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THE BALKANS – DIPLOMATIC CONCEPTS AFTER THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Summary: The relations between Turkey and Romania during the 30th and 40th of the 20th century, with a special accent on their Balkan cooperation present important part not only of history of the two countries, but of the European relations as well. The policy pursued by Turkey and Romania in the Balkans sought to maintain the stability of boundaries, mediating between states that did not have a similar policy like Turkey's involvement in Romanian - Bulgarian and Romanian – Russian relations.

At the same time, this topic could not be discussed without the involvement of the great powers in the Balkans, which all has their own goals and interests. For example, Germany was using Bulgaria as a breakthrough in the Balkans. A state that had direct interests in the Balkans was the Soviet Union. The fact that Turkey had relationships with the Soviet Union, unlike Romania, amounted for Romania to an attempt to get close to its neighbour to the east through Turkey, the aim of the officials in Bucharest being to sign a nonaggression treaty with officials from the Kremlin. However, France and Great Britain have considered the same alternative; one of the ways to get to Moscow was by Ankara. Romania's evolution from a politic, economic and military point of view was largely determined by the trend of the two neighbouring countries, Hungary and Bulgaria, which were part of a system of alliances which contravened the political interests of both Romania and Turkey.

Key words: First World War, Diplomatic Relations, Great Powers, the Balkans, Romania, Turkey

In the study of international relations of the XXth century, the Romanian-Turkish relations during the third and fourth decades, as well as their cooperation in the Balkans, detail and complete a part of the history of the two countries. The policy pursued by Turkey and Romania in the Balkans sought to maintain the stability of boundaries, mediating between states that did not have a similar policy like Turkey's involvement in Romanian – Bulgarian and Romanian – Russian relations.

On the other hand, the great powers were involved in the Balkans, each pursuing its own policy which led to the differentiation of views. For

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example, Germany was using Bulgaria as a breakthrough in the system of alliances. A state that had direct interests in the Balkans was the Soviet Union. The fact that Turkey had relationships - not very special – with the Soviet Union, unlike Romania, amounted for Romania to an attempt to get close to its neighbour to the east through Turkey, the aim of the officials in Bucharest being to sign a nonaggression treaty with officials from the Kremlin. However, France and Britain have considered the same alternative; one of the ways to get to Moscow was by Ankara. Romania's evolution from a politic, economic and military point of view, was largely determined by the trend of the two neighbouring countries, Hungary and Bulgaria, which were part of a system of alliances which contravened the political interests of both Romania and Turkey.

Beyond solving internal problems regarding Turkish-Hungarian and Turkish-Greek relations, Tevfik Rüstü Aras, when asked by Vasile M. Anastasiu, the Romanian consul in Constantinople, about the possibility of concluding a Hungarian Turkish pact of arbitration and non-aggression, the Turkish diplomat said that replied that negotiation for this pact will soon start in Budapest between the Hungarian government and the Turkish Minister: *“In Budapest I put in a lot of work in the interest of peace, advising Hungarian politicians to be patient, calm and reconciliatory towards neighbours of their country, forcing themselves to resolve the disputes between them amicably . I know of a very difficult problem: the question of optants² remained unresolved between Romania and Hungary. Allow me to express my belief that, apart from the League of Nations and without turning to arbitrage from anyone, but only by direct negotiations and amicably it will be easier for you to reach an agreement with Hungary. Making concessions and being conciliatory and generous to a defeated country, will make it easier to Hungarians to abide by peace.”*³

As a matter of fact, the Romanian government has given enough evidence of spirit of conciliation towards Hungary, with which Romania wants to maintain friendly relations in the Treaties. Moreover, in order to assist Hungary, the Romanian government, with much goodwill and spirit of European solidarity has agreed in 1924 to a partial moratorium, which made it possible to restore Hungary financially, in accordance with the plan established by the League of Nations.⁴

Instead, in the matter of the optants, the Hungarian government raised claims contrary to the legitimate and vital interests of the Romanian nation, and a constant struggle to their defence has been waged since 1923.

Regarding the Turkish-Bulgarian arbitration and nonaggression pact, the Turkish diplomat stated that it will be signed soon and that the Turkish government intends to propose the conclusion of an analog pact to Yugoslavia after the Ministerial crisis will be resolved in Sofia following the

2 Regarding the issue of optants see the account of Nicolae Titulescu, Permanent Delegate of Romania to the Council of the League of Nations on July 5. 1923 *La réforme agraire en Roumanie et les optants hongrois de Transylvanie devant la Société des Nations*, apud Nicolae Titulescu, *Discursuri*, Bucharest, 1967, p. 269–293.

3 AMAE, stock 71/1920-1944. *Turkey*, vol. 1, f. 186–187

4 *The Dawes Plan* was adopted in aug. 1924.

resignation of the Bulgarian Minister of War.⁵

“Concerning Yugoslavia, I do not know if the obligations imposed to this country by the treaties of alliance that affiliates it to the powers of the Little Entente would allow the Belgrade government to conclude an arbitration and nonaggression pact with Turkey.”⁶

Relative to Greek-Turkish relations, Tefvik Rüstü showed belief that he and Venizelos will reach a final agreement on all outstanding issues between Greeks and Turks. This will be easier now that there is a stable and strong government in Greece, able to internally enforce decisions for solving the disputes that have been separating the two republics for so long.

Once understanding is established for solving the different issues related to the exchange of Greco-Turkish populations, the conclusion of the arbitration and non-aggression pact between Turkey and Greece will become normal and easy.

The aim of the Turkish Foreign Minister is the desire to live in peace (Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s motto – *Peace at home, peace in the world*) with everyone, he is ready to conclude arbitration and non-aggression pacts with all powers, but he is not interested to enter into any alliance group.

Past experience leads Turkey’s current leaders to seek peace and to ensure their country is not drawn into a coalition. Desirous of peace, so necessary to progress and internal development, Turkey enthusiastically welcomes the Briand – Kellogg Pact.⁷

Continuing the existing foreign policy, Ismet Inonu, the Turkish Prime Minister drew the course the Turkish state is supposed to follow: “*The political and geographic situation of Turkey subjects our country to following the political trends of the major global powers. We recognize the importance and delicacy of the situation. The foundation of the policy of a country that is in such a position should be consistent enough to shelter it from the storm that would burst in any part of the world. So we have the duty to pursue our own foreign policy to protect the country against the temptation to make itself a tool for the outside influences. Therefore we must pursue an unbiased policy without any reproach of partiality.*

Therefore, all the treaties that we sign, declarations or political commitments must be inspired by perfect honesty and fairness, which is the basis of our foreign policy.

