

I. Introduction

On the face of it, Turkey and Pakistan seem to have little in common today, except for the fact that both countries have a Muslim majority population. Turkey, despite concerns over a rising tide of Islamism, is still perceived of as a country that is constitutionally secular and who sees her future with the West and Europe. Pakistan, on the other hand, continues to fight Islamic fundamentalism at home, is still struggling to reach a consensus on exactly what sort of role religion should play within the state and is increasingly clubbed together in international circles with that quintessential struggling state, her northern neighbour, Afghanistan.

Yet, there exists between the two a strange, sentimental relationship. On the Pakistani side, Turkey commands enormous respect. Stephen Cohen notes that over the years Pakistan has continued to remain enamoured by the Turkish model. For most of the westernised Pakistani elite, and especially the military elite of the country, Turkey was a good approximation of what they themselves would like to become – it was westernised and modern, had one foot in Europe, close ties to the US and the military presided over a generally liberal and secular society.¹ Military dictators, from Ayub Khan (who served as the second President of Pakistan from 1958 to 1969) to Pervez Musharraf (who was in office from 1999 to 2008) have openly declared their admiration for both the secular founder of the Republic, Kemal Atatürk and the Turkish model.² For Turkey, Pakistan may not be a model, but she remains ‘dost ve kardeş Pakistan’ – a friend and brother country, as references in the press never fail to mention – on whom she can count on for international support and with whom she has few, if any, problems.

Historically, there had been important ties between the Ottoman Empire and the Muslims of the Indian Subcontinent. The propagation of pan-Islamism, which the Ottoman Sultan Abdülhamid II had decided to follow in a bid to arrest the decline of the Empire, had found particular success in India. So much so, that political activity in India in the immediate aftermath of the First World War was primarily concerned with trying to influence the British government to protect the suzerainty of the Ottoman Caliphate. However, the deathblow to the Ottoman Empire and the Caliphate by

¹ S P Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan*, Oxford University Press: Delhi, 2004, p. 275.

² Musharraf, who came to power in a coup d'état in 1999, called Atatürk ‘his most admired person’ and revelled in his status as Pakistan’s military moderniser, till fear of an Islamic backlash muted such talk. (*The Christian Science Monitor*, ‘A Turkish Path for Pakistan?’, 4 January 2002. Available at <http://www.csmonitor.com/2002/0124/p01s04-wosc.html>; P Musharraf, *In the Line of Fire: A Memoir*, Simon & Schuster: London, 2006). Similarly, Ayub Khan had marketed himself, and won great support, as a military man who had seized power for the purposes of modernisation, progress and stability and had similarly declared his admiration for Turkey’s founder (L Ziring. *The Ayub Khan Era: Politics in Pakistan, 1958 – 1969*. Syracuse University Press: Syracuse, 1971; N Ghani (ed.), *Field Marshall Ayub Khan: A Selection of Talks and Interviews, 1964 – 1967*. Oxford University Press: Karachi, 2010).

Mustafa Kemal in order to build a modern, republican state meant an end to the cause of the *Khilafat* Movement.³

Furthermore, in the aftermath of India's independence, partition and the formation of a new Islamic state of Pakistan, it was hard to see why Pakistan and Turkey would develop a relationship of any great intimacy. But develop relations they did. It is the logic of these ties built between these two countries during this period in particular (the roughly twenty year period from the end of the Second World War to the mid-1960s) that this thesis aims to examine.

The end of Empire in South Asia, which coincided with the beginning of the Cold War and a renewed struggle to ensure the security of the Middle East, led to geostrategic imperatives for new kinds of international alliances and formations and it was in this context that Turkey and Pakistan found themselves tied together once again. The Cold War era, which marked a period of high engagement between the two countries, is a particularly interesting time frame in which to examine this relationship. For one, it allows an examination of how both countries fit into the security architecture of the time. Turkey and Pakistan both occupied prime geographical locations with regard to the defence of the Middle East, a region that had only gained importance due to her oil resources, and it is really in this context that their alignment with the west during the Cold War needs to be seen. Beyond simple geopolitics, their alignment with the west and with each other was also a result of a shifting power dynamic between the great powers themselves. Instead of looking at the Suez Canal Base as the fulcrum of Middle Eastern defence, as the British did, American policy imagined Turkey and Pakistan as the two gateposts of the Middle East. Furthermore, while a Turkish-Pakistani alignment might have been a result of western incentives and imperatives, it is also important to note that these two countries had a past history of engagement, which gave them points of contact, and engagement that did not necessarily follow the western logic. Pan-Islamism may have been a dead ideology for the Turks, but the sentiment was deftly exploited by Pakistan to win domestic approval for her alignment with the west through the conduit of Turkey. Similarly, though the Turks initially turned their backs on the east and shunned any talk of a religious alliance, in their moment of isolation they did not shy away from signing on to an alliance that openly positioned itself as one of Muslim countries, in the hope of winning new friends.

The thesis explores these issues in three main sections. The first, Post-War Geopolitics, lays out a backdrop of the post World War II international environment and analyses how it affected the

³ The vision of the new Turkish nation Kemal had left little space for any pan-Islamic ideologies. An ill-judged move by the Agha Khan and the Indian *Khilafatist* Ameer Ali, who had sent off a letter to Kemal arguing for the necessity of maintaining the Caliphate, was used as a pretext by Kemal to abolish the institution.

Turkey and Pakistan. It describes the importance Turkey gained as a frontline state against the Soviets, the need for the west to secure Pakistan, especially in the wake of the withdrawal of the British and the loss of the Indian Army as a means to safeguard the Middle East, and specifically looks at why and how both countries became important partners for the west in the Middle East.

The second section, *Joining the Western Alliance*, examines the changes in the formulation of Middle Eastern defence greater US involvement in the region brought about. Turkey and Pakistan became the pillars on which western defence of the Middle East could be built. While the support of just these two countries was clearly not enough, they were to set an example for other countries in the region to ally with west. It also examines the curious role Turkey, as a nominally Muslim but also strongly pro-western country, played in Pakistan's alignment with the west. An alliance with Turkey became the condition for US military aid to Pakistan. Building on layers of colonial era engagement with the Ottoman Empire, the conduit of Turkey was used by Pakistan to tie together the issues of Cold War security and religious solidarity and win domestic support for her alignment with the west.

The third and final section traces the isolation alignment with the west brought and the re-evaluation in positions that was engendered by the US-Soviet rapprochement and what was perceived as western indifference towards both Turkey and Pakistan. For both countries it became increasingly clear that it had become necessary to build new alliances in the face of the new isolation they faced. Unsurprisingly, given their similar disenchantments and the uphill battle of winning over neutral countries over, it was to each other that they turned initially for support.

Research for this thesis is largely based on British governmental records – both those of the India Office Records held at the British Library and the Public Records Office at Kew. The records of the Foreign Office, Commonwealth Relations Office and Prime Minister's correspondences help provide a comprehensive overview of relations and negotiations. In addition to extensively documenting correspondence and negotiations with the Americans, they also provide rich source materials that shed light on both Turkey and Pakistan. The Anglo-Turkish relation was a particularly important one in light of Britain's strategic imperatives in the Middle East and is extensively documented. Unsurprisingly, the documentation of events in Pakistan is perhaps even more exhaustive given her position as a former colony and a continuing member of the Commonwealth. In addition to these official documents, the thesis also makes use of both Turkish and Pakistani newspaper resources to garner a sense of official positions and public perceptions in both countries. Beyond these, the thesis is supplemented by extensive use of secondary literature.

II. Post-War Geopolitics

“When everyone is dead the Great Game is finished. Not before.”

- Mahbub Ali in Rudyard Kipling's 'Kim'

The story of how Turkey and Pakistan became the lynchpins of western plans for anti-communist defence in the Middle East is primarily one of their respective geographical and strategic importance. It also one that can not be told without taking into account the jostling between the British, who were already in decline and desperate to try and maintain some semblance of power and control over the regions they once were completely in charge of, and the Americans, who were slowly but surely awakening from their isolationist slumber to become more involved in the world.

Turkey and Pakistan both held strategically important locations and roles. Since Ottoman times Turkey had figured in British offensives to thwart any possible Russian expansion towards the Middle East and Central Asia – a path that would naturally lead to the prized British possession, India.⁴ Continued aggressive Russian posturing against Turkey in the early months and years of the Cold War only helped underline her continued importance. The chaotic state of the Middle East, a region which had become all the more important now in its own right due to the discovery of oil, in the aftermath of the Second World War also made her a much-needed ally in a region faced with the kind of turmoil that might make communist insurgency much easier. The newly created state of Pakistan occupied the areas that once formed the important and heavily protected north-western boundaries of British India. The end of the Empire in India left a massive void, most glaringly in the loss of the British Indian army, which had not only protected South Asia but also been used with extreme efficiency to maintain and protect British interests in the Middle East and the Mediterranean. The role the British foresaw for both countries, though, was a very different from the roles they came to play in the course of the Cold War. However, during the first years of the Cold War, the United States was still reluctant to get involved in either the Middle East or South Asia and was happy to let Great Britain act as its proxy in these regions. Britain, of course, had her own agenda, but it was quickly becoming clear that she hardly had the financial resources to even try and maintain any sense of control or importance in these regions without American help.

The Korean War, which began in June 1950, marked a turning point. The events in Korea demonstrated that the communist threat was not restricted to merely the European theatre, but was

⁴ E Ingram, 'Approaches to the Great Game in Asia', *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 18, no. 4, Oct 1982.

indeed a global threat that needed a global response. In early 1951, the Truman government presented a budget that was more than twice the size of the previous year's to help protect the United State's national security interests. Nearly 69 per cent of the total proposed budget, close to US\$ 50 billion, was earmarked for foreign military aid and defence purposes.⁵ It marked the end of the American tendency towards isolationism. As the US became more deeply involved in formulating its own foreign policy in South Asia and the Middle East, there was a growing sense that 'British hegemony was an anachronism dependent upon the U.S.', and that the US needed to chart its own path.⁶ This chapter aims to lay out a detailed backdrop of how the post World War II international environment affected the Turkey and Pakistan, how they fit into the western alliance and specifically why and how they became important partners for the west in the Middle East.

1. Turkey

The Post-War Alliance with the West

The Second World War was a crucial test for the still relatively new Turkish Republic. The First World War had led to the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. The 1920 Treaty of Sèvres between the entente powers and the Ottoman Empire reduced any future Turkish state to a mere rump in the areas of Istanbul and central and northern Anatolia.⁷ Though the Treaty of Sèvres was never ratified by the Ottoman government or any Turkish parliament, it was an important indication of the future of the Ottoman lands. As William Hale notes several states involved had already moved to create *fait accomplis* for some time before. By the spring of 1919 the Italians landed troops in Antalya, the French occupied Cilicia, British, French and Italian troops were stationed in the straits and the Greeks landed in Izmir on 15 May 1919.⁸ The ensuing national struggle for Anatolia (*Milli Mücadele*) resulted in a victory of the Anatolia based nationalist forces led by Mustafa Kemal (later Atatürk) and eventually led to the abrogation of the Treaty of Sèvres and the international recognition of the Republic of Turkey as the successor state of the Ottoman Empire with the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne on 24 July 1923.

⁵ W Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1774 – 2000*, Frank Cass: London, 2000, p. 117.

⁶ A Jalal, 'Towards the Baghdad Pact: South Asia and Middle East Defence in the Cold War 1947 – 1955', *The International History Review*, vol. 11, no. 3, Aug 1989, pp. 418.

⁷ Hale, pp. 45 – 46. Control over the straits (the Bosphorus and Dardanelles) was placed under an international commission. The areas of south-west Turkey were to be placed under Greece administration. In eastern Anatolia, an independent state of Armenia was to be established. A committee composed of British, French and Italian delegates would work out a scheme for 'local autonomy' of the Kurds, possibly leading to full independence. Furthermore, 'special interests' of Italy in southern Anatolia and France in the area of Cilicia were recognised and the Arab provinces were severed wholesale from the Empire

⁸ *ibid.*, p. 46.

Under Atatürk's leadership the priorities for Turkey were more domestic than international. It was imperative that Turkey march on the path towards westernisation, modernisation and aim to reach the level of contemporary civilisation (*muasır medeniyet*). Foreign policy during this period, therefore, focussed on the issues of peace, sovereignty and national development instead of territorial expansion or irredentism. Under the one-party system, after Atatürk's death in 1938, his right hand man and deputy İsmet İnönü took over the Presidency of the country and the Republican Peoples Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* (CHP)). İnönü's commitment to Atatürk's principles was so complete that he managed to keep Turkey out of the Second World War, with the country remaining a *de facto* neutral power throughout the war.⁹ This neutrality was a natural outcome of Turkey's anxiety to avoid the possibility of a replication of the experience of ending up on the losing side of another great war. Saving the country from death and destruction and protecting the security of the country that had been hard won in 1923 was an overriding concern.¹⁰

The post-war environment, with the beginning of a bipolar international system, was a dramatically different scene than the Turks were used to. Before 1914, the Ottoman government had been able to play one European power off another in fluid, if usually temporary patterns of alliances and even since the formation of the Republic, despite the domestic program of westernisation, the country was reluctant to rely on any one major power and based its foreign policy on reconciliation with both the big powers and also the regional powers.¹¹ It was Turkey's proximity to the Soviet Union and the USSR's decision soon after the war to renounce her 1925 Treaty of Friendship with Turkey and push for a revision of the 1936 Montreaux Convention, which gave Turkey control of the Bosphorus Straits and the Dardanelles, that pushed the Turks into the embrace of the west soon after the beginning of the Cold War.¹²

⁹ M Aydın, 'Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy: Changing Patterns and Conjectures during the Cold War', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 36, No.1, January 2000, p. 105.

¹⁰ Though Turkey signed an alliance with Britain and France in 1939, the terms of the tripartite agreement allowed Turkey the leeway to enter the war only if it extended into the Mediterranean and exempted her if the hostilities involved conflict with the Soviet Union. İnönü played an extremely important role here, keeping tight control over decision making, acting with caution, trying to gain time, avoiding bold initiatives and adapting the country's policies to the circumstances. Furthermore, Turkey's military unpreparedness was also exploited as a legitimate reason to avoid joining the war. Turkey finally declared war against Japan and Germany on 23 Feb. 1945, after Yalta summit, which announced that only states that were in war with Germany and Japan by 1 March 1945, would join the United Nations. This declaration of war was only a token attempt directed to join the United Nations as a founding member. (See Hale, pp. 79 – 105 and J C Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East*, Princeton University Press, 1956, pp. 226 – 228.)

¹¹ Aydın, p. 106.

¹² The Soviets had denounced as early as 1917 the secret treaties the Czar and his western allies had concluded regarding the annexation of Istanbul. Later on, close relations established by Atatürk and Lenin at a time when both countries were replacing the old monarchical systems with newer regimes resulted in the Treaty of Friendship (1921), calling for mutual solidarity against expansionism. This was followed by the Treaty of Non-aggression and Neutrality in 1925, which was again reaffirmed in 1928. This period of peace was important for the historical foes – it allowed Turkey to secure her eastern borders and gained recognition for the Ankara based National Assembly and allowed the Soviets to secure their southern borders and expand their rule in the Caucasus and Central Asia. (K H Karpat, *Turkey's*

Turkish fears of aggressive Russian state had a precedent in history. The so-called “Lenin-Atatürk era of friendship” was, if anything, an anomaly in the history of relations of the two countries. The Turks and the Russians had fought thirteen wars ever since the Russians began challenging the Ottoman Empire with the aim of expanding to the south and southwest with the ultimate aim of controlling the straits.¹³ It was perhaps not surprising then, that after a brief period of friendship, by 1939 Turkish-Soviet relations started deteriorating again. The Soviets were now reassured about the survival of their regime, the extent of their military strength and returned to old tactics of using Turkey as a pawn in international dealings.¹⁴

Russian aggression truly came to the fore on 7th June 1945 when the Turkish ambassador in Moscow was told that the Soviet Union wanted a new straits treaty negotiated solely between the two countries and adjustments to the existing Turkish-Russian border.¹⁵ The demand for Soviet bases in the straits, in particular, led to a genuine fear on the Turkish side that the Soviets wanted to make Turkey a satellite state in the model of the eastern European countries, in addition to gaining control of the straits.¹⁶ The issue of the straits, though raised at the first post-war meeting at the Potsdam Conference (17th July - 2nd August 1945), did not reach any resolution. For the British, the Soviets were a direct threat to their position in the Middle East and the Turks, therefore, natural allies. For the United States, however, ensuring Turkish security was still too distant a commitment, especially at a period when the prospect of meaningful cooperation with the Soviets was not yet a discarded option.¹⁷ Perhaps even more importantly, Turkish neutrality during the war had left her in an area of ambiguity, especially regarding the assistance owed to her and she was part of a region that was still regarded primarily as a British responsibility.

On 7th August 1946, the Soviets made a formal announcement encapsulating the demands they had made vis-a-vis Turkey at Potsdam.¹⁸ By this time, however, the international political sphere was one that was much more polarised than it had been just a year previously and the gravity of the

Foreign Policy in Transition 1950 – 1974, E.J.Brill: Leiden, 1975, pp 80 – 81.)

