).

CHAPTER II

NATO POLICY AND STRATEGY IN THE SOUTHERN FLANK

NATO'S defense policy, from the beginning of the Alliance, is deterrence. The objective aim of this policy is to convince any possible invader that war would not bring him any profit. The doctrine of deterrence has kept successfully, until today; peace in Europe. Frank C. Carlucci United States Secretary of Defense, stated: "Our NATO allies do more for NATO'S defense than is commonly recognized. While our NATO allies account for less than 50 percent of total Alliance economic wealth they maintain over three and-one-half million personell on active duty, compared to a little over two million for the United States. (54: 74)* *

In the beginning NATO'S strategy, in order to make the deterrence of war credible, was based mainly on tremendous nuclear power of the United States. In Europe the nuclear power of the United States seemed to be the only available means of reprisal against any kind of attack against NATO. However the potentiality of NATO to use conventional forces always was realized as useful. For that reason NATO Countries formed conventional forces which they put under the command of SACEUR.

The evolution of technology both in the West and the Warsaw Pact, as well, soon changed all the prepositions upon which NATO strategy was based. The acquisition of nuclear capability by the Soviet Union led to a reexamination of NATO'S defense policy. Thus, the strategic concept of "massive nuclear reprisal" was developed, and it comprised the planned use of strategic and tactical weapons in a premature phase in order to face an attack which would be serious to the alliance.

In the decade of the 50's NATO started to revise its defense policy with regard to the strategy of massive use of nuclear weapons. Because NATO had understood that an attack against it might not be a general war but a limited one, an erroneous nuclear response could lead to the extension and escalation of hostilities. It was also obvious that the Soviet Union had developed the ability to deploy its forces any place of the world and it also had increased its naval power in the Mediterranean, direct in threatening the Southern Flank of NATO.

All the above strengthened the conviction that a general nuclear war would not be the most likely kind of conflict between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, and that the credibility of massive nuclear use had meaning only during a general nuclear war. After that, a new and more flexible strategic doctrine had to be developed. Thus, in 1967 the ministers of defense of the NATO countries accepted the new NATO doctrine, which has become known as the Strategy of Flexible Response.

A. STRATEGY OF FLEXIBLE RESPONSE

The aim of the strategy of Flexible Response is to give NATO the ability to deter or to face any kind of Warsaw Pact threat, from border conflicts to general attack in any region of NATO. This strategy accepts that the spectrum of threat is very wide, from regional conventional conflict to a general nuclear war.

In order for NATO to succeed with this strategy it must be able to field balanced military power in the conventional, tactical nuclear, and strategical nuclear arenas. This stability of military power gives to NATO

the ability for a flexible response. NATO can either confront any Warsaw Pact attack with direct defense, or it can prepare an adequate escalation of hostilities under strong political and military control in case of defense failure in the first phase of the Warsaw Pact attack. Also, the attacker has to know very well NATO'S resoluteness and readiness to use nuclear weapons in case they should be needed. But he will not know the exact time and situations under which NATO will use them.

However, the limited use of nuclear weapons must not be so late that the conventional forces have been completely destroyed; because in such a case NATO will lose its cohesion, and would not be able to exploit the benefits of the use of those weapons.

The status of NATO readiness, and its ability to mobilize, to reinforce and to deploy its forces in time during periods of crisis and tension constitute the foundation of NATO defense policy. Because the Warsaw Pact has a great numerical superiority in conventional forces, NATO in order to face the threat and to avoid an untimely use of nuclear weapons must expend a great deal of effort. It also must spend a great amount of money to increase its conventional ability, and to "bridge over" the discrepancy in forces which exists between the two coalitions.

B. PROBLEMS WITHIN SOUTHEASTERN FLANK

According to ex-NATO secretary- General Joseph Luns "the steady increase of Soviet naval power... has been remarkable and has brought considerable change in the makeup and tasks of the Soviet navy. Its traditional task

was to protect the maritime approaches to the USSR and to provide close support for ground forces. Now it has three new missions: to contribute to potential world-wide offensive and defensive strategies; to conduct naval operations in every ocean; and to support Soviet policy and promote Soviet interests world-wide. Even though still limited the Soviet navy as now constituted provides the USSR with incomparable opportunities for action and influence, particularly in the Third World, and its power has implications for the security of vital Western Sea lines of communication.¹³

It is obvious that instability in any region makes the mission of Soviet naval power easier and of course increases the probabilities of success.

Today's instability in the Southeastern Flank of NATO has created serious problems within its structure and has made this region more vulnerable to the Soviet threat, mainly due to political influence resulting from the new face of Soviet foreign policy.

For 23 consecutive years there had been no major problem in Greece's relations within the Alliance. This situation was reversed in July 1974 when troops of a NATO country using weapons supplied to it for the defense of NATO, invaded Cyprus, an independent country, member of the United Nations, and occupied a significant part of the territory of the Republic of Cyprus. This situation brought two countries to the brink of war. The most immediate cause of the present instability (but not the only one) in the Eastern Mediterranean is the Cyprus crisis of 1974, which served to intensify animosity between Greece and Turkey and precipitated sharp deterioration in relations between the two countries (14:20-45)

It is not the aim of this research paper to examine the whole range of problems between Greece and Turkey, although it is fact that all these problems seriously wound the integrity of the Alliance. Thus we will examine only those problems which directly affect NATO's ability and for which NATO has to change its policy in order to create a strong and consolidated Southern flank against the Soviet threat.

In recommending the reintegration of the Greek Armed Forces, General Haig stated in his assessment, inter alia, that "There is from the military technical viewpoint sufficient substance and structure to the Greek responses to support Greek reintegration..." (50:4). All the members of the Military Committee, with the exception of the Turkish member, agreed to SACEUR'S recommendation. It is worthwhile mentioning here that the reintegration of the Greek Armed Forces was viewed by the Alliance as matter of urgency. Turkey, in exchange for the reintegration, insisted on the alteration of the existing command and control arrangements in the area, in a way that would permit her to exercise operational control over some Greek territories, territorial waters and Greek national airspace. It is necessary to remind the reader, that the existing command and control arrangements in the Aegean are based on political realities, meet military requirements and are in conformity with a basic NATO document according to which "...NATO nations are ultimately responsible for the defense of their territories and the security of their people" (50:5). This was probably the reason why these arrangements worked well for many years and no NATO commander ever made any proposal for substantial alteration. There is not a single military study, within NATO indicating that these arrangements were not satisfactory (50:5).

The Defense Planning Committee (DPC) in its meeting of October 20, 1980 approved the Reintegration Agreement, that is the Greek responses to the Open Ended Group (O. E. G.) and SACEUR'S proposals. With regard to the area of operational responsibility it must be pointed that, according to the Reintegration Agreement these areas include the land, sea and airspace for the defense of which the Greek Armed Forces were responsible before August 1974 *.