5 Referring to the resignation of General Ivan Vilkov, Minister of War in the cabinet of economist Andrei Lipchev, followed by resignation of the head of Foreign Affairs, Atanas Burov, which caused a brief political crisis in Bulgaria in the summer of 1928

6 AMAE, stock 71/1920-1944. *Turkey*, vol. 1, f. 186–187

7 The *Briand-Kellogg Pact* ((*General Treaty to renounce war as an instrument of national policy in the mutual relations of the State*) signed on August 27, 1928, in the French capital by 15 countries and registered in League of Nations Treaty Series on September 4, 1929. The Romanian Government has joined this important document of international law on September 4 1928. For further study, see the classic study of Eliza Campus, *A step in the struggle for repudiation of force in international relations: The Briand-Kellogg Pact (1928)* in „Revista română de studii internaționale”, no. 3/1973, p. 97–115. The Republic of Turkey submitted the documents for permanently joining this Pact on July 24 1929, the same as Romania.

*These directives show that we sincerely want to maintain world peace. Turkey is one of the countries that made the greatest exertions for peace, signing numerous diplomatic documents in order to establish mutual trust in its relations with either neighbours or the states located far from the Turkish border.”*⁸

The President of the Council presented the following “evidence”: The treaty of friendship and mutual assistance concluded with Afghanistan; the agreements signed with Persia, a country that Turkey feels bound to by old friendships. He then proceeded to the arbitration and non-aggression treaty recently signed between Turkey and Italy, showing that this treaty ended the suspicion and lack of trust that both countries have suffered from. He recalls that because of the friendly Turkish-Bulgarian relations there was a mutual agreement to conclude a non-aggression and arbitration treaty with Bulgaria.

Concerning the relations between Turkey and Greece, Ismet Pasha said that there is no contradiction between the mutual interests of the two republics, no territorial dispute, preventing a final agreement. Current disputes – Ismet Inonu opined – arise from the interpretation of clauses in existing agreements and concern not the best interests of the state, but of the individuals, subjects of the two countries. The Prime Minister expressed the belief that, courtesy of both sides, all these legal disputes will be resolved, as the Turkish government is animated in this regard by a real spirit of conciliation, and Venizelos, through the speech recently given, and in a friendly letter addressed to Ismet Pasha, expressed the desire to witness a definitive agreement between the two neighbours.

In a broader sense, he said: *“Our relations with the Soviet Union – says Ismet Pasha – continue to be friendly. Trust and goodwill are constant between the two countries. Our relations with Britain are good and normal.”*

In relation to Turkish- French relations, the Prime Minister recalled the signing of the agreement on the Ottoman public debt issue that interested particularly France and expressed the hope that Turkey’s spirit of sacrifice will be appreciated at its true value. *“There is no antagonism between the best interests of Turkey and France – adds Ismet Pasha – and we are animated by the sincere desire to see the relations between the two states developing on the basis of mutual goodwill. I hope that by virtue of the activity of the new Ambassador of the French Republic, the differences concerning the border between us and Syria will be satisfactorily resolved. Our relations with Germany and Japan are good. The relations we maintain with other foreign countries are developing in an atmosphere of peace and understanding”*.⁹

8 AMAE, stock 71/1920-1944. Turkey, vol. 1, f. 188–190

9 Ibidem, f. 189

From a telegram sent by Carol M. Mitilineu¹⁰ envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary in Vienna to Constantin I. Argetoianu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania, concerning an article from western mass-media:

“From the foreign policy of Turkey and its relations with the Great Powers we see that the young republic wants peace and understanding with all neighbours; and this is proven by the conclusion of treaties of friendship and non-aggression with Persia, Afghanistan, with Italy and soon with Bulgaria. The Greek - Turkish problem, which troubled the world for a long time, ceased to exist. The visit of Venizelos at Angora [Ankara] is approaching, and it gives hope to all.

Moreover, Turkey is interested in the minority problem finding a just solution, because not only Bulgaria, Greece and Yugoslavia, but also Albania and Romania have a Turkish minority, and they consider the issue as purely internal in the respective state.

The government maintains its view of not being part of the League of Nations, which is regarded with sympathy, but it cannot be considered yet as an institution standing above the parties, because today it is a tool for the victors. The Minister appears very categorical concerning the pan-European movement of Count Coudenhove – Kalergi,¹¹ in whose success he is distrustful, just like in the other movements (Pan-Germanic, Pan-Slavic, Pan-Islamic, etc.).

With the USSR, Turkey maintains the best relations, which does not exclude fighting Bolshevism. A Russian propaganda is not to be feared as 14 million of the population of 15 million of the Republic is made up of peasants and therefore unfit subjects to communist contamination.¹²

From a report by Gheorghe Filality, addressed to George G. Mironescu¹³, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania, on the conversation with Tevfik Rüstü, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey on Turkey's external relations with its neighbours and with the Great Powers we quote: “*Our policy – Tevfik Rüstü – bey told me – that you have long known, is immutable and can be summarized in a few words: we want peace and tran-*

10 Carol M. Mitilineu (1866–1939), Romanian diplomat. He entered MAS as legation attaché 2nd class (1889). Secretary II (1892), Secretary I (1895), counsellor (1905), minister plenipotentiary II (1911) and I (1920). Missions in Constantinople (1889–1894), Belgrade (1895–1896), Brussels (1900–1903), Sankt Petersburg (1903–1906), Paris (1906–1911). He was envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary in Hague (1911–1922), Vienna (1923–1930) and Stockholm, Oslo, Copenhagen (march–december 1930). From 1933 he was a member of the Diplomatic High Council.

11 Count Richard Nikolaus von Coudenhove-Kalergi (1894–1972), publicist, politic thinker and European federalist militant, Austrian. He was the founder of the Pan-European Union (1923) – the first non-governmental organization on the continent that fought for a united Europe, through an association of free sovereign states. See, for example, recently in Lubor Jilek, *Pan-Europe de Coudenhove-Kalergi: l'homme, le projet et le mouvement pan européen*, in „Human Security”, no. 9/2004–2005, p. 205–209.

12 AMAE, stock 71/1920–1944. *Turkey*, vol. 1, f. 192

13 George G. Mironescu (1874–1949), jurist and Romanian politician. Minister of Foreign Affairs (10 Nov. 1928–8 Jun. 1930, 13 Jun.–8 Oct. 1930, 10 Oct. 1930–4 Apr. 1931, 11 Aug.–11 Oct. 1932) and president of the Council of Ministers (7–8 Jun. 1930, 10 Oct. 1930–4 Apr. 1931). Honorary Member of the Romanian Academy (1939).

quillity not only for ourselves, but also for all the other states. We do not have ambitions of conquest, we do not want to upset anyone and we long to be treated the same so we can reach our desired goal in our policy of regeneration and modernization of the country. This is so true that we are ready to shake hands with anyone who outstretches them with love and friendship. Guided by this desire, I signed, as you know, friendship and non-aggression pacts with Afghanistan¹⁴ and Italy.¹⁵ We are about to sign in a few days an identical one with Bulgaria¹⁶ and we hope that in a very short time with Hungary as well.¹⁷

As to our differences with Greece, I have absolute faith that both our friend Venizelos and I, with a sincere wish to restore old ties of friendship, we will finally end the difficulties arising from the great operation of exchange of populations and then sign a pact identical to the Italic – Turkish pact. I look forward to the return of Mr [Ioannis] Pappas – Greek Minister – here to resume negotiations, which, I repeat, cannot end but well.