¹³G C McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO Middle East Connection: How the Truman Doctrine and Turkey's NATO Entry Contained the Soviets*, Macmillan Press: New York, 1990, p. 10.

¹⁴Karpat, *Turkey's Foreign Policy*, p. 82.

¹⁵The Soviets wanted a new straits treaty that allowed for free passage of Soviet warships through the straits and their closure to non-Black Sea states, the establishment of Soviet bases at the straits and the return to Soviet Union of the provinces of Kars and Ardahan which had been returned to Turkey by the 1920 Treaty of Alexandropol, which was later confirmed by the 1921 Treaty of Friendship (Hale, p. 112; Aydin, p. 107).

¹⁶Hale, p. 112.

¹⁷Aydin, p. 108.

¹⁸According to McGhee (*op. cit.*, p. 17), the Soviet war of nerves against Turkey included directing ground forces towards Turkish territory and holding naval manoeuvres just 45 miles from the Turkish coast, leading to Turkey mobilising its own ground forces.

situation was enough to garner British and American support for the Turkish stance.

For the Turks, Russia had reoccupied its place as the principal enemy of the state and it had become quite clear to the İnönü government that it was imperative that not only were Soviet demands not entertained by the west, but perhaps even more importantly, that Turkey secure western allies and military and financial guarantees that would enable her to maintain the mobilisation of armed forces and ensure protection against Soviet aggression.¹⁹ The continued Soviet manoeuvres against her allowed Turkey to continually draw attention to the potential threat she was under, as well as use her position as the gateway to the Middle East to garner western support.²⁰ For the British, Turkey had always been important due to her ability to buffer the British position in the Middle East. A 1946 US Joint Chiefs of Staff report made the US reach the same conclusion. Soviet actions in the Middle East were seen as 'a calculated Soviet policy of expanding Soviet de facto geographical political control' and Turkey as 'the most important factor in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East'.²¹

By the early stages of 1947 both British and American leaders were steadfast in their view that the defence of Turkey and Greece were essential for the protection of their interests in eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. The British were already aware that they were too weak to carry the economic burden of economically aiding all their allies and western European countries were put on the priority list.²² The Turkish search for security, however, was at an end thanks to the declaration of the 'Truman Doctrine' on 12th March 1947. The Doctrine, which was articulated in the form of a speech by the President to both houses of Congress, marked a turning point in American foreign policy with the declaration that wherever direct or indirect aggression threatened peace, US security was at risk. Truman further argued that the best way to bolster regimes that supported freedom and democracy through economic and financial aid that would bolster economic and political stability. Towards this end, the \$400 million in aid demanded for Greece and Turkey was

¹⁹Hale, p. 113

²⁰Aydin, p. 108; The refusal of Soviet troops stationed in Iran to withdraw in accordance with their march 2nd 1946 deadline led to increased fears on the part of Britain and the United States as to potential designs in the Middle East and only served to make Turkey even more important in its need to stand up to the Soviets (see E Athanassopoulou, *Turkey: Anglo-American security interests, 1945-1952: the first enlargement of NATO*, Frank Cass: London, 1999, p. 68)

²¹McGhee, p. 17; Ever since the Yalta Conference (4 – 11 February 1945) the British had firmly supported Turkey, especially under the Conservative Churchill government. Under the new Attlee Labour government, however, there was a shift towards an anti-imperialist stance and talk of a complete withdrawal from the Middle East. It was only in late 1946 that a (now weaker) Britain and (an internationally committed) United States reached a state of collaboration on defending Turkey from the Soviets. The signs of any compromise with the Soviet State had disappeared and both were determined to protect the Middle East from any possible Communist threat (M. Bilgin. *Britain and Turkey in the Middle East: Politics and Influence in the Early Cold War Era*. Taurus: London, 2008. p. 65)

²²Bilgin, p. 67

passed by Congress.²³ The Truman Doctrine was a watershed in Turkey's acceptance by the west as an important junior partner in its fight against communism. American aid was imperative for the Turkish government to build up its military strength. Furthermore, the inclusion of Turkey in the Truman Doctrine, left little ambiguity about the fact that the United States was now willing to make actual economic commitments, as opposed to simply making symbolic statements, for the defence of Turkey.²⁴

Securing Turkey's Co-operation in the Middle East

Turkey's position as the gateway to the Middle East was perhaps one of the most important, if not the decisive factor, in her receiving western aid and support. For the British, the Middle East retained its importance due to their control over the Suez Canal. However, the end of the Second World War not only posed a serious challenge to British influence, but also led to a sense of uncertainty and fragility about the region. While Iraq and Egypt had achieved independence from the British in the 1920s, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria followed after the end of the War. These new Middle Eastern countries were still coming to terms with a number of economic, political and social reforms when the creation of Israel in 1948 not only changed the landscape of the region, but also left the region dealing with the 800,000 Palestinians who had become refugees. It also added to the difficulty of the western powers to try and maintain good relations with the Israelis and Arabs at the same time. The effect of these socio-political changes and the fragile nature of the states in the region, only added to western worries that the Middle East could prove to be an easy target for Soviet propaganda and influence.²⁵ The collapse on Anglo-Egyptian discussions in late 1946 on the withdrawal of British troops and unity with the Sudan only served to put any kind of multilateral defence agreement, something Britain was keen on, on the back burner and increased Turkey's importance in the region²⁶. In return for British support, it was hoped that Turkey would help play a

²³ McGhee, pp. 23 – 25. The internal political situation being more precarious in Greece, which was in the throes of civil war, \$300 million of the allocated aid budget were made available to her. Apart from just military aid what the Truman Doctrine also helped Turkey in avoiding being encircled by Soviet areas on all sides, by aiding the Greek government against Communist insurgents.

²⁴ Hale, p. 115

²⁵ McGhee, pp. 51 – 52; Bilgin (pp. 76 – 77) notes that the role of Britain in the Middle East was itself subject to internal debate, especially once Churchill's Conservative government was replaced by the Attlee Labour government. Attlee himself not only had an anti-imperialist stance but was also worried about the effects of defending the region on the British economy. The Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, however was of the view that the Middle East was important in both offensive and defensive terms against the Soviet Union and Britain's presence in the region allowed her to maintain her position, influence and prestige. By early 1947 it was Bevin who had won the argument.

²⁶ The same year the Egyptians had renewed their demand for the total evacuation of British troops from the Suez Canal base, which was considered completely unacceptable by Britain and her allies. For the British, one way around this problem was to try and establish an Allied Middle East Command and invite Egypt to join as a partner in an Allied Military Organisation (B K Yesilbursa, 'Turkey's Participation in the Middle East Command and its Admission to NATO, 1950 – 52', *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 35, no. 4, Oct. 1999, p. 71.) While an unenthusiastic American response caused the plan to be shelved, British interests in the Middle East resulted in the idea of a Middle East

mediating role to persuade the Arab countries of the importance of a British presence in the region.²⁷

The Turkish imperative in bolstering British influence in the region was an important one. The United States had largely adopted a slightly distant approach to Middle Eastern defence, leaving the British in charge of the heavy lifting. As George McGhee, the Assistant Secretary for State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs in the United States Department of States between 1949 and 1951, noted, though the US Joint Chiefs of Staff had concluded that Middle East and its security were of vital interest to the US, till as late as the end of 1949, US military strategy was not concerned with military preparedness in countries not contiguous to the Soviet bloc. Furthermore, there was seen to be no need for military pacts with countries in the Middle East.²⁸

By the following year, however, this policy was slowly but surely changing. For the Americans it was becoming increasingly clear that the power of the British in parts of the Middle East were fast declining, thus putting the onus of bolstering the British presence on the Americans. The outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950 only served to add a sense of urgency to the question of Middle Eastern defence and led policy-makers in Washington to decide in favour of a more proactive role to contain the Soviet Union along its southern front.²⁹ There was also a shift in the approach the two powers had to the region, which became clear during a series of UK-US defence talks held in July 1950. Britain, for whom maintaining her influence in the region was paramount, supported an 'Inner Defence' strategy focussing on the Suez. The Americans on the other hand, were partial towards a strategy of bolstering Turkey, Iran, Iraq and even Pakistan in an 'Outer Defence' strategy – a concept which would be reincarnated during the Eisenhower Presidency as the 'Northern Tier'. 'Inner Defence', they argued was akin to simply protecting Egypt.³⁰

At the same time, Turkey made the strategic decision to send a brigade of 4,500 Turkish forces to Korea so as to allow it to renew, with enthusiasm, its demand to be accepted into the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).³¹ The signing of the North Atlantic Pact in 1949, with the exclusion of Turkey but inclusion of Italy and the Algerian territories of France, had caused deep unease in Turkey and a sense of worry that Turkey, who had borne the financial and military burden of

defence organisation being reincarnated in different forms till the eventual establishment of the Baghdad Pact in 1955.

²⁷ Bilgin, p. 77

²⁸ McGhee, pp 52 - 53

²⁹ Yesilbursa, p. 73

³⁰ McGhee, p. 54

³¹ Bilgin, pp. 139 – 140. The Turkish brigade was the third largest after the US and Great Britain.

standing up to the Soviets, was being left out in the cold.³² However, despite the recent increase in Turkey's profile, the road to NATO membership was filled with stumbling blocks. The British, in particular, were completely unenthusiastic about the prospect of Turkey as a NATO member. The Foreign Office not only considered the Atlantic Treaty a military alliance, but also a community of common European traditions. Furthermore, the expansion of the Pact to Turkey would introduce further military complications into the organisation, not to mention the fact that most of the existing members had no wish to increase their obligation to go to war, especially in defence of a country not really part of the European mainstream, especially one that had pointedly tried to stay neutral during the Second World War. Also considered was the effect Turkish membership would have on Greece. Greece was not pushing for membership, but it would certainly do so if it seemed likely that Turkey would be admitted. The bottom-line however was that Britain continued to see Turkey in a Middle Eastern strategic context. The British were keen on increased co-operation with the US in the Middle East through Turkey as a conduit, but felt that this could just as easily be achieved through a unilateral American guarantee to Turkey. The Americans were wary over stretching and preferred any commitment to be undertaken under the framework of either the Charter of United Nations or the Atlantic Pact.³³ The deadlock meant that Turkey (and Greece) were rejected admission into NATO, but given a runners-up prize of 'associate members' with the hope of keeping them satisfied and involved in defence planning in the Mediterranean.

Despite America's initial tepid response to Turkey's NATO admission, circumstances quickly changed enough for her to press for full admission of Greece and Turkey in NATO within the year. Even since before the Korean War, Turkey was seen as a sea of stability in the midst of the Arab countries. Turkey in 1950 had also seen the free and fair general election in which the long standing rule of the CHP had ended and power had been transferred into the hands of the Democrat Party (DP), thus also making her a bastion of democracy in the region. Perhaps the most decisive role, however, was played by Dwight Eisenhower, then Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, who played a major role in stressing Turkey's centrality for European defence, by emphasising the need to be able to attack the Soviets from its southern flank.³⁴ Simultaneously, George McGhee was also

³²McGhee, p. 59. Turkey had been informed that the Pact was strictly geographical in nature and aimed at the North Atlantic regions, with a separate pact for Mediterranean countries a future possibility. The inclusion of Mediterranean areas in the pact was, thus, a source of worry, if not a slight, for Turkey.

³³For more details on roadblocks to Turkey's NATO admission see Athanassopoulou, pp. 174 – 182, Bilgin, pp. 143 – 153 and Yesilbursa, pp. 75 – 77.

³⁴Hale, p. 118, notes that Eisenhower saw Europe in the shape of bottleneck. The Soviet Union was the wide part, central Europe the neck and Spain the end. He argued that if the Soviet Union tried to move into the central bottleneck, the western powers should attempt to hold it there while also attacking the wide areas of the bottle hard from both sides using both air and sea power. A Russian attack via Turkey had always been the reason the Turks had put forward for wanting to join NATO, even when faced with the argument that they were already receiving material and military support from the west via the Truman doctrine (Conversation between Secretary of State and the Turkish

urging the US State Department to rethink its strategy towards Greece and Turkey, following meetings with US Chiefs of Mission in Istanbul and the Turkish President Celal Bayar in early 1951.³⁵ By the summer of the same year both Dean Acheson, the Secretary of State, and President Truman were won over by these arguments and decided to push for Turkish engagement to NATO. The only party that still needed to be won over were the British.³⁶

Though disheartened by the NATO rejection, the Turkish government made it clear that it would regroup and press for membership again within a few months.³⁷ The importance Turkey placed on NATO membership came not only from her thinking of herself as European, but also due to the new dynamics in domestic politics. The liberal economic policies the DP was advocating, not to mention the party's own need for the survival of democratic conditions in the country after nearly thirty years of one-party rule, made NATO membership more important than before.³⁸ The Turks also argued that they were the only country on the Russian border to have openly stated their intention to resist any Soviet aggression, thus making the country more vulnerable than any other. To protect the country the military spending was no less than 75 per cent of the total budget – an amount that could hardly be sustained any longer of her own accord.³⁹ Furthermore, British defence plans for the Middle East drawn up in early 1951 only included the southern parts of Turkey and left large areas of the country undefended thus leaving Turkey, in the absence of NATO membership, less inclined to collaborate on the defence of the entire Middle East.⁴⁰ The Turks themselves lost no time in informing London that Turkey's admission to NATO was seen as a foregone conclusion in the Middle East and any further rejections would only harm Turkey's standing and ability to influence other countries in the region.⁴¹

With American support for Turkey's NATO membership, there was a genuine worry in London that Turkey might be entirely absorbed into the European sphere of defence and leave Britain in a position where she had neither Turkish support, nor American involvement through Turkey – a necessity, given her diminished resources – in the Middle East. Realising that it was no longer feasible to hold out against Turkey's NATO membership, the Foreign Office decided to use support

Ambassador, 22nd August 1950. FO 371/87949).

³⁵ McGhee, pp. 66–71

³⁶ A new American policy, NSC 109, strongly recommending the inclusion of Turkey in NATO was approved by Truman in 1951. The British, however, continued to see Turkey in the context of Middle East defence, an issue which had only gathered steam by 1951 due to increasing nationalism in Egypt and disputes between Iran and Britain over the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company.

³⁷ Dispatch from Ankara to Foreign Office, 26th September 1950. FO 371/87951

³⁸ Aydin, p. 112

³⁹ FO 371/87948

⁴⁰ Bilgin, pp. 154–156

⁴¹ Istanbul Telegram to Foreign Office, 28th August 1950. FO 371/87949.

for Greco-Turkish NATO membership as a bargaining chip to gain Turkish and American involvement in the Middle Eastern sphere and made any support for Turkish membership conditional to Turkey's participation in plans for Middle Eastern defence. The initial Turkish reaction was to reject any conditions on her NATO admission. Within the space of a mere two weeks however that the Turkish Foreign Minister, Mehmet Fuat Köprülü, announced the Turkish government's acceptance of the proposal stating, "We are convinced that the defence of the Middle East is vital for the defence of Europe for strategic and economic reasons". Turkey, he said, was willing to work with the concerned parties to undertake the necessary measures towards this end ⁴².

2. Pakistan

The Strategic Location of the New State

That Pakistan would come to play an increasingly important strategic role during the Cold War in western strategy for the defence of the Middle East is not surprising. Great Britain's entanglement in the Middle East during the course of the 19th century was a direct result of her quest for security and a solution to the problem of how to defend India. The original Great Game ostensibly began when Russian expansion in the Middle East led to a fear in the British administration that whenever Britain would oppose Russia in Europe, she might in turn threaten to invade India.⁴³ The obsession with protecting India's north-western borders played an important role in imperial strategic thinking even more than a century later and had a direct impacted British policy in the Middle East. Furthermore, the role of the Indian army, not only in defending India, but also successfully holding British lines of defence in the Middle East and the Mediterranean during both of the great wars, had been of instrumental importance to the British. After the Second World War and in the run up to Indian independence, questions about the future of the Indian army and how to protect the Middle Eastern oilfields, which were clearly of crucial importance to the western economies, had occupied centre stage.⁴⁴

In particular, with the partition of India itself quickly becoming writing on the wall, British military men and civil servants were left to ponder over whether the Indian army itself would be divided. However, even with the probability of partition, the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army,

⁴²Bilgin, pp. 158 – 159.

⁴³For more see E Ingram. *In Defence of British India: Great Britain in the Middle East, 1775 – 1842*, Frank Cass: London, 1984.

⁴⁴Jalal. 'Towards the Baghdad Pact', pp 401 – 412.

Claude Auchinleck, struggled to come to terms with the idea of a partitioned Indian army.⁴⁵ Till as late as 1946 he hoped that there would remain in place, at least for a period, some kind of supra-national organisation that would provide adequate defence capabilities while the army's assets, personnel and responsibilities were divided between the two emerging nations. Beyond this, there was also a notion that some sort of joint defence treaty be put in place that would allow for some resources to be pooled and remain available for use by both sides.⁴⁶ Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the leader of the Muslim League, while amenable to some sort of joint defence agreement, was insistent that Pakistan have her own army.⁴⁷ The formal announcement on 3rd June 1947 that the date for British handover to the new states had been brought forward to the 14th of August of the same year served as a final blow for any optimistic visions about the fate of the army and left only seventy-two days for the division along communal lines of an army that had so far considered itself a unified body.

