

AMBASSADOR HENRY MORGENTHAU TO TURKEY, 1913-1916:

PROTECTION OF AMERICAN RIGHTS

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The purpose of this study is to examine Henry Morgenthau's efforts to protect Americans and their interests in the Ottoman Empire during 1914 and 1915, to analyze the problems he encountered, and to evaluate his achievements.

Although Morgenthau had no experience in diplomacy, he successfully endeavored to protect American interests at a time when their continued existence appeared doubtful. Prior to World War I American-Turkish relations were governed by the "capitulations" which, in effect, granted the United States extra-territorial rights. Under them, American citizens and their institutions were relatively free from Ottoman regulations. In 1914 the Ottoman government, taking advantage of the disunity of the European powers arising from World War I, abrogated the capitulations. With their removal, Americans and their institutions were left at the mercy of the Turks.

Morgenthau's efforts in behalf of the American interests were greatly aided by his close friendly association with the Turkish leaders. Arriving in Constantinople at a time when the future of the Ottoman Empire looked bleak, he assiduously attempted to appear as a true friend of the empire. While the other ambassadors made no secret of their countries ambitions in the Near East, Morgenthau professed America's noninvolvement in that part of the world and publicly sympathized with the Turks. He genuinely attempted to create American loans for the needy Ottoman government and, when those efforts failed, proved willing

to allow the Turks to use rumors of a possible American loan to gain better arrangements with French financiers. Because of these actions, the Turkish leaders asked Morgenthau to make a social-economic study of the empire in the hopes of interesting future American investments. Thus, Ambassador Morgenthau fortunately was able to create a feeling of goodwill between himself and the Turkish leaders prior to the abrogation of the capitulations.

The ambassador grew into his responsibilities. When he arrived in Constantinople in November 1913 he idealistically believed the "Young Turk" regime was progressive. He was amazed to find how openly the other ambassadors discussed their countries ambitions. The naive diplomat merely believed that to create better relations it was only necessary to contrast America's traditional isolationist Near East policy to the policies of the European powers. Therefore, when all foreign businesses in Smyrna, including the American, were boycotted by the Turks in June 1914, it came as a shock to Morgenthau. Because of the boycott's severity and the persecution of the city's Greek minority, his sympathy for the Ottoman government hardened into contempt.

Yet Morgenthau did not allow his disillusionment to affect his relationship with the Ottoman government. When the American citizens at Smyrna requested an American warship, Morgenthau refused. After the abrogation of the capitulations he continually counseled the American citizens and consular agents to cooperate and work closely with the local Turkish officials. When the Beirut consul threatened to use armed American sailors to protect American property, Morgenthau advised the naval commanders that they were not to receive their orders from

the consulates. The ambassador did not believe in "gunboat diplomacy" and pointed out to Americans residing in the empire that until they wished to be evacuated, they would have to depend upon Ottoman protection.

In November 1914 the Ottoman Empire entered World War I. Soon afterwards, new regulations were enacted which placed all foreign schools and institutions under direct Ottoman control. These new rules not only attempted to regulate the extensive American philanthropic interests in the empire but, through higher tax requirements, appeared as a direct threat to the institutions' continued existence. Throughout 1915 Ambassador Morgenthau appealed to the Turkish leaders for moderations to the regulations and delays to their enforcement. Because of his personal relations and influence with the Turkish leaders, Morgenthau was finally able to gain changes in the regulations which enabled the American institutions to continue their operations.

While Morgenthau was expected to protect American interests, he surprisingly found the State Department his greatest hindrance. When the Ottoman government abrogated the capitulations the State Department refused to recognize the legality of the action. Throughout Morgenthau's mission the State Department refused to alter its position. Thus, in his efforts to protect American interests and achieve moderation to the Ottoman regulations, he was left with little bargaining power. That the American philanthropic interests survived must be credited more to Henry Morgenthau's personal efforts than to any other factor.

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CHAPTER I

AMERICAN - TURKISH RELATIONS

Prior to World War I America's relations with the Ottoman Empire had traditionally adhered to noninvolvement in the internal and international politics of that country. The State Department's position was understandable as the United States was geographically remote to the Near East and American investments and interests in that portion of the world were minimal. American interests in Turkey centered in the colleges and missions established by American missionaries and in the restricted number of American businessmen whose work, chiefly the purchase of tobacco and the marketing of petroleum products, had led them to reside in Turkey.

The American Board for Foreign Missions had initiated the first American involvement in the Ottoman Empire. In 1819, the American Board sent two missionaries to labor in Palestine as it seemed intolerable that Christianity's birthplace should forever be in the grasp of Islam or left to exhibit a lifeless form of Christianity. The principal aim was not conversion owing to Mohammedan religious fanaticism. Instead, the missionaries focused on the reinfusion of life into the native Christian churches within the empire. By 1850, inspired by the slogan, "the evangelization of the world in this generation," the American Board had sixty-four active missionaries in Turkey and that country was fairly astir with their influence.¹

¹Vahan Cardashian, The Ottoman Empire of the Twentieth Century (1908), 193-94, hereinafter cited as Cardashian, The Ottoman Empire; William E. Strong, The Story of the American Board: An Account of the First Hundred Years of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (1910), 80, 107, hereinafter cited as Strong, American Board.

Acknowledging the need for health education and the provision of medical service as essential to aid their evangelical efforts, the American missionaries eventually established medical missions, hospitals and orphanages staffed with Christian doctors and workers. The American Board supported twenty hospitals and dispensaries and five nurses training schools treating nearly forty thousand patients annually. In 1908, Dr. Mary Eddy established near Beirut the first tuberculosis sanitorium in the Ottoman Empire. Such attention to the medical needs of the empire created an excellent rapport between the Moslem population and the Americans. The clinics and hospitals were open to all and their treasuries served as free banks of deposit for Turkish farmers.²

During the American Civil War the Reverend Cyrus Hamlin, an American missionary in Constantinople, conceived the idea of broadening the missionary educational policy in Turkey. With American financial support, in 1864 he founded an American college in Constantinople which was Christian in purpose and character, but not a missionary institution. This new institution, taking the name of Robert College, was the first American college established abroad, and served as the pioneer of many other such institutions which were soon thereafter flourishing throughout the empire. Gradually the college expanded its operations and by 1919

²Strong, American Board, 501-04; Howard M. Sachar, The Emergence of the Middle East: 1914-1924 (1969), 341, hereinafter cited as Sachar, Emergence of the Middle East; John A. DeNovo, American Interests and Policies in the Middle East, 1900-1939 (1963), 31, hereinafter cited as DeNovo, American Interests.

its property value was well over a million dollars.³

The Syrian Protestant College, now the American University of Beirut, was the first such school to be established in the Arab portions of the Ottoman Empire. While Robert College was oriented toward instruction in the liberal arts, Syrian Protestant College emphasized the sciences and eventually evolved into a fully-developed medical school. In 1871, the Constantinople Woman's College was founded by energetic Mary Mills Patrick who, by 1914, had enlarged its campus to seventy-five acres. In 1926, Miss Patrick's college was reported by the Near East Relief Agency as comparing "favorably both in situation and in buildings with the leading women's colleges of America."⁴ Euphrates College at Harput, founded in 1895, served more than three million people and was reported as "a veritable lighthouse amid dark and stormy waters." In sum, by 1914, American philanthropy was supporting eight colleges, forty-six secondary schools, and 369 elementary schools with a total enrollment of 25,400 students in all institutions.⁵

³ Lewis V. Thomas and Richard N. Frye, The United States and Turkey and Iran (1951), 141; Luther R. Fowle to Secretary of State, October 1, 1919, case 367.1164R54/22, National Archives Building, General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, hereinafter cited as R.G. 59.

⁴ Stephen B. L. Penrose, That They May Have Life: The Story of the American University of Beirut, 1866-1941 (1941), 14-15, hereinafter cited as Penrose, That They May Have Life; Mary Mills Patrick, A Bosphorus Adventure: Istanbul (Constantinople) Woman's College, 1871-1924 (1934), 100-30, 137-40, 156-59, hereinafter cited as Patrick, A Bosphorus Adventure; Frank A. Ross, Luther C. Fry, and Elbridge Sibley, The Near East and American Philanthropy: A Survey (1929), 157-58, hereinafter cited as Ross, Fry and Sibley, The Near East.

⁵ Strong, American Board, 404; DeNovo, American Interests, 96.

Americans remained at their posts during periods of wars, pestilence, famine and massacre. The United States, through the efforts of its missionaries and educators, helped introduce into Turkey modern education, modern medicine, the modern printing press, and many industrial, agricultural and commercial improvements which materially added to the prosperity of the country. According to Dr. Talcott Williams, writing in 1919, American philanthropy during the past century had invested about \$100,000,000 in Turkey. As he stated: "such a record and influence no people has ever had in another land." With considerable justice James L. Barton, secretary of the American Board for Foreign Missions, claimed that:

American interest in the Turkish Empire is second to that of no other country if interest is measured by the time, strength and sacrifice which have been given by Americans to plant, develop and maintain educational, medical, industrial, benevolent and religious institutions throughout the length and breadth of the Turkish Empire.⁶

American interests in Turkey, however, had not centered solely around philanthropic endeavors. As early as 1831 the first American minister to the Ottoman Empire, Commodore David Porter, finding the Sultan was very interested in American naval achievements, brought to Turkey Henry Eckford, one of America's greatest ship builders, to help strengthen the Turkish navy. In 1846, upon the request of the Sultan, the United States agreed to send to Turkey Dr. James Bolton Davis and Dr. J. Lawrence Smith, successful South Carolina Planters, to help

⁶ Eliot Grinnel Mears, Modern Turkey: A Politico-Economic Interpretation, 1908-1923 (1924), 361-62, hereinafter cited as Mears, Modern Turkey; James L. Barton to Robert Lansing, April 6, 1916, R.G. 59, 367.116/469.

improve the cotton culture. But these economic efforts were really inconsequential, for throughout the nineteenth century the commercial relations between the Ottoman Empire and the United States were never of prime importance.⁷

But as Americans surveyed their maturing industrial economy at the beginning of the twentieth century, the possibilities of expanding commerce and investment abroad attracted much more attention. Between 1908 and 1912, the Taft administration tried to apply "dollar diplomacy" to the Ottoman Empire. Without the enthusiastic support of Ambassador Oscar S. Straus, who feared what he called the "maze of European alignments" in Turkey, it nevertheless appears that those efforts to increase American trade were at least partly successful. From 1906 to 1912 American exports to Turkey increased from a little more than 1.2 to over 5.3 million dollars while imports from Turkey during the same years increased from 2.1 to over 6 millions. So rapid was the trade increase that the American consul-general in Constantinople, who compiled all American commercial statistics in the empire, could report that by 1914 the United States had become Turkey's second best customer, ranking second only to Great Britain.⁸

⁷Merle Curti and Kendall Birr, Prelude to Point Four: American Technical Missions Overseas, 1838-1938 (1954), 22-24, 54-55, hereinafter cited as Curti and Birr, Prelude to Point Four.

⁸Naomi W. Cohen, "Ambassador Straus in Turkey, 1909-1910: A Note on Dollar Diplomacy," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XLV (1959), 637, hereinafter cited as Cohen, Ambassador Straus in Turkey; Mears, Modern Turkey, 349; Ravndal to Serri Bey, September 22, 1915, item 630, Vol. 16, Constantinople Embassy Records, National Archives Building, Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State, Record Group 84, hereinafter cited as R.G. 84.

Among the most interesting commercial activities were the licorice interests of MacAndrews and Forbes. This firm, perhaps the largest in the world which purchased licorice root, enjoyed a virtual monopoly of the licorice trade in Turkey. The root was used chiefly in the manufacture of chewing gum and candy, for sweetening chewing tobacco, and for coloring and sweetening beer. The company maintained one of the largest establishments at Smyrna, a large Turkish seaport.⁹

The Standard Oil Company of New York (Socony, currently Mobil Oil Corporation), also had extensive commercial interests in the Ottoman Empire. In 1911 Socony received licenses to explore for oil in northern Anatolia and in Palestine. Geologists and mining engineers were sent, and in Palestine a drill was established south of Beersheba. By 1913 Socony had obtained full concessionary rights to seven plots in Palestine and had approximately sixty more in either preliminary or intermediate stages of negotiation. The company was finally forced to abandon its exploratory efforts in 1914 for several years when the European conflict spread to the Near East. Socony also had built up an extensive export market for its products, especially kerosene, in the Levant and Asia Minor. In 1911 it established a distribution agency in Constantinople and completed storage tanks and warehouses there and at Smyrna. By World War I, the company's sales were on the increase throughout the empire.¹⁰

According to its claims, the Singer Sewing Machine Company by 1918,

⁹DeNovo, American Interests, 39.

¹⁰Stephen Hemsley Longrigg, Oil in the Middle East: Its Discovery and Development (1968), 25, hereinafter cited as Longrigg, Oil in the Middle East; DeNovo, American Interests, 39-40, 169.

had nearly two hundred agencies or stores throughout Asiatic Turkey. President Douglas Alexander conservatively estimated that his company did a gross business of one million dollars there during a normal year.¹¹

Although American commerce and investment were modest, there were great expectations for a bright future for American trade and capital in the Near East. It was owing to the increased commercial activity in Turkey that the legation at Constantinople was finally elevated to an embassy in 1906.¹²

The increased commercial activities also resulted in the establishment of the American Chamber of Commerce at Constantinople in 1911 and in the organization of steamship lines directly connecting Turkey and the United States. The American Chamber of Commerce formed branches in the major commercial centers of the empire. By 1912 the association claimed five hundred members and wanted to organize other branch offices in other areas. To deal with American trade interests in the country the chamber established the quarterly Levant Trade Review, first published in Constantinople on August 1, 1911.¹³

Thus, by the beginning of the First World War Americans had built up extensive interests, mainly of a religious, philanthropic and commercial nature, in the Middle East. To support these enterprises the American government by 1914 maintained four consulate general posts and six consulates in the Ottoman Empire. These field agents received their instructions from the Near Eastern Division, only recently formed by

¹¹DeNovo, American Interests, 40.

¹²Ibid., 39.

¹³Ibid., 41.

Elihu Root's reorganization of the State Department in 1909.¹⁴

Political relations with the Ottoman Empire had been established early in the nineteenth century primarily owing to the missionary activity. In 1830 Charles Rhind, as American commissioner, and Reis Effendi, the Ottoman representative, negotiated the first treaty between the two countries. It was written in both Turkish and French and became a vexatious problem in the interpretation of its provisions. When Turkish officials pointed out a discrepancy between the two translations, the American charge' d'affairs in Constantinople, David Porter, unwittingly signed a statement accepting the Turkish version of the treaty without reservation. As the Senate had earlier approved an English translation of the original treaty and then did not act on Porter's statement, the political relationship between the United States and the Ottoman Empire began in a muddled fashion.¹⁵

One of the major discrepancies dealt with interpretation of Article IV which established an American extraterritorial consular and diplomatic protectorate. There was a dispute over whether Ottoman officials had the right to arrest American citizens although both parties agreed Ottoman officials could not imprison American citizens. Throughout the nineteenth century and up to World War I no conclusive agreement was reached by the two governments on the proper interpretation.

As a result of the treaty of 1830 and the continuous efforts to

¹⁴Graham H. Stuart, The Department of State: A History of Its Organization, Procedure, and Personnel (1949), 216-17, hereinafter cited as Stuart, Department of State.