I wish with all my heart that we could all form the Balkan Confederation, idea that was launched two years ago by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece. I was in favor; we were assured of Bulgaria's assistance, when I felt the pulse in Belgrade I did not find the same enthusiasm and wondering why, I learned that France – the protector or rather the custodian of Yugoslavia – had invited it to be reserved, for it wasn't the right time for the realization of that Confederation that – apparently – would have resulted in hindering France's policy of domination in the Balkans as well as elsewhere".¹⁸

Fierce criticism from Ankara's chief diplomat at the French foreign policy emerges from discussion with our minister, as well: "With the Little Entente on the one hand, through Poland, on the other hand, France dominates Central Europe and the Balkan Peninsula. When I learned of her intention to attract Greece as well in the Little Entente, I was very concerned, because in this manner Turkey and Bulgaria would find themselves completely surrounded and at the mercy of the four combined states. Greece did not join the Little Entente, and I've connected with Italy. Mussolini, here is a formidable man, whom I know well and appreciate more than anyone, for he has line of conduct well-drawn and the will – if not always the power – to accomplish it."¹⁹

From his admiration for Mussolini, the Turkish Minister went on to the analysis of British foreign policy "Here's a country that deserves eve-

¹⁴ The Turkish-Afghan treaty of friendship and cooperation was signed in Ankara, on 25 May 1928, with the occasion of the visit of Amānullāh Khān (1892-1960), reforming leader of the Afghanistan Emirate (1919–1929).

¹⁵ Treaty of Neutrality, Conciliation and Judicial Regulation between Italy and the Republic of Turkey was signed on 30 Mai 1928, in Rome.

¹⁶ The Neutrality Agreement between the Republic of Turkey and Bulgaria was to be signed on 30 Mar. 1929.

¹⁷ The Neutrality Agreement between the Republic of Turkey and Hungary was signed on 5 Jan. 1929.

¹⁸ AMAE, stock 71/1920-1944. Turkey, vol. 1, f. 195-197

¹⁹ AMAE, stock 71/1920-1944. Turkey, vol. 1, f. 196

ryone's admiration. Its policy is not made in teasing and baffle as France's. She keeps away, lets us live and even if so far it has not helped us with anything, it does not hinder our path either."²⁰

In Romanian-Turkish relations, until 1928 we could notice some stand-offishness, motivated by the Turkish ties with the Soviet state and the issue of reparations for Turkish migrants in Dobruja. Following the declaration of the Romanian Foreign Minister N. Titulescu, in the spring of 1928, where he was in favour of "the development of good relations with all countries, regardless" the Turkish Foreign Minister said that "Romania and Turkey make a policy of peace and rapprochement between the Balkan countries and I gladly see the relations getting closer between the two countries."

On October 6, 1929 at the International Congress for Peace in Greece, Alexandros Papanastasiou, former Prime Minister, proposed the establishment of an institute of the Balkan Union to solve problems between the respective countries. The Balkan states received the idea well.²¹ In this respect a series of meetings between the Balkan states took place:

I. October 5, 1930, representatives of Albania, Greece, Bulgaria, Turkey and Romania met in Athens where they established that: the Balkan states will meet annually at foreign minister level, the preparation of a Balkan pact encompassing war ban, peaceful mediation of conflicts, and the rapprochement of Balkan states from a social, cultural and economic point of view.

II. 20 to 26 October 1931, Istanbul – in order to bring closer the Balkan states the intensification of economic, technical and cultural relations was decided. Turkish officials found that Romania and Yugoslavia, members of the Little Entente, were ardent defenders of the idea of the Balkan Union. To make a step towards improving relations with Greece, Inonu visits Athens in the autumn of 1931. The visit proved itself useful, the talks about Greek-Turkish rapprochement and possible cooperation with all Balkan states catching contour. The Turkish official considered this trip, the seed of the Greek-Turkish Agreement.²²

III. 23 to 26 October 1932 in Bucharest – the issue of minorities was discussed. Bulgaria withdrew motivating that the Balkan Union would not be in its best interest. The Balkan states decide the establishment of committees of experts in various fields: the Balkan chamber of commerce and industry, the Balkan labour office and the Balkan postal union.

On September 20, 1933 Inonu and T. R. Aras went to Bulgaria (official visit) to convince officials in Sofia to join the Balkan Pact and extend the neutrality, conciliation and arbitration agreement for another five years. Bulgaria refused to participate in the friendship accord between Turkey and Greece.

²⁰ Ibidem, f. 197

²¹ Coord. Baskin Oran...p.350

²² **İsmet İnönü**, *Hatıralar*, İkinci basım, Ankara, 2006, p. 503

IV. Thessaloniki, 5 to 11 November 1933 – it was decided to continue the project with Bulgaria with the mention that it will be admitted at any time. The Balkan Pact was accepted.

In addition to the previous remarks, the Little Entente states regret that recent negotiations have highlighted ideas belonging to the revisionist policy.

In 1931 the 2nd Balkan Conference takes place. M. Kemal said on this occasion: “Today in the Balkans there are independent countries as Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Yugoslavia and Turkey. All these countries have gained independence in the last century from the remains of the Ottoman Empire. Reunion in an organization of Balkan countries will be welcomed by the civilized world”.²³

Through the common security and cooperation agreements, Romanian-Turkish relations developed in-between 1928-1934. To achieve security in the area, on October 17, 1933 an understanding of friendship and non-aggression was signed between Romania and Turkey. The rapprochement between Turkey and Greece and the co-optation of Yugoslavia and Romania turned into the Balkan Pact. Border securing provisions were promised.

Due to the Turkish-Russian commitments, Turkey could only enter into a defensive alliance with Russians’ permission. In this regard, in April 1932, the Turkish Prime Minister Ismet Pasha travels to Moscow for talks with Russian officials. In his memoirs, Ismet Inonu gives details on the importance of the visit and the agreements between the two countries. In his view it was necessary to strengthen the Turkish-Russian agreement of 1925. Also he considered that the understanding of 1925 was a result of the Bolshevik Revolution on the grounds that the Russians wanted to be closer to the Turks because they were marginalized by Western countries and they were trying to prevent a German rapprochement to Britain and France. Unrest in Moscow was produced when the French and English together with the Poles, Italians, and Czechs signed the Treaty of Locarno. Turks perceived this understanding as opposed to Soviet interests. In this equation the Turks signed with the Russians a neutrality agreement in Paris, two weeks after Locarno, in 1925, and the Soviets always viewed with fear the rapprochement between Germany and other major countries. The Russo-Turkish agreement was a response from the Russians for the Westerners.²⁴

Ismet Pasha had a positive view of the Turkish-Russian relations because he considered them as based on trust. For Turkey it was an important issue, even though the Soviets did not help in the Mossul situation, but they supported them in the League of Nations and in committees during negotiations.