For military strategists, the prospect of leaving India's most important land frontiers in the care of a state whose future was not even certain was extremely troubling. An April 1946 report entitled 'Defence Implications of a partition of INDIA into PAKISTAN and HINDUSTAN' prepared by the Chief of General Staff in India had already pinpointed Russian aggression as the biggest threat to a nascent Pakistani state. It was estimated that Pakistan, with its two wings, would need essentially the same army and air force required by an undivided India to defend itself. The new state, without eastern Punjab and western Bengal, would hardly have the commercial and economic capabilities, no to mention trained personnel, to do so. If it were to face Russian aggression through Afghanistan or Iran, “no defence would be possible unless Pakistan could count on the active assistance of powerful allies”, and even then Pakistan's strategic position in comparison with Russia with her bases in Iran and Afghanistan would be bad. It would be necessary, in addition to having strong allies, for “Hindustan to be either an active ally or benevolently neutral” not just to offset the serious strategic weakness in the position of Pakistan, but also to protect her own north-western

⁴⁵ By late 1946 Indian regular officer – who till that point had not received promotions beyond the rank of brigadier – were given accelerated promotions over British officers of the Indian army in recognition of the fact that the British officers would have to leave with independence. At the same time, any talk of partitioning the Indian army was still kept secret because of the possible effect it might have on Muslim officers and sepoy. (See T A Heathercote, *The Military in British India: The Development of British Land Forces in South Asia, 1600 – 1947*, Manchester University Press: Manchester, 1995, pp. 252 – 253). In his memoirs, Lt. Gen. Sir Francis Tuker, then the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Indian army's Eastern Command, mentions that even though partition had become an eventuality, there was confusion till as late as the summer of 1947 as to what shape the British Indian army would survive in. Even amongst the local population, it was almost taken for granted that old Indian army would remain (F Tuker, *While Memory Serves*, Cassell: London, 1950).

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ A Jalal, 'India's Partition and the defence of Pakistan: An historical perspective', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. 15, no. 3, p. 292.

front.⁴⁸

Thus, till the eve of their departure from India, British thinking seemed to underline how some sort of unified military command in South Asia could buttress Great Britain strategic and economic interests in the Middle East against Soviet aggression. The unavoidability of partition shifted the primary concern to keep both the states within the Commonwealth, so as to gain their support in its defence⁴⁹. While the break out of hostilities between India and Pakistan in October 1947 over the princely state of Kashmir put an end to any speculation over joint defence, it was still hoped that both the states could be weaned to the western security nexus.⁵⁰

It had already become clear long before independence that India, under the leadership of the proud nationalist Jawaharlal Nehru, would chart her own path in international affairs. Nonalignment, or as Nehru put it, “keeping away from the power politics of groups aligned against one another”, was to be the guiding light of independent India's foreign policy. Nehru was determined that India should not end up as “pawn” and considered independence and nonalignment in foreign policy two sides of the same coin.⁵¹ This neutralism on India's part only served to make Pakistan strategically more important for western strategic purposes. The role Pakistan could take on in the Middle East, and needless to say due to the new state's geographical location this role was much more important than any that India could have played, was identified by a draft report 'Contribution of Pakistan to Commonwealth Defence' by the joint planning staff in April 1949. Not only was Pakistan best suited in terms of locational to help in the defence or re-capture of the Middle East oil areas, it could also provide air fields for strategic bomber offensives. It was also noted that while land communication between the Middle East Oil areas and Egypt were very meagre the same was not true of the sea communications to India, thus further adding to Pakistan's strategic importance in defending the Middle East.⁵² Moreover, Great Britain still had a large amount of direct control over the army in Pakistan. New Delhi had already appointed an Indian commander-in-chief in early 1947, but the Pakistani army was to remain under a British commander-in-chief until January 1951.⁵³

⁴⁸IOR L/WS/1/1029

⁴⁹Jalal, 'Towards the Baghdad Pact', p. 413

⁵⁰Even though the Kashmir conflict put a dent in the idea of joint defence, the British were quick to spot an opportunity even within a setback. Jalal (ibid.) cites War Office correspondence that make the point that since both countries were dependant on Britain for their supply of military material and equipment as well as technical know how, it was considered possible to persuade them to maintain larger peacetime defence organisations than they would need for their own purposes. This would not only help defend western interests in the Middle East, but also help cut down on the money, well over £1 billion, she owed the undivided government of India.

⁵¹S. Gopal (eds), *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*, Oxford University Press: Delhi, p. 492

⁵²IOR L/WS/1/12364

⁵³Jalal, 'Towards the Baghdad Pact', p. 416

While the political bargaining stakes might then seem to have been neatly on the Pakistani side, the biggest drawback for her was that she had India for a neighbour. New Delhi was not only the biggest power in South Asia, but also a major prop in the Commonwealth and London was wary of doing anything to spoil her relations with India. In the same report cited above, the chiefs of staff also bluntly noted for all the benefits of location Pakistan could offer, until the cessation of hostilities with India, it would be unreasonable to expect her to be able to provide brigades for defence in any other part of the world.⁵⁴ Britain had no option but to follow a policy on Kashmir that did as little as possible to antagonise India, leaving Pakistan in a strange position of being aware of its use to the west but being unable to capitalise on it.

Bringing South Asia into the Cold War and the Middle East

Given Pakistan's extremely important geo-strategic position in American foreign policy, not just in recent years, but also during much of the Cold War, it is interesting that the US had little interest in the state once at first. The post-World War II dilemma for the US was simple: it had to secure its strategic and economic interests in far away areas with minimal cost. While South Asia was, in the face of China going communist, perhaps the last hope of democracy in the region, the US was wary of any direct involvement in the region. By August 1947, the US had already extended the sphere of its involvement and economic aid to Greece and Turkey via the Truman Doctrine and was happy to pass on responsibility of the region to the Commonwealth in securing the defence of the region.⁵⁵ The British welcomed this distance as their commercial and strategic imperatives tied in perfectly with this US policy, especially in the light of increasing uncertainties about Britain's relations with a number of Middle Eastern countries. However, even in South Asia Britain was soon to lose her advantage.

The partition settlement, in which Pakistan was left with just 17.5 per cent of the financial assets of undivided India combined with less than 10 per cent of the industrial base and just over 7 per cent of its employment facilities, meant that the country clearly did not have the economic resources to spend on defence, a necessity given the state's embroilment in Kashmir, in addition to actually

⁵⁴IOR L/WS/1/12364

⁵⁵H W Brands, 'India and Pakistan in American Strategic Planning, 1945 – 54', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 41 – 44. Reports prepared by the US State and Defence Departments on the brink of the defeat of the Chinese nationalists a couple of years later also dealt with the issue of American policy towards India and Pakistan and continued to push American involvement through the Commonwealth. The most pressing problem in the region was how to fill the void left by the withdrawal of the British from the region before the Russians exploited it. The biggest benefit the west had here was the amount of influence the British still had in the region through the membership of both countries in the Commonwealth and the economic and cultural contacts that had been sowed over the course of British rule.

building up a new state from scratch⁵⁶. It was clear enough to the Pakistani authorities that Great Britain hardly had the financial resources to support her and within months of independence requested an audacious \$2 billion loan spread over five years from the Americans for the country's armed forces as well as developmental projects. Tellingly, Pakistan's representatives in the US were shrewd enough to couch their demands in anti-Soviet tones, stating that the biggest security threat for Western Pakistan was the Soviet Union, in the hope of striking a chord in Washington.⁵⁷ This search for an external patron was to mark Pakistan's approach to foreign policy. In marked contrast to India, Pakistan followed a deliberate policy of openly supporting American foreign policy decisions and touting her pro-Western and anti-communist sensibilities. The prominent Pakistani politician and future foreign minister Feroze Khan Noon plainly stated that Pakistan could be the eastern bastion against communist incursions in the Middle East, just as Turkey was the western bastion. Thus, it was simply in the American interests to give military and economic aid to Pakistan.⁵⁸

America, however, remained unmoved – not only was the demand for the loan turned down, but both India and Pakistan were slapped with an arms embargo following the Kashmir dispute. However, things on the ground were changing and Pakistan was quickly gaining vocal supporters in American diplomatic circles. A long list of familiar arguments were trotted out as to why Pakistan was important to US strategic interests – her geographic position on the edge of the Soviet Union and the Middle East, the mantle of the largest Muslim nation in the world, her 'magnificent airfields' and of course, its army, which was talked of as the best in the Middle East.⁵⁹ The Consul-General in Lahore, in particular, chastised Washington for a policy that was 'inadequate', especially when the pro-American sentiment amongst the elite could be exploited to America's benefit⁶⁰. By the time George McGhee visited the country in December 1949, relations between the two countries

⁵⁶For breakdown of the partition settlement see A Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule: The Origins of Pakistan's Political Economy of Defence*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1990. p. 64. The mammoth task of building the country could probably not be overstated – unlike India which had inherited not just the capital but also a large chunk of the British Indian bureaucracy, Pakistan started life with fewer than 200 civil servants, a lack of basic equipment like pen, paper, typewriters, telephones etc. and the only commercial city Karachi becoming the capital city but lacking the space to accommodate the governmental workforce that suddenly flooded the city (R J McMohan, *The Cold War on the Periphery: The United States, India and Pakistan*, Columbia University Press: New York, 1994. p. 66).

⁵⁷McMohan, p. 69; G C McGhee, *Envoy to the World: Adventures in Diplomacy*, Harper & Row: New York, 1983, pp. 88 – 97. Making the communists out to be the biggest threat was obvious posturing as it was India with which Pakistan's biggest security threat lay. At the same time, Pakistan never had good relations with the Soviets, who had always viewed the idea of partition as a continuation of the British divide and rule policy which would allow some form of British domination in the region by playing the two new dominions against each other. Even during the early months after independence, initial Pakistani neutrality won no reciprocity from Moscow, for whom Pakistan was simply not important enough an actor (see W Levi, 'Pakistan, the Soviet Union and China', *Pacific Affairs*, vol. 35, no. 3, p. 213).

⁵⁸Quoted in McMohan, p. 70

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 68

⁶⁰Quoted in Jalal, 'Towards the Baghdad Pact', p.415

had grown and McGhee himself was impressed by Pakistan's enthusiasm to align with the west. The Pakistanis, he wrote, 'openly sought our aid on our terms promising support in our efforts to build a defence against the communist threat. Compared with the wishy-washy neutralist Indians they were a breath of fresh air'.⁶¹

By 1950 with the outbreak of the war in Korea, there was not only a fear of communist expansion in Asia, but also a growing acknowledgement that the policy of relying on the Commonwealth in South Asia was simply not working. The British had been forced to scale back their resources in other parts of the world just to provide troops for Korea and by the autumn of 1950 the Truman administration was informed that commitments in other parts of the world had meant military assistance to India and Pakistan had to be cut back.⁶² This period of British decline coincided with a shift in American foreign policy in the face of the communist onslaught in Asia. A South Asia Regional Conference of US Diplomatic and Consular Officers was held between February 24 and March 6, 1951 in Ceylon to get feedback and input from officers on the ground so as to move towards a more proactive South Asian policy. While India could not be considered completely hostile and was still considered extremely important by the Americans, it was Pakistan that emerged, yet again, as the most important state in the region. Of particular importance was the American ambassador Avra Warren's report that Pakistan would be willing to contribute troops for Middle Eastern defence and provide significant support and bases in the case of an attack by the USSR – but only if she received some sort of guarantee against Indian aggression.⁶³

During the course of a number of meetings with Foreign Office officials the following month, George McGhee briefed them not only on the changes taking place in American foreign policy, but also made clear that the US felt Pakistan's contribution in Middle East defence was "urgently needed".⁶⁴ Though the British themselves had always been keen on the idea of a role for Pakistan in the Middle East, Pakistan herself had always maintained that such a commitment could not be made without a resolution to the Kashmir issue.⁶⁵ In addition, while Britain had never felt that she had ever been in any position to offer any guarantee against India, the Americans were of the view that the most simple and effective way around the problem might be a guarantee from the UK, US and 'old Commonwealth' that they would never recognise any Indian attempt to 'get away with it'.⁶⁶

⁶¹ McGhee, *Envoy to the World*, p. 97

⁶² H W Brands, "India and Pakistan", p. 47

⁶³ For more details of the conference see McGhee, *Envoy to the World*, pp. 277 – 289.

⁶⁴ FO 371/92875

⁶⁵ During the Commonwealth Prime Ministers meeting held in January 1950, the Pakistani Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan had made clear that Pakistan would be happy to join plans for Middle East defence but could not do so until either the Kashmir issue had been resolved or Pakistan received some guarantee against India (ibid.)

⁶⁶ Ibid.

The British were not convinced. At any rate, they also had to contend with a possibly violent Indian reaction. The Foreign Office admitted that while the Commonwealth Relations Office often tended to over exaggerate any possible Indian reaction, it was also true that India was of much more importance to the British than the Americans who were increasingly frustrated with India's neutralism and Nehru's tone of moral superiority.⁶⁷ The British High Commissioner in Pakistan argued that while India was important, it was equally important not to permanently sterilise Pakistan when it came to the issue of its role in the Middle East. There was also a growing feeling in Pakistan that Her Majesty's government had lost a lot of its standing in the Middle East, indeed the world, and while the Commonwealth was the alliance system she was the most familiar she might be welcomed much more warmly if she started going straight to the Americans. This was not a feeling that needed encouraging.⁶⁸ The Foreign Office was keenly aware that there was only so much that could be done to deter the US from her new insistence on making Pakistan an integral part of Middle Eastern defence and security. The British were successful in talking the US out of making any territorial guarantees to Pakistan, but were hardly able to control the trend within US policy circles to increasingly situate Pakistan within a Middle Eastern context or the American fascination for a line of countries along the 'Northern Tier' to deter Soviet aggression.⁶⁹

Summary

America, concerned with the overextension of her troops, wanted to protect the Middle East but to do so with the help of indigenous states. Turkey had already been locked in on the western front. Rising Arab nationalism and bitter Anglo-Iranian differences over Iranian oil revenues left no one else in the region. No one, except Pakistan, who had already made clear that if the US was kind enough to give her the same amount of importance as Turkey, she would 'seize the opportunity eagerly'.⁷⁰ Clearly then, this was the solution the Americans had arrived at, despite British worries about the impact Pakistan's involvement in the Middle East would have on India. With her military resources and manpower, Pakistan could be turned into the eastern bastion of pro-western support in the Middle East. Britain, with her diminished financial resources had no option but to go along, despite being sceptical.⁷¹ Once this decision had been made, major efforts were made in Pakistan

⁶⁷The British High Commissioner in New Delhi argued that any such move would push India further towards isolation and therefore make her more prone to communism. This needed to be prevented at all costs. In any case, India had been more appreciative of the western point of view against communism recently and it was necessary to be patient and stable in relations with her. (Letter to Commonwealth Relations Office, 13 November 1951, FO 371/92876). In a letter to the High Commission in Washington, the Foreign Office minced no words in saying it was worried that US impatience with India and the resulting friendship with Pakistan might truly alienate the Indians (Foreign Office Telegram to Washington, 13 October 1951, FO 371/92875)

⁶⁸Letter to Commonwealth Relations Office, 8 November 1951, FO 371/92876

⁶⁹Jalal. 'Towards the Baghdad Pact', pp.420 – 424

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 418

⁷¹Foreign Office Report, 'India and Pakistan in relation to the Middle East', FO 371/92875

properly with the west and particularly Turkey, the other pro-western Muslim country in the region. By late 1951 greater military ties were being encouraged between the two states, now touted as the two “most reliable and stable” in the region, with the hope that not only that this cooperation would act as a deterrent for Soviet aggression towards the Middle East and Iran, but also that it might encourage other countries in the large empty space between these two bastions to fall into place in a zone against communism.⁷²

⁷² George McGhee, who had been posted as Ambassador to Turkey in late 1951 was instrumental in pushing for closer cooperation between the two countries in his new role.

III. Joining the Western Alliance

[The Middle East] could be like a train facing westwards, with Turkey the engine, Pakistan the guards van and the Arab sates the carriages.

- Chaudhary Sir Zafrullah Khan⁷³

Initial western plans for the defence of the Middle East revolved around British led efforts to reach some sort of agreement with Egypt, which would allow the Suez to be the centre of gravity for the West in the Middle East. The period after the Second World War had seen the end of the Empire in India and left Britain struggling to maintain control over that other strategically important theatre of the world, the Middle East. Confronted with Arab hostility, military and financial resources, the British realised that holding on to the Middle East without American support would be an impossible task. American policy regarding the region continued to be based on the assumption that Britain would be primarily responsible for western interests in the Middle East, with America providing whatever political and logistical support it could.