There is no clause in the Reintegration Agreement which calls for negotiations on the subject of the areas of operational responsibility assigned to the Greek Allied Commanders in Greece. In this respect, it should be pointed out that it is a plain and undeniable fact that the established eastern boundary in the Aegean cannot be shifted without placing Greek Sovereign space i.e territories, territorial waters and national airspace under the operational responsibility of a Turkish Allied Commander in Turkey.*

The only pending issue is the establishment of the two envisaged NATO Headquarters in Greece. This happened because NATO military authorities did not agree to include in the Terms of Reference (TOR's) the areas of operational responsibility of the new Headquarters arguing, quite curiously and convincingly, that these will be defined after the establishment of the two Headquarters. Such a notion is militarily unfounded. It is a widely accepted fact that we define the mission and the area to be defended and then we establish the command . (50: 4-7)

Greece, since 1974, has repeatedly informed NATO that the exercises conducted in the Aegean do not comply with current NATO documents

* see chart one (1)

* The time Greece withdrew its Armed Forces

and International Law and Regulations. In an effort to promote good will, the Greek Armed Forces participated in 14 out of 33 live exercises conducted in the Southern Region from 1976 to 1984 though their planning was not in conformity with NATO approved plans, Military Committee and other NATO relevant documents; NATO commanders in planning and conducting exercises in the Aegean use Ad Hoc arrangements, contrary to agreed NATO Documents, which lead to a de facto alteration of the established command and control arrangements in the area. (50:10)

This attempt of a de facto change of the existing arrangements is contrary to the Reintegration Agreement (50:4) and could lead, as already mentioned to assigning the defense of Greek territories, territorial waters and national airspace to Turkish Commanders. This is politically unacceptable and offers no improvement in the defense of the Southern Region. (50:10)

The attempts to alter the existing command and control arrangements in the area do not improve NATO'S defense capabilities but only serve the political aims of Turkey against Greece. NATO authorities officially protested to the Turkish government over the flagrant violation of the I.C.A.O. regulations by issuing of an illegal NOTAM and the use of NATO exercises for political purposes in the Southeastern NATO Flank which creates serious problems for the Alliance (51:1)

Another point of friction is the Lemnos Island issue. NATO authorities do not include the military installations and forces on the island of Lemnos in exercises planned and conducted in the Aegean. Neither do they support these installations through the common funded infrastructure programmes.

As it is known, at the time the Lausanne Treaty was signed, Turkey and Greece had just ended bloody wars which had lasted for many years. It was logical then to include in the Treaty some clauses which would help to avoid any further frictions between those two countries. Thus, they provided for the demilitarization of the Straits and the island complex associated with them. The relations between these two countries were getting better as the years went by and this was reflected in the Montreux Convention. The spirit of this convention was very clearly expressed by the then Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, who was the negotiator of this convention. Rustu Aras in his address in the Turkish National Assembly, on July 31st 1936, on the ratification of the convention stated : "...Provisions concerning the islands of Lemnos and Samothraki which belong to our neighbouring and friendly country Greece and which were demilitarized in conformity with the convention of Lausanne of 1923, are also cancelled by the new Montreux convention and we are very pleased for this..." (50:12) and (36:16). Also, the Turkish Ambassador Essref's letter written on May 6, 1936 to the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs, I. Metaxas stated: "...Turkey would look favorably upon every measure that the Greek Government would consider necessary to take to ensure the security of the islands that are under the sovereignty of Greece... The militarization of the Greek islands that will take place is that of the islands of Samothrace and Lemnos. We absolutely agree to the militarization of the two islands and at the same time to that of the Straits" (52:7).

Have these Turkish officials written and spoken favorably to Greece because they loved Greeks so much? No ; they simply explained correctly

the two conventions (Lausanne and Montreux).

Article four of the Lausanne convention has included in the demilitarized zone the Dardanelles and Bosphorus and the Aegean Islands: Samothrace, Lemnos, Imbros, Tenedos and Lagousai Islands. Why should anyone think that the Montreux convention, which states in its preamble that the parties "...have resolved to replace by the present convention, the Convention signed at Lausanne on the 24th of July 1923..." has changed the status quo of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus Straits and Turkish islands Imbros, Tenedos and Lagousai islands, but has not changed the status quo of Greek Aegean islands, Lemnos and Samothrace? NATO accepts today's Turkish opinion, which contradicts that of their predecessors who signed the conventions knowing exactly what they had signed.

The present Turkish unilateral and totally unfounded allegations in relation to the island of Lemnos cause considerable political and military damage to NATO. There is no doubt about it, because NATO does not exploit critical points of its territories and also, according to a basic NATO document "... NATO nations are ultimately responsible for the defense of their territories and the security of their peoples (50:4).

C. NATO POLICY TOWARD THESE PROBLEMS

Turkey and Greece have been members of NATO since 1952 and they have accepted its principles and the ultimate objective for which NATO was established, namely collective defense. Turkey, also, seeks membership in the European Economic community. Having in mind these two realities one would

logically have expected that Turkey would feel much safer with its Western Flank protected and that the defensive strengthening of Greece should be seen as an improvement of the whole defense posture of the Alliance. A loss of Greece would have resulted in the weakening, if not the outright loss of Turkey as well (2:104).

Unfortunately, this is not so and Turkey is doing everything in its power within the Alliance to prevent Greek Forces and defense Facilities in the Aegean Islands from contributing to the Alliance's defenses. The case of Lemnos is a characteristic example in this respect. It is questionable if this Turkish effort at least serves NATO'S defence policy.

Unfortunately NATO seems to support this Turkish policy. NATO takes the so-called "equidistance position" , saying that it is a bilateral dispute which must be resolved between the two countries concerned. In the meantime, Lemnos may not be included in NATO planning and exercises.

Here are some relevant facts:

a. In 1970 the preparations for the installation of an air defense radar station on Lemnos were completed and in 1971 the station was placed under NATO command after its successful operational evaluation, which was conducted by COMSIXATAF in Izmir on behalf of COM/IRSOUTH in Naples. Naturally, no NATO or other Government, including Turkey, raised any legal questions in regard to that military installation on Lemnos (50: 14)

b. In May 1980 the then Secretary General Yielded to Turkish pressures and, acting on his own, formally instructed SACEUR that any future project submission which, in the view of the appropriate military commander could raise legal questions would not be considered for inclusion. These

instructions were promulgated after SACEUR'S request for funds to improve the aforementioned radar on Lemnos, and obviously they were in complete consonance with the unfounded views and wishes of Turkey. They arbitrarily changed the situation which existed in NATO, in relation to that NATO facility in Lemnos. This most certainly is not an "equidistance position " (50:15).

At this point, it is worth mentioning another fact which constitutes NATO'S policy toward these problems. In the report of the "Three wise Men" approved by NAC on December 13, 1956 it was written that NATO countries "will submit inter-member disputes to good office procedures within the NATO framework before resorting to any other international agency, except for disputes of a legal and economic character appropriate for submission to a judicial tribunal..." (44:1-5) In other words, neither member country can submit such disputes to NATO'S good office procedures nor can NATO play the role of a judicial tribunal. It is obvious that in case of Lemnos NATO does not comply with the forementioned NAC decision. (50:15).