The Soviets wanted to develop their economic relations, but in 1927, the Russians imposed price control on certain goods, and after hard negotiations they succeeded in signing a trade agreement in the same year.

In 1928 disarmament talks took place in Geneva. Turkey supported the Soviet proposal, total disarmament. It also participated with the Soviet Union in the Briand – Kellogg Pact.

²³ Eyup Kaptain, *Turk-rumen iliskileri*, p. 147

²⁴ Ismet Inonu, p. 505

From the memoirs of the Turkish Foreign Minister, I. Inonu we learn: “After 1926 we tried to develop relations with Western countries. On account of this and because of the attention we pay to the Balkans, the Soviets were more careful in relations with Turkey. For these reasons the Russians were offended by our desire to develop relations with the West. In this situation I visited Moscow in 1932”.²⁵

THE MEETING BETWEEN STALIN AND İSMET İNÖNÜ

The first contact was with Stalin and the government. The meeting is detailed in the memoirs of the former Turkish statesman: “The Russian Ambassador to Ankara tells me that Stalin is in a meeting with the government and will be 1-2 minutes late. Stalin: “We have a job inside, we will be done shortly. I would have liked very much that you see the meeting. A lot of things are said about me, that I’m a dictator. To see for yourself the amount of work we put in”.²⁶

“After Stalin returned to the meeting room, they invited us into a room that seemed the venue for the government. Stalin showed me the head of the table; I sat down, on the left and right were T. R. Aras and Huseiyn Ragip, our ambassador in Moscow. On the opposite side, Molotov and Litvinov, together with the ambassador from Ankara and one-two deputies. Stalin began to lead the meeting while standing. We talked passionately about the relations between the two countries, us in Turkish them in Russian. We have strong translators. When needed, I spoke in French as well. The first item we discussed was the Russian economic aid for Turkey. We arrived in the Soviet Union at a time when they were in economic trouble. Politics remaining from the time of Lenin began to be reformed and they began to tell us about the results they had and that they appreciated the steps taken in the past by Lenin.”

“We were promised that they would help us with \$ 8,000,000 in gold. I opened the subject of interest, but they did not want interest. Stalin was still walking up and down and intervened whenever was necessary. They talked about the refund: 20 years fixed rate payments in goods.²⁷ On his return from Moscow, while discussing it with the English ambassador he conveyed that in these conditions we obtained the maximum of what we could get.”

Stories about the visit and discussions with Stalin are detailed: “After the formal discussion, Stalin invited me to his villa outside Moscow. We went together in a car, Stalin on the right side of the driver, and me in the back with Molotov. During the meal Stalin talked about our relations with the West, I told him about our relations with the Greeks and we came to the Balkan Pact.” Inonu: “We would like to make a deal in the Balkans; we conducted meetings in this regard. We would like to secure this area apart from the relations we have with countries outside the Balkans. In this

²⁵ Idem

²⁶ Ibidem p. 506

²⁷ Ibidem, p. 507

equation, our relations with the Soviet Union will always be defended. Our participation in the Balkan Pact will never work against the Russians; this principle will even be mentioned in the Pact. Being regarded as suspicious, we tried to convince them. I opened this topic at the table where Stalin was with Litvinov and Molotov. We detailed our intentions regarding the Pact without leaving doubts where we are concerned. The ambassador in Ankara, Surici was present as well. When I was in Ankara, Surici said they're going to connive and try to impede the creation of the Balkan Pact." Although he was regarded with suspicion, Inonu did not give up and insisted: "I began to speak to Stalin. Surici opposed my intention but Stalin chimed in and stopped the discussion by telling me I'm right. Our ambassador, who knew Russian, said that Stalin told to his ambassador, "My dear, this man is correct. Why are you interrupting? "The subject was closed. We moved on to other issues. I was composed and sure on our policy when I left. (I ate, drank with Stalin all day, I met his wife and his daughter, Svetlana, who was young)".²⁸

"Another conversation with Stalin was in Kremlin. I noticed that he was well informed on our domestic policy. For Stalin, Mustafa Kemal's decision to allow the existence of another party caused astonishment: 'Stalin asked: What is this liberal party to you? I did not understand? How could you establish this party? Inonu: 'I did not want to go into details; it is something special for us'."

One thing noted by the Turks was the fact that Stalin was upset on the English, considering that they wanted to be the masters of the world. Inonu concludes: "I realized that he harboured enmity towards the Great Britain".²⁹

After returning from Moscow, Inonu drew some conclusions from his discussions with Stalin: "the attention of Russian foreign policy is directed to Germany and Western Europe; they are interested in the western borders. They want to pursue an amity policy. They did not give up their western borders even though they were crumbling, I think they were disadvantaged because of the revolution; their ideal is the liberation of these territories. What do I see? The Soviet Union in 25 years will not be able to do this! I was wrong!" Writing his memoirs after the Second World War, Ismet Inonu admitted he was wrong in his prediction. Details of his visit to Moscow end on a note that is not exactly cheerful, even disturbing: "During his visit to Moscow, they said they were preparing for the big war. They believed that there will be a war with Western Europe. They wanted to take back what they had lost at Brest Litovsk. All the armament factories were built retral to the Urals as per Stalin's wish."³⁰

Given the unanimous and profound feelings of their countries, the Little Entente states have considered it their duty to draw attention to the fact that revisionist policy, which would inevitably result in a reaction of the most energetic, is not able to calm things down and strengthen the sense of trust that would enable mutual cooperation.