The election of the Eisenhower government would prove to be a drastic turning point in American policy towards the region. Faced with the failures of previous British-led Middle Eastern defence attempts, a truculent Egypt who was in no mood to make any concessions over the Suez, it became increasingly clear to the US that a new approach to the region had to be made. The US had come to the realisation that supporting the British, and Israel, in the Middle East had handicapped its position and caused it to be regarded as a colonial power in the region. The most drastic change as a result of this shifting power dynamic was a move away from the Suez based view of defending the Middle East.⁷⁴ By late 1953, the concept of a 'Northern Tier' of defence had taken shape towards this end, which aimed at creating an alignment of countries – from Turkey to Pakistan – that could protect the Middle East from any incursions from the Soviets south of their border.

It was natural that Turkey, because of her location, NATO membership, close ties to the west and willingness to help in the defence of the Middle East would become the first country to be roped into the scheme. Problems began to the east of her. A wide but militarily weak Iraq, which was also a member of the Arab League had little initial sympathy for any Western Middle East organization. Beyond Iraq was an even weaker Persia, who at the time was at complete odds with the west and, given her historical record, unlikely to blatantly position herself against Russia. Afghanistan, not seen to be on any invasion route in any case, was also militarily weak and unlikely to take sides against Russia. But beyond these countries lay Pakistan, which had not only an important location

⁷³ Despatch from Sir A K Helm to Foreign Office, 25 February 1952, FO 371/ 101862

⁷⁴ FO memo, 'Washington Talks: Middle East Defence', June 1954. FO 371/110828

and the potential for important military contributions towards the defence of the region, but was also eager and willing to align with the west.⁷⁵

Britain had always seen Turkey playing an important role in the Middle East. She had also often recognised the potential for Pakistan to be involved in Middle Eastern planning, but the American approach was seen as blatant territory poaching. Yet she had no option but to agree to go along with the new American plans. It was clear to countries like Turkey and Pakistan, that it was the US who had something to offer them and Britain simply had to ride on American coattails to preserve her position in the international arena. The Foreign Office noted that despite their recent disagreements the US and the UK had identical aims in the region – to build up prosperity, stability and the capacity for self defence against the Soviets. It was, therefore, important to continue to cooperate with the Americans and to convince them of the advantage of working together in the region.⁷⁶

This chapter aims to examine how, with an increase in American involvement in the region, Turkey and Pakistan became the pillars on which western defence of the Middle East could be built. In geographical terms both were seen as important, solidly pro-western plugs on the extreme edges of the Middle East that would help insulate the Middle East from the Soviets. While the support of just these two countries was clearly not enough, they were to set an example for other countries in the region to ally with west.

It also examines the curious role Turkey played in Pakistan's alignment with the west. Turkey, since her membership into NATO, was seen, and indeed saw herself, as the model for other countries in the Middle East. With her high profile and membership of the western alliance, she was a new nation-state pointing the way to a successful political renaissance for other new non-European nation-states.⁷⁷ Her status as a nominally Muslim country, however, allowed her to play an ambiguous double role in helping link Pakistan with the west. On one hand, an alliance with Turkey could be sold by Pakistan to her western allies as a commitment to the west, modernisation and development and a turn away from religious politics. On the other, by building on layers of pre-

⁷⁵ K Helm, 'Turkey and her Defence Problems', *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, Vol. 30, No. 4 (Oct., 1954), pp. 434-439

⁷⁶ Britain would vigorously oppose any intent from America to 'go it alone'. FO memo, 'Washington Talks: Middle East Defence', June 1954. FO 371/110828. It was also noted that in Pakistan, there an increase in American stock at British expense, not only because of American generosity with aid but also due to what the Pakistanis saw as British foot-dragging over Pakistan's inclusion in Middle Eastern defence plans in a bid not to offend India. The British High Commissioner in Karachi noted that Britain had no option but to welcome the American aid that would flow to Pakistan as a result of her association with the western powers in the Middle East, even though the consequences that flow from the aid may be unpalatable to the UK. Despatch from Karachi to CRO, 'Reactions to American Military Aid to Pakistan', 15 March 1954, PREM 11/1520.

⁷⁷ L Binder, 'The Middle East as a Subordinate International System', *World Politics*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (Apr., 1958), p. 424

colonial engagement with the Ottoman Empire, the conduit of Turkey was used by Pakistan to tie together the issues of Cold War security and religious solidarity.

From the Suez to the ‘Northern Tier’

For much of the period after the Second World War, western policy in the Middle East revolved around a fixation to reach some sort of regional defence agreement which would not only serve to hinder Russian aggression but also, and perhaps just as importantly, allow a degree of control over the economic and strategic areas of the Suez and the Gulf oilfields. For Britain, to whom America had acceded leadership in the Middle East for the time being, maintaining control of the Suez Canal was a foreign policy objective even the Attlee government, despite its policy of a reduction in overseas commitments, had decided to pursue. Not surprisingly then, initial western plans for Middle Eastern defence centred around Egypt and the Suez. In 1946 the Egyptians had called for a withdrawal of British troops from the Suez. It was an unpalatable option for the British who argued that it was necessary to maintain a base in Egypt for the security of ‘all freedom-loving nations’, because Egypt would never be able to defend herself against ‘aggression by a major power’. Furthermore, if Britain left Egypt it would not only hinder any plans for Middle Eastern defence, but also affect Turkey who would be left as the sole protector of the free world in the region.⁷⁸ The best route around the problem would be the establishment of some sort of a Middle East defence pact with Egypt as a founding member with the hope that the conversion of British bases in the Suez into allied bases would placate the Egyptians.⁷⁹

The first such concrete proposal for Middle Eastern defence was put forward under the name of the Middle East Command (MEC).⁸⁰ In October 1950 the Egyptian government was invited to join the MEC as a founder member by the western powers of the UK, US, France and Turkey. Under the terms put forward, British troops not allocated to the MEC would be withdrawn from Egypt, the British base in the Suez Canal would be turned into an allied base with full Egyptian participation in its running and also put forth was the possibility of an air defence organisation jointly responsible to the Egyptian government and the MEC. Cairo flatly rejected the offer arguing that it did not meet the Egyptian demand for a complete evacuation of foreign troops. Worse, the provisional and

⁷⁸ Bilgin, p. 162

⁷⁹ B K Yesilbursa, ‘The American Concept of the ‘Northern Tier’ Defence Project and the Signing of the Turco-Pakistani Agreement, 1953-54’, *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.37, No.3, July 2001, p. 61

⁸⁰ The initial set up of the MEC proposed by the Foreign Office was that of a defence pact for the Middle East that would include Turkey, Egypt and the Commonwealth countries of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa under the tentative name of the Middle East Command (MEC).

limited occupation by one state would be turned into occupation by multiple states with no end in sight.⁸¹

Despite the Egyptian rejection, western plans for Middle Eastern defence continued. These led to British attempts to try and reform the MEC which was in 1952 reincarnated as the Middle East Defence Organisation (MEDO), in the hope that the name would be less offensive to Arab ears. The new proposals allowed for full Egyptian control on the bases, but gave Britain the right of re-entry in the event of war, as well as the right of periodic inspection and installation. However, with the Free Officers now in charge in Cairo, for whom ridding Egypt of British troops and reviving the idea of a collective Arab polity was the priority, there was an even lower probability for any British led defence proposal to have any chance of success.⁸²

The death of the MEDO proposal coincided with the presidential election of General Eisenhower for whose administration the question of how to preserve western influence in the Middle East was perhaps the most important and vexing one. US foreign policy under Eisenhower and his Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, was to be much more engaged and bold and aimed to enlarge the role of the US in the Middle East. In his very first report on foreign policy problems, on January 23, 1953, Dulles pointed out the great strategic and economic significance of the Middle East and stressed the Soviet and communist threat to the area – a theme that was to dominate his tenure as Secretary of State.⁸³ As Ayesha Jalal notes, this newfound boldness in foreign policy would tear apart Great Britain's fragile web of interests not just in the Middle East, but South Asia as well.⁸⁴

The first major foreign tour Dulles made was to the Middle East and South Asia between 9th and 29th May 1953 and it resulted in major change in the US approach to Middle Eastern defence. By this time Dulles was already sceptical of the success of MEDO or any similar defence proposal in the Middle East and in large part his trip was one of research - to try and understand the situation on

⁸¹ Bilgin, p. 168; Yesilbursa, *op. cit.*, pp. 61 - 62

⁸² B K Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact: Anglo-American Defence Policies in the Middle East, 1950 – 1959*. Cass: London, 2005. p. 10. In addition to the mentioned concessions, while ideally the British would have liked military personnel stationed within Egypt to carry out the inspections, room was made to allow for civilians stationed outside Egypt to do the same if Egypt was adamant on this point. Interestingly soon after Churchill's conservative government came to power, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Anthony Eden, produced a Cabinet Paper in June 1952 on 'British Overseas Ambitions' advocating a reduction in commitments. However, any drastic and unilateral withdrawal was rejected. Not only were 'the effects of a failure of will and relaxation of grip ... incalculable', once the prestige of the country had started to slide there was no knowing where it would stop. The only practical solution, in addition to allowing the US to take the lead, was to desperately try to make international defence organisations work. (See A Adamthwaite, 'Overstretched and Overstrung: Eden, the Foreign Office and the Making of Foreign Policy, 1951 – 1955', *International Affairs*, vol. 64, no. 2, Spring 1988. pp. 246 – 247)

⁸³ H N Howard, 'The Regional Pacts and the Eisenhower Doctrine', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 401, America and the Middle East, May, 1972, p. 86

⁸⁴ A Jalal, 'Towards the Baghdad Pact'. p. 428

the ground and think of a more effective way to secure the Middle East against the Soviets. Dulles' first stop was Cairo, where President Naguib bluntly told him that the Arab populace not only hated the British, but also felt bitter against the United States. In such an atmosphere it was impossible that the Egyptian people would listen to the idea of any defence arrangement. A follow up meeting with Gamal Abdel Nasser went no better. Nasser argued that MEDO would only be viewed as a continuation of British occupation. When warned of the Soviets, Nasser's response was simple – the Soviets were not only five thousand miles away, but had never attacked or occupied Egypt. It was impossible to convince Egyptians of a potential Soviet threat when the British were already a clear and present danger.⁸⁵

While Cairo provided the gloomiest of outlooks and visits to the other Arab capitals proved better, it was Karachi that provided Dulles with optimism. Following meetings with a number of Pakistani officials, Dulles noted that the feeling of genuine friendship “exceeded to marked degree that encountered in any country previously visited on this trip”.⁸⁶ Dulles' visit to Pakistan had occurred a mere month after the deposition of the Prime Minister Nazimuddin, whose government had overseen a number of political changes that had not gone down well with the ruling elite.⁸⁷ Men like the Governor-General Ghulam Mohammed and the Army Commander-in-Chief Ayub Khan believed that only a strong, centralised state with a powerful military and a strong bureaucracy could ensure Pakistan's survival – and their own futures. The establishment of the new government of Mohammed Ali Bogra was an important moment in Pakistan's relations with the west – it was touted by the State Department as a triumph of the progressive elements in Pakistan - because it marked the ascendancy of the civil and military establishment that actively and aggressively courted western support. Unsurprisingly then, Pakistan, who not only needed US aid for military purposes, but was also facing dire economic conditions and a mounting food shortages, was happy to reiterate her willingness to cooperate and align with the United States.⁸⁸

Dulles' last stop was Turkey and meetings with the Prime Minister, Adnan Menderes, and President, Celal Bayar, only reinforced the difficulty of enforcing a Middle Eastern defence system that

⁸⁵ Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, pp. 15 -16. Yesilbursa quotes Nasser as saying “How can I go to my people and tell them I am disregarding a killer with a pistol 60 miles from me at the Suez Canal to worry about somebody who is holding a knife five thousand miles away? They would tell me ... "first thing first””

⁸⁶ McMohan, p. 161

⁸⁷ The issuance of the Nazimuddin Report in December 1952 brought to a head a number of sensitive issues - religious, political, economic - issues that had plagued Pakistan since partition. For the entrenched bureaucratic and military elite, most of whom were from West Pakistan and were also more secular than religious, the proposals were particularly threatening because they gave too much power to the traditional Muslim religious leaders and provided the province of East Bengal, where a more than half the country's population resided, a majority in the lower house of the national legislative assembly. (Jalal, *State of Martial Rule*, pp. 136 – 144, 167 -180)

⁸⁸ *ibid.*, McMohan, pp. 154 - 163

included the Arabs. The Arabs, Bayar argued, had put forward a number of problems – the Suez, Israel, and the independence of Arab countries – to remain uncommitted to Middle Eastern defence, but even if these problems were solved it was unlikely that they would join the western side. The Turks also raised concerns about the probability of a hand over of the Suez Canal bases to a government who had preoccupations apart from Soviet aggression and “whose future and intentions were anyone’s gamble”. In the Turkish view, a defence organisation had to be formulated with Turkey as a backbone and, perhaps, without any initial Arab participation. Dulles was largely inclined to agree. The only Arab countries he had seen some awareness of the communist threat were the northern Arab countries, especially Iraq, but it was clear that winning Arab support would have to be a gradual battle.⁸⁹

By the time Dulles was back in Washington, he was convinced that the old projects of the MEC and MEDO were clearly not feasible in the face of Arab resistance. Any sound regional defence arrangement would have to be formed based on the desires of the respective governments and peoples. The Arabs were clearly too overwhelmed by internal problems and too complacent about the communist threat to be dependable allies and, therefore, another approach to the security of the Middle East had to be thought of.⁹⁰ The approach Dulles came up with was that a new line of defence could be built along the ‘Northern Tier’ states – Turkey, Pakistan, Iraq and possibly Iran – which were more exposed to communist danger, were best situated to provide the area greatest protection and were more prone to cooperating with the west. It was hoped that not only would these countries form a “roof” to contain the Soviets, but by trying to organise them in some kind of pact together they may also serve to act as a bait for other countries in the region. This new approach was approved by Eisenhower and the National Security Council and became the new basis for Washington’s policy in the Middle East. With formal approval, the State Department now became preoccupied with actual implementation. The two countries which had most impressed Dulles during his visit, Turkey and Pakistan – the most stable and most openly pro-western at the time – were chosen as the two countries between whom a pact might provide an initial impetus for a broader regional grouping.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, pp. 17 – 18; Telegraph from Sir A. K. Helm to the Foreign Office reporting on Dulles’ visit to Turkey, 28 May 1953. FO 371/ 107553. The Turks noted that while it was all very well for the Egyptians and others to talk of independence, the defence of the free world was also important. The Egyptian accusations of imperialism and colonialism were also prone to exasperate the Turks who felt that such talk was out of date, especially when Egypt was being promised joint bases and similar bases were in existence in Turkey without affecting her sovereignty. In Turkish eyes, then, collaboration with Egypt over Middle Eastern defence was out of the question.

⁹⁰ Howard. ‘The Regional Pacts and the Eisenhower Doctrine’, p. 86

⁹¹ Bilgin, p. 204; Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, p. 20; Despatch from UK High Commission (Ankara) to Foreign Office, 26 March 1956. FO 371/ 110787

Attempts at linking Turkey and Pakistan

The thought of linking Pakistan with Turkey was in itself not a new one and had been broached in the past by Pakistan herself. During the development of the MEC, Pakistan had in 1951, indicated her willingness to participate in the defence of the Middle East. While the British and the Americans were debating whether Pakistan should be included in the pact at all, General Ayub Khan sent a message to the Turkish Chief of General Staff requesting that if Pakistan were to be a part of any Middle Eastern defence it should be Turkey who 'sponsor' her. The reasons given for this were simple: if it were Britain who openly suggested Pakistan's involvement, other Middle Eastern countries would not only see it as simply an advancement of imperial interests in the region but the move would also cause Pakistan to loose ground with Arab countries. This would not be the case if Turkey, a fellow Muslim country, sponsored her. Since by this time the Foreign Office had already decided not to make any approach to Pakistan, the issue died a quiet death.⁹²

The overture by Pakistan was quite telling of the country's own self perception and her desire to become involved in the Muslim Middle East. The narrative of Pakistan's creation and immediate aftermath of antagonism with India made foreign policy an extremely important tool for the state to gain foreign help and support for the Kashmir issue. Even as the country tried to enter alliances with the West, it also regularly expressed a desire to cultivate its Islamic ties, never failing to remind the Muslim world that Pakistan was the only modern state created exclusively in the name of Islam. Islam was also used as a bargaining chip with the west and Pakistan, in her hopes to get a foothold in the western camp, was not afraid to offer her help in raising the Islamic flag against communism.⁹³ There was also a genuine desire to be seen as some sort of premier Islamic state and have a greater role in the Middle East and it was with this that led some Pakistani leaders to take up the idea of a multilateral defence arrangement based on the grounds of common religion.

It is perhaps unsurprising that such an idea was first proposed to Turkey, despite the country's secular credentials, given the rather strange sentimentality that accompanied perceptions of the country in Pakistan. As an editorial in the Turkish newspaper *Cumhuriyet* put it, "Pakistani's consider Turkish history their own". After the end of the First World War when the Turks were organising themselves to fight of the Imperial powers who had taken control of areas of Anatolia and the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire were fighting for independence, Muslims in India launched the Khilafat Movement. The movement was informed by a romantic adherence to the idea of a Caliphate and aimed at preserving the territorial boundaries of the Ottoman Empire as they had

⁹² Telegram from Sir K Helm (Ankara) to Foreign Office, 17 December 1951, FO 371/92876.