There is no doubt that NATO'S policy of "equidistance position" serves very well Turkish objectives in the area and as a result of this policy the Southern Region remains the weak link in the chain of NATO Alliance, and it becomes weaker every day. The Reintegration Agreement which was reached in October 1980 has not yet been fully implemented and this perpetuates the present disintegration in the defense of the Southern Region. Within the framework of its goals, Turkey blocks any action towards improving the defense posture in the Aegean and the same time Turkey constantly raises improbable and totally unacceptable claims with regard to the established command and control arrangements in the area. (50:16)

It is clear that the continuation of the feud is not likely to serve the best interests of either Greece or Turkey, and certainly not NATO. In an atmosphere of Greek-Turkish tension the roles of NATO and the United States assume vital significance in both Mediterranean States. For as long as Greeks and Turks continue to coexist in an atmosphere of mutual recrimination, suspicions, and military preparations, the United States is naturally invited by both sides to play the role of honest broker, good officer, and mediator. (2:125) With regard to the present NATO policy of "equidistance position." I will mention some official Turkish statements:

___ "I think no one in Turkey should have any wish that the Aegean islands should be called Greek islands... This does not mean a border adjustment. In other words, I am not at this moment in a position to make a border adjustment..." (Prime Minister Mr. Demirel to "Milliyet" 23-8-1976)

___ "In the Aegean, the balance of power is clearly in Turkey's favour; indeed to such an extent that beyond the facts of the balance of power, the eyes and thoughts of the old Turkish inhabitants of the islands remain set on establishment of the opposite coasts, which lie only a few miles away".

(Minister of Defense Mr. Sancar to the Periodical "Yanki", 20- 1-1975)

___ "...the status that now exists between Turkey and Greece is unsatisfactory..." He also suggested to British journalists not to use the term "Greek Islands", but to call them "Aegean Islands".

(Mr. Ozal to the "Financial Times", 6-12-1983)

CHAPTER III

PROBABILITY OF TURKISH NEUTRALITY

In the event of an outbreak of hostilities of limited or conventional nature between the NATO Powers and the Soviet Union and its Allies one of the missions of the Sixth Fleet would be to maintain supply lines to Turkey and Greece. To carry out its objective, it would have to fight and destroy the Soviet Fleet in the Med. even at the potential risk of being partly or entirely destroyed. Should Turkey be immediately involved in such a war, she would probably be involved from Bulgaria and along her caasian border, and she would require assistance which would have to come mostly by ship via the Mediterranean.

If Turkey were directly involved, she would naturally close and defend the straits against attacks from the north. The Soviet Fleet in the Mediterranean would be cut off from its Black Sea bases, and it is obvious it would face serious problems.

However, in the event that no aggression were committed against her territory, Turkey might decide to remain a non belligerent, as she did during W.W. II. In that case the status of American bases on her territory would become highly anomalous, should such bases still exist there at that time (9:125).

A. TURKISH ATTITUDE IN THE PAST

In 1938 the Turks would have preferred an alliance with Germany to the one they were to negotiate a year later with Britain and France (16:24)

In 1938, the Turkish army marched to Alexandretta but the "solution of the Alexandretta problem did not end Turkish territorial demands, during this period of Second World War.

In July 1938, during the Credit talks, foreign Minister Ribbentrop asked Menemencioglu how Turkey would apply the articles of the Montreux convention in case of war between Germany and Poland and whether the Turks would be willing to sign a nonaggression pact with the German Government. Ribbentrop was concerned that the British and French could ship war material to the Poles through the Straits and then north along various Balkan routes. Menemencioglu, to Ribbentrop's relief, promised that Turkey would prohibit any such traffic, though he knew the Poles would be at a tremendous material disadvantage in any conflict (16:24).

On May 12, 1939 the Anglo-French and Turkish agreement was published. The Anglo-French on one hand and Turkey on the other agreed to cooperate if war started by the Axis spread to the Mediterranean and involved Italy. The same obligations were exchanged if the Axis attacked the Balkan Peninsula. The Turks refused to proceed to a full-scale military alliance, until London and Paris had associated Moscow with it. The final draft, published on October 19, 1939, provided that Britain and France would render Turkey all aid if she were attacked by a "European Power", the Turks had to settle for that simple description. In return, Turkey assumed the same obligation to help her allies, but only if the action developed in the Mediterranean theater. The Turks would not fight on a western European front. On the other hand a secret clause committed the Anglo-French to intervention Turkey's behalf if the aggressor force only reached the Frontiers of Bulgaria or Greece

without violating Turkish territory itself. Still another secret article exempted Turkey from any operation against the Soviet Union. The twenty five million pounds credit and the fifteen million pounds bullion loan were confirmed. A concluding secret proviso made the whole Pact inoperative until the British and French delivered the money and materials (29:63-77) and (32:571-75).

Turkey, bound to Britain and France in a mutual assistance treaty since October 1939, broke her pledge to them on numerous occasions and declared war against Italy and Germany only in February 1945, when the fighting was all but over. The İnönü government, however made a distinction between Axis aggression against Yugoslavia and against Bulgaria as part of the Greek campaign. If the Germans were to invade Yugoslavia to support another Italian drive against Greece, the Turks indicated that they would do nothing even though Ankara and Belgrade had been allied in the Balkan Pact since 1934. But, if the Germans penetrated Bulgaria, Turkey's immediate neighbor, the İnönü government declared itself perfectly able and ready to fight. At the same time, the Turks raised their old demands for territorial compensation in the Dodecanese Islands, Bulgarian Thrace and Albania. They even evinced a new interest in controlling the Greek port of Thessaloniki, which since they controlled the Straits, would have given the Turks the predominant position in the Aegean Sea (16:60).

On October 28, 1940, Italian Forces invaded Greece from Albania. This was a contingency clearly covered by Ankara's military alliance with Britain and France. But as in the previous June, the Turks broke their pledge and remained neutral (16:59). "Britain denounced Turkish

policy as inexcusable" (16:59). The Turks emphasized their lack of a strong air force and of adequate anti-aircraft defenses, a point that modern Turkish historians cite in vindication of their country's policy in 1940.

On April 6, 1941, the Wehrmacht invaded Greece. The Turks however, though treaty-bound to assist in the struggle for Greece, remained neutral, pleading lack of material. Yet, for other operations, Ankara considered its preparations completely adequate. Saracoğlu (Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs) suggested to the Germans that Turkey garrison the Greek Islands of Chios, Samos, and Mytilene for the duration of the War (32:552). The Germans didn't accept it and the Turkish government was undoubtedly irritated, but did not make an issue of the future of the Greek Islands, because it hoped to acquire an even greater prize, Iraq and the oil fields of Mosul (16:82).

On May 17, 1941 Papen (German Ambassador in Ankara) worked there to consummate an alliance with the Turks. Saracoğlu again seemed to be bidding for an understanding when he discussed recent Wehrmacht victories in Greece with the German Ambassador. The Turkish minister speculated that with Greece in tow, Germany's next logical move should be an attack on the Suez Canal. Saracoğlu claimed that if such an attack were successful it would serve even Britain's best interests, because the Churchill government would be forced to make a sensible peace and could then combine its forces with Germany's against world Communism. At any rate Saracoğlu did not believe that Rommel could take the Canal from the West.