¹⁵Oscar S. Straus, Under Four Administrations: From Cleveland to Taft (1922), 87-89, hereinafter cited as Straus, Under Four Administrations.

gain Turkish recognition of the "most favored nation" principle, the United States had ultimately received all "capitulatory rights" maintained by other western nations in the Ottoman Empire. Beginning with the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, a unique relationship had developed between the Ottoman Empire and the West. The relations were determined and defined by decrees of the Sultans which in due time were called "capitulations". The first capitulation was granted the French in 1535 and through the years others were extended to other nations. These special agreements dealt with such topics as extraterritorial jurisdiction, certain trade privileges, and religious freedoms for foreigners within the empire.¹⁶

Gradually over the years the western powers, ultimately including the United States, came to regard the capitulations as treaty rights which could be altered only through mutual consent. The westerners justified their position on the grounds that the Ottoman judicial system was backward and inconsistent with western concepts. There were three bodies of law with each having its own judges which functioned independently of each other. The Sheriat or Sacred (canon) Law, was based upon the Koran and regulated such matters as civil status and landed property. A second body of codes and statutes regulated most modern commercial transactions and were applied in combination with a fluctuating mass of irades (imperial orders in council). Finally, the judicial capitulations

¹⁶ Frank E. Manuel, The Realities of American - Palestine Relations (1949), 8, hereinafter cited as Manuel, Realities of American-Palestine Relations; James B. Angell, "The Turkish Capitulations," Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1900, I (1901), 513-516, hereinafter cited as Angell, The Turkish Capitulations.

regulated all the civil and commercial affairs of the foreign communities. Because of the complexity of the Ottoman judicial system, inconsistencies in application often occurred and the corruption of Ottoman judges was notorious. Thus, all western nations believed that their citizens would suffer injustices if they were made accountable to Turkish justice. The American attitude on the capitulations was described in 1900 by James B. Angell, president of the University of Michigan and a former ambassador to the Sublime Porte: "The difference between the customs and laws of the Mohammedan nations ... and those of the Christian nations is so marked that the relations between the two must long be determined by treaties breathing something of the spirit of the old capitulations."¹⁷

The capitulations also served as a detriment to the internal stability and prosperity of the empire. Because of their privileged position foreigners were not subject to any taxes at all without the consent of the foreign powers, except on certain landed property. While all Ottoman subjects had to pay the temettu (a business tax), foreigners in the same businesses were exempt. They therefore had an unfair advantage in competition of which they eagerly took advantage. The Ottoman government could not even change its own customs tariff without the consent of the foreign powers. This not only seriously interfered with the development of internal commerce and industry, but

¹⁷George Young, Constantinople (no date), 249-50; A.K. Schmaonion to Wilson, December 27, 1910, Case 711.673/2, Records of the Department of State Relating to Political Relations Between the United States and Turkey, 1910-1929, General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, National Archives Microfilm Publication M365, roll 8, hereinafter cited as M365; Angell, The Turkish Capitulations, 519.

also undermined an excellent source of government revenue, and as a result, the Ottoman Empire was forced to rely upon foreign powers for financial support. It was given only with further reductions of Ottoman authority.¹⁸

The United States' capitulatory judicial claims on behalf of its citizens exceeded those of all other powers. While other nations allowed Turkish control over the trial of their citizens accused of crimes and retained authority only over the execution of the sentence, the United States alone insisted on an exclusive jurisdiction for both trial and punishment. The Ottoman officials were keenly aware of America's capitulatory position, and at least one American diplomat found himself ostracized by Turkish officials for publicly suggesting strict Turkish compliance with capitulatory privileges.¹⁹ The United States proved willing to negotiate its capitulatory rights in return for certain financial gains. In 1910, to facilitate a pending agreement between the Turkish government and private American businessmen, the State Department agreed to abandon certain privileges, principally the right of forum in cases of Americans accused of criminal acts. However, owing to stiff Turkish requirements and inexplicable delays, the investors dropped the matter, and nothing concrete was completed on an American reevaluation of its capitulatory position.²⁰

¹⁸ A. K. Schmavonian to Wilson, December 27, 1910, Case 711.673/2, M365, roll 8.

¹⁹ Straus, Under Four Administrations, 131; The American minister was James B. Angell (1898-1899), who because of his statements was not even invited once to dine at the palace during his entire eighteen months in Constantinople.

²⁰ Manuel, Realities of American-Palestine Relations, 90-91; DeNovo, American Interests, 67; Straus, Under Four Administrations, 195.

The Ottoman government attempted twice to annul the medieval capitulations, first in 1856 and again in 1862. Each time it found the western powers united in opposition. Only Germany, in 1890, renounced the capitulations but, like the United States, reserved the same rights under the "most favored nation" privilege. Thus, the Ottoman government, if it was to shake off successfully the shackles of the capitulations, would have to wait for the day when the European nations were divided among themselves.²¹

American and Ottoman political relations were also clouded by the question of naturalization. In 1875 a treaty was signed in Constantinople setting forth conditions under which each nation would recognize the naturalization of the others' citizens. However, a Senate amendment was not acceptable to the Porte and the naturalized citizen remained a perennial problem. The Turks refused to recognize American naturalization, maintaining that when former Ottoman subjects returned to the empire they became Turkish citizens again, for the Turkish Law of Nationality of 1869 prohibited the naturalization of any Ottoman citizen without the consent of the Ottoman government. Because the law purposely made it difficult to receive permission to change nationalities, most immigrants ignored it. Yet as many as fourteen percent of the immigrants from Turkey to the United States may have returned to their homeland. A naturalized American upon his return to the empire usually found himself ostracized by Ottoman officialdom and treated with contempt. The problems became so numerous and vexing to American consulates that in 1912, the acting secretary of state promulgated the policy that

²¹Angell, The Turkish Capitulations, 518.

Americans who attempted to conceal their naturalization in order to evade Ottoman law, relinquished their rights of American citizenship. The American government had no obligation to protect them.²²

Yet, on the whole, American foreign policy in the Near East had traditionally adhered to noninvolvement in the internal and international politics of the area. The State Department viewed the Near East as an extension of Europe and followed there the traditional policy of isolation from European politics. While the United States was concerned with the free passage of its ships in time of peace, it left the great political question of the passage of ships of war through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles in time of war to the European powers. In 1911 President Taft asked Secretary of State Philander C. Knox about the plausibility of American diplomatic intervention to stop the Turkish-Italian War. The secretary replied that other powers were more intimately concerned. As for the internal problems of Turkey, Knox advised that there was no way that the United States could bring pressure on Turkey or even offer advice. In February, 1913 during the Balkan wars the State Department advised the American ambassador in Constantinople that should violence occur there, American citizens would have to rely upon foreign protection. Until the First World War the State Department was reluctant to become entangled in the politics of the Ottoman Empire.²³

²²Manuel, Realities of American-Palestine Relations, 8, 89; Huntington Wilson to Henry M. Goldfogle, March 14, 1912 R. G. 59, 367.117/1.

²³DeNovo, American Interests, 57; Laurence Evans, United States Policy and the Position of Turkey, 1914-1924 (1965), 21-23, hereinafter cited as Evans, United States Policy.

Throughout the nineteenth century the Ottoman Empire was recognized as the "sick man of Europe." This was true not only because of the internal weaknesses, but also owing to loss of territories. Beginning with the loss of Greece in 1830, Ottoman influence in the Balkans was reduced to the point of impotence. And when in 1907 Austria had successfully taken the two provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina a revolution had occurred which brought the "Young Turks" to power.

They gave every impression of establishing a modern progressive parliamentary regime. They publicly disavowed the repressive policies of the past and planned for a brighter future. The optimism expressed by the new government led President Taft to comment in his annual message of December 7, 1909 that: "... the quick transition of the Government of the Ottoman Empire from one of retrograde tendencies to a constitutional government... with progressive modern policies of reform and public improvement ... [is] one of the important phenomena of our time."²⁴ Writing in 1910, the editorial secretary of the American Board for Foreign Missions claimed that owing to the change that "the morning had indeed come" in the Board's evangelistic efforts in the empire.²⁵

Nevertheless, the Young Turks were faced with a multitude of problems in their efforts to breathe new life into the moribund empire. In 1912 the new revolutionary government lost Tripoli to the Italians, and during the two Balkan wars prior to 1914 the Turks were swept back to the Dardanelles and Bosphorus Straits. By then the Young Turks were greatly concerned about the future of their empire.

²⁴Cardashian, The Ottoman Empire, 187; DeNovo, American Interests, 48.

²⁵Strong, American Board, 412.

The loss of these territories was not the only problem faced by the new regime. Immigration was a critical matter. Between 1899 and 1914 approximately forty-six thousand Armenians went to the United States because of Turkish persecution. They were joined by an estimated eighty-six thousand Syrians who joined the sixty thousand Syrian immigrants already in the United States. One longtime missionary resident of Syria observed that "Syria is losing its best blood, its enterprising youth." His sentiments were echoed in reports to the American Board for Foreign Missions by many other missionaries throughout the Ottoman Empire. If the new government was to check the growing migration, internal stability and prosperity would have to be secured with or without the consent of the major foreign powers.²⁶

Another major problem was minority rights. Historically the Ottoman Empire had been a haven for Europe's persecuted elements. After the Christian reconquest of the Iberian peninsula in the fifteenth century many Jews chose to flee to the Levant rather than be forcibly converted. During the nineteenth century Jews suffering from the Russian pogroms found a haven in the Ottoman Empire. In the same century several European powers began asserting the privilege of protecting one or more of the Ottoman minorities - notably France on behalf Catholics and Russia in behalf of the Christian Armenians, Russian Jews and Turkish subjects of the Orthodox faith. Owing to the weakness of the empire, the Ottoman government not unnaturally began to view these "protected minorities" as serious threats to its sovereignty. The Armenian persecutions of 1894 and 1895 were in fact an outgrowth of the Turkish

²⁶ DeNovo, American Interests, 42-43.

reaction to western protection of minorities.

With the loss of Balkan territory, the Arabs had become the largest non-Turkish race in the Ottoman Empire. In an effort to stem the growing tide of nationalism, the Young Turks began to "Turkify" this segment of the population. Arab Moslems soon found themselves required to attend Turkish language schools. Between 1908 and 1914 Arab advisers, who had enjoyed an influential role in the pre-revolutionary government, were dropped from the regime. The Arab population, while twice that of the Turks, was represented by a third of the delegates in parliament.²⁷

The Young Turks hoped to nip the then slowly-blossoming Arab nationalistic movement before it matured into open defiance. In the last decade before the world war several political parties had begun tentatively to express upper middle class Arab demands for cultural and political autonomy. The cultural reawakening of the Arabs was to a great degree aided by the efforts of foreign missionaries, notably Americans. American missionaries found it expedient to learn Arabic for their daily activities and designed a new Arabic fount which was more adequate to the printing press than the standard print. These missionaries introduced good Arabic textbooks and reproduced Arabic manuscripts which had an enormous influence upon the revival of Arab culture. In March, 1913 the American consulate at Baghdad sent a despatch reporting rumors of a secret movement for autonomy among the Arabs claiming the name of the society was La Markazia. However, the unrest of the Arabs was restricted to a small minority as the greater part of the Arabs were backward to the point of primitivism. Only a few hundred thousand were literate and even they

²⁷Sachar, Emergence of the Middle East, 119.

recognized that, in the final analysis, their overlord was still a Moslem power.²⁸

Both the internal and external affairs of the Ottoman Empire were therefore in desperate straits. In 1913 Ambassador William W. Rockhill outlined the goals of the European powers in Turkey in return for the financial aid the Turks desperately required. The British hoped to gain an understanding on the Turkish-Persian frontier along with greater influence in lower Mesopotamia. The Germans wanted more railroad concessions on easier terms than before with a greater degree of control over their operation and exploitation. The Russians wanted an understanding on the Caucasus frontier while the French desired more concessions and recognition of their interests in Syria. The New York Times probably expressed the general consensus on the future of the Ottoman Empire when it claimed, "... the problem of the future of Turkey turns largely on the decent administration of Turkey in Asia, and such administration can be secured only by the influence of the Powers"²⁹

While the European powers attempted to consolidate their positions in the empire, the United States was content to maintain its traditional isolationist policy. Unfortunately, as events were to unfold, during 1914 and 1915, the traditional American foreign policy of nonintervention in Ottoman political affairs was to change greatly. Whereas before

²⁸ Ibid., 120; Penrose, That They May Have Life, 6; Despatch 80, March 17, 1913, Case 867.00/517, Records of the Department of State Relating to Internal Affairs of Turkey, 1910-1929, General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, National Archives Microfilm Publication M353, roll 5, hereinafter cited as M353.

²⁹ Evans, United States Policy, 23-24; New York Times, September 22, 1913, 8.

World War I the Near East had been insulated from the United States by intervening layers of interests, ambitions and fears of the European powers, the World War was to thrust the United States into the very center of Ottoman affairs.³⁰

It was amid this fluctuating scene of rival expectations and negotiations that a relative unknown was to be installed as the American representative to the Ottoman Empire. Henry Morgenthau, a successful New York City businessman, was to be the American ambassador during this critical period. While inexperienced in diplomacy and ignorant of Near East affairs, he was expected to protect American interests.

³⁰ Evans, United States Policy, 21.

CHAPTER II

MORGENTHAU AND HIS APPOINTMENT

Henry Morgenthau was born at Mannheim, Germany in 1856. At the age of seven he and his parents immigrated to the United States. Forty-four years later he would be able to reflect, "... that on that June day of my arrival [to the United States] ... I simply felt that one of the momentous hours in my life had come, when I found myself stepping ashore into a vast garden of unlimited opportunities."¹ Despite many difficult and frustrating experiences Morgenthau indeed found America's opportunities to be almost unlimited.

In later life Morgenthau was prone to compare his early lot in the new world with that of the millions of almost penniless immigrants who arrived at New York's Ellis Island. Yet, contrary to his recollections, Morgenthau's parents brought to the United States about thirty thousand dollars and a German middle-class appreciation for thrift and sobriety. Young Morgenthau therefore had the opportunity to attend public school at a time when many immigrant children were forced to work to support their families.²

He enrolled in the Columbia Law School and after receiving his law degree in 1877 joined the firm of Lachman and Goldsmith in New York City. Soon tiring of routine legal duties and eyeing the vast opportunities in the city's real estate business, he became president of the Central Realty Bond and Trust Company. But anxious to forge for

¹Henry Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time (1923), 6, hereinafter cited as Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time.

²Ibid., 5.

himself, Morgenthau formed his own realty company in 1906. Because of hard work, a dynamic personality, and shrewd investments, Morgenthau became a multi-millionaire.

At fifty-five, retired from business, financially independent, and rich in experience, Morgenthau began to look for means by which he could repay his adopted country for the opportunities it had given him. He became president of the Free Synagogue, the brainchild of the famous liberal rabbi, Stephen S. Wise. Also, he became a director of the Mount Sinai Hospital, and as a result of his and his wife's interest in the arts, helped to organize and finance the Conried Metropolitan Opera Company. Because of his background in real estate, he knew well the bad housing conditions for the poor, and with the help of Miss Lillian Wald, founder of the Henry Street Settlement, he organized the Bronx House which served as a musical school and a settlement center.³

Like many other idealists throughout the country Morgenthau was perplexed by what he called the "death grapple between the soul of the people and the ugly octopus of Big Business." Therefore, the appearance of Woodrow Wilson and his "New Freedom" concept in 1912 seemed a godsend and Morgenthau threw himself, as he put it, "... heart and soul in the enterprise of securing the Presidential nomination for Woodrow Wilson."⁴

Morgenthau first met him in 1911 while serving as president of the Free Synagogue. He invited the Democratic presidential candidate to attend, as the guest of honor, the fourth anniversary of the founding of the synagogue. Wilson must have welcomed the opportunity because many

³Ibid., 95-108.