⁹³ Jalal, 'Towards the Baghdad Pact', p. 417.

been in 1914 and the temporal authority of the Ottoman Sultan as the Caliph of Islam. The movement was unique in that it was the first national campaign of its kind by a group of Muslim leaders who aimed to unite the Indian Muslim community politically through the use of religious and cultural symbols meaningful to all strata of society.⁹⁴

The Khilafat Movement died a natural death when in Turkey itself a new Republic was set up that had little regard for the position of the Sultan-Caliph and only saw the remnants of the Ottoman Empire as a barrier to the modernity and westernisation it aimed to achieve. The end of the Caliphate had a significant impact on politics in India. Jawaharlal Nehru astutely noted that Mustafa Kemal's abolition of the Sultanate and Caliphate, destruction of religious orders and building up of a secular state were all acts that destroyed the 'dream structure' that had grown up in the Indian Muslim minds since the Mutiny. The death of the Khilafat Movement was, however, important in that it helped in paving the way for more Muslim political activity that was more concerned with domestic issues. In many ways Turkey and the changes occurring there continued to have a hold on their imagination and served as an important example and inspiration for leaders like Jinnah and Iqbal who now held sway – though the exhortation of the Turkish example to the Indian public was still wrapped in Islamic language and approval.⁹⁵ Given this background and Pakistan's

⁹⁴ The British had long exploited the pro-Turkish sentiment amongst Indian Muslims and their policies had only helped magnify the importance of the Ottomans. A proclamation from the Ottoman Sultan had been obtained during the Sepoy Mutiny in 1857 calling on Indian Muslims to remain loyal to the British and much had been made of British support to the Ottomans during the Crimean War in a bid to win the British government in India greater support. While the Muslim leadership in India had always been loyal to the British, there was a slow reversal during the early 1900s. The Balkan Wars led to a feeling of insecurity that the Christian powers were conspiring to crush the Ottoman Empire and by the end of the First World War, these reservations had only grown. Pro-Caliph religiosity combined with anti-British zeal and the movement saw a strange unity of religious leaders and westernised politicians. Perhaps the most important development during the Khilafat Movement was the espousal of the cause by none other than M.K. Gandhi. Gandhi saw the cause as primarily anti-British and the increased political awareness of the Muslim masses as a means to bring them into the nationalist movement and turn the Congress into a truly mass based organisation. The marriage with Gandhi and the Congress was also one of convenience for the Khilafat leaders for it made their concerns and issues truly national and aided in making a much stronger impact on the British. For more on the Khilafat Movement see G Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India*, Columbia University Press: New York, 1982; M N Qureshi, *Pan-Islam in British Indian Politics: A Study of the Khilafat Movement 1918 – 1924*, Brill: Leiden, 1999.

⁹⁵ Given the familiarity with events in Turkey that the Khilafat Movement had ensured it was hardly surprising that Jinnah laid the example of Ataturk in front of the Indian public. For him, Ataturk was the foremost figure in the Muslim world, who had shown to the consternation of the rest of the world that Muslim countries were coming into their own. "With the example of this great man in front of them as an inspiration, will the Muslims of India still remain in quagmire?" he asked. The language Jinnah uses in his description of Ataturk is telling of his own politics in India. The admiration of secularism and westernisation had to be balanced out and couched in very religious terms. It is hardly surprising then that Jinnah praised Ataturk as "the greatest Mussalman in the modern Islamic world" on the latter's death. While Iqbal over time felt increasing apprehension that the vitality of the Turkish experiment was becoming bogged by the desire of its leaders to blindly ape the west and restrict reforms to the perimeters of the western framework, he had written about and discussed the Turkish case extensively in his works. While he was sceptical of the separation of state and religion that was taking place in Turkey, he did admit that the 'structure of Islam as a religio-political system, no doubt, does permit such a view'. That he was initially impressed by the Turkish reforms can be clearly seen in his writings. 'The truth is,' he wrote, 'that among the Muslim nations of today, Turkey alone has shaken off its dogmatic slumber, and attained self-consciousness. She alone has claimed her right of intellectual freedom; she alone has passed from the ideal to the real - a transition which entails keen intellectual and

foreign policy imperatives soon after independence, it was logical that Turkey would be one of the first country's she should try and forge ties with.

In 1952, the Pakistani Foreign Minister Zafrullah Khan, while in Turkey, proposed the formation of an Islamic bloc and raised the need for Turkey to pay more attention to her Arab neighbours. In his view, Turkey and Pakistan could give organisation and cohesion to the entire region, as they were the most stable pillars of the regions between which there were large quantities of sand in every sense. In a previous meeting with George McGhee, Khan had raised similar points arguing that if the Turks were more sympathetic to the Arabs the entire Middle East could be arranged 'like a train facing westwards, with Turkey the engine, Pakistan the guards van and the Arab sates the carriages'.⁹⁶ The Turkish authorities themselves were completely unenthusiastic about any such move. As the Foreign Office noted, Khan had arrived to find the Turks in a flush of pro-Western and anti-Cominform enthusiasm over their entry into NATO. Had his visit had not been so badly timed, he might have made a bigger impression. The Turks having thrown her lot in with the west thought it best to avoid commitments with Muslim cooperation movements.

In a meeting with the British Ambassador Sir Alfred Knox Helm, the Assistant Secretary General of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nuri Birgi, explained that Turkey had no aspirations to lead the Middle East herself and that her only concern was that Turkish security should not be endangered by what went on there. She hoped, however, that her own cooperation with the West would serve as a salutary example to her Middle Eastern neighbours and might in that sense give them a lead. The best thing the countries of the Middle East could do was to learn and understand the nature of change that had taken place in Turkey and follow her example.⁹⁷ Despite the extreme reservations of the Turks regarding any such scheme, it raised the interest of both the Americans and the British. Despite agreeing with Knox Helm that the Turkish government would hardly base any of its policies on Islam, George McGhee restated the need for identifying Pakistan with western plans in the Middle East. The Foreign Office, while acknowledging the Turks' west oriented stance also dryly noted that the Turks 'should not forget the facts of geography. Their country is situated in the Middle East, however Western-minded they have become'.⁹⁸

moral struggle.' For more see – M.N. Qureshi. 'Muslims of British India and the Kemalist Reform in Turkey: Iqbal, Jinnah and Atatürk, 1924 – 1938', *Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Dergisi*, 12/35 (1996); F. Rahman. 'Muhammad Iqbal and Atatürk's Reforms', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 2 (Apr., 1984); M. Iqbal. *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*. M. Ashraf: Lahore, 1999.

⁹⁶ Despatch from Sir A. K. Helm to Foreign Office, 25 February 1952, FO 371/ 101862

⁹⁷ Despatch from Sir A. K. Helm to Foreign Office, 31 March 1952, *ibid*.

⁹⁸ *ibid*.

As already noted, the establishment of the government of Mohammed Ali Bogra in the summer of 1953 was an important shift in Pakistan's domestic and foreign politics. It marked a move towards a military dominated foreign policy, which was not only slightly suspicious of the religious elements of Pakistan's political system, but also more eager to court the west than ever. The US gladly noted that Pakistan had turned its back on the mullah-dominated theocratic state and that the change of government offered great opportunities for Pakistan, now so important to the foreign policy of the US, to help develop the stability of its area.⁹⁹ By the time Ayub Khan visited Turkey in the winter of 1953, on the tails of his trip demanding aid from the US, the Turks, egged on by the US and slightly placated by a less religious Pakistani approach, were willing to set the ball rolling on a regional alignment that might form the basis for a larger defence organisation in the Middle East in the future. The Americans visualised Pakistan and Turkey as forming the two gateposts of a defensive system designed to counter a Russian threat to ME oil and, in a miscalculation, noted that perhaps a regional alignment could overcome Indian objections to Pakistan's alignment with the west. Turkey's role would be that of a bridge with the west.¹⁰⁰

A Turkish-Pakistani Approach to Defending the Middle East

The realisation that the Americans were pushing hard for a regional pact between Turkey and Pakistan, which would give an initial push to the Northern Tier was extremely aggravating for the British. For one, this new approach to the defence of the Middle East meant that they could not attempt any serious approach to resolving the Suez Base issue under the guise of Middle Eastern defence. Additionally, the renewed American interest in Pakistan complicated matters hopelessly with India, something the British had always been careful to avoid. A similar situation had arisen during the initial stages of the discussion of the MEC. While the US pushed for the inclusion of Pakistan, the British had resisted. Though the British had always been open to the idea of a Pakistani presence in Middle Eastern defence, especially to act a prop in the eastern regions of the Middle East, there had always been a worry about whether Pakistan actually had the military resources for this.

The continual conflagration with India on the Kashmir border only brought about a cause for pause. During the course of a Chief of Staff meeting on the topic of Pakistan in the Middle East it was noted that in addition to the problems that may arise with India over Pakistan's participation in any

⁹⁹ Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule*, p. 180

¹⁰⁰ A parallel was drawn with Turkey's role in the Balkan Pact where she had helped align Yugoslavia with NATO over the objections of Italy. She could play the same role of linking Pakistan to the west. Visits to Turkey by the C-in-C of the Pakistan Army and the Governor-General of Pakistan, FO 371/ 106924

plan for Middle Eastern defence, the other main problem was the Pakistani army's acute shortage of both equipment and officers. The constraints on any possible British aid made it extremely difficult to provide Pakistan with any aid till at least 1954, thus making any short term contribution to Middle Eastern Defence extremely ineffective and therefore, unlikely. At the same time, it was also noted that a considerable importance was attached to Pakistan's attachment in the long term and therefore, it was important to approach her at a time that was opportune. It was recommended that while it was important to dampen American ardour over the matter, Pakistan herself should not be discouraged and the matter should be left there.¹⁰¹ Perhaps the biggest irony in the new American push for a Pakistani role in the Middle East lay in the fact that in many ways this formulation was a reworking of the traditional British imperial notion of using troops from the subcontinent to defend the Middle East.¹⁰² Pakistan had been careful to woo Dulles with a carefully orchestrated showcase of its capability to contribute to the defence of the Middle East and by the end of his visit, Dulles was convinced of the need for Pakistan's manpower resources to defend Iran and eventually linking both the countries to Turkey.¹⁰³

By the late summer of 1953 US planners began moving ahead on the concept set forth by Dulles. US military strategists calculated that in cooperation with Turkey, Pakistan might help retard an advance towards the oil fields of the Persian Gulf and the western-controlled military installations in the area for long enough to allow the US and Great Britain to launch large scale air assaults against vulnerable targets as far up to the Caucasus. However, there were still a number of logistical issues to sort regarding bringing Pakistan into the western fold. Questions still loomed about how

¹⁰¹ Extract from COS Meeting Held 12 October 1951, FO 371/ 92876

¹⁰² N J Ashton, 'The Hijacking of a Pact : The Formation of the Baghdad Pact and Anglo-American Tensions in the Middle East, 1955 – 1958', *Review of International Studies*, vol. 19, 1993, p. 126. The preoccupation with Pakistan over India, itself had its roots in the ideas of the British imperialist Sir Olaf Caroe, who had served as the Governor of the North-West Frontier Province and had been the last Secretary of the Foreign Department of the Government of India. Caroe had become increasingly worried about what he termed the "wells of power" – the oil resources in the Gulf and Arabian peninsulas. Convinced that an organisation of Arab states was not an answer to the iddues of Middle East defence, Caroe argued that a grouping along the lines of the Saadabad Pact of 1937 (whose signatories were Turkey, Iraq, Persia and Afghanistan) – what he termed the 'Northern Screen' – was more effective in shielding the Western Allies against the Soviets. Intuitively distrusting of Nehru and his anti-imperialism, Caroe also became a champion of Pakistan's role in the Middle East. In his books and articles Caroe argued that Pakistan had inherited the responsibility of for the Indian Peninsula, the North-West Frontier areas and the areas of the Arabian Sea and the Persian Gulf. Karachi was ideally situated to command the "Muslim lake" whose littoral states controlled the fuel on which the western powers depended so greatly. Importantly, Caroe's formulations found favour in Washington especially among Henry Byroade, who had been appointed Assistant Secretary for the Near East, South Asia and Africa. (See L I Rudolph & S H Rudolph, 'The Making of US Foreign Policy for South Asia: Offshore Balancing in Historical Perspective', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Feb 2006, pp. 704 – 705; P J Brobst. *The Future of the Great Game: Sir Olaf Caroe, India's Independence and the Defence of Asia*, University of Akron Press, 2005)

¹⁰³ CIA agent Wilbur Crane Eveland, serving in the Middle East at the time later suggested that Dulles probably let his imagination run away a little. 'In Pakistan, Dulles saw a unit of splendidly uniformed, turban topped Pathan lancers (flown in expressly for the occasion) on parade. Each man appeared at least seven feet tall ... the secretary of state came away convinced that this army of giants should be given weapons. Such warriors, he was certain, could stem the Red hordes.' (W C Eveland. *Ropes of Sand: America's Failure in the Middle East*, W.W.Norton: New York, 1980. p. 65)

much of a military contribution Pakistan could make, how much aid would it need to achieve satisfactorily enhanced military capabilities and perhaps most importantly how aid could be granted without raising Indian hackles.¹⁰⁴

When the Pakistani Commander-in-Chief, Ayub Khan, visited the US in September of the same year, he minced no words about the purpose of his visit – to acquire military assistance for the Pakistani army. Ayub forcefully presented Pakistan's case, arguing for the need for close to \$25 million in military aid. By the time he left, he had received assurances from Dulles that the US was willing to assist the Americans, regardless of the Indian reaction.¹⁰⁵ It was only once the promise had been made that the British were informed that America had a new approach to roping in Pakistan into the western alliance and all that needed working out was how the aid should be granted. London had in the past already noted that the Americans could be 'very rash and stupid' and prone to 'immature oscillations' when it came to South Asia.¹⁰⁶ Though intent on never allowing the US to undermine British interests in the region, the Foreign Office was completely blindsided by the American disclosure and alarmed at Washington's disregard for the past pattern of close consultation on matters concerning South Asia. The move was viewed in London as a reckless gamble. The only real basis on which a strong Pakistan, capable of playing a valuable role in western defence, could be built was improved relations with India. The US had just made a move bound to upset any potential break through between the two countries for the uncertain prospect of future assistance from Pakistan. Frustratingly for the British, they had been put in a position where they could hardly object to the US aid for Pakistan for fear of spoiling relations with the Commonwealth country. Furthermore, the Foreign Office noted that the extension of the NATO line to Pakistan would serve no real purpose if there was still a gap in between and bemoaned this new concept for the lack of a British contribution to strengthen the defence of the region. The US was bluntly told that London did not approve of the proposal, but if the Eisenhower government decided to go ahead heedless of British advice, she would not stand in the way but would ask for extremely tight secrecy about the plans.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ McMohan, p. 166

¹⁰⁵ The seesawing of the domestic political situation in Pakistan had often been a source of frustration for the state department and the Pentagon in the past. In Ayub, who had the backing of the military, the one relatively stable organization in the country, they finally had a man they could negotiate with. This deference to the military strongman not only set a pattern of engagement with the country that continues to date, but also gave a handful of elite who wielded power and influence to continually use international developments to influence domestic politics. (For more on the ascendancy of the bureaucratic-military alliance see Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule*, pp. 180 – 193)

¹⁰⁶ The British preoccupation with not upsetting India had raised its head earlier as well. The proposal for MEDO had put the onus of planning on the participants as opposed to actually contributing troops, which negated most arguments that had previously held sway about the ability of Pakistan to contribute to such an organization. However, in spite of this, the British did not make an approach to Pakistan at the time for fear of upsetting India. Jalal, 'Towards the Baghdad Pact'.

¹⁰⁷ *ibid.*; FO 371/ 106935; US Project to Associate Military Aid to Pakistan with Middle East Defence: Memorandum by

However, the Pakistani government, already fidgety waiting for the promised aid to take concrete form, was happy to leak out stories on the probable military assistance the US had planned for Pakistan. The Indian response was immediate, indignant and very public. Nehru trotted out the by now familiar argument that the US was bringing the Cold War to the subcontinent.¹⁰⁸ The leaks, coupled with aggressive pro-west posturing by the Pakistani government put the US on the back foot. Moscow had already responded to the news of US military aid by immediately denouncing US actions. The Russian newspaper *Pravda* argued that it was only a short time before the US established military bases in Pakistan and tried to convert Pakistan into a second Turkey.¹⁰⁹ Any backtracking by the US at this point would not only make it look like it was not supporting a friendly regime against the Soviets but also that it could not handle Indian criticism. Dulles acknowledged that supporting Pakistan would damage relations with India for the foreseeable future. While India was entitled to her policy of neutralism in Asia, it was not US policy. To give way to India now would be to surrender to neutralism.¹¹⁰

The US had already decided that the Mutual Defence Assistance Act, which declared that the equipment, materials, or services provided as aid to a recipient country would be used "solely to maintain the recipient country's internal security and for its legitimate self-defence, or to permit it to participate in the defence of the area" of which it was a part, was to be the framework in which Pakistan would get military aid.¹¹¹ Ever since the idea of the Northern Tier had taken shape, the US had started to visualise Turkey and Pakistan 'as forming the two gateposts of a defensive system designed to counter a Russian threat to ME oil.'¹¹² At the same time increasingly convinced that any security arrangements in the region should at least look like indigenous arrangements to avoid the criticism of their being under direct western control, the US was reluctant to be seen publicly orchestrating such a collaboration. The State Department had also been surprised and embarrassed by the hostility generated in India when news had broken about the possibility of American military aid to Pakistan. This was just another factor that pushed the US towards the idea of linking any aid

the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 5th January 1954, PREM 11/52.