The only sound approach was from the north, through Syria, Palestine and the Sinai Peninsula, with supplies coming regularly through Turkish Anatolia. If Germany demanded the right of transit across Anatolia or delivered any ultimatum to Ankara, Saracoglu warned that she would be refused and opposed with all the force of Turkish arms. But if Berlin could offer him some "facesaving devise" with which he could silence the partisans of the alliance with Britain in the Turkish legislature, then the foreign minister was ready to repudiate the Anglo-Turkish Treaty and open Germans the overland passage to Egypt (16:94). Papen prepared a draft treaty with Ankara which offered the Inönü government a cordon of land West of Edirne; two or three Aegean Greek islands of the coast of Anatolia; and lastly "the advancement of Turkish interests in the Southern and Eastern neighboring zones" that is Syria and Iraq.(32:580-84) Yet no sooner did the draft reach the German Capital than the Turks began to equivocate about their responsibilities under it and by the end of the month, executing a complete diplomatic volteface, they returned to their policy of nominal association with Britain and strict neutrality toward all the belligerents(6:93). The problem of Turkey, in particular, figured largely in the Hitler-Moussolini conversation at Salzburg on April 29, 1942 when Hitler declared that "Turkey was moving slowly but surely over to the Axis". In Hitler's view Turkey would never be an enemy of the Axis", and, at most, "would remain neutral to the end of the war." (1:168)

On June 2, 1942, a new trade agreement with Germany was signed, and it was announced on September 29, that Turkey had contracted to send some 45,000 tons of chrome, or approximately one-half of the annual production,

to the Krupp munitions plant in exchange for German arms (1:169).

In November 1942 Papen, protested the Turkish minister's behavior, but Menemencioglu cited the recent commercial treaty to prove that his heart was still with the Germans, even though he had to make comments that might suggest otherwise to placate the badgering British and American Ambassadors. According to Papen's report, he even hinted that chrome deliveries to Germany could be accelerated if Hitler would sign an agreement ceding Syria to Turkey at the conclusion of the war (16:151).

During the German invasion in Russia, while the Turks were probing the Wilhelmstrasse about its future policy in Soviet Russia, they were also objecting in London to British policy in the Eastern Mediterranean. One of their long-standing concerns in that region was the post war disposition of the island of Cyprus. The Turks were willing to tolerate control of Cyprus. (16:154)

By June 1944 there were other difficulties with Turkish policy, especially with respect to the passage of certain German warships through the Straits. The Foreign office protested and on June 14 Eden announced in the House of Commons that Great Britain "was profoundly disturbed" by the situation. (1: 196)

Turkey, despite her flagrant bad faith toward the Allies, has become a member of the United Nations, a participant in NATO and the recipient, beginning in 1947, of hundreds of millions of dollars in American equipment and aid. Westerners have tended to forget Ankara's ambiguous Foreign Policy during the Second World War, and, as if by international agreement, the true story of Turkey's wartime diplomacy has been left deliberately

obscure. But Anthony Eder said: "Turkey would always have to be placated beyond her due to preclude an outbreak of her aggressive tendencies" (16: 215).

B. TODAY'S SOVIET-TURKISH RELATIONS

The character of straits control is double-edged: it raises the value of Turkey as an ally but it attracts potential aggressors. On the other hand mastery of the Straits is a vital requisite of Turkey's genuine independence. While she cannot survive without them, with the Straits Turkey leads a dangerous life. And, being realistic, she must clearly see in which corner the danger lies, which power has the greatest interest in depriving her of this invaluable possession. "Turkey is not expected to sacrifice herself for NATO" (9:135).

The Turkish writer expresses in a few words today's political thought of Turkish officials; he expresses the political culture of his country. According to the Turkish political way of thinking honest political agreement or alliance is that which serves the national interests at any certain time. (16:215)

That country, western by vocation but eastern by history, tradition, religion and extent mentality, could hardly be expected to bear the main responsibility for the defense of the West, which criticized and, in some cases, disavowed it.

One of the reasons for Turkish behavior is its political system. A bureaucratic and military elite remains the ultimate repository of autho-

rity in the country, and the 1982 constitution and associated legislation are intended to make this situation permanent. Turkey attempts to move closer to the European Community. These are apparent in religious and political freedom, ethnic questions and the clash between the essentially nationalist political philosophy embodied in Turkish institutions and the anti-authoritarian pluralist outlook which largely dominates political life in the West (6:151). The Turkish armed forces kept and keep the most substantive levers of power (if not legitimacy) in the post-1961 Turkish political setting. Symbolic of the military predominance has been the fact that the presidents of the Turkish Republic since 1961 have originated from the highest ranks of Turkey's military hierarchy. One, only, had to watch a parade through Ankara's broad boulevards following the landing in Cyprus in 1974 to realize the enormity of the army's prestige. Many men and women had tears of joy in their eyes; they applauded the precise march of the troops particularly of the Crack Commandos flown from Cyprus for the occasion. The crowds knew little about that fumbling operation, the intricacies of faulty intelligence and the other flaws in its planning. All they saw were Turkish troops returning from a "victorious war" ... "the armed forces are an institution above suspicion in Turkey, despite their political plotting as far back as the Young Turks". (8:45-102)

Such a political situation makes it natural, to always follow narrow national objectives. If these objectives coincide with NATO goals, Turkey looks like the most valid ally within NATO, but, on the other hand, they put a great effort to improve their political relations with U.S.S.R. and the economical ties as well.

During the 1970's under the governments of Süleyman Demirel and Bulent Ecevit, Turkey appears to have made some strategically significant concessions to the Soviet Union. It seems that Soviet military jets were regularly allowed to overfly Turkey enroute to Syria. In 1976 the Soviet aircraft carrier, the Kiev, was allowed to travel through the Straits to the Mediterranean in what most external observers regard as a clear breach of the terms of the 1936 Montreux Convention. This last event, of course, happened at a time when the U.S. Congress had imposed an embargo on the sale of arms to Turkey (6:53.54)

During Foreign Minister Caglayangil's visit to Moscow in March 1977, Turkey and the Soviet Union agreed to sign a treaty of friendship. While this agreement falls considerably short of Moscow's maximum objective-the signing of a nonaggression pact-it nonetheless is indicative of the degree to which Soviet-Turkish relations have improved over the last few years. The Turks are interested in tapping the Soviet Union's economic potential to help expand their infant industries and they regard better relations with Soviet Union as a useful source of pressure on the United States (14:23).

Good neighbourliness (Turkish-Soviet agreement, April 1972) and the avoidance of provocation are constantly emphasized. There have been no spy scandals in Ankara comparable with those which periodically occur in Western capitals, despite the large size of the Soviet mission there. (6:44) Turkey has been, one of the major recipients of Soviet economic aid (the last 30 years it has taken more than it has taken from the U.S.A.), and depends on imports of Soviet and Bulgarian electricity for about 7 per cent of its annual consumption. The 1,4 m. ton capacity iron-and steel

plant (Turkey's third), which has opened at Iskenderum in 1975 was built by the Soviets. Istanbul in a few years will be receiving natural gas from the Soviet Union, via a spur through Thrace and Bulgaria of the pipeline to Western Europe. (6:44).

The United States view was, and is, that Turkey's role as the linchpin of the Southeastern Flank had grown for many reasons. One of them is that the United States felt that with the precarious situation on NATO'S outer perimeter, particularly in the Persian Gulf, only a strong Turkey could provide a valid deterrent against a possible Soviet effort to reach the Arab oil fields. "Turkey's own attitude was obscure mainly because of the political pressure of some NATO allies as well as its growing effort to establish more solid links with the Arab world. In such a context Turkey was loath to get involved in contingency planning for a possible operation in the Gulf, that might-and most likely would -antagonize much of the Arab world. To the generals in power in Ankara, stopping a Soviet attack was one thing, but serving as a possible springboard for the United States Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) in the Gulf was a totally different matter" (8:45-102). In general, however, the Turkish view of the role of NATO installations on its territory is that they are defensive rather than offensive. It does not want its carefully balanced relations with its neighbors, especially the Soviet Union to be upset by anything which might create the impression that it would allow itself to be used as a bridgehead for military intervention by the alliance.