⁴Ibid., 128.

wealthy New York City Jews supported Stephen Wise's synagogue. The impact of Woodrow Wilson's personality and his speech that night must have greatly impressed Morgenthau because he promptly promised Wilson his "unreserved moral and financial support."⁵

Wilson welcomed his help. Within a few months, Morgenthau received an invitation from William G. McAdoo to join him and William F. McCombs, who was then Wilson's campaign manager, at a luncheon. There Morgenthau was asked to donate money for the campaign. He eventually donated approximately thirty thousand dollars. As a result of his willingness to help Wilson's campaign and because of his personal acquaintance with other wealthy contributors, Morgenthau became the Democratic Party Finance Chairman and was called "Uncle Henry" by the close-knit workers of the National Committee.⁶

After the election Democratic party leaders began surveying the vast federal bureaucracy in search of positions in which to place their major political supporters. Traditionally, the State Department had many prestigious posts to offer the more lucrative contributors, and since the Democratic party had not been in power for sixteen years, the demand for political positions was overwhelming. Both the new president and his secretary of state, William Jennings Bryan, were besieged by thousands of greedy but deserving office seekers. In fact, Wilson was so overwhelmed by a Democracy, with a "starved appetite [which] knew no bounds," that he finally refused to see office hunters in person, and diverted them

⁵Ibid., 130-32

⁶Ibid., 137-54.

to the various departments.⁷

Nowhere did they concentrate more than on the State Department. Bryan's office became a continual reception center from early morning until long after the close of the business day. Fortunately, in the State Department all of the clerical force was under civil service regulations, and it was only in the upper echelons that changes were possible. This limitation on appointments did not deter the eager new secretary, and among forty-odd diplomatic chiefs of missions, twenty-nine were changed in the first six months of the Wilson administration. For the most part, Wilson allowed Bryan to select his own past political supporters to the various choice posts.⁸

But despite his indifference to most of Bryan's appointments, the President was determined to reserve the most prestigious embassy posts for his own political supporters. Immediately after the inauguration Capitol Hill gossips began spreading rumors where what persons might be going. As early as March 6, only two days after Wilson's inauguration, the New York Times reported that Henry Morgenthau, "... for whom President Wilson had a high regard, can undoubtedly have a big diplomatic office" Several political observers thought that he might even receive a cabinet position. While the Times speculated that it was "certain that [Morgenthau] will have his choice of several Ambassadorships ... Mexico or Japan," Colonel Edward M. House, Wilson's unofficial

⁷Stuart, Department of State, 225; Louis W. Koenig, Bryan: A Political Biography of William Jennings Bryan (1971), 503, hereinafter cited as Koenig, Bryan.

⁸Stuart, Department of State, 226, 228; Koenig, Bryan, 505.

advisor, had settled on him for Turkey. Apparently reflecting upon the recent Ottoman loss of Libya, Wilson merely responded, "There ain't [sic] going to be no Turkey." Colonel House rejoined that they ought to send Morgenthau to pursue the "wounded bird" anyway.⁹

Evidently, it never occurred to the President or Colonel House that "Uncle Henry" might not want to go to Constantinople. As early as March 8, Morgenthau had privately declared that he would not consider an appointment as ambassador until he was actually asked. He publicly claimed that he was not a candidate for a diplomatic position. The first indication that he was being officially considered for the Constantinople post came in April, 1913 when Senator James A. O'Gorman of New York telephoned that he had been requested by the President to offer the appointment to him. Surprisingly, Morgenthau refused, but with O'Gorman's urgings, he agreed to see Wilson personally.¹⁰

They met on June 2. Morgenthau informed Wilson that many American Jews were strongly opposed to having any position made a distinctly Jewish one and were therefore urging him to decline the Constantinople post. Morgenthau believed his acceptance of the appointment would confirm the impression that Turkey was the only country where a Jew would be accepted as the American representative. Morgenthau's contention was valid for there had recently been a succession of Jewish appointments to the Sublime Porte. For example, Oscar S. Straus had served three terms in Constantinople and in 1890 had been succeeded by Solomon Hirsch.

⁹ New York Times, March 6, 1913, 2; Charles Seymour (ed.), The Intimate Papers of Colonel House (1926), I, 96.

¹⁰ New York Times, March 8, 1913, 2; Morgenthau, All in a Life-time, 59.

John G. A. Leishmann had become the first American ambassador to the Ottoman Empire in 1906 when the legation was elevated to embassy status. Now President Wilson told Morgenthau that he had chosen him for Constantinople because it was there that the concern of American Jews for the welfare of the Palestine Jews was focused. Wilson bluntly added, "... it is almost indispensable that I have a Jew at that post." When during the interview Morgenthau expressed an interest in accepting the China post, the president responded that because of Christian missionary activities there, (evidently temporarily forgetting their work in the Near East) it seemed necessary that the American minister be a Christian. But despite Wilson's pleas, Morgenthau adamantly refused the post at Constantinople.¹¹

That Morgenthau was a man of principle and firmly committed to his point of view was shown in a letter to the president ten days later. Morgenthau wrote that he had learned that William G. McAdoo, now the Secretary of Treasury, was seeking a Jew to fill the "sub-treasurership", and that Senator O'Gorman had approached him on the same question. Morgenthau pointedly inquired, "Why should the Jews be treated differently than anyone else? Would prominent Methodists or Baptists be told here is a Position, find one of your faith to fill it?" A bit disgruntled and acting as if he wanted to put an end to the discussion, Morgenthau with his wife and daughter Ruth embarked for Europe intending to vacation there for the rest of the summer.¹²

¹¹New York Times, March 8, 1913, 3; Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 160-61.

¹²Morgenthau to Woodrow Wilson, June 12, 1913, Henry Morgenthau Sr. Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C., hereinafter cited as Morgenthau Papers.

Despite Morgenthau's refusals, he had not entirely given up hope for a government position. He informed the President through Senator O'Gorman that he wanted to serve on the proposed Federal Reserve Board, still being debated in Congress. He appealed to Colonel House: "I am finished with Money making and deeply feel the responsibility of the Debt I owe my Country I am as determined and anxious to liquidate that debt as I ever was in accepting the gifts received." Colonel House promised that he would discuss the possibility with Secretary of Treasury William G. McAdoo as soon as he saw him.¹³

While Morgenthau awaited word from McAdoo, President Wilson enlisted help to persuade the stubborn philanthropist to accept the Constantinople embassy. Morgenthau soon found himself besieged by many individuals encouraging him to accept the appointment. Josephus Daniels urged him "as a friend" to undertake the tendered offer. While Morgenthau was at Aix-les-Baines, France the American ambassador, Myron T. Herrick, told him that it was "a greivous mistake" to refuse the post. He elaborated on the advantages of ambassadorial life. But the most persuasive argument came from Morgenthau's rabbi, Stephen S. Wise. Wise, who was traveling across Europe enroute back to the United States after a visit to Palestine, altered his schedule to meet with Morgenthau for four hours. The rabbi, an eager Zionist, was "tremendously anxious" to have Morgenthau accept the position. He explained that a Jew as ambassador to the Ottoman Empire could be of "great service to the Jews in Palestine." Morgenthau recalled that Dr. Wise used "all the force of his eloquence to rescind

¹³ Morgenthau to Edward House, July 10, 1913 and House to Morgenthau, July 28, 1913, Morgenthau Papers.

my declination." As a result of Wise's interposition, the stubborn millionaire-philanthropist promised to reconsider his position.¹⁴

On the strength of Morgenthau's promise to reconsider, Rabbi Wise wired President Wilson: "Have earnestly urged Morgenthau to accept your offer ... in view of importance of post for many reasons at this time. I would suggest immediate renewal of invitation to serve" So anxious was Wise that Morgenthau accept the position that he promised to forward the president's invitation to Morgenthau personally, probably to attach another personal encouragement. Within two days Morgenthau received Wilson's renewed invitation and indicated that he would accept the embassy at Constantinople. Five days later Morgenthau received word from William G. McAdoo that he could not commit himself on the Federal Reserve Board position despite "your marked capacity" because the situation had to be "weighed carefully." Thus, Morgenthau had to settle, at least for the time being, for a post which he originally had not desired.¹⁵

On September 2, Morgenthau arrived back in New York City from his vacation. He received special recognition upon stepping ashore because the port collector had been instructed by the State Department to render all "proper courtesies." The new appointee wisely refused to discuss publicly his new position until it had been approved by the Senate.¹⁶

¹⁴ Josephus Daniels to Morgenthau, undated, Morgenthau Papers; Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 161-62.

¹⁵ Stephen S. Wise to Woodrow Wilson, August 7, 1913, Woodrow Wilson Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., hereinafter cited as Wilson Papers; Morgenthau to Wilson, August 9, 1913 and W. G. McAdoo to Morgenthau, August 14, 1913, Morgenthau Papers.

¹⁶ "Department of State" to John Purroy Mitchell, August 30, 1913, R.G. 59, 123M823/2A; New York Times, September 3, 1913, 8.

Morgenthau's appointment was widely viewed as an excellent choice. The New York Times pointed out that the philanthropist would not only take to his new post a "practical and clear-headed" mind, but also the "insight, sympathy and discretion" needed to fill a post in a troubled country such as Turkey. In Europe, Morgenthau's appointment caught the attention of The Jewish Chronicle which considered it "a notable event." It believed that the appointment would "react favorably upon the very important Jewish interests bound up with the Ottoman Empire." Little could the editors of the Times and the Chronical know that within the next year their prophecy would be true.¹⁷

But reaction to Morgenthau's acceptance was not uniformly favorable. Eugene H. Lehman, who had been associated with Morgenthau in the Free Synagogue, wrote President Wilson that Morgenthau was "guilty of interfering with the course of Justice and of suppressing the truth." A State Department investigation revealed that Lehman's serious charges referred to a private dispute between himself and Morgenthau, the president of the synagogue. It had brought about Lehman's removal from the synagogue's membership. The department therefore merely responded that it could "find nothing ... to cause it to change its opinion" and that it was "neither necessary or proper for it to take any action" More serious was the criticism leveled by Congressman John Jacob Rogers of Massachusetts who accused President Wilson and Secretary of State Bryan "... of ousting experienced diplomats in favor of political 'pets'" Rogers noted that Morgenthau, "a millionaire real estate operator," was replacing

¹⁷New York Times, August 29, 1913, 8, August 31, 1913, sec. III, 2.

William W. Rockhill, a career officer with "distinguished service."¹⁸

But despite the Lehman and Rogers criticism, Morgenthau's appointment was quickly approved by the Senate on September 5, 1913. While Capitol Hill gossips were still hinting that Morgenthau's selection was "merely a stepping stone to further preferment," Secretary Bryan informed the new ambassador that the thirty days following the taking of the oath of office would be regarded as an instructional period. Morgenthau decided to take his oath on October 1 which would give him time to reach his new post by the beginning of December.¹⁹

Shortly after taking his oath of office, the new appointee went to Washington, D.C. to receive his instructions and to meet the head of the near eastern division. Before beginning his detailed instruction Morgenthau made a polite call upon the Secretary of State who, Morgenthau later recalled, "knew no more about our relations with Turkey than I did." After describing his previous visit to the Holy Land and the difficulty that he had in locating Mount Beatitude, Bryan instructed his new ambassador: "... try to persuade the Turkish Government to grant a concession to some Americans to build a macadam road up to it, so that other pilgrims may not suffer the inconveniences which I did in attempting to find it." After receiving these useless instructions from Bryan Morgenthau began more informative interviews with the department's personnel. He later recalled that the chief of the division of near

¹⁸Eugene H. Lehman to Wilson, October 18, 1913 and J. B. Moore to Mrs. Eugene H. Lehman, December 22, 1913, R.G. 59, 123M823/7, 123M823/12; New York Times, April 3, 1914, 2.

¹⁹William Jennings Bryan to Morgenthau, September 9, 1913 and Morgenthau to Bryan, September 19, 1913, R.G. 59, 123M823/14A, 123M823/5; New York Times, September 6, 1913, 1.

eastern affairs, Albert H. Putney, "took me in hand" and in a series of conversations outlined the duties, prerogatives, and privileges of an ambassador. Several hours were spent studying the methods of keeping the embassy accounts and handling its funds. Morgenthau also received a general survey of the relations between Turkey and the United States. "I found this period of preparation intensely interesting," the ambassador later recalled. But Morgenthau's instruction could not have been very detailed because Putney himself was one of the many recent Bryan appointees and had been dean of the Illinois College of Law before accepting his new position.²⁰

Before leaving Washington the new ambassador called on the President. Wilson, perhaps owing to the Zionist influence of Louis Brandeis, told Morgenthau, "Remember, that anything you can do to improve the lot of your co-religionists is an act that will reflect credit upon America, and you may count on the full power of the administration to back you up." Indeed during the next two years Ambassador Morgenthau would find that he needed the full supporting power of the administration in his relations with the Ottoman government.²¹

Fortunately for the success of his mission and before embarking for Europe, the ambassador had a most enlightening conference on American missionary activity in the Near East. At the suggestion of one of the trustees of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, Morgenthau met with the Board's leaders. There also, he met the leaders of the foreign mission boards of the Congregational, United Presbyterian, Methodist, and

²⁰Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 174; Koenig, Bryan, 505.

²¹Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 175.

Protestant Episcopal churches. He remembered that these men spoke "with authority on the problems I should confront in the East." He also learned that five of them, including James L. Barton, foreign secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and a close personal friend of President Wilson, were planning to cross the Atlantic at the same time as he. Morgenthau therefore immediately made arrangements so that he could travel with them. During the voyage the inexperienced ambassador gained a fuller picture of the work of the mission boards from these five missionaries which proved very helpful in his new task. The missionaries for their part pressed upon the Jewish ambassador their hopes that he would take advantage of any opportunity to aid their evangelistic efforts.²²

During the final week prior to departure, Morgenthau attended many farewell dinners and parties. At one of them nearly three thousand persons gathered to wish the new ambassador success. He spoke of his hope of establishing better commercial relations between the United States and the Ottoman Empire. This prompted former ambassador Oscar S. Straus to advise him: "Your mission to Turkey is more human than material. Let your diplomacy be human diplomacy, not 'dollar diplomacy'." Better advice could not have been given, and as the twenty-six months of Morgenthau's mission in Constantinople were to unfold, it became apparent that he had listened to Straus' advice.²³

On November 1 Morgenthau left the United States on the George Washington which in 1919 would become President Wilson's famous peace

²² Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 175; Robert E. Speer to Morgenthau, October 23, 1913, Morgenthau Papers.

²³ New York Times, October 24, 1913, 6, October 31, 1913, 7.

ship. Since his wife and youngest daughter, Ruth, could not accompany him owing to personal reasons, Morgenthau took his daughter, Helen, her husband and their two sons. The group arrived in England on November 8, and the new ambassador immediately began to acquaint himself additionally with his new duties. Hoping to secure some hints as to the character of the government to which he was credited, he called on the American ambassador, Walter Hines Page, who introduced him to the various Turkish officials there. Among others, Morgenthau also met Baron Lionel Rothschild, who had extensive land holdings in Palestine. On November 16, the Morgenthau party continued their tour of Europe, visiting Paris and Vienna, finally reaching Constantinople on November 27, 1913.²⁴

The new ambassador looked forward with great interest to his new duties. He had promised himself that he would approach them with an open mind and not form any opinions until he had spent some time in the Turkish capital. The idealistic Morgenthau believed that America's true mission in Turkey was to foster the permanent civilizing work of the Christian missions while also attempting to improve American trade with the Ottoman Empire. He would never cease to explain and remind the Turkish officials that the United States had only altruistic motives and did not covet territory.²⁵

Morgenthau went to his new post with the hope and desire that the Young Turks would prove permanently progressive. But during the next two

²⁴Diary entries of November 1, 10, 11, 15 (1913), Morgenthau Papers; Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 177.

²⁵New York Times, November 2, 1913, sec. II, 1; Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 203.

years Morgenthau was to become wholly disillusioned with the entire Ottoman government. As he later reflected: "In order to understand the situation, we must keep in mind that there was really no orderly, established government in Turkey. For the Young Turks were not a government; they were really an irresponsible party, a kind of secret society, which by intrigue, intimidation, and assassination, had obtained most of the offices of state;"²⁶

Within less than a year after his arrival in Constantinople the inexperienced diplomat was forced to deal with an Ottoman officialdom fighting for its very existence. Throughout his tour of duty Morgenthau would attempt to utilize his position continually as the representative of the most powerful neutral country to mitigate the desperate policies of a regime with its "back to the wall."

Soon after Turkey's entrance into the war Morgenthau would find the very cornerstone of American Near Eastern policy removed. The Ottoman Empire was at last to find the long awaited opportunity to abrogate the capitulations by taking advantage of the disunity of the European powers. With the removal of the legal basis for official protection of American interests, the ambassador would be forced to exert every means of persuasion to maintain the safety and status quo of American enterprises.