28 Ibidem pp. 507–508

29 Ibidem p. 509

30 Ibidem p. 511

In the spring of 1929, George Filality discusses with Tevfik Rüstü, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, the foreign policy towards neighbours and the Great Powers. The Turkish diplomat opined: *“I am delighted by what I did and heard in the three capitals. Being received like I was in Berlin and especially in Rome, filled my heart with pride, for I was confirmed that Turkey enjoys great prestige in the two countries. I had several conversations with Mussolini (his admirer – n.n.) and I was convinced once more of the brightness of this man whose views fit so well with my own. I examined with him not only the problem of the Adriatic, which interested us both in the highest degree, but also problems of the entire Europe, and we were both convinced that we have similar views. Where does Mussolini’s trust in me come from? From the honesty and unselfishness of the policy I have been making for more than three years. You know the state of affairs I found. Friends? Only one: the Soviet Union. The rest if not enemies, but certainly ill-wishers who despised us, saying in all voices: Turkish land? But it’s non-existent as a power in the European arena. It does not even deserve to exist, let alone to be taken seriously. And today? See how the greatest Powers seek our friendship. How did we come to this radical change? Very easy, by the amity policy that I have been promoting and will continue to do so for as long as I have the honour to be here. But for this policy to succeed and especially to continue to be as efficacious as it has been, it needs to fulfil a necessary condition: to never befriend anyone in order to be against somebody else because this is the only way to keep your independence, inspire trust and can hope for future friends. Otherwise you fatally get to the formation of political constellations that hate and seek by all means to antagonize each other.*

I have the highest esteem for Maniu, as for Mironescu, although I do not know them [personally], I have been following up on them closely for several months now and I am sure they will succeed because they are lucky, the first had the chance to do the stabilizing and loan that his predecessors had been working in vain for years, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs signed the Litvinov Pact, to which I associated with enthusiasm, and now, after these events he visited Paris and London, where he was well received and where he could see to how much the actions of your country amounted to since the new government came to power .

But for me, the Litvinov Pact is your best course of action so far, because you built a bridge between the Soviet Union and yourself for the benefit not only of Romania, but for the whole of Europe. You shed light on a situation as obscure as possible, which represented the big unknown in Europe. I have faith that gradually Your relations with the Soviet Union will clarify and that after the resumption of trade between the two countries, you will then get to normal diplomatic relations. But of course, it will still need time because the distrust of the Soviet Union is still too acute in your country... And then there’s the Bessarabian question, which remains open.

I once told you about my amity policy and how I understood these friendships. I confess that I would be delighted if Romania started doing the same thing. To have a well-established foreign policy plan and to pursue it in the utmost independence without giving the appearance of await-

ing an order from its Great allies. Whatever their advice might be, their continuous priority will be their own interests, because all they see in the weaker ones, however fond they might be of them, is just instruments of their domination policy.

It is the same with the role that Beneš is trying to make you play in the Little Entente. Mr. Beneš is undeniably intelligent, but I think too intelligent for a country as small as his. He would have made an extraordinary foreign minister in Great Britain or France, for he has broad views and today he does not have enough range of action. I'm sure Mr. Mironescu has already sensed the trap set by his ally, probably in agreement with Yugoslavia and he will not allow himself to be manipulated. It is logical that, taking into account the importance of your country, if one country of the three should dominate and lead others, it would only be Romania. But again, Beneš's so skilful that he may confuse you if you do not take heed.

I am informed that your relations with the Bulgarians are about to be normal again and this makes me happy, because everyone needs you to have close friendly relations with them. The same with Hungary.³¹

As in other cases, the Turkish Minister, out of too much pathos deviates from the real problems and tries to seek a solution even where things would not change easily. Romania sought agreement with Bulgaria and Hungary and even with the Soviet Union, but the fact that the first two were followers of the revisionist principle situated the states in different camps.

PARTICULARITIES OF BALKAN DIPLOMACY

An issue that crossed the internal borders of Turkey was also establishing borders with Syria and the population exchange between Greece and Turkey. From Gheorghe Filality's report, extraordinary envoy and plenipotentiary minister at Constantinople, referring to the statements made by Tevfik Rüstü at the National Assembly, we quote:

"I mean to declare, Gentlemen, first of all, that by continuing to work towards the Directives that you approved several times, the government managed to resolve the last remaining contentious issues, thanks to the good will and mutual willingness of the governments concerned.

I want to particularly point out the favourable and amicable influence that the resolution of the difficulties with France will have on the future of Turkish- French relations.

It is also natural that solving trade difficulties to have a favourable influence on our relations with Greece.

I am also happy to announce that concerning our maritime delimitation with Italy - we are talking about some minor-importance islands over which the two countries had claims - we have reached a compromise that I signed the day before yesterday with the ambassador of Italy.

31 AMAE, stock 71/1920-1944. Turkey, vol. 1, f. 164-167

I'm equally happy to announce that, concerning our border demarcation with Persia, we agreed with the government concerned to establish a joint commission that will begin its activity shortly.

In this manner, the frontiers of new Turkey are permanently fixed and we do not have any significant disputes with any foreign governments.

Moderation and goodwill manifested from all parts allowed us to reach appreciable results and to resolve peacefully seemingly inextricable difficulties. We are therefore entitled to claim that the method used by Turkey, to seek the realization of its interests and rights in the international procedure of peaceful solutions, preferably to any other, is full of promise.

As a natural and favourable result to these agreements, I am here to announce you that our ambassador to Paris, immediately after returning to his post, shall commence negotiations for the conclusion of a treaty of friendship, conciliation and arbitration with France.

We trust that our understanding with France, as the treaty we shall sign with her will have a repercussion that could not be more favourable to the relations between the two countries and that you will be satisfied with the results.

The same with Greece, our minister in Athens will begin negotiations for a treaty of arbitration and friendship, for which the grounds will have already been set as soon as he takes possession of his new post.

On what grounds did we agree with France? Concerning the Turkish-Syrian border, the route adopted by mutual agreement takes into account the works of the mixed commission responsible for the demarcation, as well as the safety needs of Turkey in those regions.

*In the issue of the exchange, I agreed, as I have already informed you, to the suggestions and proposals of the neutral presidents of the mixed commission for the exchange.*³²

The Theodor Scortzescu report, chargé d'affaires in Ankara, is also suggestive,³³ as it is addressed to George G. Mironescu, the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, regarding his welcome by Tevfik Rüstü, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkey, and the discussion on the state of bilateral relations and the new headquarters of the Romanian mission in Ankara as well as some of the priorities of Turkish foreign policy. From the discussions with Ruştü Aras on the Soviet Union, the Turkish diplomat inferred³⁴:

"- Our neighbourhood with the Slavic giant adequately explains the

32 AMAE, stock 71/1920-1944. Turkey, vol. 1, f. 222-223.

33 *Theodor Scortzescu* (1893-1976), jurist, diplomat and Romanian writer. In since 1921; he was appointed on missions in Istanbul (1921-1922) and Athens (1922-1923); in the Central until 1928; Secretary I in Ankara, where after Gh. Filality left, is left chargé d'affaires a.i. (1929-1930). Married to a Borghese princess (Jul. 1930), shall continue missions, being appointed secretary I and then counsellor (1934) in Helsinki and Riga (1930-1936); permanent representative in the Secretariat of the Little Entente in Prague (1937-1938); Deputy Director for Consular Affairs (1938-1939); counsellor Bern (1939-1940) and Vatican (1940-1942). Consul General in Istanbul (1942-1944); minister plenipotentiary 2nd class (1943), on 15 Dec. 1944 is appointed chargé d'affaires a.i. at the Italian government (1944-1946). Recalled in the Central, refuses to return, being considered resigned from diplomacy (Apr. 1947); after that he immigrated to Argentina.