In September 1979, Turkey refused to grant overflight rights for U-2 aircraft based in Cyprus for the purpose of Salt II

verification unless the Soviets consulted and acquiesced (5:12)

In 1979, Turkish officials did not agree to the use of Incirlik for the evacuation of American civilians from Iran. (5:6,29)

Only at the last minute did Americans seek approval from Turkish officials for the arrival of U.S. units at Incirlik, to back up marines landing in Lebanon in 1958 (5:12)

Submarines, even if they belong to Black Sea powers may not pass through the Straits. A large number of Soviet submarines float in the Mediterranean. The Turk Foreign Ministry in Ankara has insisted that Soviet submarines in the Mediterranean must have entered via Gibraltar! (9:107)

Another source of uneasiness among Turks is widespread belief that in the eventuality of a war, NATO would exert all its strength to defend the center, that is, the area of Central Europe (Germany) and neglect the defence of the two Flanks of the alliance, Norway in the north and Turkey in the south (9:89). Maybe for that reason "the willingness of Turkey to enter a military conflict between the West and the Warsaw Pact Powers is sometimes questioned" (6:157). Turkish officers and government officials, however, are unambiguous in stating that the country is fully committed to its obligations under NATO. These obligations, though, are perceived as reciprocal, a point which Turkey has stressed in its successive Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreements with the United States. Turkish officials tend, also, to be rather clear that NATO is a defensive rather than an offensive alliance, one intended to forestall conflict through vigilance. It is true, and all of us (NATO countries) know it, but when we use it as a document to improve national relations with the Soviet Union, it

sounds a little strange in diplomatic language, because in certain time it maybe has more than one explanation.

It is worth noting that during 1984 almost 260 warships passed through the Straits, 214 of which were Soviet and only 8 were American. Finally, during his last visit to Turkey 14-18 September 1986, the chief of the Soviet Armed Forces, stated that the Soviet Union is very careful not to create any problem to Turkey neither in Caucasus nor in the Balkan area. This statement, in conjunction with all the above, shows how the Turkish-Soviet declaration really works. And, it is probable that, if the Russians had not made a series of foreign policy blunders in the Middle East between 1942 and 1954, Turkey would have continued its non-affression pact with them, and its military alliance with the West would not have acquired the momentum which it did (6:44).

CHAPTER IV

NATO'S STRATEGIC PROFIT BY THE EXPLOITATION OF GREEK AEGEAN ISLANDS

In the relations between East-West, the Soviet Union, the predominate state in the Eastern coalition (W.P) and one of the two superpowers, is a closed state which does not like communications, and also does not easily accept foreigners. The two main characteristics of Soviet behavior are: They are afraid of being attacked by the Westerns and they have deep feeling of insecurity which is based on their experiences during W.W.II, when 20 million Soviet people lost their lives. In any way they want to avoid another battle on the Russian "Motherland".

Military power plays an important role regarding domestic and international affairs. The Soviets respect power, and they feel contempt for weakness. They believe in the superiority, of the communist idealism. They keep powerful armed forces, which as they showed , will be used anytime they estimate the appropriate time and value.

Any Westerner who examines the Soviet way of strategic thought, risks expressing it according to Western culture, mentality, behavior and thought, supposing that they have the same way of thinking. Western Strategic thought is deeply affected by Von Clausewitz's theory, although it is sometimes referred to or interpreted wrongly. Von Clausewitz has said: "The war is an act of force..." and "The war is merely the continuation of policy by other means ". Against that theory, Lenin's theory is that "The war is not only a strategic act of force, but also has a diplomatic, sociological and financial character". His experience has led him to support

that "The best strategy during a war is to postpone the operations till the decomposition of the oppponent's morale makes a fatal attack easy and possible". In other words "The act of force is not a continuation of the unsuccessful policy but of the successful one." Despite the fact that these theories are old there are no indications that they have been changed a great deal. In his book "The Sea Power of the State" which was first published in 1976, Admiral Gorshkov who later became vice Minister of Soviet Defense, following Mahan's theory, marks that "any one who controls the sea, controls also the land around it...", and in the end of his conclusion he writes, "The sea power of our state aims to the assurance of the propitious condition for the expansion of communism, for the intensive expansion of the economical force of the State, and the continuing stabilization of its defensive ability."

For the above reasons it is obvious that the Soviet Union will wage war against NATO and the Western world, only if she is absolutely sure to win this war. The Soviets will continually try to create such presuppositions which are necessary for a successfull war, during peace time. If they succeed in creating economical relations or political connections with some of NATO'S countries, they will use these relations in order to force these countries to stay neutral or friendly with the Soviet Union, or these countries would maybe have no other choice.

In case of an imminent threat of war which would involve the entire NATO Alliance and in which Turkey would consider herself directly endangered, Turkey would according to her discretion, be legally justified in closing the Straits to warships of some powers and keeping them open for others. In the above contingency the potential peril would emanate from

the Soviet Union, and therefore Soviet warships would be barred from passing through these waterways. Ankara may thus prevent Soviet vessels of war from returning to their regular Black Sea bases (Article 21 of the Montreux Convention). It is of course not to be expected that Turkey could precipitate rather than postpone an outbreak of hostilities. She would use these extreme steps only when aggression would appear to be almost inevitable (9:123).

Should a danger of military conflict arise between the United States and Russia (for instance, if Israel's existence were at stake, a case which is not a NATO *causus belli*), Turkey could possibly remain a nonbelligerent. In that event she would, however, be legally obliged to close the Straits to the warships of the belligerent powers, except that she would still have to permit the withdrawal of Soviet vessels into the Black Sea (9:124). Turkey's long history of involvement in the politics of Europe, and thereby the West, does not offer clear guidance for the future. Primarily because of the religious divide between Christianity and Islam, the history of Turkish-European relations is largely one of confrontation, antagonism and mutual indifference, dislike or misunderstanding. The cultural divide remains strong even today.

Relations between Turkey and the Western world can be expected to alter significantly over the next decade as Turkey consolidates its achievement in building an industrialized and urban society. "Ironically, an economically and militarily stronger Turkey, one less dependent on aid and able to play a more active regional role, could be a more awkward ally, and could possibly prompt a revision of Western perceptions of its military importance". (6:87)

The Greek-Turkish differences present the phenomenon of being between two allies. Turkey denies Greece the right to fortify the islands of the Aegean Archipelago, despite knowing, that they can support any military undertaking by the Turkish Armed Forces conducted in Asia Minor, and can also control the exit of naval forces belonging to the Warsaw Pact Nations coming from the Black Sea into the Mediterranean, even if NATO has lost the control of the Turkish Straits. General Rogers (ex-NATO commander) stated to Ali Birand (Turkish journalist): "It is important not only to keep the Aegean vis-a-vis the Soviet Forces which pass through the straits, but also to impede the Soviet Forces of the Mediterranean to enter the Aegean in order to regain the Black Sea going through the Straits... I am interested in all measures taken to deter these two possibilities" (53).