¹⁰⁸ McMohan, pp. 167 – 168.

¹⁰⁹ Chaudhri Zafrullah Khan, the Pakistani Foreign Minister, who was touring the US lost no time in stepping up the pressure by stressing again Pakistan's strong anti-communist credentials. In an meeting with reporters at the Overseas Press Club in Washington he stressed that Pakistan was dedicated to preserving moral freedoms that were incompatible with the designs of an oppressive aggressor. *Dawn*, 'Zafrullah Decries Neutrality', November 12 1953, p. 3. For the Soviet reaction see *Dawn*, 'US Attempts to Enslave Muslim Middle East', December 5, 1953, p. 3.

¹¹⁰ Telegram from Anthony Eden. 'US Aid for Pakistan'. January 24, 1954. PREM 11/52. As the British Ambassador in Washington noted, the Indians had 'overplayed their hand as to make it now virtually impossible for the Americans to back out even if they had otherwise so wished'. British Embassy to Foreign Office, 21 December 1953, FO 371/106937

¹¹¹ Howard, 'The Regional Pacts and the Eisenhower Doctrine', p. 86

¹¹² Foreign Office memo, 17 December 1953. FO 371/106924

to Pakistan with some kind of military cooperation with Turkey, in the hope that aid to Pakistan under a Turkish-Pakistani pact would be less unpalatable to Nehru.¹¹³

For Pakistan, the need for arms from the US and the associated US terms quickly linked both issues in official minds and Pakistani government and military officials had got to work on discussing Middle East defence with Turkey in an effort to convince the US of their seriousness to fulfil the conditions for aid.¹¹⁴ George McGhee, who as Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern, South Asian and African affairs at the State Department had been involved in discussions over how to integrate Pakistan into Middle Eastern defence, was now the US ambassador to Turkey and acted as the US conduit on the Turkish side. The Turks were told that the Pakistanis were keen to develop relations with Turkey, especially on the military side and wished for Turkey to push them hard on this issue, thus making it domestically easier for them to accept. Pakistan, with its 80 million people, strong army and good prospects for economic development would make a strong ally¹¹⁵.

Turkey – A Bridge to the West? An Islamic Partner?

In early January 1954, the Turkish government delivered a memorandum to the US containing a full statement of the Turkish views on the American proposals of cooperation between Turkey and Pakistan. The Turkish government emphasised its willingness to help the US provide military aid to Pakistan because of her feeling of friendship towards Pakistan and also because of the effect such aid would have in filling the strategic gap in this part of the world and in increasing the effectiveness of resistance to Soviet aggression. It was also hoped that such an agreement would create the nucleus for a future organisation for Middle East defence, especially in the wake of the example being set of American aid being given to a country that was willing to join the western alliance. Following an exchange of views, the United States and Turkey agreed that the Turkish government would approach the Pakistani government to undertake negotiations for an agreement that would allow for consultation on matters of political, economic and security issues of mutual interest. The US in turn agreed to provide Pakistan with military aid following the conclusion of such an agreement.¹¹⁶ By the time these negotiations had been announced to Britain, it was clear to the Foreign Office that moves by the US had begun earlier and gone much further than they had anticipated and that they were in no position to try and stall negotiations, despite their misgivings,

¹¹³ Memo from FO to Washington. 8 January 1954; US Project to Associate Military Aid to Pakistan with Middle East Defence: Memorandum by Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 5 January 1954, PREM 11/1520

¹¹⁴ PREM 11/1520

¹¹⁵ McGhee, *The US-Turkish-NATO-Middle East Connection*, pp. 140 - 141

¹¹⁶ Yesilbursa, *The Baghdad Pact*, pp. 32 - 37

given the willingness and enthusiasm of the parties involved.¹¹⁷ On the 19th of February 1954, Turkey and Pakistan announced their decision to form a pact. The following day the United States made an announcement declaring its intent to give Pakistan military aid.

For the Turks, this was a particular opportune moment to build links with Pakistan. The willingness and enthusiasm of the Pakistanis to join the western alliance was seen by them to be a major change in Pakistan's policy hitherto among the Arab states and marked an important breach in the trend towards neutrality in the region.¹¹⁸ The Turkish government did realise that the value of the pact would be, to a large extent, dependent on eventual military assistance and strategic cooperation from America and Britain, especially if the pact was to develop into an effective basis for Middle Eastern defence. However, even without such an eventual broader development, the pact would still be of value, if only for weaning Pakistan off her pan-Islamic intentions and linking her with Turkey and the west, especially since Pakistan's previous policy of identifying with the Arab League had meant a policy of Islamic solidarity and hostility towards the West and Israel.¹¹⁹

In a meeting with the Pakistani Prime Minister, Mohammed Ali Bogra, following the signing of the Pact, the Turkish Prime Minister, Adnan Menderes, stressed that Turkey had no intention of identifying with pan-Islamism. However, he noted that the Turks were just as good Muslims as the Arabs, despite Turkey now being a lay state. Perhaps still concerned by Pakistan's previous attempts at forming an Islamic bloc, he stressed the importance of preventing the Turkish-Pakistani pact becoming in anyway hostile to the west or Israel. Though Turkey understood that Pakistan did not recognise Israel, her own policy was not going to change and at most she would refrain from asking Israel to join plans for Middle Eastern defence. Bogra was not only completely understanding of these concerns, but also managed to placate the Turks by noting that Pakistan's alignment with Turkey had won the country major commendations by the important Jewish influenced *New York Times*. He had no wish to forfeit the goodwill the country had won in that quarter.¹²⁰

In the Turkish press, the young and dynamic Pakistani leadership was lauded for being against the fanatic interpretation of religion and putting the country on the road to embracing contemporary western civilisation.¹²¹ The Turks and Pakistanis on the basis of a secular understanding and cooperation with the free world had enclosed the unstable Middle Eastern region and would plug all

¹¹⁷ Telegram from Sir A.K. Helm to Foreign Office. 20 January 1954; US Military Aid to Pakistan: Memorandum by the Minister of State. 16 February 1954. *ibid.* PREM 11/1520

¹¹⁸ Ankara to Foreign Office, 15 February 1954. *ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Despatch from Sir J. Bowker to Mr. Eden, 13 March 1954. *ibid.*

¹²⁰ Letter from James Bowker, Ankara to FO. 18 June 1954. FO 371/ 110787

¹²¹ *Vatan* 'Dost ve Kardeş Pakistan'a Selam'. Pakistan Ilavesi. 7 May 1954

the holes through which strife could occur in the future.¹²² The newspaper *Cumhuriyet*, while on one hand stressing that Pakistan was not a theocratic state, also noted that the fact that a majority of country's 80 million people professed Islam and were tied by a single religion was a huge asset. India, which was troubled by diversity and social and economic problems and was under the leadership of the 'strong socialist' Nehru, was on the other hand, seeing a strong shift towards to communism.¹²³

Despite the Pakistani governments assertions abroad that she had no wish for any pan-Islamist revival, Turkey's ambiguous position as a staunch pro-western ally, in addition to her being a Muslim country allowed the reception of the pact in Pakistan to take on a decidedly religious flavour. On one hand, the signing of the Pact was used to gain leverage with the west. On the other, by stressing the Islamic flavour of such a coming together, the government attempted to win popular support for the decision to have joined with Turkey, especially at a time when the role Islam would play in a new constitution had assumed a new importance.¹²⁴

The Turkish press in its take on the common history of the two countries noted that Pakistanis had supported the Turkish freedom struggle with even young school children taking up cries of 'Long Live Mustafa Kemal', but neglected to mention that the resonance of those cries was very different in the historical imagination of Pakistan.¹²⁵ While Prime Minister Bogra simply stated that the Pact was the first step in strengthening the Muslim world, other political leaders were hardly as circumspect and declared it was the realisation of the dreams of the Muslims of the subcontinent, who had been striving for greater understanding amongst the Muslim world since the days of the

¹²² *Vatan*, 'Pakistan'la Kader Birliğimiz'. 7 May 1954

¹²³ *Cumhuriyet*, 'Bugünkü Pakistan ve Genç Başbakanı', 2 June 1954

¹²⁴ Despite initially toeing the Jinnah like line, that religion had no place in politics, Prime Minister Bogra had to change his tune when he was told that Islam was the only hope for the Muslim League to win elections scheduled for early 1954 in East Bengal. While this shift worried the civil military establishment, an opposition United Front victory in Bengal would have been even more problematic, especially given the Front's call for shifting the naval headquarters to the eastern wing and the establishment of an armaments factory. Another problem for the military was that most of the opposition to Pakistan's alignment with the West was centred in East Bengal, where the rising United Front represented a much more left wing and far less western viewpoint. While noting that the elements who were critical of an alignment with the west were primarily fellow travellers or mullahs, the Foreign Office also snarkily noted that, 'the mentality of East Pakistan is, of course, very different from that of the Muslims of the West, and with the absence of any martial traditions of significance, the importance of assistance from outside to the strengthening of Pakistan's armed forces is less present to the Bengali'. Nehru, perhaps in a fit of frustration at the international atmosphere, was not to be left behind in complicating the situation further. In a particularly pointed statement, he described moves to make Pakistan's constitution Islamic, 'medieval and totally opposed to the democratic conception'. In addition to infuriating the Pakistani leadership, the statements also sent Pakistani diplomats in a tizzy to ensure her western partners that the proposal for the inclusion of 'Islamic' in the title of the new state was only a small concession to public opinion and had no effect on the substitution of the constitution. For more see *Dawn*, 'Karachi Shocked', 16 November 1953; Outward telegram from CRO containing statement by Governor-General of Pakistan, 20th November 1953. DO 35/6583; Despatch from Karachi to CRO, 15 March 1954. PREM 11/1520; Despatch from Karachi to FO, 30 June 1954. FO 371/11231; Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule*, pp. 180 – 193;

¹²⁵ The anachronism that Pakistan did not exist at the time of the National Struggle was conveniently ignored. *Cumhuriyet*, 'Bugünkü Pakistan ve Genç Başbakanı', 2 June 1954

Khilafat.¹²⁶ The speaker of the North Western Frontier Province Assembly went as far as to state that the Pact would be a forerunner of the great dream of the late Ataturk for the creation of a United States of Islam from Morocco to Karachi.¹²⁷

The convenient smokescreen the Turkish-Pakistani Pact offered also helped to sell the American aid that had followed as a no strings attached benefaction and refute charges of Pakistan having become an American stooge. ‘A glorious chapter in our history. No bases, no undertakings’, declared *Dawn*. The fact that the Eisenhower government had decided to make a similar aid offer to India as a gesture of goodwill following her indignation, while knowing full well that it would be refused, was also used by the Pakistani press to make the case that the American aid was simply, in Eisenhower’s words, an attempt to “strengthen efforts towards regional, political, military and economic integration”.¹²⁸

Within a short span of formulating a new approach to the defence of the Middle East, then, the US had managed to establish a nucleus for Middle Eastern security. For one, as Eisenhower put it, it was the most defence the US could afford for the least money.¹²⁹ Secondly, unlike previous attempts that had been led by Britain that had invariably got bogged down by Egypt, the US already had tangible results to show for its change in policy. Beyond the issue of simple defence however, the US government had attached a great deal of importance to the closer association of Turkey and Pakistan – not merely as an occasion for them to offer military aid to Pakistan, but for its own sake.¹³⁰ Though the Turkish-Pakistani pact might in the future form the basis of a Middle East defence organisation, it did not in itself envisage joint defence planning and was mainly a political ploy to awaken both states to ‘common external dangers and internal threats of subversion’.¹³¹ Turkey had already proven her anti-Communist and pro-western sympathies. As the Turkish leaders claimed, tying Pakistan to her would put Turkey in the position of being an exemplar to follow.

¹²⁶ *Dawn*, ‘Turkey and Pakistan Enter Pact’; ‘Country Acclaims New Pact’, 20 February 1954

¹²⁷ Most reactions to the Pact played on similar Khilafat era themes. The reactions hailed ‘the dawn of a new era in Muslim history’, ‘the consolidation of Muslim thought’ and ‘the lining up of the Muslim countries in the common purpose to promote the Islamic way and world peace’ (*Dawn*, ‘Turco-Pakistan pact seen as way to Islamic unity’, 22 Feb 1954). An editorial in *Dawn* noted that such a collaboration would only build upon the tie the two countries had with each other. The Muslims of Pakistan, after all, regarded Kemal Ataturk as their own hero. (*Dawn*, ‘A Great Beginning’, 20 February 1954.) Miss Fatima Jinnah in her statement welcoming the Pact ended with “Quaid-i-Azam Zindabad. Kemal Ataturk Zindabad” (Long Live Quaid-i-Azam, Long Live Kemal Ataturk) (*Dawn*, ‘Miss Jinnah gives her blessings’, 20 February 1954).

¹²⁸ *Dawn*, ‘Eisenhower Announces Aid to Pakistan’; ‘Nehru can have it too’, 26 February 1954

¹²⁹ Jalal, *Towards the Baghdad Pact*, p. 431

¹³⁰ US Military Aid to Pakistan: Memorandum by the Minister of State, 16 February 1954. *ibid*.

¹³¹ In a meeting with the British Ambassador in Turkey, Mr. Nuri Birgi explained that the treaty itself was not an alliance and if one of the parties was attacked, the other was under no obligation to send troops to its help. Letter from Ankara to the FO, 10 April 1952. FO 371/ 112321; Jalal, ‘Towards the Baghdad Pact’, p. 431.

The same thinking also dictated the thinking of a number of the most influential American Cold Warriors. For them too, Turkey was an important model for the third world, especially as her experience with modernisation had been the most successful among the non-western societies and contained important lessons for the “Third World” and US policy towards it. Turkey was an excellent example for historical study not only because she had transitioned from a dictatorship to a democracy, but by accepting American aid and investment had also grown out of the early etatism of the Kemalist period. Authoritarianism of the Ataturk mould was seen to be the reason for Turkey’s successful modernisation, westernisation and staunch anti-communism. The security concerns of the Cold War only served to reinforce the acceptance of elite authority as a model that would help align the developing world with the west.¹³² To the Pakistani public the tie with Turkey may have been sold as a bonding based on Islamic solidarity, but unlike in the past, the fact that now a bureaucratic-military elite was in control of affairs in the country was a huge relief for Pakistan’s Western allies. It was all very well to sound off platitudes about Islamic solidarity as long as no one in power was actually serious about them and as long as they would turn public opinion against communism.

Summary

The development of the idea of the ‘Northern Tier’ made Turkey and Pakistan the two most important states for the defence of the Middle East in the official American imagination. In trying to develop some form of an indigenous defence organisation in the region, Turkey became the face of the west and the conduit through which Pakistan could avail herself of the large sums of military aid alignment with the US would bring. This double role Turkey played had a number of ramifications. On one hand it allowed Pakistan to couch her western alignment in terms of Islamic solidarity, a theme that had been a recurring one in her foreign policy ever since independence. On the other, it also allowed herself to project a different image of herself to her western allies – she was a country who was moving on the path of westernisation and modernisation and, like Turkey, was exactly the kind of country the west wanted to see developing in the region.

¹³² N J Cinito, ‘The Ottoman Legacy in Cold War Modernisation’, *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, no. 40, 2008, p. 580. Cinito notes that Ottoman-Turkish history helped provide justification for an approach towards developing countries that envisioned an authoritarian path to modernization and rationalized collaborating with dictatorial regimes by portraying democracy as the crowning achievement, rather than the precursor, of the development process. Developing societies thus achieved security and economic stability through a process that began with a revolution from above and that later permitted dictatorship to give way to democracy

IV. Charting a New Path

That the Cold War protagonists tried to control the behaviour of their local clients is not in question, but the degree of control they achieved ranged between the limited and non-existent.

- Yezid Sayigh & Avi Shlaim¹³³

The security that came with the embrace of the west did not last long for either Pakistan or Turkey once the Turkish-Pakistani Pact had been signed. The alignment with the West, at a time when Arab nationalism was at a high and when nonalignment was becoming an increasingly important trend in the politics of the third world, only served to isolate both countries and mark them out as western stooges. By the later years of the 1950's with the beginning of a détente between the west and the Soviet Union, it also became clear that the countries had lost their geostrategic importance and that alignment would not bring the benefits that it previously had.