With the capitulations successfully removed the Turks at last would find themselves freed of foreign intervention, at least so far as internal affairs were concerned. Legislation was to be enacted which made all foreign institutions and citizens subject to Ottoman law and

²⁶ Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 195-96.

authority. The major force of this new legislation was to fall upon the various foreign institutions previously exempt from Ottoman control. It was only as recently as 1906 that American citizens had gained the right to erect and own buildings without having to go through a labyrinth of Ottoman red-tape designed to discourage such ventures by foreigners. With the capitulations voided, these institutions were faced with the unhappy prospect of complete dependence for their existence upon Turkish authorities without the legal protection of their own government.²⁷

Morgenthau was to find the State Department his greatest hindrance in his efforts to protect American privileges. While expecting its ambassador to protect Americans and their institutions, that agency was to refuse any reconsideration or modification of its capitulatory position. The ambassador was therefore left to his own devices. To his difficult task he was to apply all of the wit, ability, good sense, imagination and self-confidence which had made him a successful businessman.

²⁷Strong, American Board, 412.

CHAPTER III

PROTECTION OF AMERICAN RIGHTS: 1914

Morgenthau arrived in Constantinople on November 27, 1913. He was met at the station by the entire embassy staff, Consul-General Bie Ravndal, and other representatives from the American community. The beauty and attractions of the Turkish capital "most favorably impressed" him, and he was very eager to begin his new duties. Following a bewildering round of handshakes, Morgenthau, his daughter, and son-in-law stepped into a carriage and went to the American embassy.¹

The new ambassador found the embassy to be a "handsome" three story structure. Made of marble and set in a garden surrounded by a high wall, it offered an impressive view overlooking the majestic Golden Horn. It was to be Morgenthau's official residence for the next twenty-six months.²

After familiarizing himself with his new surroundings, he began preparations to take active charge of the embassy. The staff was small but capable. Hoffman Philip, counselor and first secretary of the embassy who had acted as charge d'affaires prior to Morgenthau's arrival, introduced the new ambassador to the other staff members. Although finding Philip "at times unable to grasp and hold a thought," Morgenthau greatly enjoyed his company. Besides Philip, there were the second and third secretaries and A.K. Schmavonian, the embassy's Turkish legal advisor and interpreter. He knew every American interest in the Ottoman Empire,

¹Diary entry of November 27 (1913), Morgenthau Papers; Morgenthau to Woodrow Wilson, November 28, 1913, Wilson Papers.

²Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 177.

and Morgenthau remembered him as "an invaluable storehouse of information." Schmajonian also knew all the Turkish officials and was to accompany the ambassador at most official interviews.³

Morgenthau then eagerly sought out the leading members of the American community. On December 6, he visited the Constantinople College for Women which had recently moved into its new buildings and classrooms. He lunched with Dr. Mary Mills Patrick and several of the college's professors. He was "overwhelmed" by what they had accomplished. In Dr. Caleb Gates, the president of Robert College, Morgenthau found a man who was to become very useful to him and also a close personal friend. Gates had lived many years in Turkey and knew all the chief public figures. The new ambassador also met Dr. William Peet, the resident financial representative in Constantinople for the American Board for Foreign Missions, who was to be a constant aid to the ambassador in future crises. On December 20, 150 Americans attended Consul-General Bie Ravndal's welcome reception held in the Robert College gymnasium. The speeches by representatives of missionary and commercial interests voiced the opinion that with Morgenthau's appointment a new era of American progress was assured.⁴

Immediately after his arrival, Morgenthau also began to acquaint himself with the records of the embassy. The new ambassador immersed himself in this work despite a discouraging attitude from the staff.

³Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 178; diary entry of February 19 (1914), Morgenthau Papers.

⁴Diary entry of December 6 (1913), Morgenthau Papers; New York Times, December 21, 1913, sec. III, 3; Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 208.

Like most bureaucracies the embassy's personnel desired to protect their privileges and anonymity. Morgenthau thoroughly studied the past records and ledgers as he felt "duty bound to do." The naval attache claimed that he "never saw a man who so thoroughly enjoyed work" as did Morgenthau. By December 19, the ambassador could claim that he was "dropping into the work nicely."⁵

On December 11, Morgenthau was visited by the Master of Ceremonies at the Sublime Porte and presented to the Sultan, Mohammed V. Taking with him most of the embassy staff, the ambassador was met at the palace gate by a band playing "My Country Tis of Thee." Shortly thereafter he and his interpreter were ushered into the Sultan's room and the nervous ambassador exchanged complimentary remarks with the sovereign. The inexperienced Morgenthau mustered the best French he could and later remembered that the entire proceeding was "all very impressive and agreeable." The presentation completed, he was now officially recognized as the American ambassador.⁶

Since his wife was not with him, he was for the moment relieved of certain social responsibilities. Instead, he attempted to survey the society in which he would shortly become an active member. He observed the composition of the diplomatic society in Constantinople, the factions which divided it, and the cross currents of personality and interest that colored it. The "diplomatic set" was a little world apart. At

⁵Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 178-79; diary entry of November 19 (1915), Morgenthau Papers.

⁶Diary entry of December 11 (1913), Morgenthau Papers; Morgenthau to William J. Bryan, December 11, 1913, R.G. 59, 123M823/11.

most, its members numbered about a hundred. It comprised the Grand Vizier (the Sultan's chief representative), the premier and his cabinet, and the ambassadors and ministers of other governments.⁷

Understandably, the new ambassador was not yet sure of himself in his new social surroundings. He adopted the common sense policy of trying to remain something of an enigma to his new colleagues. Assuming that the foreign diplomatic corps in Constantinople believed that all successful Americans enjoyed flaunting their wealth, Morgenthau went to the other extreme and managed the embassy very modestly. Not until February did he buy an automobile, contenting himself until then with a carriage and a pair of Arabian ponies. Furthermore, Morgenthau obeyed only the letter of a custom which prescribed that a new ambassador must call upon the other ambassadors after he had been presented to the sovereign. They, in turn, were supposed to return his call and thereafter the newcomer was expected to make the advances to his seniors. Instead, Morgenthau remained at the embassy, devoted himself to embassy business, and did some watchful waiting.⁸

Morgenthau's unusual tactics finally were rewarded. A few weeks after his presentation to the Sultan he was called upon by an emissary of the German and Austrian ambassadors who, Morgenthau believed, were evidently trying to inquire as to his personality and mission. The following day the German and Austrian ambassadors, Baron Hans Freiherr von Wangenheim and Marquis Pallavicini, called on him and "entered at

⁷Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 179.

⁸Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 180; diary entry of February 22 (1914), Morgenthau Papers.

once upon an acquaintanceship which removed the formality of an official relation." In other words, Morgenthau was convinced that his "tactics" had created a situation whereby the German and Austrian representatives were willing to work with him on an informal basis.⁹

In January, 1914 Morgenthau's wife, accompanied by their two daughters, Ruth and Josie, joined her husband. Mrs. Morgenthau at once entered into the spirit of her husband's mission by visiting hospitals and schools, and also became an invaluable assistant. Like her husband she soon found in the diplomatic circle a group of charming people, intellectual stimulation, and enjoyed the fascinating game of international politics. Morgenthau recalled that he and his wife were continually attending "luncheons, teas, dinners, and formal state functions."¹⁰

Morgenthau soon observed that his new society was composed of "shrewd and cultivated men." Marquis Pallavicini was the senior member of the diplomatic corps. A nobleman of ancient family, he had grown old in the Austrian diplomatic service and was an authority on every point of diplomatic usage. Morgenthau remembered that the Marquis was invaluable "in teaching me the relative rank of the bewildering array of officers and title holders...." Unlike Pallavicini who was quiet and formal, Baron von Wangenheim impressed Morgenthau as a perfect representative of dynamic Germany. Morgenthau recalled Wangenheim as "a man of great stature,... overflowing with physical vitality ... [and] opinionated and positive in manner" By 1914, Wangenheim had spent

⁹Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 180-81.

¹⁰Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 179, 191, 194; New York Times, March 8, 1914, 4.

over twenty-five years in the diplomatic service and was a personal friend of Emperor William II. His eye for the ladies was well known; it had cost him his first wife, which prompted Morgenthau to forbid his daughters from sitting next to him at diplomatic dinners. The British ambassador, Sir Louis Mallet, impressed Morgenthau as a fine English gentleman. "He exhibited the quiet force and cultivation which one naturally expects from a member of the English upper classes." Mallet, like Morgenthau, was a newcomer in Constantinople having arrived in October, 1913. Previously he had served as the private secretary to Marquis Henry Landsdowne and Sir Edward Grey and had been the Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs before being sent to Constantinople. Michel de Giers, the Russian ambassador, was a "proud and scornful diplomat of the old aristocratic regime." Morgenthau was impressed with his astute mind, but recalled that he treated the Young Turks contemptuously. At one time de Giers had been seriously considered for the position of Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs. Louis Bompard, the French ambassador, impressed Morgenthau with his "polished politeness and clear intellectual grasp." In the company of such accomplished and experienced men, Morgenthau found it necessary to use every resource, from social gifts to business experience, to preserve and assert himself.¹¹

Most of the ambassadors openly discussed their country's ambitions in Turkey. Sir Louis Mallet did not conceal the interest which his government had in everything that tended to insure the safety of the Suez

¹¹ Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 179-80; Henry Morgenthau, Ambassador Morgenthau's Story (1918), 4-5, 27-28, hereinafter cited as Morgenthau, Morgenthau's Story; Alexander Telford Waugh, Turkey: Yesterday, To-day and Tomorrow (1930), 140, hereinafter cited as Waugh, Turkey; Frank G. Weber, Eagles on the Crescent: Germany, Austria and the Diplomacy of the Turkish Alliance, 1914-1918 (1970), 18, hereinafter cited as Weber, Eagles on the Crescent.

Canal. Bompard was deeply concerned with securing more concessions for French capital in Turkey while de Giers acted as if Russia had actually captured Constantinople and he was the governor of the city. Wangenheim did not openly discuss his country's ambitions, yet the other ambassadors knew that he was always interested in any scheme to create friendly relations between Germany and Turkey. Morgenthau remembered that even the Greek minister talked with confidence of a future Hellenic confederation which would include Smyrna and part of Asiatic Turkey. As Morgenthau wrote President Wilson, "I have been like the visitor at a Poker game - being permitted to walk around the table [and] look into each hand and observe"¹²

The empire in which these ambassadors hoped to increase their country's influence was led by a group of dedicated "Young Turks" brought to power by revolution in 1908. Morgenthau observed that in reality the Sultan was merely a figurehead who was hopelessly incompetent. His state duties consisted merely in performing certain ceremonies, such as receiving ambassadors and affixing his signature to such papers as were placed before him. Morgenthau believed, as did his colleagues of the diplomatic corps; that the real political leaders were Talaat Bey, the Minister of the Interior, Enver Bey, the Minister of War, and Djemal Pasha, the Minister of Marine.

Among all the Turkish politicians Morgenthau had met he regarded Talaat as the only one who had extraordinary native ability. Talaat had

¹²Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 183-84; Morgenthau to Woodrow Wilson, November 10, 1914, Wilson Papers; Morgenthau, Morgenthau's Story, 5-6.

begun life first as a humble porter in a village railroad station, then became a postman and a telegraph operator. Taking a minor part in the 1908 revolution he had risen to power owing to his ability to think quickly and accurately, and by having an almost superhuman insight into men's motives. Talaat did not accumulate wealth for himself, but he, in order to win their political support, encouraged others to enrich themselves by corrupt practices.¹³

While Talaat was a striking figure with a powerful frame and huge rocky biceps, Enver was short and slim and dressed in the height of fashion. Like Talaat, he was of humble origin. His father was a bridgekeeper and his mother an imbalmer. He had accumulated great riches and lived in a palace. Enver possessed the two traits that made for success in such a distracted country as Turkey - boldness and energy. He was always prepared to stake his future and his very life upon the success of a single adventure. One of his first acts as Minister of War in January, 1914 was to issue a circular to the commanders of the various army corps reminding them that their future was entirely in his hands and demanding their absolute submissiveness.¹⁴

Djemal Pasha, unlike Talaat and Enver, came from a prominent family in Baghdad, and became chief of police in Constantinople. After Turkey's entry in the World War Djemal was sent to Syria as commander of the Fourth Army. He proceeded to rule Syria as a sub-Sultan, holding

¹³ Morgenthau, Morgenthau's Story, 18-19, 21-22, 30-31, 172.

¹⁴ Ibid.; Caleb Frank Gates, Not to Me Only (1940), 189-91, hereinafter cited as Gates, Not to Me Only; Morgenthau to Secretary of State, January 17, 1914, case 867.00/600, M353, roll 5.

his own court, issuing his own orders, and often disregarding the authorities at Constantinople. Despite their curious backgrounds, Morgenthau could not refrain from sympathizing with them in their efforts to revitalize the Ottoman Empire. He wrote his daughter, "... all of them have an air of sincerity and conscientious interest in their work and the future of Turkey"¹⁵

During his first months in Constantinople Morgenthau increasingly found himself in sympathy with the Young Turks. Because his associates discussed their country's ambitions so openly, he believed that America was the only disinterested friend of Turkey. He frequently pointed out to Turkish officials that the United States coveted no territory.¹⁶

Morgenthau was astonished at the progress he made in his relations with the Turkish leaders. He invited cabinet members to the embassy repeatedly for meals, and they in turn entertained him several times. The ambassador found the Young Turks animated with "a most sincere desire" to benefit their people. This greatly impressed him. By March 1914 he could report that he was "on absolutely intimate terms" with all the cabinet leaders and openly professed himself a "turcophile".¹⁷

What the Young Turks desperately required was financial assistance. The Ottoman Empire had recently fought two disastrous wars, and owing to the backwardness of the country, the government revenues were pitifully small. Morgenthau found the Turkish leaders completely discouraged and feared that unless help was quickly forthcoming, a revolution might

¹⁵Ibid.; Morgenthau to Josie Morgenthau, December 27, 1913, Morgenthau Papers.

¹⁶Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 203.

¹⁷Morgenthau to Wolf, June 20, 1914, Morgenthau to Stephen S. Wise, March 6, 1914, Morgenthau Papers.

occur.¹⁸

Morgenthau was evidently persuaded that financial assistance might prevent an upheaval and determined to help. He publicly asserted that America had great sympathy for them and privately promised to interest American capital for commercial development. To his wife he confessed that he hoped to "prove their Moses who will lead them out of their difficulties."¹⁹

The Young Turks eagerly looked to Morgenthau for financial assistance. During his initial trip to Constantinople Morgenthau's discussions with the Turkish ambassador in Vienna about the possibilities of American aid was rapidly passed on to the Sublime Porte. During his first month in the Turkish capital the new ambassador was besieged by Turkish officials inquiring about possible loans. Bustani Effendi, the Minister of Commerce and Agriculture, held out the possibilities of American capitalists taking charge of the reorganization of Turkish finances. Talaat Bey even asked Morgenthau to make a personal loan which, of course, Morgenthau was unwilling to do. The earnest zeal and abundant flattery of the Turks put Morgenthau on his guard. To his daughter he wrote, "I was puzzled on ... how I would get along with these officials and now they are making it so easy that I am become wary."²⁰

Morgenthau's caution was well founded. At the very time the Turkish leaders were begging for financial aid they were asking, as required by

¹⁸Diary entry of January 17 (1914), Morgenthau Papers.

¹⁹Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 186-87; diary entry of January 20 (1914), Morgenthau Papers.