It should be indicated that for land operations the Force ratio 3:1 is considered, in general, sufficient for the attacker. For mixed air-naval and amphibious operations this ratio increases to 6:1. It entails that the USSR finds itself in an advantageous position towards the operations of securing control of the Straits. On the other hand in the operations against the Aegean Islands, the NATO Forces will have the initiative of movements with the assumption, of course, that full advantage will be taken of the strategical position and facilities made available by these islands. For all the above, and if we take under consideration that the Soviet Union is clearly interested in a friendly neutral Turkey, if not one under Soviet control (37:15), the strategic value of fortifying Greek Aegean Islands for NATO is multiplicand and multiform. From a military point of view they can support the Straits, Asia Minor

and Northern Greece and Turkish Thrace as well. From a strategical point of view, the Aegean Islands can impede, the Soviet Naval Forces of the Mediterranean from entering the Aegean to threaten the Straits, the mainland of Greece and Turkey, or to bottle the Soviet Fleet inside the Black Sea in case of the Straits occupation by the Soviet Forces. And, from a political point of view, the Greek Aegean Islands can absolutely replace the Turkish Straits in case of a possible Turkish neutrality or friendship with the Soviet Union.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The geopolitical picture of the Eastern Mediterranean is dominated by certain geographic, strategical characteristics. The two gates found on each extreme, and by which the Eastern Mediterranean connects with other open seas and oceans; specifically the Straits of Dardanelles with their natural extension, the Aegean Sea, offer to the bordering nations of the Black Sea accesses to the open seas, along with the Suez Canal through which the industrialized nations of the Mediterranean and Central Europe assure themselves communication with the wealthy nations of the Middle East and Asia, which have large quantities of natural resources. The deep incision that are caused by the Balkan as well as Italian Peninsulas, with which the nations of Central Europe assure themselves access to the sea lines of the Mediterranean, also brings the nations of North Africa in contact with Europe. In addition these two peninsulas divide the Mediterranean into portions; the Adriatic, Ionian and Aegean, which with today's technological military abilities become closed channels that can make the deployment of a large naval forces difficult, particularly as regards aircraft carriers.

The Aegean lies between the Western coast of Turkey and the Eastern coast of Greece. It is dotted with Greek islands. In summers, it is crisscrossed by private yachts and cruise ships. But under the facade of idyllic charm lie the tensions of the two neighboring nations. The tension is accentuated by the occasional appearance of the dark silhouette of a Soviet warship, a reminder of the Soviet navy's presence in that sensi-

tive part of the world. It is clear that the continuations of the feud is not likely to serve the best interests of either Greece or Turkey and certainly not NATO.

The Aegean Sea Islands with their air bases and other defense facilities, fully control the sea lines of communications crossing that sea and constitute successive defense barriers in depth. Therefore, even if the Straits were occupied, communications between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean would not be restored for the Warsaw Pact Forces without the previous occupation of the Aegean Islands complex. As far as the battle in Northern Greece is concerned, these Islands provide the strategic and tactical depth required for manoeuvres and support. (2:104) , (5:6).

In particular, because of their geographical position, together with the whole Greek territory, they are the link between Italy and Turkey. Thus, it ensures the defense continuity of the NATO Southern Flank and serves the early warning and air defense systems, the strategic manoeuvres and the movements of NATO reinforcements. They, also deny the W.P. Forces exit to the Aegean Sea and through it to the Mediterranean and further to Africa and the Middle East. Their position also covers Turkey and the Dardanelles from the west.

It is obvious that in case of occupation of the Aegean Islands and the island of Crete by Warsaw Pact Forces, the lines of communications in the Eastern Mediterranean will be cut OFF, Turkey will be isolated, Southern Italy will be threatened, Yugoslavia, if not already overrun, will be in a very difficult position and the entire Middle-East area, the Suez Canal and North Africa will be under the direct threat of Warsaw Pact Forces.

The strategic value of Greek Aegean islands becomes more significant in the possibility of Turkish neutrality. Throughout the Second World War, Turkey was a nonbelligerent but not an ineffective bystander. By diplomacy alone she maintained her territorial integrity against both Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. She took expensive lend-lease equipment from Britain and gave only overpriced commodities in return. She deprived Germany of an Arab alliance and withheld her own alliance for the highest price (16:219).

"Turkish diplomacy during the War was a brilliant accomplishment by all standards except those of honesty and integrity. Only thirty years later, when they invaded Cyprus, did the Turks "reveal", that after all, they had been dissatisfied with what that diplomacy had gained for them" (16:219). In other words according to Turkish philosophy, successful diplomacy is that which, either offers palpable benefits or keeps away the threat disregarding any obligation or agreement with other nations. Today's relations between Turkey and the Soviet Union, as well as history, make possible a future Turkish neutrality, in order to avoid the Russian and Warsaw Pact threat. When Turkey vetos fortifications Greek Aegean Islands in NATO exercises, whose national objectives after all are served? The Soviet Union is the great winner, and on the other hand in a possible Turkish neutrality, NATO would have lost the opportunity to use the Aegean Islands as second straits in order to avoid the exit of Soviet Fleet to the Mediterranean, or the entering the Aegean Sea from the Mediterranean.

The Aegean Sea with its thousand islands is one of the very strategically important areas of NATO. NATO'S members must be convinced of its va-

lue in order to create the best defensive planning against to continuously increasing Soviet Naval threat in the Mediterranean, and general Soviet influence as well. Today this area divides two NATO members because, as I have said, one of them tries to change the status quo of this area. The NATO policy of "equidistance position" toward these problems has not solved them yet because, simply put, it is not a equidistance position. NATO policy would be a policy of "equidistance position" if it accepted the status quo of the area (as NATO did for about 30 years) and suggested negotiations within NATO if a member has any objection to this existent status quo.

NATO'S strategic profit by the exploitation of Greek Aegean Islands is obvious and manifold. As the situation has formed today in this area NATO cannot expect any change which could make this situation better for its strategical goals. On the contrary if NATO does not change today's policy of "equidistance position", (so called) the Soviet influence in the area will increase seriously, because of the new Gorbachev Foreign policy. Thus future NATO cohesion may be threatened.