34 AMAE, stock 71/1920-1944. Turkey, vol. 58, f. 177-179

Turkish-Russian ties of friendship, friendship that is a huge saving in our national defence budget. Let's say – for a moment – that between us and the Soviet Union were no benevolent feelings: it's easy to understand why we would be forced to take expensive security measures for our border to the East! Unable to move our current army, which is ordered elsewhere, we would have to increase its number in order to be able to handle an eventual Soviet threat. This would mean a considerable load on our budget, or we are poor and this cannot be asked of us.

Some Powers, instead of making unnecessary efforts to intervene between us and the Soviet Union, could do something much better. Noticing the necessity for Turkish-Russian friendship, they could work in harmony with this situation, which cannot be modified, in securing peace in Eastern Europe. I regret that the Litvinov Pact has not been given its due importance³⁵; it should have been considered a starting point and I would have been happy to see other countries adhere to it. I spoke to this effect to Mr. Beneš. Czechoslovakia, like Turkey, has no dispute with the Soviets, by Czechoslovakia joining the Litvinov Pact, it would have given this Pact a broader sense, and the example of Czechoslovakia could have been followed by other states. We did not want the Litvinov Pact to have a narrow sense, nor to be limited only to states that have a dispute with the Soviet Union. Through new accessions, the Pact could have taken the magnitude of the Locarno Pact for ensuring peace in the East.

You have every incentive to cooperate to strengthen the Litvinov Pact that, by removing the threat of a Romanian-Russian war, enhances the security of Romanian borders, and thereby you gain in importance even in the eyes of your allies.

You must not think that our friendship with the Soviet Union would ever make us encourage Pan-Slavism. Pan-Slavism would be against the interests of Turkey. What we want is to maintain the current borders in the Balkans, but peace in the Balkans is closely linked to the situation of Eastern Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean. This is so true that, what may seem paradoxical is that if a great power would attack Greece, our interest would be to defend it; we prefer to have as neighbours the Greeks than a Great Power!

However, I must say that the Greek attitude towards us has upset us a lot. I'm not talking about Mr. Venizelos, whom I consider well-intentioned. But the Greek public opinion, stirred by the violent Athenian press campaign, is fervent with the idea of revenge. The vision of a conquered Constantinople always haunts them. I know there are some in Belgrade dreaming of dominance over "Tzarigrad". But if such an absurdity could not gain ground over there, in Greece it became a dangerous obsession. Greeks are so disruptive and incorrigible, that I wonder if in order to es-

³⁵ Reference to the *Litvinov Pact* signed on 9 Feb. 1929, in Moscow, by Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Romania and the USSR, the signatory countries committing not to use force to resolve disputes between them. It was considered an Oriental replica to the *Briand-Kellogg Pact* of 1928 and entered into force on 16 March, same year, ratified on 30 March 1929 by the Romanian Government. The text of *The Moscow Protocol* is in *Romanian-Soviet Relations. Documents*, vol. I 1917-1934, Bucharest, 1999, doc. no. 168.

cape their neighbourhood, we will not have to allow the Bulgarians to extend to the Aegean Sea!

Greeks complain that we cause them navigational difficulties in Turkish waters. But do they not cause serious drawbacks for our exporters by charging them maximal rates and refusing to enter a *modus vivendi* with us? For as long as they affect our exports to Greece, which is much superior to the Greek export in Turkey, we will make their commercial navigation suffer, it is natural [emphasis in text – n.n.]. Of course we will not impede free passage through the Straits. But I issued orders to make it as difficult as possible for Greek ships in Turkish ports. Moreover, as the Greek press urges for the murder of the Ghazi, Ismet Pasha and me, I must take all necessary measures to ensure that a Greek assassin does not creep into our territory.

I said I do not want Greek navigation to be impaired in the Straits. So I gave orders to this effect. We received the Notice of the Straits Commission. I shall always meet the requests of the Straits Commission, when they are fair and made in a friendly tone. The existence of this international body pleases us. In their absence, some countries would demand special favours, which would often put us in a delicate position. But we cannot accept requests made by the Commission on an imposing tone. If we were ever to concede, it would create an unfortunate precedent, for so began the Capitulations. You know that this is for us a sensitive issue...

I must say that in recent years we have often been offended by the attitude of Romania in the Straits Commission. I could not understand why Romania was so keen in upsetting us. I think that our friendship is not negligible for Romania. You know well that Europe did not take upon itself to guard the Straits, if there was such an effective guarantee against possible forcing of the Straits, we would be pleased. But for now, guarding the Straits is incumbent on us. Such being the case, do not doubt that in exceptional times... for example in a conflagration, we, the Turks will in fact be the masters of the Straits. I believe we showed enough proof that no one can take the Straits from us. Therefore, it is understandable that, in certain circumstances, we may, by mastering the Dardanelles, provide services to those with which we have friendly ties. Besides, what could oppose the existence of such links between Romania and Turkey? Without a doubt, nothing is opposed to encouraging the good relations between the two countries".³⁶

Ruştu Aras' ideas also emerge from his conversation with Gheorghe C. Ionescu, Consul General in Istanbul, on the opinions expressed by him on the works of the Straits Commission and his country's relations with Greece: "We must not forget that the Straits are part of Turkish territory and that she alone can ensure free navigation through them in any circumstances. At Lausanne the possibility of leaving this task to the Allied Powers was discussed, but nobody wanted to take responsibility. The Turkish government cannot allow the slightest abatement to Turkish sovereignty, for which the lives of hundreds of thousands of people have been sacri-

36 Corresponding to this passage there is a mention on the text: *This is the issue against which we shall protest* – Indecipherable

ficed. The Capitulations regime is one of the most painful episodes of the former Ottoman Empire and the public opinion today is terrified at the faintest gesture which would seem to tend to the revival of that regime”.

Emphasizing this point, he added that Turkey cares deeply about Romania’s friendship, which might be of great use in a potential emergency, precisely because the Straits are part of Turkish territory.

About Greece, he expressed dissatisfaction that the Greek government refuses to conclude a trade agreement with Turkey, or at least a *modus vivendi*, as was done with other countries, and Turkish trade suffers greatly because of this, given that Turkish export to Greece is much higher than the import of Greek products .

“The Greeks are threatening that they will address the League of Nations, this does not scare us, for I will answer to the League of Nations that I shall not stop the passage of Greek ships through the Straits, but I have every right to take defensive measures, ordering the thorough examination and supervision of all their ships, lest they carry assassins as written in the entire Athenian press, that come to Turkey in order to assassinate the President of the Republic, Ismet Pasha and me.