²⁰Morgenthau, Morgenthau's Story, 37; diary entries of November 21 and December 23 (1913), Morgenthau to Josie Morgenthau, December 27, 1913, Morgenthau Papers.

the capitulations, for foreign consent to an increase in the custom surtax. Acting on the advice of missionary leaders, the State Department instructed Morgenthau to give the United States' consent only upon the satisfactory settlement of pending American claims against Turkey. Most of the pending matters dealt with the freedom of missionaries and commercial activities from Ottoman regulation. The State Department further instructed its ambassador that in light of the Turkish requests for American financial assistance, he should secure the promise of the Ottoman government to grant fair consideration to American capitalists. Morgenthau was instructed to give American consent "on a monthly basis" subject to a possible future refusal because the other capitulatory powers readily gave their consent. The matter of the surtax remained unsettled until Turkey abrogated the capitulations later in 1914.²¹

Despite his government's position on the Ottoman surtax, Morgenthau continued to work for American financial aid. He believed that money was essential to the commercial and industrial development of the empire. He informed the State Department that should Turkey be unable soon to secure a loan, her financial situation would become "really serious." The ambassador believed that the Turks looked to the United States for support. He claimed that "today they are willing to do everything in their power to encourage the investment of American capital and to open up all the resources of the country for American enterprise." He

²¹ Stanley White to William J. Bryan, April 11, 1914, James L. Barton to William J. Bryan, January 29, 1914, Ottoman Embassy to State Department, December 23, 1913, Morgenthau to Secretary of State, June 22, 1914, "memorandum from American Embassy to Turkish Government," March 23, 1914, R.G. 59, 367.116/157, 667.003/42, 667.003/40, 667.003/49, 667.003/46.

further believed that an American loan would strengthen the embassy's capacity to protect American interests.²²

In December 1913, Talaat Bey privately informed Morgenthau that a small American loan would substantially aid Djavid Bey, the Ottoman finance minister, in his talks with French financiers. Although not sure how this would benefit them, Morgenthau wanted to show his sincere sympathy. He immediately attempted to interest Standard Oil in a half-million dollar loan. The ambassador also inquired into the possibilities of several New York institutions making short-term loans. As a result of this and other endeavors rumors were spread that an American syndicate was offering a loan of 600,000,000 francs. Sensing that the Turks were using the rumors of American aid to gain better financial arrangements with the French, Morgenthau did nothing to discourage the rumors. On the very day the French-Ottoman negotiations were completed, he had Mr. C. K. G. Billings in Constantinople discussing a five million dollar loan with the Turkish government. Although the American loans never materialized, the Turkish leaders were greatly appreciative. Talaat told Schmavonian, the embassy's legal advisor, that they all felt they had a friend in Morgenthau and that he was in fact pro-Turkish.²³

Understandably then, Morgenthau enjoyed a close personal relationship with the Turkish leaders. So trusting were Talaat and Enver that upon their urging, Morgenthau, despite explicit instructions which forbade any interference with purely domestic affairs, agreed to undertake

²²Morgenthau to Secretary of State, January 30, 1914, R. G. 59, 667.003/44.

²³Diary entries of December 23 (1913) and January 28 (1914), Morgenthau Papers; New York Times, January 22, 1914, 22; Morgenthau, Morgenthau's Story, 37-40.

an economic-social study of the country. Assisted by the two Turkish leaders, the ambassador planned three trips - the first to Palestine and Syria, the second to the south shore of the Black Sea, and a third into the interior to the point where the Baghdad railroad had been completed.²⁴

Morgenthau eagerly accepted the proposal for several reasons. First, he hoped to use whatever information he gained to encourage American investors. In the second place it would offer him an opportunity to visit the consulates, schools, hospitals, and businesses of his countrymen. Finally, and most importantly, Morgenthau believed that the trip would greatly aid the future efforts of the embassy to protect American interests. He was acutely aware that during the long decline of the empire, subordinate administrators had fallen into the habit of circumventing orders from the Sublime Porte whenever possible. Morgenthau felt that, "An ambassador who has visited the provinces and seen and studied the condition of affairs can talk ... with much greater authority"²⁵

Leaving Constantinople in mid-March, he began the first trip. In addition to his wife, Morgenthau also took Dr. William Peet, the American Board's financial representative, who acquainted the ambassador with the many missionaries and educators throughout Turkey. He visited Smyrna, Alexandria, Beirut, Mersine, Tarsus, and other localities. While traveling through Palestine and Syria he met Dr. Franklin Hoskins of the American mission in Beirut and Dr. Howard Bliss, president of the

²⁴Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 202.

²⁵Morgenthau, Morgenthau's Story, 37; Morgenthau to Secretary of State, February 13, 1914, R. G. 59, 123M823/15.

Syrian Protestant College. While in Palestine, Morgenthau was greatly impressed with "the serious sincerity and deep-rooted conviction of the better and younger element of Jews" At Beirut Morgenthau presented a trophy cup to the Syrian Protestant College "for the promotion of the interest in athletics" which became a perpetual trophy and tradition at the college. Although he privately believed that the missionaries should "switch from proselatizing [sic] to educational work," Morgenthau was nevertheless impressed with their work and institutions. Wherever he went the ambassador found the missionaries enthusiastic over the prospects of his visit. He later recalled: "They expected - and I afterward ascertained were justified in this - that a visit to their main stations by the American ambassador would so impress the local authorities ... that their standing with, and their treatment by the Turkish officials would be greatly improved." His views were echoed when in 1915 the educators at the Syrian Protestant College said, "We regard it as most fortunate that Mr. Morgenthau visited Syria last year. He has proved himself a staunch and able friend."²⁶

On May 1, returning in the Scorpion Morgenthau was stopped at the mouth of the Dardanelles. He had forgotten to secure permission to pass. But the ever resourceful ambassador bluffed his way through by telling the commandant that an ambassador could not be detained and that the Scorpion ceased being a warship when used as his private yacht! Shortly

²⁶ Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 211, 213; Morgenthau to Stephen S. Wise, May 5, 1914, Howard Bliss to Morgenthau, May 13, 1914, "Resolution of the Syrian Protestant College," May 13, 1914, Diary entry of May 21 (1914), Morgenthau Papers; Joseph L. Grabill, Protestant Diplomacy and the Near East: Missionary Influence on American Policy, 1810-1927, 65, hereinafter cited as Grabill, Protestant Diplomacy.

thereafter, Morgenthau made his report to the Turkish officials. Morgenthau considered his one trip a success and claimed that, "... I am more pleased than ever with my present position." Owing to the European war, the other two planned trips were cancelled.²⁷

While Morgenthau was on his tour of the empire, events were occurring in Smyrna which were to change the ambassador's benevolent view of the Turkish government. Early in 1914 the Turks demanded that all foreign establishments in Smyrna dismiss their Greek employees. This stemmed from a 1913 agreement with the Greek government to exchange populations at the end of the second Balkan War. Because many more Turks had been ousted from Greece than Greeks from Turkey, the Ottoman government determined to punish the sizable Greek minority in Smyrna. It was this ruthless and indiscriminate policy and its threat to American interests which caused Morgenthau to reevaluate his former pro-Turkish position.

Early in June the American consul at Smyrna, George Horton, reported a general Turkish boycott of all foreign firms that employed Greeks. Morgenthau soon noted that Talaat was speaking more frequently of a "Turkey for the Turks." The American embassy also began receiving daily reports of Turks killing and ousting Smyrna Greeks without fear of apprehension.²⁸

²⁷Diary entry of May 1 (1914), Morgenthau to Stephen S. Wise, April 21, 1914, Morgenthau Papers; New York Times, May 3, 1914, 2; The Scorpion was a small warship converted into a yacht. The Scorpion was considered the ambassador's yacht and could be used as he directed.

²⁸George Horton to Morgenthau, June 9, 1914, George Horton to State Department, June 13, 1914, case 867.00/625, 867.00/624, M353, roll 5.

On June 10, Horton informed the American ambassador that "a very unsatisfactory ... state of affairs" prevailed in Smyrna. The consul reported that all business interests, including American, were "disastrously" affected. At several surrounding towns the Greek Singer Manufacturing Company representatives had been driven out and sales and collections had stopped. MacAndrews and Forbes Company complained that the boycotters would not allow the Turkish women to remain employed with them. American citizens who owned landed estates in the Smyrna vicinity informed the consulate that the boycotters would not permit Turkish women to work on their farms. Horton further reported that despite repeated promises of the local governor to protect American interests, nothing had been done.²⁹

Morgenthau immediately brought the matter to the attention of the Sublime Porte. He requested a prompt investigation of the facts and protection for all American enterprises in Smyrna. He considered the situation serious and so informed the State Department. He also reported that a resumption of hostilities between Turkey and Greece was a very real possibility. Owing to his close relations with the Turkish leaders and the intervention of the other ambassadors, Morgenthau was able to obtain a sixty day delay from the Ottoman government ordering all foreign commercial concerns to dismiss Greek employees. The American ambassador now recognized that the Turkish officials would "stop at nothing and must be aggressive"³⁰

²⁹George Horton to Morgenthau, June 10, 1914, case 867.00/625, M353, roll 5.

³⁰Morgenthau to State Department, June 11, 1914, case 867.00/626, M353, roll 5; New York Times, June 15, 1914, 4; diary entry of May 4 (1914), Morgenthau Papers.

Despite Morgenthau's intervention the situation in Smyrna continued to deteriorate. On June 12, Horton reported that "a great anti-Christian agitation" existed. Greeks were abandoning villages in terror, the boycotters still prevented Turkish women from working in the MacAndrews and Forbes factory, and the local Standard Oil agent feared pillage. Five days later Horton forwarded the request of twenty-five American citizens for an American man-of-war owing to the "state of lawlessness and terrorism with numerous well-authenticated cases of murder and incendiarism"³¹

Morgenthau was not at all convinced of the necessity of complying with the "Smyrna Committee's" request. He knew that Horton and Rufus Lane, the leading American citizen in Smyrna, had Greek wives and that many of the Americans were naturalized Americans of Greek descent. Most American commercial concerns in Smyrna were owned or operated by Greeks or naturalized Americans. No reports of personal injuries to Americans had yet been reported, and Morgenthau was aware that the naturalized Americans had more than once taken advantage of their citizenship to aid Greek interests. Instead of requesting an American warship, the ambassador sent Hoffman Philip to Smyrna to make a thorough investigation of the condition of affairs and to consult with and to pacify the American citizens.³²

While Philip was in Smyrna placating the Americans, Morgenthau continued his efforts in Constantinople with the Turkish officials.

³¹Morgenthau to State Department, June 19, 1914, George Horton to Morgenthau, June 17, 1914, George Horton to State Department, June 18, 1914, case 867.00/630, 867.00/628, 867.00/629, M353, roll 5.

³²Diary entry of June 16, (1914), Morgenthau Papers; Morgenthau to State Department, June 19, 1914, case 867.00/630, M353, roll 5.

Talaat Bey promised to end the deplorable situation and within a few weeks the crisis had passed. Upon Philip's request the Scorpion was sent to Smyrna. This satisfied, for the time being, the demand for an American warship. The real losers were the Greeks: over 200,000 were removed from Smyrna and sent to Greece or the interior.³³

During the height of the Smyrna affair the American government was considering the possibility of selling two outdated cruisers to the Greek government. Morgenthau had informed his government that under the direction of Djemal Pasha, the Ottoman Minister of Marine, every effort to increase the naval strength of the country was being exerted with the least possible delay. The Turks had earlier contracted with a British shipbuilding firm for two large modern dreadnaughts with the apparent aim of once and for all dealing with Greece. The payments for these warships had just been completed, and the Greeks desperately sought the means to deter this new threat. The American government took the view that the sale of the obsolete cruisers would equalize the two adversaries and would therefore reduce the possibilities of war. Also, the Secretary of the Navy claimed that the proceeds of the sale offered a splendid opportunity for the American navy to get new ships.³⁴

The rumored sale of the American warships occasioned wide comment and apprehension at the Sublime Porte. Djemal Pasha was greatly concerned, claiming the sale of the cruisers "was of vital importance." When the American government stated that the transaction was merely a commercial

³³Morgenthau to State Department, June 19, 1914, case 867.000/630, M353, roll 5; diary entry of July 12 (1915), Morgenthau Papers.

³⁴Morgenthau to State Department, June 5, 1914, case 867.00/623, M353, roll 5; New York Times, June 24, 1914, 5.

deal, Djemal wanted to know why Turkey had not been allowed to compete. Morgenthau could only answer that he would try to check with his government.³⁵

Morgenthau was very upset over the proposed sale. He feared that in light of the Smyrna trouble, the sale of the American cruisers to Greece might precipitate an anti-American campaign. However, after discussing his views with Schmavonian and William Peet he decided not to send a telegram objecting to the transaction. Schmavonian and Peet had pointed out that the Turks never treated American missionaries kindly and neither feared worse treatment.³⁶

Congress at first refused to approve the sale, but the administration applied pressure. Therefore, on June 23, the sale of the warships was approved over the objections of the Turkish ambassador, Rustem Bey, who claimed that the United States was "taking sides ... with Greece against Turkey." Only two days before the congressional action, Morgenthau had erroneously told the Grand Vizier and Djemal that the sale of the cruisers had been cancelled. Morgenthau had felt that the sale would reduce his ability to help the American missionaries and educational institutions. Now, in order to regain his former standing the ambassador promised the Sublime Porte that he would ask the United States to promise that the warships would not be delivered for three or more months or until Turkey received its dreadnaughts. But like the Smyrna affair the importance of the sale of American warships to Greece declined with the likelihood of a general European war. Although the warships

³⁵Morgenthau to State Department, June 5, 1914, case 867.00/623, M353, roll 5; diary entry of June 1 (1914), Morgenthau Papers.

³⁶Diary entries of June 15 and July 1 (1914), Morgenthau Papers.

were ultimately delivered to Greece, no outbursts of anti-American feelings occurred as had earlier been feared.³⁷

Reviewing the events of 1914 Morgenthau reflected that the early summer months had been peaceful ones. "... all the ambassadors and ministers and their families were thrown constantly together ... all then apparently friends, sitting around the same dining tables, walking arm in arm upon the porches." When news of Francis Ferdinand's assassination burst upon this agreeable and placid scene the conversation of the diplomatic corps at Constantinople turned to one topic - the possibilities of war.³⁸

And indeed within little more than a month Europe was at war. Morgenthau was concerned about what Turkey would do and what effect its actions might have on American interests. "How could I realize during those peaceful first months of my embassy that I, the representative of remote and isolated America, should soon be involved in diplomatic complications that should involve the very continuance of American institutions."³⁹ On July 31, Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan sent a circular telegram to all American ambassadors, ministers, and consular officers in European countries ordering them to telegraph the State Department daily as to the military, political, and financial situation. American

³⁷ New York Times, June 23, 1914, 4, June 24, 1914, 10; diary entries of June 21, 25 (1914), Morgenthau Papers.

³⁸ Morgenthau, Morgenthau's Story, 56-58.

³⁹ Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 209.

foreign offices were now going on a war-footing.⁴⁰

On August 7, Morgenthau informed the State Department that the Turkish cabinet was divided over the question of entering the war. The ambassador believed that the preservation of Turkey's neutrality was in the American interest. With the recent events at Smyrna in mind, Morgenthau feared that as a belligerent, Turkey might again be tempted to persecute its minorities. The British ambassador shared his apprehension. Morgenthau, without informing the State Department, undertook to influence Ottoman officials. He informally advised Enver and Talaat to apply the Turkish methods of slow action and not commit themselves. The ambassador was encouraged when the Grand Vizier told him that they would remain neutral as long as they could.⁴¹

Finding the Turkish cabinet still closely divided on neutrality, Morgenthau asked the State Department for official permission to advise the Minister of War and Minister of Interior to remain neutral. The department quickly denied Morgenthau's request. Bryan instructed his ambassador merely to advise the Turks that the United States "solely in the interest of humanity and from no political consideration ... [hoped] that there should be no further spread to the European conflict"⁴²

Despite his explicit instructions, Morgenthau still attempted to

⁴⁰Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Supplement 1914, 24, hereinafter cited as Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp; During the years 1914 through 1916, Foreign Relations consisted of two parts. Hereinafter, to indicate the second part, "Supp" will follow the shortened title, while the first part will be indicated by the title only, example: Foreign Relations, 1914 and Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp.

⁴¹Diary entries of August 3, 9 (1914), Morgenthau Papers; Foreign Relations, 1914, 62.