CHART J

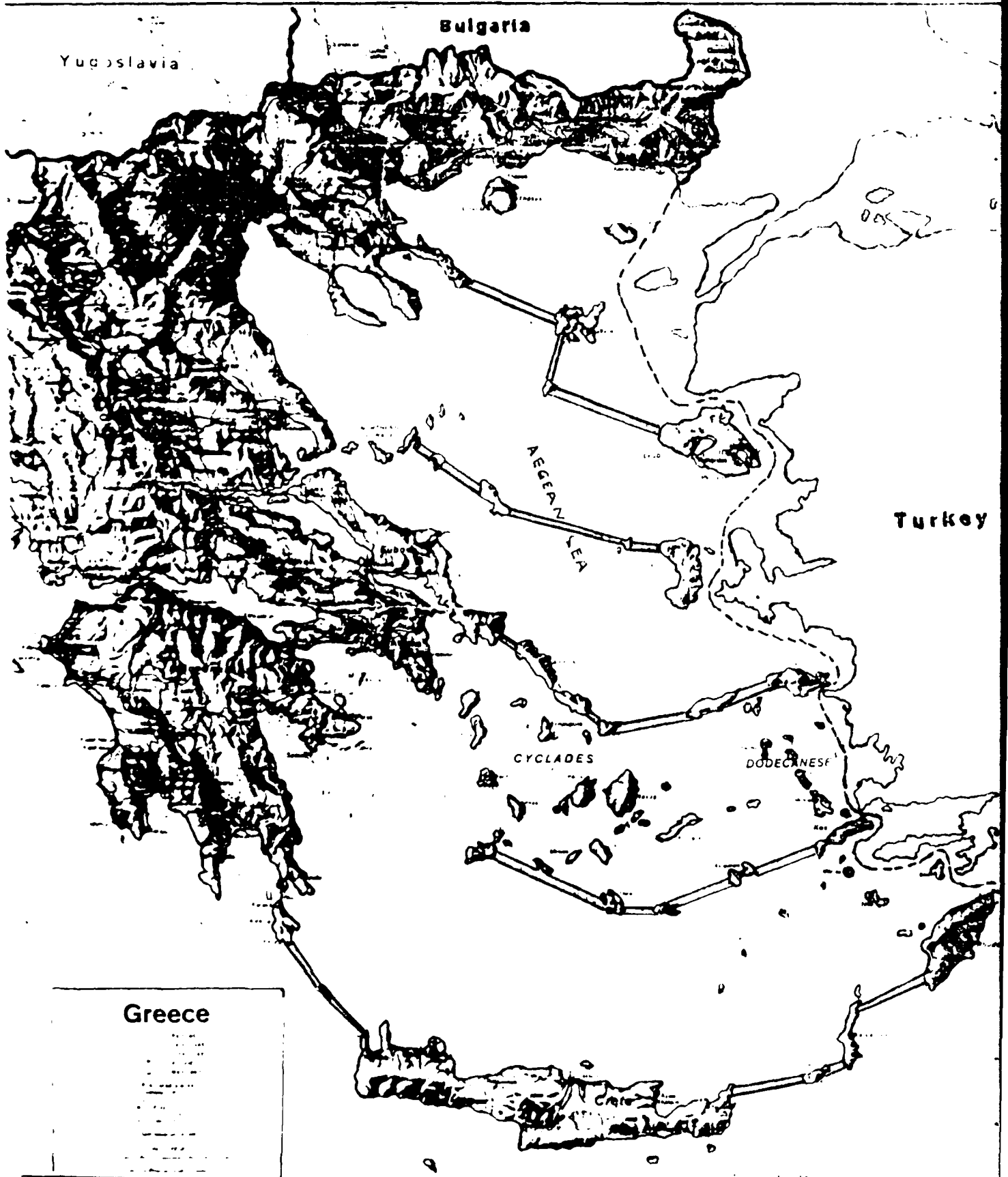
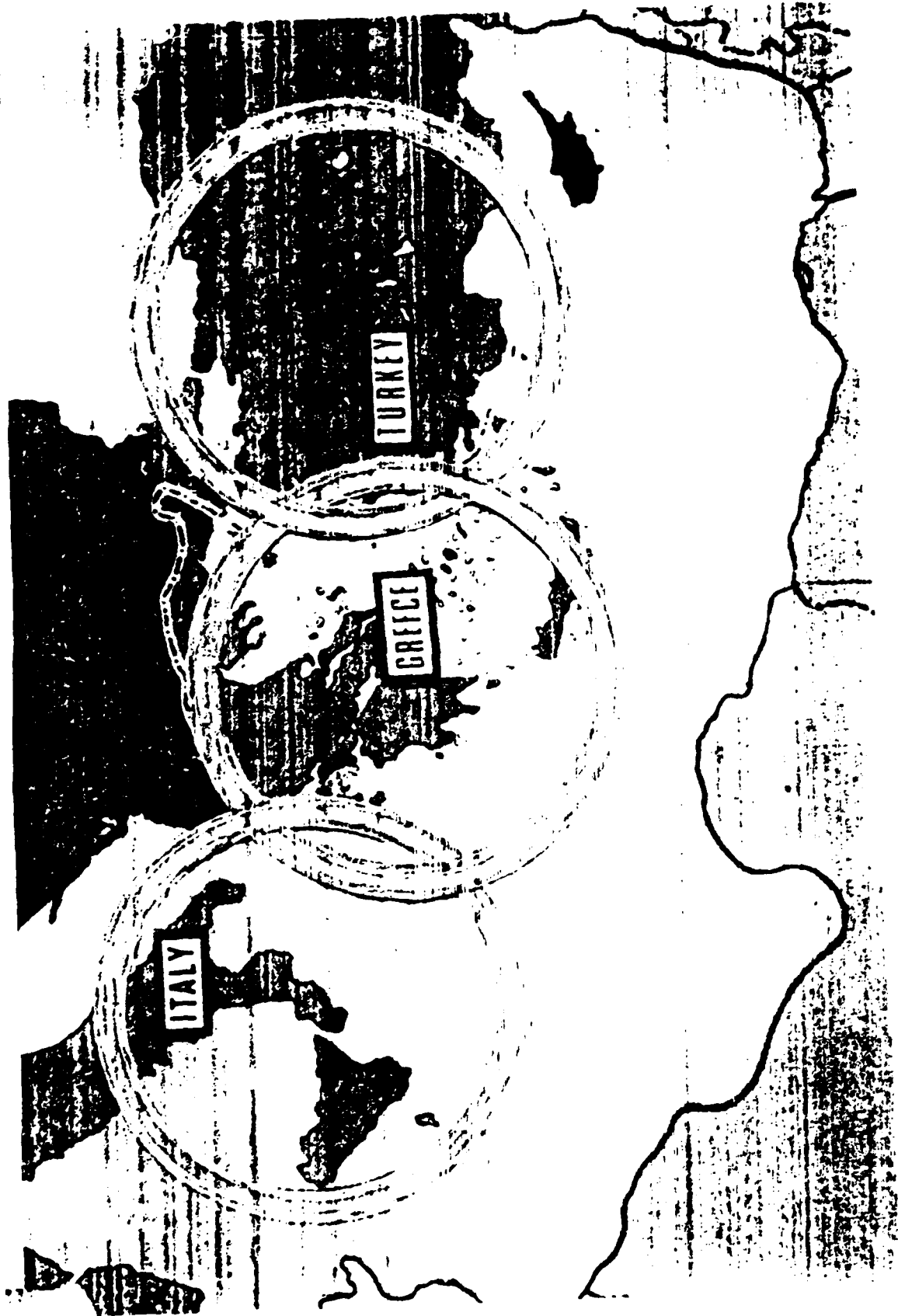
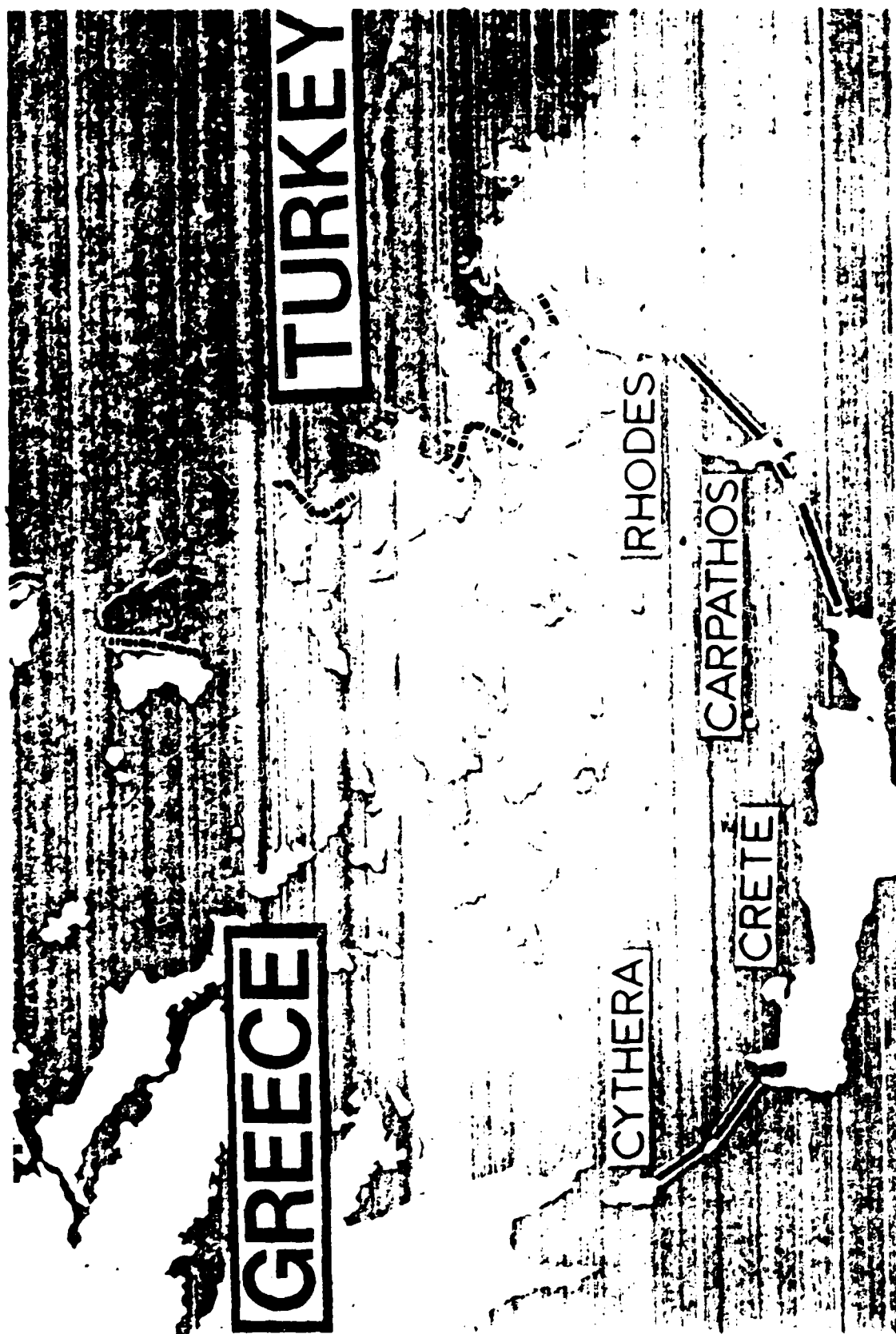