In such circumstances I believe that the Turkish government is in its own right to take action as it sees fit, without imposing on the freedom of navigation through the Straits, under the Treaty of Lausanne. I am convinced, His Excellency added, that Venizelos does not approve of the attitude of the Greek media, for he is a civilized man who would not urge the public to murder; as in the medieval times the press keeps writing about. I do not know what I’d pay the man who finds the medicine to heal the Greek people from the wrath that exalts them to want to reach Constantinople, like the Serbs want to command Tzarigrad because of their irritating and threatening policy, and if they don’t change, Turkey will be forced to work as much as possible to have no border with Greece (in Thrace) and to insist on Bulgaria having an opening to the sea at Dedeagaci port.

Increasing naval armaments both for Turkey and Greece, said Tevfik Rüstü, is an aberration, for we both shall throw tens of millions of liras down the drain to no avail! Put together, our fleet and the Greek fleet, represent a big zero in front of one of the fleets belonging to the Great Powers, which would come into play in a potential conflagration.

We’re ready to stop, to limit the fleet increase, if the Greeks agree, but each passing year forces us to other unnecessary expenses, and if last year the naval armament limit could have been fixed at 50 000 tons, this year we cannot do without 60 000, for what would we do with the boat “Yavuz” that has just been repaired? We cannot sink it to minimize the tonnage of our warships!

Greece does not want to understand this, and issued orders for new vessels, and thus other unnecessary expenses.”

As for the friendship between Turkey and the Soviet Union, based on the Treaty of friendship and non-aggression: *“This treaty results in Turkey, said the minister, making an annual saving of 30 million Turkish liras, money not spent on security for our relatively wide border with the Soviet Union. Both countries are secure in this area, and the troops they would*

have had to station there, are at their discretion. The treaty with the Soviet Union allows us full freedom of action in terms of our relations with other countries.

We want all states to resume relations with the Soviet Union, because we are convinced that in this way peace in Eastern Europe will be even more guaranteed, so I shall not keep secret from you the fact that I urged the Czech government to resume relations. We are in favour of the largest possible expansion of the Litvinov Pact and we want a Locarno of the European East. We do not want at any cost to change the balance in the East of Europe, established by peace treaties. The current situation is absolutely according to the will of Turkey, for only thus peace will hold, for which we shall fight with all our might.

Do not find it strange if I say that we would give our support even to Greece, if another state would seek to expand in the detriment of Greece, for we would rather be neighbours with a country of 7 million than with a larger and stronger country (alluding to Yugoslavia).

Through our policy, Turkey is part of Eastern Europe, and there are three elements that equipoise, through the interests of: Russians with Serbs; Turks, Hungarians, and Bulgarians and then Romanians with the Greeks and Czechs [Czecho - Slovaks]. We do not want at any cost a large Southern - Slavic state, because it would be dangerous for all.

Your country has inconveniences with Hungary over the issue of the optants, but this is not a difficult problem that cannot be solved. It's about money, they demand a lot and you cannot give them as much as they ask, but it will be over someday and I'm sure they will forget they lost Transylvania, where many of your countrymen are.

We too were in command of Hungary once and now we are good friends with the Hungarians, who have forgotten the past, left in the area of history”³⁷

After meeting with Rustu Aras, Theodor Scortzescu, chargé d'affaires ad interim in Ankara, he met with the Minister of Greece, Polychroniadis³⁸ and had a conversation about the politics of Turkey and Greece in the Balkans. Our diplomat writes: “As I recognized some ideas of Tevfik Rüstü in his words, it gave me the impression that the two governments foresee the future possibility of a common policy in the Balkans.

After signing the agreement on trade, we shall conclude a treaty of friendship with Turkey. Tevfik Rustu proposed that the treaty be like the Italic-Turkish treaty. Both we and the Turks are interested in maintaining peace in the Balkans. For this purpose, organizing a Balkan conference regarding naval arming would be welcome. Thus the maximum tonnage for the fleets of Balkan countries would be fixed, avoiding future pointless expenses. Next we would conclude a naval pact with a non-aggression clause. This pact would occur between Turkey, us, Bulgaria and Romania. I think the Soviets would join – why not? However Soviets cannot plan to have with you a naval warfare.

37 AMAE, stock 71/1920-1944. *Turkey*, vol. 58, f. 181–184

38 *Spyridon Polychroniadis*, Greek diplomat. Minister in Belgrade (1925–1929), Ankara (1929–1932) and Moscow (1933–1936).

Such a Balkanic understanding would be an additional “atout” to maintaining the status quo that Your Lordship wants as well”.³⁹

When asked by Theodor Scortzescu why Yugoslavia was not cited among the enumerated Balkan states, Polychroniadis answered:

“We would certainly welcome the adhesion of Yugoslavia. Disputes between Yugoslavia and Turkey related to the financial compensation of expropriated Muslims by the Serbs are about to settle. In my opinion, however, the only state that Turkey should fear is Yugoslavia. I was for many years in Belgrade and I know that the Serbian Irredentism dreams of the conquest of Greek Macedonia, Thessaloniki and Constantinople. I reckon it’s in our interest as well as yours, to prevent a Serb-Bulgarian border union, as we might find ourselves in front of a large and dangerous Slavic state”.⁴⁰

Cooperation alternatives for the Balkan states were advancing. The report of Theodor Scortzescu on his audience to Tevfik Rüstü in connection with the appointment of a new envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of Romania to Ankara and the Turkish government’s position on the issue of the Straits resulting from the increase in Soviet war fleet show the opening of new paths. Moreover, the Romanian-Turkish relations move towards closer cooperation:

“The Appointment of Mr. Carp as Minister of Romania in Angora [Ankara] did not fail to make me happy. I gave my approval. I must tell you that we were upset by the fact that Romania had suppressed the post of titular Minister to Turkey, putting us on the same level with other countries lacking political interest for you. In addition, Romania’s gesture was potential harmful to us, creating a precedent that could be emulated in other countries. In the Balkans, especially because of a special state of mind, issues like this have significant repercussions.

Pending the appointment of a Romanian Minister in Angora [Ankara], I approved for our Minister to Bucharest, Sabry – bey,⁴¹ limited leave. I could not, however, keep him inactive, without risking an affront a politician of Sabry – bey’s value, especially since the gesture of the government could be interpreted in the party as a desire to dissociate ourselves from a potential future minister. After an intervention from the Secretary-General of the People’s Party, we had to accept that Sabry – bey be re-elected deputy.

As I said before, between our two countries there is an evident sympathy. But whenever we made an attempt to approach the Romanian governments, it was fruitless... My many proposals were left without an answer”.⁴²

Tevfik Rüstü, when asked by Theodor Scortzescu if he remains optimistic on the success of the Turkish- Greek agreement, the Turkish diplomat replied: “I am confident that the agreement will be signed. It is also

39 AMAE, stock 71/1920-1944. Turkey, vol. 1, f. 239

40 Idem

41 Mehmet Sabry-bey Toprak (1877-1938), jurist, politician and Turkish diplomat. Minister of Agriculture (1925-1927). Envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary in Bucharest (1929-1930).