The abatement of the Soviet threat coincided, for both countries, with the inflammation of local disputes. Problems like the dispute with India over Kashmir, for Pakistan, or the conflict in Cyprus, for Turkey, could not be presented as part of the cold war narrative. Unsurprisingly then, the inability of both to actually enlist western support for these causes, which were of huge national importance to them, was a huge blow. The principal attraction of alliance with the west in the eyes of both countries was the machinery it afforded to obtain necessary military and financial aid from the United States. But the change in cold war imperatives meant that even this benefit was quick loosing appeal. The ability of neutral India to avail herself of massive amounts of western aid or the US warning that Turkey could not use any of her US supplied arms in Cyprus help illustrate the point.

It had become clear that western alignment in addition to becoming an impotent weapon against present rivals had also restricted the ability to make new friends.

The circumstances made clear to both countries that it was necessary to build new alliances and both had to chart a new path in international politics on account of their disillusionment with the west. While on one hand this meant courting communist China (Pakistan) or trying to build a new relationship with Soviets (Turkey), another outcome was the construction of a private alliance with each other (and Iran), specifically excluding CENTO's great power participants and hoping the new

¹³³ Yezid Sayigh and Avi Shlaim (eds), *The Cold War and the Middle East*, Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1997, p. 291.

organisation might attract other Islamic countries to join. As Karpas notes, for Turkey in particular, such a move was dramatic because it called for a series of political, cultural and ideological adjustments and compromises which in some ways conflicted with the political and ideological course followed in the previous decades.¹³⁴

This chapter initially traces the isolation that alignment with the west brought. It looks at the Arab reactions to the signing of the Turkish-Pakistani Pact, which was followed by the creation of the Baghdad Pact, as well as looking at the isolation of Turkey and Pakistan from the bloc of Asian-African countries following the Bandung Conference. It then looks at the re-evaluation in positions that was engendered by the US-Soviet rapprochement and what was perceived as western indifference.

Western Alignment and Isolation

The announcement of the Turkish-Pakistani Pact was met with great indignation by the Egyptian military government. The government news organ al-Gumhurriya called the announcement of the Pact a 'conspiracy' and saw in the agreement new attempts by the West to revive plans for the setting up of Middle Eastern Defence Organisation that had in the past been rejected categorically by Cairo. The Egyptian regime worried that Egypt's demands for the evacuation of British troops from the Suez Canal Zone would only be weakened if Muslim Turkey and Pakistan joined with the West.¹³⁵ The timing of the Pact was particularly worrisome to the Egyptians, because on-going tensions between Iraq and Syria might make the former more prone to falling prey to American blandishments. Denounced, in particular, was the Turkish Foreign Minister's suggestion that the door remained open for other Middle Eastern countries. While Turkey's conspiring with the West over issues of the Middle East was hardly surprising, Pakistan's membership of the Pact would totally undermine close relations, which bound that country to the Arabs. Not only had she, against Arab warnings, joined the West, which took an unjust and hostile attitude towards the Arabs, occupied Arab territories and violated Arab rights, but had also gone as far as expressing the hope of dragging Iraq into these new plans.¹³⁶

Syrian reactions to the announcement were similarly agitated. The Syrians were worried at the possibility of Iraq being co-opted into any such agreement, as the supply of military aid to Iraq would make it easier to 'unite' with Syria. At any rate, such overtures towards Iraq would make her

¹³⁴ Karpas (ed), *Turkey's Foreign Policy in Transition*, p. 9

¹³⁵ *Dawn*, 'Naguib's paper calls it a "Conspiracy"', 22 February 1954

¹³⁶ Despatch from Cairo to FO, 24 February 1954. FO 371/ 108356

an unsatisfactory member of the Arab League. Furthermore, Pakistan's new link to the United States had weakened the Arab-Asian bloc. It now seemed likely that Pakistani support might not be as forthcoming on Arab issues at the United Nations.¹³⁷ The Arabs had so far regarded Pakistan as a member of their bloc against the western powers. While India was still neutralist and hostile to the west, Pakistan had clearly shown her disloyalty.¹³⁸ Writing to the Foreign Office about the press coverage of the Pact, the British Embassy in Damascus noted that most of the reactions were extremely hostile and a number of articles urged the Arab states to do their best to foil this scheme. A number of prominent Egyptian and Lebanese personalities made clear their opposition for the new developments. All efforts to make the agreement seem indigenous fooled no one. Western hands were seen behind the Pact and it was denounced as yet another scheme for 'colonisation'. It was noted that at best the most favourable, and yet utterly uncertain, political outcome could be that Pakistan might be able to show some degree of influence over Turkey and make her display greater friendship for the Arab states.¹³⁹ It was clearly wishful thinking as already in a fit of annoyance at this public display of hostility towards a country that saw herself as having displayed a great amount of support for the Arabs, the Pakistani Ambassador was suggesting a re-evaluation of policy towards 'such faithless allies as the Arabs'.¹⁴⁰

Baghdad was the only Arab capital to have a favourable reaction to the announcement of the Pact. Already in the process of negotiating military aid with America, Crown Prince Faisal made clear that he welcomed the Pact but would defer the question of joining any such scheme until the question of American aid had been settled. While discounting Egypt's noises of disapproval, he noted that he was concerned about the policy Syria might adopt. While it would be fantastical to think that Syria would accede to any Pact that included Turkey, given their bitter differences, he hoped that not much resistance would be put up if Iraq joined. Nuri Pasha al-Said was even more forthright about Baghdad's stance. Laying out details about a visit to South Asia to the British Ambassador, he noted that he planned to challenge Nehru about the whole conception of neutrality, noting that if Nehru wanted the entire eastern world to organise its policy on neutralist lines, he had to provide means to maintain this neutrality. If he was unable to do so, he should refrain from interfering. The British Ambassador noted that while Pasha knew he probably did not have much hope of converting Nehru to his viewpoint, his focus seemed to be on forestalling domestic opposition to Iraq becoming closer to Pakistan and Turkey.¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ Letter from British Embassy, Damascus to FO, 19 January 1954. FO 371/ 110787

¹³⁸ Letter from British Embassy, Damascus to FO, 15 February 1954. *ibid.*

¹³⁹ Letter from British Embassy, Damascus to FO, 23 February 1954. *ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ Letter from British Embassy, Damascus to FO, 15 February 1954. *ibid.*

¹⁴¹ Despatch from British Ambassador, Baghdad, to FO, 10 March 1954

Given Iraq's relative enthusiasm, it was hardly surprising that as soon as the Turkish-Pakistani Pact was signed both governments agreed that strong pressure should be put on Iraq to accede to the Pact.¹⁴² It was agreed that were Iraq were to think that a series of bilateral pacts centred on Iraq would be more efficient and suitable than a multilateral defence scheme, such an arrangement could also be considered. What was important was that Nuri's enthusiasm should not be blunted and that Iraq be drawn into some sort of defence commitment.¹⁴³ The new line taken by the Turkish government was an about turn on previous policy regarding the involvement of Arab States with Turkey. One of the factors that caused Dulles to formulate the Northern Tier concept was the Turkish view that Arab collaboration was out of the question in the Middle East. The reversal occurred during a special conference of Turkish diplomats held in Istanbul and Ankara between 12 – 17 July, 1954, where a consensus was reached that the Turkish-Pakistani agreement had stimulated some positive political thinking amongst the Arabs. Time was ripe for the furthering of friendly gestures from Turkey, which might lessen the antagonism the Arab states felt for Turkey.¹⁴⁴

The signing of the Turkish-Pakistani Pact also led to major revaluations of the role Britain took on in the region. Reflecting on the repercussion the Pact would have on her role in the region, the British Ambassador in Ankara, Sir James Bowker, wrote that it signalled the end of the old MEDO idea centred on Arab participation as the British had formulated it. The fact that under the aegis of the Mutual Security agreements, any country that decided to join with these two initial signatories would start receiving American arms to build up their military resources was a bait that was bound to attract. The proof lay in the definite signs of interest on Iraq's part. The scheme seemed like it was there to stay and was bound to be of considerable importance to in future of the Middle East and the position of Great Britain in the region. Given this, what role was Britain to play in the region? The Americans, seemed to be assuming that they would be running the show, not necessarily because of any specific intent to eliminate the British, but rather because they did not seem to think that they either needed or could get any useful help from anyone else. While so far Egypt and the Suez Canal had been regarded as the key of Middle East defence, it was looking increasingly likely that any further waiting on Egypt would relegate Britain to a very secondary role in influencing events and even entail the risk of her elimination from areas such as Iraq, where up to now her influence had been paramount.¹⁴⁵

The changing dynamics in the Middle East only became clearer when towards the end of June 1954,

¹⁴² Inward telegram to CRO, 'Turco-Pakistan Discussions', 18 June 1954. FO 371/10788.

¹⁴³ Inward telegram from CRO, 'No. 138 Saving, Secret and Guard', 17 November 1954. *ibid.*

¹⁴⁴ From Helm to FO, 28 March 1953, PREM 11/ 1520; Bowker to Eden, 3 August 1955. FO 371/110774; A. Sanijan. 'The Formulation of the Baghdad Pact', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol.33, No.2, April 1997, pp. 231 - 232

¹⁴⁵ Letter from Sir James Bowker to FO. 26 March 1954. FO 371/ 110787

the US announced that it would break with Britain and follow an independent policy in Egypt, unless the British were willing to evacuate the Suez. The move was totally in keeping with the view the Eisenhower government had formulated of the British fettering the potential to secure the Middle East against the Soviets. Seeing no other alternative, the British agreed and by October had withdrawn their troops from the Suez. By the time Turkey and Iraq had signed the Baghdad Pact, along similar lines to the Turkish-Pakistani Pact, in January 1955, the British could clearly see their position weakening in yet another old stronghold. After the relative loss of influence in Pakistan and the loss of the military base in the Suez, Iraq had assumed additional importance for Britain in the Middle East, especially because she had two military bases in that country that were coming up for renewal.¹⁴⁶ Given their precarious position in the region, the British realised that becoming part of whatever regional defence scheme that developed, and making sure Iraq was taken along too, was probably their best bet in the circumstances.

In April 1955 Britain became a signatory to the Baghdad Pact. Pakistan followed in September and Iran in October. The United States, peeved at what they saw as a British take over of negotiations for Middle Eastern defence to make sure any resulting arrangement could be used as an instrument of British policy and having come to a clear understanding of the depth of opposition to the pact within the region, especially from Egypt, decided to hold out and merely became an observer.¹⁴⁷ Britain's membership of the Pact killed even the slightest sliver of an illusion that the move to secure the Middle East was an indigenous project by the countries of the region. While Turkey was already a member of the Western bloc and a member of NATO, Pakistan's association with the Baghdad Pact made clear once and for all that she too had put her weight firmly behind the west. Given the hostility to the Pact by Egypt, India and the other neutral countries they were leading, it is hardly surprising that the members were cast in the image of tools in the hands of the west.

Turkey and Pakistan, in particular, had only isolated themselves from the third world countries further by their stance taken at the Asian-African Countries held at Bandung in 1955. Mustafa Aydin notes that originally Turkey was not keen to attend. However, under pressure from the west, she changed her mind and used her attendance to warn attendee states against the threats created by 'middle of the road' measures, in addition to defending her western alliance with harsh attacks on non-alignment, socialism and communism.¹⁴⁸ Nehru, acknowledged as some sort of path finder for

¹⁴⁶ Jalal, 'Towards the Baghdad Pact', pp 430 - 432

¹⁴⁷ N.J. Ashton, "The Hijacking of a Pact", pp. 129 - 132

¹⁴⁸ Aydin, 'Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy', p. 114. The British Foreign Office openly acknowledged that from the western viewpoint such a conference was hardly desirable. The participant countries had nothing in common except that they were different from Europeans and Americans. Having recently emerged from western domination, there was still a fear of a re-imposition of alien domination, even if only in an alien, indirect form. While in the west,

the newly independent nations, came in for particular attack from the Turkish Deputy Prime Minister, Fatin Rüştü Zorlu, who spoke at length of the baneful results that would follow the adoption of a neutral policy in the face of the Soviet threat. In a rebuttal to arguments of western neo-colonialism, Zorlu also argued that the a new Soviet colonialism had developed alongside the classic colonialism and asked for this to be condemned no less strongly.¹⁴⁹ Pakistan had similarly earned the gratitude of the west by stoutly defending against attacks from other hostile parties. This commitment to the west on the part of both countries brought criticism from the Asian and Arab world and hostility from the Communist bloc. It also came without the compensatory security that the west would provide the requisite support on the issues that affected them.

India, Cyprus and a Re-evaluation of Positions

This intense pro-western zeal did not last long. The Suez Crisis of 1956 was a major blow for the organisation and its individual members, who became tainted with the events that had taken place. Furthermore, the inherent weakness of the Baghdad Pact had become clear soon enough, as it became a vehicle for the individual members to further their own interests. The lack of accomplishment towards any serious military planning only added to its debility.¹⁵⁰

Nuri Pasha, the one major Arab leader who had remained committed to the west, was hit the hardest by his alignment with the west led to his ouster in a military coup in July 1958. By March 1959 Iraq had formally withdrawn from the Pact. The Iraqi withdrawal and a shift of Ankara allowed for a change in name and the alignment was re-designated the Central Treaty Organisation.¹⁵¹ Despite the name change the fundamental weakness of the organisation remained. The State Department noted that 'CENTO does not in fact offer the means of defending the Middle East against a major Soviet attack, by reason of the weakness of its members, particularly Iran'.¹⁵² At any rate, the threat of an outright aggression by the Soviet Union was fast dwindling even by the time CENTO was established and it was hardly surprising that, over time, more of an economic emphasis was put on

the greatest fear in world politics was the struggle with communism, to many people in Asia and Africa the major on-going struggle was between imperialism and national freedoms. The unifying element between these countries, therefore, was that of anti-westerism because no other such element was possible. The organisation of such a conference brought with it the inherent danger that it might lead to some Afro-Asian bloc, which if forced to adopt an attitude in the on-going struggle might prefer communism, no because it liked the ideology but because it disliked the west more. Report of Afro-Asian Conference, DO 35/ 6099

¹⁴⁹ Z. Kuneralp. *Just a Diplomat*. The Isis Press: Istanbul, 1992, pp. 55 - 57

¹⁵⁰ M. J. Cohen, *Strategy and Politics in the Middle East*, p. 190

¹⁵¹ *ibid.*, pp. 211 - 213

¹⁵² Quoted in W.M. Hale and J. Bharier, 'CENTO, R.C.D and the Northern Tier: A Political and Economic Appraisal', *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (May, 1972), p. 218

the organisation as opposed to a military one.¹⁵³ This transformation of the importance of Middle Eastern had important ramifications for both Turkey and Pakistan and their relationship with the west.

By early 1957, the amount of aid being received by Pakistan had already been called into question by the US Bureau of Budget. An evaluation of the US-Pakistani relationship had led President Eisenhower to note that the US tendency to rush out and seek allies 'was not very sensible'. The US was doing practically nothing for Pakistan except in the form of military aid and while Eisenhower lamented the military commitment to Pakistan as 'perhaps the worst kind of a plan and decision we could have made' and a 'terrible error', there was little the US could do to disengage since it was now 'hopelessly involved in it'.¹⁵⁴ The election of John F. Kennedy to office in 1961 led to an immediate re-evaluation of policy against neutral countries, who were believed to have been mistakenly side-lined in favour of military aid relationships and formal alliances, only to lead to greater Soviet influence over countries like India and Egypt. India had a special hold over Kennedy, who thought of her as the key to Asia, and especially important as a bulwark against the threat China posed to Asia's equilibrium.

By late 1961 Pakistan was already worried about the perceived western indifference to India's annexation of the Portuguese colony of Goa. Just as the NATO member had not been helped in the face of Indian aggression because she had not been a victim of Soviet aggression, so too Pakistan, despite being a member of CENTO and SEATO, would be left out in the cold if India decided to attack her. It was clearer than ever to Pakistan that the west was only keen on using their allies to check communism and Pakistan's willingness to support the west had brought her no preferential treatment or advantages vis-à-vis India.¹⁵⁵

This change in direction was only cemented further with the break out of the Sino-Indian war in late 1962, which the US saw as a huge opportunity to court India, while the Soviets pondered the dilemma of choosing between India, with whom they had assiduously cultivated ties, and China, a fellow communist state. Kennedy swiftly offered India support, which Nehru immediately

¹⁵³ *ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ It was noted that the US was supporting a large military establishment in Pakistan numbering over 180,000 men, that was proving counter productive to the establishment of a viable state structure. The armed forces were consuming nearly 70 per cent of the central government revenues and monopolised the talents and skills needed for a nation building program. It was acknowledged however that the US bore considerable responsibility for the state of affairs in encouraging Pakistan to develop her military strength beyond the capacity she had to support it. McMohan, p. 207.