⁴²Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp, 75, 77.

persuade Enver and Talaat to remain neutral. He explained to them that their trade with the Entente powers was about half of their entire export, that Russia would always be their "big revengeful" neighbor, and that France had been their only recent financial backer. The ambassador also pointed out that the Entente powers were in complete control of the Mediterranean and could capture the Ottoman seaports in a very short time. However, Morgenthau, like most of the Turkish leaders, was unaware that Enver and Talaat had signed a secret treaty with Germany on August 2, 1914. Within a few months the Ottoman Empire entered the war allied with Germany and Austria-Hungary.⁴³

During the first week of August Turkey informed the American government that it had ordered a general mobilization of its armed forces as "a purely precautionary measure."⁴⁴ At the same time rumors were rife that the Ottoman government was planning to abrogate the capitulations. As could have been expected, most foreigners, including Americans, were alarmed. As early as August 5, Morgenthau was receiving from all parts of the empire where American citizens were located requests for the presence of American war vessels. The ambassador reported to Washington that the entire empire was under martial law and that it would be "extremely desirable" to send American cruisers to the Ottoman ports. In reply the Secretary of State advised him that American war vessels were not available, but that preparations for such eventualities would begin.⁴⁵

⁴³Diary entry of August 30 (1914), Morgenthau Papers; Weber, Eagles on the Crescent, 65.

⁴⁴Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp., 50-51.

⁴⁵Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp., 756-57; Morgenthau to State Department, August 5, 1914, case 867.00/784, M353, roll 6.

Turkey's foreign trade was now almost completely paralyzed, and Ottoman banks ceased cash payments. Many people, including Americans, were unable to obtain enough money for daily living expenses. One American commented, "We have on hand most any amount of checks ... but they are not worth the paper they are written on." Through Ambassador Morgenthau's efforts an exception was made by the banks in favor of the American consulates, and the vice-consul at Smyrna was able to report that "up to the present United States' drafts are honored without question." The vice-consul in his report struck a more pessimistic note, however, when he reported that unemployment was spreading, particularly among the lower classes. He expressed fear that this could lead to disorder in the city. The American consulate at Beirut reported that conditions were so bad that the streets were beginning "to assume an empty aspect." In Baghdad it was reported that all business had stopped and that all the banks were paying only fifteen per cent on each deposit.⁴⁶

The Ottoman general mobilization resulted in much anxiety and fear among the people. Mobilization meant requisitioning, which when practiced in Turkey was little short of highway robbery. Turkish officials would enter a retail shop, take practically all the merchandise and give merely a piece of paper in acknowledgement. One longtime resident in the empire estimated that if one understood Ottoman officialdom, had political influence, and great patience, up to seventy per cent of the

⁴⁶Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp, 762-63; Charles F. Brissel to Morgenthau, August 8, 1914, Stanley Hollis to State Department, August 10, 1914, case 867.00/735, 867.00/649, M353, roll 6; "Annual Commercial Report for Turkey, 1914," dated "1915", R. G. 84, item 600, volume 16; A.W. Halsey to Secretary of State, August 29, 1914, R.G. 59, 367.116/168.

original value could be recovered. But for most of the population requisitioning simply meant financial ruin.⁴⁷

In Beirut the local governor-general was reportedly attempting to extort money from the Vacuum Oil Company. On August 10, the American consul at Smyrna reported he had with difficulty kept the local Turkish officials from seizing all the coal of the Archipelago American Steamship Company. In many areas Turkish authorities were reported entering foreign property and seizing houses, carriages, and automobiles by force. Morgenthau was forced to place sailors at the embassy's stable to protect his horses and remembered seeing carriages without horses throughout Constantinople. In general, these actions seemed to demonstrate the claims that the Turkish authorities were beginning to disregard the provisions of the capitulations. The embassy received a large number of requests for the presence of American war vessels. The vice-consul at Smyrna observed that, "... judging the situation as best I can, I am convinced that so long as Turkey remains neutral, the foreign population has nothing to fear. But, ... if Turkey enters the conflict ... the situation will suddenly contain elements of the gravest danger to the entire Christian population."⁴⁸

Throughout August affairs worsened. On August 15, Edward Nathan, the American consul at Mersina, reported that the local situation continued to be very distressing economically and politically. The banks there had finally abstained from all business. And in direct

⁴⁷Morgenthau, Morgenthau's Story, 65.

⁴⁸Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp., 757, 762-63; Stanley Hollis to State Department, August 7, 1914, case 867.00/639, M353, roll 5; diary entry of August 5 (1914), Morgenthau Papers.

violation of the capitulations the local Turkish authorities were planning either to requisition large quantities of American petroleum or control the prices at which it could be sold. At Beirut, Consul Stanley Hollis, reported that many inhabitants of that city were "in a state bordering panic and the whole atmosphere is one of distrust and fear." He advised that if the Turks should carry out their avowed intention of evacuating Beirut; he feared that "a state of anarchy would surely reign here." On August 19, the local Turkish governor-general of Smyrna stated that should the Entente powers, whose citizens had suffered the most from the general mobilization, bombard or occupy the city in retaliation, that he would burn the city and massacre all foreigners. On the same day Jerusalem reported a reign of military terrorism with the authorities seizing supplies from foreigners and violating their domiciles.⁴⁹

Clearly the situation was getting out of control. Acting on his own authority and without the State Department's knowledge, Morgenthau obtained \$57,850 in Turkish gold on a draft against the United States' treasury. He contributed \$12,000 from his own personal funds to help needy Americans. The money was sent to the consuls to be used as loans for American citizens. The ambassador continued to ask for warships, justifying it on the basis that anti-Christian feeling among the lower classes of Moslems was spreading. Morgenthau had learned that the Turks feared "a dire famine" and that many of the Americans who had long been in the empire believed the crisis to be the greatest during the

⁴⁹ Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp., 758-59, 763-67.

past fifty years.⁵⁰

Although the Grand Vizier had assured him that no American citizens were in real danger, Morgenthau believed the situation to be extremely critical. On August 15, he wired the State Department requesting American war vessels immediately. Secretary of State Bryan answered that before doing so he deemed it advisable to "sound out" the European powers as to such action. After a delay of thirteen days Bryan finally notified Morgenthau that the U.S.S. North Carolina, which was then at Falmouth, England, would be ordered to start for Turkish waters on August 29 with \$150,000 in gold as a relief fund. The U.S.S. Tennessee was also to be sent later under similar orders.⁵¹

While waiting for information on the warships, Morgenthau began preparing to protect American citizens. He and Commander McCauley, the embassy's military attache, organized a system of protection for the American colony in Constantinople. In case of emergency the embassy would take possession of Robert College and provide living quarters and food for the American colony. In behalf of the American citizens at Smyrna and Beirut, Morgenthau had the British charge d'affaires agree that in case of an emergency he would request British war vessels until American ships arrived. The ambassador also called daily upon the leading Turkish political leaders impressing upon them his great concern for all Americans in Turkey and reminding them of the humane services

⁵⁰Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp, 66; Stanley Hollis to State Department, case 867.00/655, M353, roll 5; Morgenthau believed he had to act quickly and advised the State Department of his actions afterward. The department quickly agreed that Morgenthau's actions were legal and necessary.

⁵¹Foreign Relations, 1914, 66; Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp, 759, 762.

being offered the Turkish people by American institutions.⁵²

Knowledge of Morgenthau's daily efforts and the fact that American war vessels were being sent to Turkish waters helped to reduce the anxieties of most Americans. On August 27, an article in the London Daily Telegraph asserted that Morgenthau had warned the State Department that the situation "is fraught with great and imminent peril." It was widely read in Europe and America. Upon the request of Talaat and also in order to soothe the jittery Americans, the ambassador issued "a most emphatic denial." He pointed out that his daughter, son-in-law, and three grandchildren were still with him in Constantinople. Yet, Morgenthau obviously believed that the situation was perilous.⁵³

On September 10, the Ottoman government, taking advantage of the disunity of the European powers, officially notified the American government that it would consider the capitulations as abrogated effective October 1, 1914. This announcement hardly came as a surprise to the State Department as Morgenthau had been informing it of rumors of a possible abrogation since early August. What did come as a surprise was the ambassador's request merely to object to the abolition of the judicial and administrative capitulations. Morgenthau was critical of the economic capitulations because he believed that they hindered the industrial development of the empire. When earlier attempting to

⁵²Foreign Relations, 1914, 66; Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp, 760; diary entry of August 20 (1914), Morgenthau Papers.

⁵³New York Times, August 27, 1914, 6; clipping "Christians in Turkey: Danger of Massacres," no date, R.G. 59, 123M823/25; copy of news article from London Daily Telegraph, August 27, 1914, copy of "Ottoman Bureau of the Press News Release," Morgenthau Papers.

persuade the Turkish leaders to remain neutral, Morgenthau had used the argument that they could raise the duty surtax to any amount without consulting the nations with capitulatory rights. Morgenthau also answered affirmatively as far as the economic privileges were concerned when Enver inquired as to the possibility of the United States abandoning the capitulations. Based upon these earlier conversations, the Sublime Porte, on September 10, notified the American embassy that it was "disposed to start negotiations with the view of concluding with the American Government treaties of commerce on the basis of the general principles of public international law."⁵⁴

The ambassador's position on the economic capitulations was quickly overruled by the State Department. Morgenthau therefore had no choice but to assert the official American position that the decision of the Ottoman government to abrogate the capitulations was null and void. However, at that time the Grand Vizier and the Minister of War assured him that Turkey had no intention of interfering with the American schools and missionaries or curtailing their rights and privileges.⁵⁵

The State Department's official position was that the capitulations were international treaties and therefore could not be unilaterally voided. Whether the department's position was completely legal is debatable. Professor Eugene Wambaugh, an advisor to the Secretary of State, believed that the United States had absolutely no capitulatory rights. He pointed out that the treaty of 1830, which gave the United States "most favored nation" privileges, did not of itself give the

⁵⁴Foreign Relations, 1914, 1090-91; Morgenthau, Morgenthau's Story, 113, 115-16; diary entry of August 30 (1914), Morgenthau Papers.

⁵⁵Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp. 767.

United States any voice in Ottoman internal affairs. Furthermore, the treaty of 1862, which also included a "most favored nation" clause, had expired in 1890 by time limitation. Former ambassador Oscar S. Straus suggested that the European nations should take the lead over the entire matter, "as it is much more important for [them] ... than for us."⁵⁶

The department's capitulatory position however, did find strong support among the missionary interests. James L. Barton, the foreign secretary of the American Board, was "much gratified" at the department's action. To the State Department the fact that the missionaries represented the primary American interest in the Ottoman Empire was justification enough. When President Wilson inquired into the situation Assistant Secretary of State Robert Lansing could merely defend the department's position on the basis that it offered the opportunity to negotiate "when conditions are less unsettled."⁵⁷

While the two governments were exchanging diplomatic notes on the capitulations, Rustem Bey, the Turkish ambassador, decided to interject a few remarks of his own. On September 7, Rustem had published a statement in the New York Times attacking the anti-Turkish position of most American newspapers. He said among other things, "... the thought of the lynchings which occur daily in the United States and the memory of the water cures in the Philippines should make them [American newspapers]

⁵⁶ Eugene Wambaugh to Robert Lansing, September 14, 1914, case 711.673/33½, M365, roll 8; Straus to Wilson, October 8, 1914, Wilson Papers.

⁵⁷ Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, September, 1914, James L. Barton to Secretary of State, September 19, 1914, R.G. 59, 367.116/188½, 367.116/86.

chary of attacking Turkey" When asked to explain his undiplomatic and unacceptable language, the ambassador simply replied that the American press had "poisoned public opinion," and refused to retract the statement. President Wilson did not publicly demand Rustem's departure because of the delicate situation in Turkey, but the Turkish ambassador did see his usefulness at an end and departed on a leave of absence. To ensure against his return, Lansing instructed Morgenthau to "intimate to [the] Turkish Government that he is persona non grata and that he could not be received ... as [the] Turkish ambassador if he should return to the United States." Owing to the critical situation in the empire, Morgenthau deliberately disobeyed his instructions. He told the Sublime Porte that Rustem was not persona non grata when the Grand Vizier assured him that Rustem would be replaced.⁵⁸

On September 16, the Secretary of State notified the Turkish ambassador that the United States did not recognize Turkey's unilateral abrogation of the capitulations. He went on to add, "I have the honor to state that the Government of the United States does not acquiesce in the endeavor of the Imperial Government to set aside the Capitulations." To this Rustem Bey, who had not yet left, impertinently answered, "This I take it to mean that the principle itself of the removal of these restrictions on Turkish sovereignty is to be opposed" This, of course, did nothing to soothe the strained relations between the Ottoman embassy and the United States government.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ New York Times, September 8, 1914, 5, September 12, 1914, 1; Robert Lansing to Morgenthau, October 8, 1914, Morgenthau to Secretary of State, October 10, 1914, Wilson Papers.

⁵⁹ Foreign Relations, 1914, 1094.

The reaction in the empire to the abrogation of the capitulations was surprisingly mild. The consul at Smyrna reported that when the news of the abrogation reached that city there was no disorder and no cases of insult or threatened violence reported. In Beirut the news of the abrogation occasioned wild rejoicing among the Moslems and "many demonstrations in the streets by excited crowds of the rabble and lower classes." Yet the Beirut consular agent reported that the local Turkish governor-general displayed a friendly attitude toward American interests. Despite the auspicious reactions, the general consensus of opinion agreed with the Aleppo consular agent when he claimed: "If the 'Capitulations' are really overthrown it will be the most unfortunate event that ever occurred to weaken the power of foreign governments in Turkey, and the lives of the Christians ... will become absolutely unbearable." What really comforted the Americans was the knowledge that American warships were in the vicinity.⁶⁰

But as the date on which the abrogation of the capitulations neared, Morgenthau reiterated his opposition to the repeated requests by the American community at Smyrna for an American warship. The Turks had earlier advised Morgenthau that Smyrna's waters had been mined and the port closed to foreign shipping. The ambassador continually advised Washington that he feared an incident might easily occur if an American war vessel were sent there. He even warned that it could lead to the annihilation of the entire Christian community. But the reaction of

⁶⁰ Leland B. Morris to State Department, September 15, 1914, Stanley Hollis to State Department, September 11, 18, 1914, Jesse B. Jackson to State Department, September 3, 1914, case 867.00/678, 867.00/672, 867.00/685, 867.00/677, M353, roll 5.

the Americans was understandably bitter. One resident exclaimed: "The feelings of the community against the government or whoever is responsible for its failure to come here, would not look well on paper." Morgenthau believed that until Americans decided to evacuate the empire, they would have to rely upon the Turkish government for protection. He was convinced that he could achieve greater recognition and security of American institutions through his own methods at Constantinople than by defying the Ottoman government.⁶¹

October 1, the day the abrogation of the capitulations went into effect, was celebrated throughout the empire as a national holiday with all foreign post offices closed. The customs duty was increased without any incidents in Constantinople. Foreigners were in a high state of apprehension as the Dardanelles had been closed on September 27, isolating them from Europe. However, the day passed peacefully and events seemed to offer hope that the internal situation within the empire would improve, at least as far as American interests were concerned. Morgenthau took the Minister of War to Robert College and arranged a special class for the minister's brother and two sons. As he observed "It is very remarkable that the man most feared should devote part of his day of Turkey's freedom from [the] capitulations arranging for his brother's education in [an] American college."⁶²

However, diplomatic problems were bound to arise owing to the United States' refusal to recognize the legality of the abrogation. In

⁶¹Cass Arthur Reed to Rev. Charles Triggs, September 25, 1914, W. W. Peet to Rev. S. Ralph Harlow, October 7, 1914, Morgenthau Papers.