42 AMAE, stock 71/1920-1944. Turkey, vol. 58, f. 189

in your interest. Greece is your friend and by becoming a true friend for Turkey as well, will bring Turkey and Romania closer. Romanian government, if it wanted, could contribute through its advice to the Turkish- Greek rapprochement.

A naval agreement providing arms limitation will be concluded between us and Greece. So the friendly fleets of Turkey and Greece will represent an important naval force.”⁴³

The concerns of the Romanian diplomat persist regarding the USSR: “I told Tevfik Rüstü that even admitting the reunion of the two fleets; they will still be inferior in the Black Sea to the Soviet naval force, after bringing the new Soviet warships from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea”.⁴⁴

Optimistic by nature, Tevfik Rüstü said: “*So far I have received no communication from Moscow regarding the bringing of two more warships. I cannot believe that the USSR would take such a decision without prior notice to us; this Soviet gesture would be unwise. Is it in their interest to upset us? It’s hard to admit that a friendly state would try to face us with a fait accompli, which we would dislike. And if they did it, you can be sure I will not hide my displeasure with Moscow. The intemperate strengthening of the Russian fleet in the Black Sea would mean that the shores of the states with an opening to the sea are always exposed to the guns of Soviet naval vessels. We do not want to remain at the discretion of anyone, even a friend. Obviously, things would be different if Soviets would notify us in advance and explain their actions, showing us that there is no reason to be concerned. But until now they have not done so. Besides, I do not see how the Soviet Union could justify transferring their Baltic Fleet in the Black Sea. If the transfer had taken place during the London Conference, it could be interpreted as a protest against the establishment of a naval balance in the Mediterranean without Soviet participation. Now, when the conference ended, I cannot see any explanation. Moreover, Moscow’s silence proves me that the rumor of bringing two new warships is false”.*⁴⁵

The dialogue gets interesting when the Romanian official poses the following question: But what if the Soviets notify you only when ships pass through the Straits, I asked. They did so the first time. I do like to, believe, however that they will not repeat this gesture this time?

“*Please do not think I hide the truth from you, if the Soviets had notified me, I would plainly say so*”, came the answer, quite elusively.⁴⁶ The dialogue then went to another interesting topic for the two states, namely the Straits Commission:

“*Do not forget that the freedom of the Straits was not imposed on us, but we asked for it in Lausanne. The closure of the Straits did not suit us because we would be vulnerable to bothersome interventions and pressures from the Powers, especially in a possible conflagration in which we were neutral. The freedom of the Straits has the advantage, by reducing*

43 Ibidem, f. 190

44 Idem

45 Ibidem, f. 191

46 Idem

the Black Sea to an extension of the Mediterranean, to establish a balance between the naval forces in these two seas. Closing the Straits would put us in the present situation, at the will of the most powerful of the riparians. On one condition we would allow the closure of the Straits: if they got prior demilitarization of the Black Sea.”

- Your Excellency thinks that all Black Sea riparian countries would accept this condition?

- *“In any case, His Excellency replied, avoiding the question, the initiative for this proposal cannot come from us. Besides, in our current situation, we are satisfied. I do not know if such a proposal would have a chance of success, in any case it could not be made until after a long preparation that will ensure its success.*

I also say that, in fact, freedom of the Straits depends on our will, and not on the signed Convention. We have proved in the past that no one can take the Straits from us. Moreover, we could organize their closure without spending any money at any time, because the Soviets would take upon themselves these expenses. But we do not want to. It would be good, though, if the manner in which the Straits Commission operates never presses on our sovereignty. In fact, the hostile attitude of a new representative of any Power in the Straits Commission would not serve any purpose, because you can be sure that at any time I can manage to find other representatives willing to put him in the minority.

I am confident that my relation Mr Minister Carp will be just as amicable as with Mr Minister Filality, whose departure I regretted deeply”⁴⁷.

From the analysis of Ion P. Carp, envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary in Ankara, concerning the political views of Tevfik Rüstü, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, it appears that the Turkish diplomat can see three hazardous areas in Europe:

1. Danzig corridor area;
2. The borders of the Soviet Union , Poland and Romania;
3. The borders of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

To eliminate the possibility of armed conflict in those areas, it is necessary that, based on the principles of the Geneva Protocol, nonaggression pacts must be signed like the one known as Litvinov, but in addition to contain an obligation for the Contracting Parties to cooperate in collective sanctions in case of aggression by one of the contractors against another state, that had signed the regional pact.

The Regional Pact from the second area should be signed by the following countries: the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Turkey. This Pact would be the first step in peacekeeping operations in the area, and then proceed to the elimination of friction points, especially the issue of Bessarabia, the Turkish minister pointed out.

47 Ibidem, f. 192

Moreover Tevfik Rüstü was convinced that offering compensation might gain recognition from Moscow of the annexation of Bessarabia. The Turkish official was very keen on the fact that the role of mediator to be played not only by Turkey, but Turkey with Czechoslovakia.⁴⁸

Ионуț Сојоцару

БАЛКАН – ДИПЛОМАТСКИ ОДНОСИ НАКОН ДРУГОГ СВЕТСКОГ РАТА

Резиме: Односи између Турске и Румуније током 30-тих и 40-тих година 20. века, са посебним нагласком на њихову сарадњу на Балкану, представљају значајан део не само историје те две земље, већ и европских односа у целини. Политика које су водиле Турска и Румунија на Балкану тежила је одржавању стабилности граница, као и посредовању међу државама које нису водиле истоветну политику, као што је турско укључивање у регулисање односа између Румуније и Бугарске и Румуније и Совјетског Савеза.

У исто време, о овој теми се не може говорити без разматрања улоге великих сила на Балкану, које су све имале своје сопствене циљеве и интересе. На пример, Немачка је користила Бугарску као свој продор на Балкан. Држава која је је имала директне интересе на Балкану био је Совјетски Савез. Чињеница да је Турска, за разлику од Румуније, одржавала везе са Совјетским савезом, омогућило је Румунији да се преко Турске приближи свом источно суседу, с обзиром да је циљ румунских званичника био да се потпише споразум о ненападању са Кремлином. Француска и Велика Британија разматрале су исту могућност; један од начина да се допре до Москве био је преко Анкаре. Румунски развој у политичком, економском и војном смислу, био је у у великој мери преодређен политиком коју су водиле две суседне државе, Мађарска и Бугарска, које су биле чланице савеза, чија је политика била супростављена политици како Румуније, тако и Турске.

Кључне речи: Први светски рат, дипломатски односи, велике силе, Балкан, Румунија, Турска

48 AMAE, stock 71/1920-1944. Turkey, vol. 58, f. 243