¹⁵⁵ Despatch from British High Commission, Karachi to FO. 30 January 1962. *ibid.*

accepted.¹⁵⁶ US policy in the region had come full circle - when the United States extended military aid to Pakistan under the aegis of the Mutual Security Agreements in 1954, the Indian Government had been assured that if Pakistan were to misuse this aid in an aggressive fashion against her, the United States would immediately take appropriate action both within and without the United Nations to thwart such aggression. Now, extending military aid to India to help her against the Chinese attack, the Government of Pakistan was assured that if India misused this aid against her, the United States would resort to appropriate action in support of Pakistan both within and without the United Nations.¹⁵⁷

This change in US policy was horrifying to Pakistan. Taken aback by the rage unleashed throughout the country, the US noted that the Pakistani's 'were going through a genuine emotional crisis'. Pakistan had wished to secure, through CENTO, a collectively organised and underwritten defence of her territory against an Indian attack. Such thinking might have been spurred on by political immaturity and wishful thinking, but seeing the spectacle of US aid to India was equal to seeing those ambitions, however naïve, going up in smoke.¹⁵⁸ Already upset at the US approach which treat an allied country and a non-aligned country on a footing of equality, Ayub Khan had openly noted that the US policy in the region was becoming a threat to Pakistan's security, going as far as to say Pakistan too was considering adopting neutralism and was reexamining her membership of the western alliances CENTO and SEATO.¹⁵⁹ This attitudes only strengthened after the Sino-India war and pushed Pakistan towards a policy of limited disengagement from the west.

For Turkey, the détente process was particularly important. The Soviet threat in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War had been so imminent, that there was never much question of Turkey's need for and dependency on the west. Similarly, this threat also sustained economic and military aid to the country. Mustafa Aydin notes that the détente increased the importance of the secondary states – a large number of them those very countries Turkey had managed to isolate at Bandung – and led to the emergence of a more complex and multidimensional international configuration. The new international atmosphere had made it more possible for small members of alliance systems to have relations with other states, disregarding military blocs and it had become

¹⁵⁶ The position of the Indian forces pointed to the fact that they might be helpless to prevent the Chinese occupation of large swathes of Indian territory or protect her major cities from Chinese air attacks. A panicky Nehru, requesting US military dispatches in addition to personnel to operate military equipment and pilot fighter jets, described the situation to Kennedy as "really desperate". Facing his biggest crisis, the patron of non-alignment believed he had no option but to ask for US help. McMohan, pp. 286 – 292.

¹⁵⁷ K. B. Sayeed. 'Pakistan's Foreign Policy: An Analysis of Pakistani Fears and Interests', *Asian Survey*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Mar., 1964), p. 747

¹⁵⁸ British High Commission in Pakistan to Secretary of State, CRO, 6 June 1962. DO 196/128; McMohan, pp 290 -291

¹⁵⁹ Acting British high Commissioner in Pakistan to Secretary of State, CRO, 11 October 1961. DO 196/128

imperative for Turkey to expand its relations in a new, more fragmented world.¹⁶⁰

Turkey's disenchantment with the western military alliances had begun when she had not received the expected support over her disputes with Syria and the USSR through the Baghdad Pact. She was increasingly concerned about becoming strategically outflanked by a communist state on her southern border and was frustrated by the lack of intervention on the part of her allies.¹⁶¹ Still, she primarily saw herself as a European power and a NATO member and there was solace to be found in that, much stronger, organisation.

The first real jolt to Turkey's alignment with the west occurred during the Cuban missile crisis. In 1959, the Menderes and Eisenhower governments had reached an agreement for 15 Jupiter intermediate-range ballistic missiles, armed with nuclear warheads, would be installed on Turkish soil. This move enhanced Turkey's military strength and showed the alliance's readiness to use atomic weapons against a Soviet attack on Turkey. This planned deployment of the Jupiters immediately became a source of diplomatic complaints by the USSR. In May 1962 these protestations were made public. The Cuban missile crisis erupted just as the Jupiters were being handed over to the Turkish authorities and one of the Soviet conditions for the withdrawal of missiles from Cuba, was the US withdrawal of Jupiters from Turkey. The initial public stance taken by the US and Turkey was that the diffusion of the crisis had not involved any *quid pro quo*, but later revelations by the then US Attorney-General Robert Kennedy revealed that it had been indicated to the Soviets that if the missiles in Cuba were withdrawn, the missiles in Turkey too would be gone a short while later. While the effects of the Cuban missile crisis were not immediate or public, they did give Turkey cause for pause. Turkey's close brush with hostilities during a major Cold War crisis made her realise that she had willingly put herself on the doorstep of a nuclear war and that foreign policy dealings in the future needed to be more cautious.¹⁶²

Relations with the western alliance would deteriorate further when problems in Cyprus – this time, a move to designate the Turkish community in the island a minority - erupted, yet again, in 1964. NATO, and in particular the US, was reluctant to enter what was seen as a local dispute between two alliance members. For Turkey, who was expecting American support, this reluctance came as a rude shock.¹⁶³ Not only had the west failed Turkey on an issue that had a profound significance for

¹⁶⁰ Aydin, 'Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy', pp. 115 - 116

¹⁶¹ M. J. Cohen, *Strategy and Politics in the Middle East*, p. 190

¹⁶² Hale, pp. 133 – 136. Furthermore, Aydin (p.122 - 123) notes that the missiles were apparently removed without consultation with the Turkish government and the sudden, drastic US action only illuminated to Turkey that in a moment of crisis, consideration for and consultation with its allies would be a swiftly discarded US policy.

¹⁶³ Not only had The Cold War détente had reduced Turkey's geostrategic importance for the US but lobbying by the

her, but she also found herself without the support of either her Balkan or Middle Eastern neighbours or countries belonging to the Afro-Asian bloc. The fact that the US would not go out of her way to protect Turkey's interests became crystal clear in a letter President Lyndon B. Johnson wrote to İsmet İnönü, who was Premier at the time. The US made clear that it would not agree to the use of any US supplied military equipment for a Turkish intervention in Cyprus. Furthermore, if Turkey were to take a rash step at this juncture, it was not clear whether her NATO allies would feel that they had any obligation to protect her against the Soviets.¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, following the enactment of a new constitution in 1961, domestic public opinion could now be much more freely expressed than before and anti-western sentiments eventually began having an affect on foreign policy.

The adverse conditions both these staunch, if not staunchest of US allies, faced only pushed them to try and regain some freedom of initiative in foreign policy and to try and build relationships that were outside the western alliance.

The Establishment of an Alternate Regional Organisation

The realisation that not only was alignment with the west not bringing the anticipated benefits, but also precluding making new friends led the members of CENTO towards forming a private alliance that excluded CENTO's great-power participants. It was a tentative and cautious move towards loosening the existing bonds with the west and perhaps, unsurprisingly, in a search for sympathetic partners the member countries turned to each other. The first move towards this direction came during a meeting of CENTO regional members in early July 1964, where greater cooperation between the Muslim members was urged outside the framework of CENTO in the economic, technical and cultural fields. The British, following the developments closely, noted that it was not yet clear where the initiative for the development was coming from but it seemed likely that it was President Ayub who was pressing for kind of formal pact. Ayub himself did not waste any opportunity to state that the three countries should get together on a platform to guarantee each other's security and be more than the mere pawns of the great powers in their game of chess.¹⁶⁵

The British Ambassador in Turkey, Sir Dennis Allen, noted that in this new scheme of things the

Greek-American community and Christian protest against the restrictions put by Turkey on the activities of the Orthodox Patriarchate in Istanbul also added to Turkey's poor position when it came to Cyprus. Aydin, pp.120 - 121

¹⁶⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ *Hürriyet*, 'Eyüp Han, Türkiye, Pakistan ve İran arasında cephe birliği teklif etti' 5 July 1964

Turks and Pakistanis had their own ideas to propagate and for the moments the Iranians were content to simply follow their lead. The visit of the Pakistani President to Turkey, within the framework of the CENTO meet, had taken on an important dimension because of the Turkish need to secure Pakistani support over the Cyprus issue. The Turkish press, in particular, had made noises that Ayub Khan would be briefed on Cyprus so that he could defend the Turkish viewpoint at the forthcoming conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers to be held in London. Khan did not disappoint the Turks. Turkish – Pakistani discussions during his visit made clear that Pakistan would support Turkey on the Cyprus issue and Turkey in turn would give Pakistan support on the Kashmir issue. They both also hoped that problem of eviction of Muslim minorities from India would be solved expeditiously through negotiations between India and Pakistan and rather pointedly, and out of harmony with CENTO, welcomed the announcement of the convening of a second Asian-African Conference.¹⁶⁶

Despite noises that any new regional organisation would not be political in nature,¹⁶⁷ it was blatantly clear that ‘a desire for greater economics, technical and cultural cooperation is not an important factor’. What was certain was that all three regional members, but Turkey and Pakistan in particular, shared feelings of frustration about the failure of CENTO to support them on political issues such as Cyprus and Kashmir. The move was aimed to secure a wider field of manoeuvre than the purely anti-communist framework CENTO provided and to increase their links with the non-aligned world. Such a development would add to their respectability in the eyes of the non-aligned world but this would come only at the cost of diluting their own commitment to the west.¹⁶⁸

By the end of July a new organisation called the Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD) with membership of Turkey, Iran and Pakistan was announced. The new organisation was seen as aiming to establish a new ‘Muslim bloc’- perhaps unsurprisingly, since Ayub, in arguing for an organisation, had played up the need for Muslim cooperation while in Istanbul.¹⁶⁹ The announcement was met by the West with initial caution. The Foreign Office and US State Department decided that publicly the news should be met with western support. There was no wish to inhibit cooperation between regional members *inter se* or with non-CENTO members, especially

¹⁶⁶ From Sir D. Allen to FO, 8 July 1964, DO 196/317; *Dawn*, ‘Ayub to tell C’wealth PMs of Turkish Concerns Over Cyprus’ 5 July 1964; *Cumhuriyet*, ‘Kardeş Pakistan Kıbrıs Konsunda Bizi Destekliyor’, 4 July 1964; *Cumhuriyet*, ‘Eyüp Han Dün Ankaradan Ayırdı’, 6 July 1964;

¹⁶⁷ Conveying information to the US the Foreign Office noted that none of the regional countries has much to offer the others in these fields and CENTO economic programme had hardly indicated great enthusiasm among them for this sort of cooperation. FO to Washington, 9 July 1964, DO 196/317

¹⁶⁸ Despatch from W. Morris, ‘Meeting of Cento Regional Foreign Ministers’, July 1964, *ibid.* (Original underlining)

¹⁶⁹ *The Times*, ‘Establishment of “New Muslim Bloc”’, 22 July 1964; *Dawn*, ‘İstanbul Accord a Landmark in History of Islam’, 27 July 1964; *Cumhuriyet*, ‘Türkiye Pakistan ve İran arasında birlik kuruluyor’, 25 July 1964

if, in the case of Pakistan, this development might mean an alternative to further involvement with China. The Turkish guarantees that they had no intention to derogate from CENTO were taken at face value, but it was acknowledged that much in the future would depend on whether she was later faced with an unacceptable solution for Cyprus and would find it necessary to give more positive expression to their disillusionment with her Western allies.¹⁷⁰

The move might have been played down by CENTO's Muslim members, but that there was now an actual effort being made to try and disengage with the West was clearer than ever. *The Economist* commenting on the new organisation noted that it only sealed yet another nail in CENTO's coffin. It was natural that Pakistan should be leading this scheme. She might have received substantial economic and military benefits from her western allies in the past, but India had now demonstrated that both could be secured without alignment and in essence that was the direction the new alignment pointed to as well. Instead of a anti-colonial platform, the RCD built upon a common Muslim heritage of west Asia. Given these religious overtones what was one to make of Turkey's involvement in the project? Turkey was a secular state that had for forty years turned away from Asia, towards Europe and some of the most ardent Kemalists of the country had no wish to turn back east on the basis of Islam. Yet, Pakistan – 'on the basis of a genuine Moslem fellow-feeling' – was offering her support at a difficult time and it was clear that the Cyprus issue had provoked the Turks into re-examining their international position.¹⁷¹

This contradiction was not solved by Turkish officials, who emphasized that cooperation with Iran and Pakistan affords 'no contradiction with Turkey's European oriented policy', while also noting that Turkey was 'playing a liaison role between west and east'.¹⁷² The rehashing of the tired old metaphor of a bridge did not hide the fact that Turkey was in desperate need allies who would support her internationally. Already there was talk of trying to bring in other Muslim countries into this alignment. Afghanistan, in particular, had shown keen interest and there was soon talk of Indonesia being drafted in as well. For the moment, the need for friends at the time was much greater than any deference to secular posturing in international sphere.¹⁷³

Summary

The isolation that followed Turkish and Pakistani support for the west during a period when neutralism was becoming a trend that was gathering steam completely isolated both countries from

¹⁷⁰ Ankara to FO, 27 July 1964 DO 196/ 317

¹⁷¹ *The Economist*, 'Moslem de Gaulle?', 16 August 1964

¹⁷² *The Times*, 'Establishment of "New Muslim Bloc"', 22 July 1964

¹⁷³ *Dawn*, 'Closer ties amongst all Muslim States', 21 July 1964, *The Economist*, 'Moslem de Gaulle?', 16 August 1964, *Dawn*, 'Indonesia may join Istanbul Accord', 17 August 1964,

the other developing Asian and African nations. Both probably expected that with the support of the west, the support of these countries was hardly needed. However, with the détente in relations between the US and the Soviet Union and a cooling down in the Cold War, both simultaneously lost the geopolitical advantage that had made them important allies of the west. Quite simply, for the west these two allies were no longer as important as they had once been in the larger scheme of things and the fact that they had local problems of their own did not mean that the west would necessarily have to come out in support of them. The fact that both Turkey and Pakistan needed to build alliances was writing on the wall. The RCD was just one avenue for both countries to try and gently disengage with the west. In hindsight the organisation might not have accomplished very much, but the circumstances around its creation are interesting in how they delineate the changes in foreign policy of both countries. Turkey, in particular, had come full circle. From refusing to identify with any pact that had a religious base, she had come around to doing just that in the hope of winning friends in the international arena.

V. Conclusion

The Turkish-Pakistani relationship during the Cold War turns out to be an interesting one to unravel because it brings together a number of different themes. In the actual initiation of a formal relationship between the two, factors like decolonisation, Middle Eastern security, British decline and American dominance all came into play. It also helps delineate the complexity of events during the time period and, in general, the complexity that international politics and alliances bring with them.

The story of how western strategic imperatives brought together two countries that were positioned at the geographical poles of the Middle East and made them the nucleus for a security organisation in the region is interesting in itself and only helps point to the vagaries geopolitics may lead to. Beyond that, however, what the relationship brings out is a capacity for agency on the part of smaller countries. Turkey and Pakistan might have been seen as pawns in a game of chess, but they were pawns that became increasingly difficult to manipulate. The two countries might have been brought together in a western alliance through the machinations of western realpolitik, but the fact that they already had a history of engagement, a degree of familiarity with each other and a level of cultural affinity made it easier for them to look to each other for support and alliance as a port of first call, when it became clear that the west was not going to provide those.

Also interesting in the whole equation was the changing role that religion came to play in this equation. Pakistan, not unlike today, was still seesawing over what role religion should play, not only in her domestic, politics but in shaping her foreign affairs too. While initially scouting for support for the idea of an Islamic bloc in the years after independence, her alignment with Turkey and the west and the ascendancy of a bureaucratic-military elite scuttled any such religious tendencies. Yet, in a moment of crisis, one of the first ideas that was formulated - by the largely irreligious military man Ayub Khan no less - to move towards a limited disengagement with the west was one of a bloc that was clearly touted as Islamic. The fact that Turkey was willing to go along with the scheme and become a member of the RCD, after nearly four decades of looking westward, renouncing the idea of religious blocs and generally considering herself European, says a great deal about the desperate need she felt to build new allies. It also points to the strange resilience and even stranger reincarnations that concepts like religious solidarity and cooperation and pan-Islamism took, allowing them to remain relevant.

In contrast, but also still relevant today is the idea of the Turkish model for Pakistan. The idea is one

that truly can be traced back to the Cold War, when it was hoped that tying Pakistan to Turkey would give her an example to follow and put her on the path to modernisation. A similar parallel exists today. A 2009 US diplomatic cable released by Wikileaks showed that moderate, progressive Turkey, now a relatively stable Muslim democracy, was being pushed by the US as a positive role model for Pakistan.¹⁷⁴ The parallels to an earlier era are striking. Turkey, once again more confident in the international arena, was positioning herself as a model to be followed. The US yet again was agreeing.

If thinking about what the outcomes were of this western sponsored collaboration between Turkey and Pakistan, it is hard to come up with any concrete answers. Clearly, the strategic imperatives of the Cold War no longer survive and organisations like the RCD, which were built in reaction to events at that particular time, too have slowly faded away. What has really survived then is, in a sense, an intangible. The relationship clearly survives in examples like the reaction seen in Turkey to the earthquake or flood in Pakistan or in the Turkish model being consistently held up as a mirror for Pakistan. It is quite literally that feeling of brotherhood and friendliness that is frequently schmaltzily mentioned in news reports and references to each other.

¹⁷⁴ *Hürriyet Daily News*, 'Turkey seen as role model for Pakistan in US cable', 2 December 2010.
<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=turkey-showed-role-model-for-pakistan-in-us-cable-2010-12-02>