⁶²Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp. 768.

order to reduce the possibilities of an incident, Morgenthau instructed all American consulates to cooperate as much as possible with the local Turkish leaders and to maintain friendly working relationships. Shortly after the first of October, Morgenthau was informed of the arrest of two American citizens by Turkish authorities. The first, a Mr. Brewster, was arrested and imprisoned for an offense committed the previous April despite having been previously tried under the provisions of the capitulations. The other American, a Mr. Finkelstein, an employee of the Standard Oil company in Smyrna, had been arbitrarily arrested when he attempted to intercede between the Turkish police and an employee of Standard Oil. The American consulate was now told that because of the abrogation of the capitulations, it had no jurisdiction over the case. Ambassador Morgenthau immediately appealed to the Minister of Justice, who, because of Morgenthau's influence within the Turkish government, promised to have both cases dropped.⁶³

Despite the problems, Morgenthau continuously made concerted efforts to remain friendly with Turkish leaders. He told the Grand Vizier that he expected special treatment for American interests. When Ottoman newspapers began hinting that the government might secularize and nationalize foreign schools, Morgenthau called a conference with Dr. Gates of Robert College, Mary Mills Patrick of the Woman's College, and William Peet of the American Board. The educators agreed to Morgenthau's suggestion that they remain firm and insist that American institutions were not affected by the abrogation. They also agreed "to

⁶³ Charles F. Brissel to Morgenthau, October 5, 1914, case 867.00/738, M353, roll 6; Foreign Relations, 1914, 125-28.

try and play rather with than against the Government." The ambassador gained Enver's promise that the government would not interfere with American schools. On October 24, at Morgenthau's suggestion, the Minister of Public Instruction accompanied him to a luncheon at the Constantinople Woman's College and to a concert at Robert College. This was the first time that any Minister of Public Instruction had visited either institution.⁶⁴

This apparent friendly atmosphere was to be disturbed by events that occurred in the Sinai Peninsula and in the Black Sea. On October 29, word was received in Constantinople that Turkish Bedouins had crossed the frontier on their way to the Suez Canal and that Turkish warships had sunk a Russian ship while raiding the port of Odessa. The representatives of the Entente powers then demanded their passports as the Ottoman Empire had now entered World War I. On November first Ambassador Morgenthau immediately began preparations to evacuate any panic-stricken Americans.⁶⁵

With Turkey now in the war, Morgenthau became increasingly concerned over the status of American citizens and their interests in Turkey. He was particularly alarmed that Talaat and Enver would not be able to control their followers, now no longer restrained by the capitulations. The Turkish Minister of War, Enver Bey, assured him that Turkey would wage the war with self-control and that there would be no greater hardships

⁶⁴ Bie Ravndal to State Department, October 7, 1914, case 711.673/67, M365, roll 8; diary entries of October 12, 22 (1914), Morgenthau Papers; Foreign Relations, 1914, 120-21.

⁶⁵ Foreign Relations, 1914, 125; Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp., 126-28.

on non-combatants than war measures required. However, ominous reports were received at the embassy from Beirut, Smyrna, and Alexandretta that preparations were being made by the local Turkish officials to burn those cities if at anytime it became necessary to evacuate them. Morgenthau immediately called on Talaat expressing his concern for the safety of all foreigners. He told him that Americans thought the Turks too decent to carry out their threats of burning and massacre. Talaat replied, "What shall we do save to prove that we mean it." Morgenthau saw that he meant it.⁶⁶

During the week of November 19, the Turkish newspapers announced a government policy of closing all alleged dens of propaganda such as foreign charity institutions, hospitals, and schools. The consul in Beirut reported that he had been "reliably informed" that the local Turkish leaders were "working up" an agitation against the religious services practiced at the Syrian Protestant College. He further claimed that instructions from the Sublime Porte were "cynically, if not contemptuously ... disregarded" by the local officials. Morgenthau, despite the promises of protection to American citizens and their institutions made earlier by Turkish officials, expressed grave apprehension as to the safety of the Christian missionaries, most of whom were Americans. Conferring with the leading Turkish officials daily, the ambassador repeatedly made the strongest possible representations to the Ottoman government. He explained that if any missionaries or other Christians were killed that the Ottoman government would probably incur

⁶⁶ Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp, 136-41; diary entries of November 5, 7, 11 (1914), Morgenthau Papers.

the enmity of the United States.⁶⁷

In the hope of arousing the patriotic fervor of the people, on November 7 the Ottoman government proclaimed a jihad, or Holy War. The proclamation was addressed to all Moslem nations, especially to those under Christian rulers, or rulers in sympathy with the Entente powers. It urged them to revolt against their governments; where the numbers of Mohammedans was not great enough to warrant open revolt, it urged them to commit sabotage and assassination.⁶⁸

Morgenthau feared that the Holy War might lead to massacres. He believed that the Turkish officials in Constantinople could very easily lose control of the Moslem masses. Furthermore, the ambassador believed that the Germans had instigated the jihad in the hope of creating revolutions in Egypt and India. He told the German ambassador that the United States would hold Germany responsible for any massacres arising from the proclamation. This prompted the State Department to remind Morgenthau that he was expected to maintain a policy of "strict neutrality" and to avoid any statements giving the impression that the United States was considering taking sides.⁶⁹

The impact of the jihad on foreigners was surprisingly mild. Dr. Caleb Gates, president of Robert College, later recalled that an elderly Turk living near the college was so troubled over the fact that Turkey

⁶⁷Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp, 771, 773-74; Stanley Hollis to State Department, October 13, 1914, case 867.00/707, M353, roll 6.

⁶⁸Gates, Not to Me Only, 211-12.

⁶⁹Diary entry of November 13 (1914), Morgenthau Papers; Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp, 134.

was allied with Christian Germany that he went to the Sublime Porte to clarify the proclamation's meaning. To his friends the old Turk exclaimed, "It's all right. It is a Holy War a la franca! - that is, a European type of Holy War." To the relief of the foreigners the old Turk's reaction typified the response of most Moslems. The American Board's representative in Constantinople notified his superiors that the "American ambassador with the hearty cooperation of Turkish officials has situation completely [in] hand. Missionaries and their work fully safeguarded, everything proceeding as though normal conditions prevailed."⁷⁰

However, the "normal conditions" of the American institutions were soon upset by new Ottoman regulations. The Turkish government, taking advantage of the abrogation of the capitulations, passed new instructions affecting all foreign institutions regarding their rights and placing them under strict Ottoman supervision. The Turkish language was to be taught to all students; all courses of study had to be reviewed and authorized by the Minister of Public Instruction; the Ottoman government was to control the amount of property each school possessed; and finally, there would be no required religious attendance.⁷¹

Morgenthau immediately protested against the new regulations. Although Talaat claimed that all foreign schools were playing politics, Morgenthau persuaded him to agree that American schools were different

⁷⁰ Gates, Not to Me Only, 211-12; W. W. Peet to James L. Barton, November 7, 1914, R.G. 59, 367.116/227.

⁷¹ Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1916, 968-74, hereinafter cited as Foreign Relations, 1916; Hester Donaldson Jenkins, An Educational Ambassador to the Near East: The Story of Mary Mills Patrick and an American College in the Orient (1925), 231, hereinafter cited as Jenkins, An Educational Ambassador.

and non-political. Through his continuous conversations with the Turkish leaders the ambassador gradually weakened the stiff requirements of the regulations. The Minister of Public Instruction finally conceded that the new school orders would not be strictly enforced immediately and that Americans were at liberty to point out any defect in the regulations. In order to reduce the possibilities of having the American institutions seized, Morgenthau offered to the Turkish government the full services of the American Red Cross and American hospitals. Early in December the ambassador reported that both the Minister of Interior and Minister of Public Instruction had agreed to treat American institutions the same as foreign institutions were treated in the United States. More importantly, he also gained a sixty day delay before the new regulations were to be enforced.⁷²

On December 4, the ambassador requested that the two ships, the North Carolina and the Tennessee, be left in Turkish waters because "we are now entering [the] most critical period." The ambassador had just recently received reports that the Entente powers were bombarding the Dardanelles. Reports from the consulates indicated that the local Turkish officials feared destruction all along the sea coast. Morgenthau now saw a grave danger of the Ottoman government in Constantinople or the provincial authorities misusing their power when dealing with American institutions. He feared that the nervous Turks might enact desperate measures despite all of the promises not to molest any Americans or their

⁷²Diary entries of November 7, 8, 25 (1914), Morgenthau Papers; Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp., 775; Mary L. Graffam to G. Bio Ravndal, November 27, 1914, R.G. 84, item 814, volume 9.

institutions.⁷³

The ambassador also feared that nervous Americans might provoke the local Turkish officials. On November 16, the captain of the Tennessee had been fired upon as he was attempting to visit Smyrna in his launch. When the captain threatened to bombard the Turkish troops a genuine crisis developed. Morgenthau immediately instructed the Tennessee to leave Smyrna because "armed sailors should not be landed except in absolute extreme urgency." Fortunately, both governments recognized the seriousness of the situation. The American government accepted the Ottoman explanation that the Turkish troops were merely trying to warn the captain of Smyrna's minefield, and on November 30, the matter was officially closed.⁷⁴

In Beirut, Stanley Hollis, the American consular officer, aroused the displeasure of Djemal Pasha. Djemal was commander of the Turkish Fourth Army and in importance ranked next to Talaat and Enver. Hollis was very nervous owing to his inability to remedy the dreadful situation in Beirut and had maintained an aloof relationship with the local Turkish officials. Early in December, when Hollis expressed his astonishment at Djemal's conduct, Djemal curtly replied, "I never will allow you to write me that you are astonished by any of my decisions and I do not authorize you to meddle with my affairs." Morgenthau considered removing Hollis, but owing to the critical situation decided to give him a chance to

⁷³Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp, 774-76.

⁷⁴Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp, 771-74; diary entries of November 16, 17 (1914), Morgenthau Papers.

establish better relations with the Turkish officials.⁷⁵

At about the same time the ambassador received word that a Mr. Geddis, an agent of MacAndrews and Forbes at Alexandretta, had been arrested. Geddis had had a regular "shoot out" with the local Turkish police when they attempted to requisition the company's goods. Although Talaat promised Morgenthau that he would promptly "investigate and avoid complications," the ambassador feared a catastrophe might occur between the nervous Americans and Turks.⁷⁶

On December 12, Morgenthau observed: "This government is fast drifting into semi-anarchy, promises are made one day and recalled the next, there is no fixed policy" To the State Department the ambassador now recommended that the "time has arrived for Americans to consider their departure." President Wilson agreed with Morgenthau's recommendation, authorizing him to advise Americans to leave those areas believed to be unsafe. Bryan advised Morgenthau that the matter was to be handled "very guardedly and confidentially" to avoid "frightening friends in this country."⁷⁷

Morgenthau instructed the American consulates to suggest that all American missionaries in the interior of the Ottoman Empire make their way to the seaports for naval evacuation. The missionaries responded in a most Christian manner that they would not desert their people in time

⁷⁵Morgenthau to State Department, December 12, 1914, case 867.00/723, M353, roll 6; Hollis was greatly upset by Djemal's policy of sending all belligerent nationals into the interior and his inability to get the local officials to send more foodstuffs to Beirut.

⁷⁶Diary entries of December 16, 18 (1914) Morgenthau Papers.

⁷⁷Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp, 776-81.

of stress and danger. Most of them felt that the present conditions were no worse than those that had existed before. Only at Marash was the sense of security not as strong as elsewhere, but the twelve Americans there still preferred to remain. Many believed that should they abandon their stations a panic would occur among the local people. Thus, 1914 ended with all the American missions and institutions still in active operation and the patient labor of ninety years had not been ended. Through the efforts of Ambassador Morgenthau, thirteen American hospitals for Red Cross purposes had been established. Before the year was completed the Ottoman government placed special protection for all missionaries connected with American hospitals owing to the humanitarian services rendered to the Ottoman people. By December 22, Morgenthau could report that American institutions everywhere except at Smyrna and Beirut "are absolutely pursuing even tenor ... and a general sense of security prevails."⁷⁸

As he surveyed the first year of his mission Ambassador Morgenthau must have considered it a success. He arrived at his new post with the same vigor and earnestness that had made him a successful businessman. He had promised himself to remain objective and non-committal toward the government to which he was accredited to. But because of his eager and impetuous nature he soon fell under the spell of the Young Turks. In doing so, he unwittingly departed from America's traditional isolation in the Near East.

Morgenthau sincerely desired to aid the Young Turks. He sought to

⁷⁸Foreign Relations 1914, Supp, 778-79; diary entry of December 22 (1914), Morgenthau Papers.

interest American capital in investing in the Ottoman Empire. His purpose was not an American economic aggrandizement of the empire, nor was it motivated merely by a desire to help the Turks. He wanted to strengthen American political stature in the Near East. Morgenthau believed that American philanthropic interests would be better safeguarded by a growing Ottoman dependence on American investments.

He also continued to demonstrate to the Turkish leaders his personal interest in and attention to the Christian missionaries. At least once a week Dr. Mary Mills Patrick and Dr. Louise B. Wallace, the president and the dean respectfully of the Constantinople College for Women, were entertained at the embassy. The ambassador frequently went horseback riding with Dr. Caleb F. Gates, president of Robert College.⁷⁹

Part of Morgenthau's early efforts to aid the Young Turks grew out of his inexperience and naivete. Immediately upon his arrival in Constantinople the new ambassador was struck by the apparent cynical ambitions of the other ambassadors and the desperate financial plight of the Turks. Sensing the possibilities for a friendly policy toward the empire, he willingly cooperated with the Young Turks. He well knew that he was being used as lever by them to pry apart European capitalists. Morgenthau thought the Young Turks were progressive and feared that without financial support a coup d'etat would overthrow the regime.

The ambassador grew into his responsibilities and learned from the actions of the Turks. The Smyrna incident in June, 1914 served as his rude awakening to the true character of the Ottoman government. With the

⁷⁹Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 204.

threat to American interests and the ruthless expulsion of thousands of Greeks, the ambassador soon changed his original view of the Young Turks. He had formerly considered them progressive and genuinely sympathized with them. Afterwards he regarded them merely as a group of bankrupt leaders attempting to enhance their personal fortunes. He now claimed: "here was a worn out empire dying, which in its death agony clutched other peoples still with withered fingers."⁸⁰

With the outbreak of hostilities in Europe, Morgenthau feared for the safety of Americans. He realistically saw that in the final analysis Americans and their institutions would have to depend upon the Turkish government for protection. He decided to cooperate with the Turks instead of working against them. Morgenthau did not believe in "gunboat diplomacy." He resisted the demands of the "Smyrna Committee" for an American warship when the Turks refused to give permission for American naval vessels to enter that port. When Stanley Hollis, the American consul at Beirut, proposed that at the "first indication" of any Turkish violation of American rights to request an American armed landing force, Morgenthau immediately made it clear to the American naval commanders that the consuls had no authority over them.⁸¹

While Morgenthau was making every effort to cooperate with the Ottoman government, the State Department was refusing to discuss its position on the capitulations. When the Sublime Porte offered to discuss possible commercial treaties, the State Department ill-advisedly completely

⁸⁰ Ibid., 209.

⁸¹ Morgenthau to State Department, November 12, 1914, case 867.00/717, M353, roll 6.

ignored the offer. Not until 1916 did the department realize that at no time did the United States officially indicate its views on the customs making powers except to state that it did not recognize the abrogation. Thus, Morgenthau found himself in the unenviable position of defending American rights without any bargaining power. With this fact in mind, Henry Morgenthau faced the unknown future.⁸²

⁸² "interdepartment memo - Division of Near Eastern Affairs," August 30, 1916, R. G. 59, 667.003/67.

CHAPTER IV

PROTECTION OF AMERICAN RIGHTS: 1915

As 1914 drew to a close it appeared that Americans and their institutions had adjusted to the war-disrupted conditions within the empire. Based upon the consular reports coming into the embassy Morgenthau could report on December 22 that all American institutions were "absolutely pursuing even tenor" and that a general sense of security prevailed. Mary Mills Patrick, president of the Woman's College, remembered, "It was easier to stir up a panic early in the war than it was later on when we learned to discount sudden rumor."¹

Despite the relaxation of tensions the status of the American educational and missionary institutions remained unresolved. When the Ottoman government abrogated the capitulations, it also passed regulations which greatly altered the legal positions of all foreign institutions. Under the capitulations the foreign institutions had been relatively free from Ottoman control. The new regulations were designed to place these institutions under direct Ottoman supervision.

The new rules had little effect on American business. By the beginning of 1915 most foreign businesses had stopped operations throughout the empire, and the American commercial enterprises merely maintained skeleton crews to watch over their properties and record any properties requisitioned by the Turks. The only sizable American commercial activity which continued was the buying of Turkish tobacco.