CHART II



Southeastern Mediterranean Countries



Line of Communications

TABLE I
 DEFENSE EXPENDITURES AS %
 OF GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (1985)

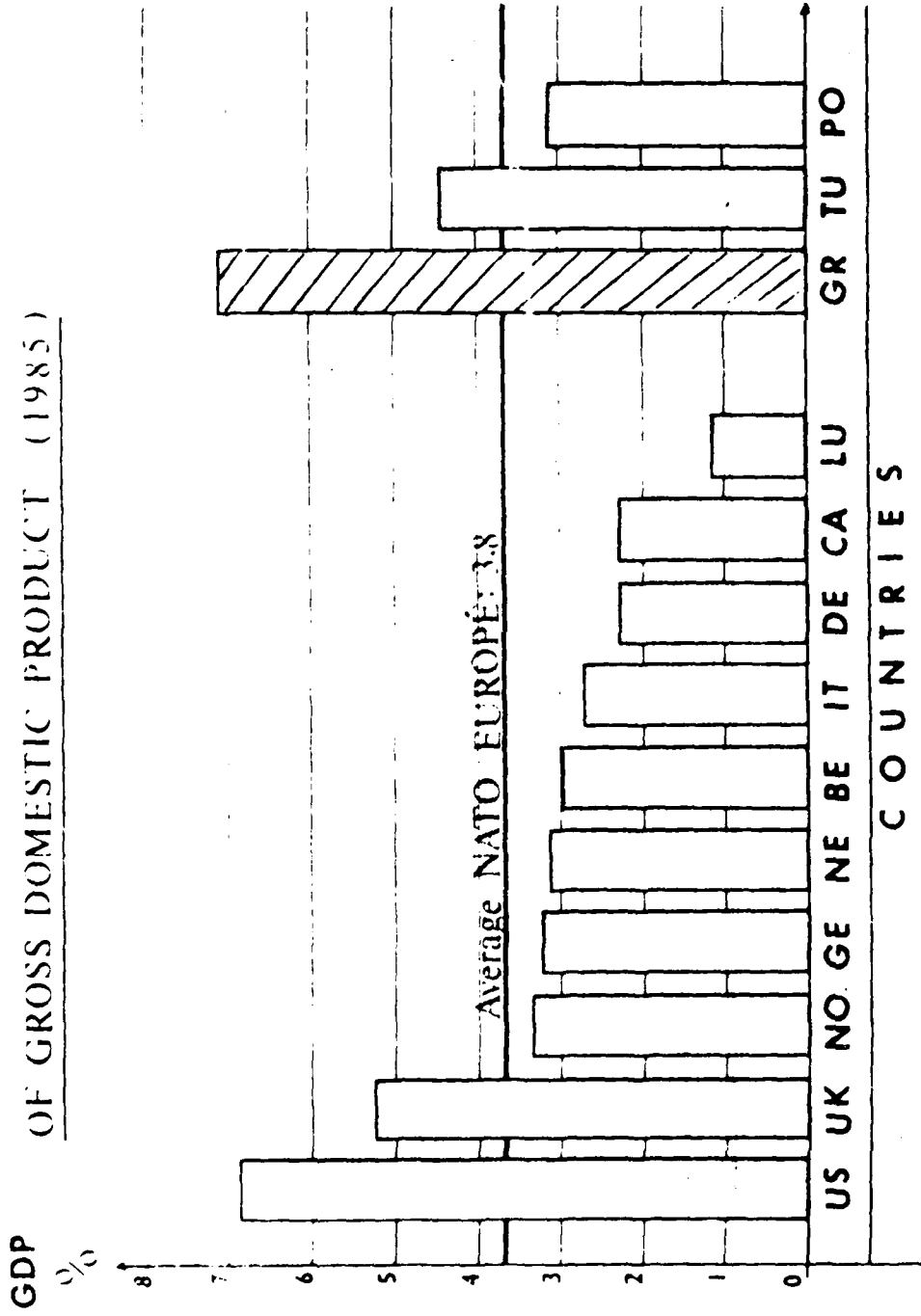


TABLE II

MILITARY AND CIVILIAN
PERSONNEL EXPRESSED AS % TOTAL
LABOUR FORCE IN 1984

GREECE	6.10
TURKEY	4.67
U.S.A.	2.90
BELGIUM	2.70
PORTUGAL	2.56
ITALY	2.42
GERMANY	2.40

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