¹Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp, 778-79; Mary Mills Patrick, Under Five Sultans (1929), 274, hereinafter cited as Patrick, Under Five Sultans.

Americans bought it at ten per cent of its pre-war price and accumulated a four year supply at Smyrna. When the Turks passed a new law requiring all businesses to have their books in Turkish, Morgenthau secured a compromise to have the records maintained in both French and Turkish. Because most businesses had ceased operations, Ambassador Morgenthau's efforts in 1915 were principally directed toward the preservation of American educational and missionary institutions.²

The American missionaries and educators naturally looked to their government and ambassador for protection. Unfortunately for Morgenthau, the State Department refused to discuss any changes to the capitulations. The department's official position tied the ambassador's hands so that all of his efforts to protect American interests had to be done unofficially.³

On December 5, 1914 Morgenthau gained a sixty day delay in the enforcement of the new regulations. The ambassador reported that the Minister of Public Instruction had offered to treat American institutions the same as foreign institutions were treated in the United States. Although doubting the verity of the offer, the ambassador believed that it was at least a good place to begin negotiations.⁴

²Diary entries of May 8, October 30 (1915), Morgenthau Papers; Morgenthau to Secretary of State, January 25, 1915, R.G. 59, 367.11/410.

³When the Ottoman government abrogated the capitulations, the State Department refused to recognize the legality of the Turkish position. Morgenthau was instructed to declare the Turkish action as null and void. Throughout the remainder of Morgenthau's mission, the State Department continued its policy of not recognizing the abrogation.

⁴Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp, 775.

Morgenthau's skepticism was well founded. While Ottoman officials were promising friendly treatment to American institutions, the Sublime Porte sent detailed instructions to all local officials directing strict compliance to the new regulations. These secret instructions did not recognize any difference between American and other foreign institutions. All crime perpetrated between foreigners and Ottomans, and all civil and commercial differences henceforth were to be judged by Ottoman tribunals without the presence of consular officials. All private educational institutions were to reapply for permits to operate or else be closed. All schools were to be subjected to municipal taxes, and those charging tuition were also additionally burdened with property taxes. All foreign schools were further required to indicate a responsible director to the Turkish authorities. Teaching the Turkish language, history, and geography became mandatory. Local officials were to ensure that the foreign schools taught religious lessons **only to** those students who were members of the denomination that sponsored the institution. Nor was any student to be required to attend prayer sessions. Through these requirements the Turks hoped to establish universal standards and "Turkify" the empire's many minorities.⁵

Most of the new requirements proved vexatious to the American schools. The requirement to teach Turkish presented an acute problem to Robert College, the Constantinople College for Women, and the Syrian Protestant College. Many of the students at Robert College and the Woman's College were Bulgarians and Greeks who would naturally oppose being forced to learn Turkish. The Syrian Protestant College's student

⁵Foreign Relations, 1916, 968-74.

body consisted of widely different elements and Turkish was little used in that portion of the empire. Nevertheless, the majority of American schools were located in the Turkish speaking sections of the empire, and the language requirement was easily adjusted to by them.⁶

The new regulations dealing with property rights and taxation appeared to be a direct threat to the institutions' continued existence. American schools operated under small budgets and many were dependant upon voluntary grants. Also, the Turkish temettu tax was applied directly to teacher's salaries. The American teachers' salaries were low and could ill afford the new tax. The cost of living in the empire by 1915 was conservatively estimated to have advanced thirty per cent due to the war. Besides having to bear the high cost of living and the temettu tax, the education of the teachers' children in the United States was expensive and involved the separation of the children from their parents. It was their sense of duty and the opportunity to render real service to the peoples of the Near East which held most of the teachers at their posts. That so many of the teachers remained at their schools during the war has to be one of the greater unsung heroics of that era.⁷

But it was the government rules on religious instruction that struck at the very heart of the Christian American institutions. While all the institutions justified their existence on the social good they were accomplishing among the Ottoman subjects, the main motivation was the spreading of the gospel. All American educators agreed with

⁶"Minutes of Meeting held July 6th, 1915, at the American Embassy on Educational Question," July 6, 1915, Morgenthau Papers.

⁷Monifiore Judelsohn to G. Bie Ravndal, December 2, 1915, R.G. 84, item 850, volume 21; Cates, Not to Me Only, 179.

Dr. Bliss when he claimed, "... the chief function [of American institutions] is to teach ... [the] students how to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with their God."⁸

The secret Ottoman instructions to the local officials were not long a mystery to the Americans. Early in January Morgenthau received a letter from Alexander MacLachlan, president of the International College at Smyrna who informed him that the local governor-general had told him of the new regulations and expected strict compliance. The governor-general had explained that the college was not only to excuse all Moslems from chapel services, but also all Jews and Christians not of the college's Congregationalist faith. MacLachlan was most anxious that the ambassador persuade the Ottoman authorities "not to enforce the new regulations on our Institutions" and abide by the promise of delay. Morgenthau immediately appealed to Talaat who promised to telegraph instructions to leave all American institutions alone. Morgenthau asked himself, "how long will [the] decision last?"⁹

The ambassador did not have long to wait for his answer. On January 8 the American consul at Smyrna, George Horton, reported that American properties were being requisitioned by the Turks. The teachers at the Aphion Kara Hissar school had been "bundled out" and supplanted by Turkish teachers. The school's chapel had reportedly been rededicated as a mosque. Furthermore, the buildings of the

⁸Penrose, That They May Have Life, 149.

⁹Alexander MacLachlan to Morgenthau, December 26, 1914, R.G. 59, 367.116/280; diary entries December 28 (1914), January 9 (1915), Morgenthau Papers.

International College were occupied by Turkish refugees and soldiers. Horton claimed that "... requisitioning from Americans has gone merrily on" The chaplain of International College, Ralph Harlow, discovered that the land around the college's property was being taxed "at much less" than the colleges'. When he brought the matter to the attention of the local Turkish authorities and claimed that all tax matters must be deferred to the American ambassador, he was told that the ambassador knew nothing about the real situation.¹⁰

The actions of the Turks were not only felt in the provinces. For example, in Constantinople the Turks attempted to enforce the new regulations to the consternation of Caleb F. Gates and Mary Mills Patrick, presidents of Robert College and the Woman's College respectively. Robert College was searched for a wireless apparatus seven times by the police. When a Turkish officer claimed that he intended to install himself and his attendants in rooms at the Woman's College, Dr. Patrick appealed to the ambassador. She was well aware that any girls' school in Turkey which had once been occupied by soldiers was given a wide berth by parents. So fearful was she that the Turks would take control of the college that she urged Morgenthau to become the college's president. He refused. Instead, he pressed upon the Americans the need to maintain friendly relations with the Turks, and through his personal contacts with the Ottoman leaders he secured the temporary safety of the American

¹⁰ George Horton to State Department, January 8, 1915, Rev. Ralph Harlow to George Horton, January 23, 1915, R.C. 59, 367.11/443, 367.116/307.

institutions for the Young Turks agreed to abide by the delay.¹¹

Throughout January Morgenthau appealed to the Turkish leaders for an extension of the original delay to the enforcement of the new regulations. A sixty day delay had been granted on December 5, 1914 and expired at the end of January. The ambassador called upon the Young Turks daily asking for special treatment for American institutions. Although the Grand Vizier and Enver readily promised to support an extension of sixty days, Morgenthau found Talaat the hardest to convince. He had to argue very hard to secure his assurance of an extension which was finally given on the premise that the United States would have to agree to the principle of the abrogation at the end of the delay. To Stephen Wise the ambassador wrote, "I am ... going at a fifty to sixty mile gait and I shall not for a long time be able to reduce again to the moderate twenty mile gait that I have been traveling!"¹²

He got no help from the State Department. While Morgenthau was attempting to temper the Ottoman government's regulations, that agency still refused to discuss any modification of the capitulations with the Turks. The department was so fearful of establishing any precedents which might weaken the American position that it refused to withdraw American protection from a Smyrna theatre despite the fact that the theatre's stock had been transferred to a Greek bank. The State Department feared that such a move was "apt to be construed ... as an

¹¹Cates, Not to Me Only, 210; Jenkins, An Educational Ambassador, 237; Patrick, A Bosphorus Adventure, 179; diary entry of January 17 (1915), Morgenthau Papers.

¹²Diary entries of January 14, 19, 23, 26 (1915), Morgenthau to Stephen S. Wise, January 14, 1915, Morgenthau Papers.

act of weakness" When the Turkish leaders indicated their willingness to limit the new regulations upon a relaxation of the State Department's position, Morgenthau was limited to stating that the American government would not accept any change in the status of American extra-territorial privileges "without previous agreement."¹³

Morgenthau therefore had to depend upon his own efforts to gain an additional delay. He told the Turkish leaders that he would be satisfied to have the American institutions treated as well as the United States treated foreign schools. When Chukri Bey, the Minister of Public Instruction, frankly admitted that the Turks desired to appropriate all the institutions they could, Morgenthau urged on him the possibility of the empire needing the United States as a peacemaker. On January 29, the ambassador reported that the Sublime Porte had granted a further sixty day delay with the stipulation that all American institutions were to come to a "direct understanding ... in all questions" with the local Turkish authorities. Morgenthau's success moved Secretary of State Bryan to remark, "Morgenthau's a mighty wide awake feller and he does measure up to every responsibility."¹⁴

The fifty-nine-year-old ambassador had indeed struggled hard for the sixty day delay. He had worked an average of thirteen hours daily

¹³ Foreign Relations, 1914, Supp, 777; "interdepartment memo-Near Eastern Division," Putney to Baker, January 13, 1915, R.G. 59, 367.114 H69/244.

¹⁴ Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Supplement, 1915, 953, hereinafter cited as Foreign Relations, 1915, Supp, diary entry of January 23 (1915), Stephen S. Wise to Morgenthau, January 29, 1915. Morgenthau Papers.

since November first and the long hours had taken their toll. At the end of January he wrote, "I may have to take a vacation during this War, if it lasts much longer, to restore the reserve force that I so unstintingly drew upon during the last months."¹⁵

Besides his efforts in behalf of the American institutions, the weary ambassador had to ensure that his staff maintained a strict neutral attitude toward the war. Several times he had found it necessary to warn them against pro-English actions, once having even to rebuke his wife. The suspicious Turks harrassed all foreigners they suspected of having pro-Entente sentiments. The crew of the Scorpion found themselves many times bothered by petty annoyances. When Lewis Einstein, a member of the embassy's staff, left Constantinople on a new assignment, the city's prefect told Morgenthau that Einstein's departure meant one less foreign spy in the city. By the end of January the ambassador noticed that the embassy's staff no longer outwardly displayed their "bond of Allied sympathy" which produced "splendid results" in his relations with the Young Turks.¹⁶

While Morgenthau was getting his staff in line, events were occurring at the mouth of the Dardanelles which would demand his full attention. On February 19, the ambassador learned that the Entente powers had begun a heavy bombardment there. He also learned that the Ottoman government already had made plans to escape from Constantinople.

¹⁵Diary entry of January 29 (1915), Morgenthau Papers; Morgenthau to Secretary of State, January 25, 1915, R.G. 59, 124.673/37.

¹⁶Diary entries of April 28, June 26, 28, October 11 (1915), Morgenthau Papers; Lewis Einstein, A Diplomat Looks Back (1968), 121, hereinafter cited as Einstein, A Diplomat Looks Back.

When he called upon Talaat the ambassador found him "quite depressed" and no longer asserting complete authority. Talaat readily admitted that, except for Enver, not a single Turkish leader believed they could stop the Entente forces from entering Constantinople. The bombardment could easily be heard in the capital, and Mary Mills Patrick remembered that it even "shook our windows." The entire city was thrown into panic. The reaction of the populace was understandable as there were tens of thousands of foreign subjects there. The danger of mob actions appeared quite possible. Morgenthau observed that, "There is undoubtedly a grave danger of the Turks doing something very desperate before they will hand over the city to the Europeans. ... there is no way of calculating [the] possibilities of anarchy or mob rule"¹⁷

Morgenthau feared that the Turks would destroy Constantinople in preference to delivering it intact to the Entente powers, although he noticed that the Turks were hurriedly fortifying it. He immediately began preparations to protect the American community. With the naval attache the ambassador arranged to have fifty to sixty sailors held in readiness to land at Robert College, the Woman's College, and the American Bible House in Stamboul. In a chancery cupboard a dozen rifles were kept and a machinegun set up at the entrance to the embassy. The embassy was therefore equipped to defend itself for a short time against a mob, but it would be impossible to hold out long in case of real trouble. No one knew how serious the situation might become should the

¹⁷Diary entries of January 1, February 19, 23 (1915), Morgenthau to Stephen S. Wise, February 28, 1915, Morgenthau Papers; Patrick, Under Five Sultans, 273.

Entente powers break through the Turkish defenses. One member of the embassy's staff overheard one of the canvasses [an embassy's armed guard and courier] state that they had nothing to fear. If it ever came to a massacre, he offered to despatch the entire staff in the most humane and painless fashion!¹⁸

While the American community in Constantinople was once again panic stricken, Morgenthau was demonstrating great courage. When the Turkish leaders advised that they favored his evacuating the city with the Ottoman government, the ambassador refused. He firmly told them that should the government leave the city he would have himself made consul-general so as to remain. The crisis rejuvenated the tired ambassador. He almost seemed to enjoy the probability of facing a tense situation. He wrote, "Danger instead of frightening me, seems to lure me on. I am delighted to have discovered that I don't know what fear is. The nearer the denouement is coming, the cooler I feel."¹⁹

On February 24 the German ambassador informed Morgenthau that, as the representative of neutral America, he would be expected to take charge of all matters should the Entente fleet come through the Dardanelles. Upon the request of the German ambassador he immediately wired the State Department for permission to act as an intermediary which was rapidly given. Morgenthau also learned that the Turks

¹⁸"Report from Commander, Scorpion to Secretary of Navy," March 15, 1915, R.G. 59, 124.6718a/29; diary entries of February 27, May 24 (1915), Morgenthau Papers; Einstein, A Diplomat Looks Back, 129.

¹⁹Diary entry of March 11 (1915), Morgenthau to Stephen S. Wise, February 28, 1915, Morgenthau Papers; Morgenthau acted on his own when he refused to leave Constantinople and again when he claimed he would be made consul-general. At no time did he consult the State Department regarding the consul-general post.

would never surrender Constantinople but rather burn it.²⁰

To further safeguard the American community the ambassador suggested the establishment of neutral zones in the capital city. He ludicrously proposed that certain areas within the city be left unfortified if the Entente powers' agreed not to bombard or send landing forces to those sites. Morgenthau found the Turkish officials favorable to the suggestion with the exception that they reserved the right to prevent all landing parties. The Entente powers were unwilling to accept this modification, and Morgenthau's idea was forgotten. The ambassador did gain Talaat's promise that the city's police and fire forces would remain should the government evacuate the city. Fortunately for the foreigners, the allied fleet never broke through the Turkish Dardanelles defenses.²¹

Elated by their success at the Dardanelles, the Turks became increasingly chauvinistic and began to create more difficulties. The police began visiting Robert College daily on one pretext or another. Two lawsuits were instituted against the college to contest the titles to its property. Mary Mills Patrick informed the ambassador that Turkish officials also daily visited her campus. Consular reports to the embassy indicated that the local officials throughout the empire expected total compliance with the new regulations after the delay expired on March 27.²²

²⁰Diary entry of February 24 (1915), Morgenthau Papers; Foreign Relations, 1915, Supp., 961-62.

²¹Diary entry of March 1 (1915), Morgenthau Papers; Foreign Relations, 1915, Supp., 963-64.

²²Gates, Not to Me Only, 221.

Morgenthau urged the Turkish leaders to grant another delay before the new regulations went into effect. The ambassador again found Talaat very much opposed to an extension. The Minister of Interior pointed out that the Americans had already been given four months to prepare themselves. Talaat believed that the American schools proselytized too much, and frankly told the ambassador that he did not want the embassy to have anything to do with the schools in the future. Morgenthau replied that should the Turks force the issue, the American institutions would have no option but to close immediately. He further pointed out that if the institutions closed, his influence in the United States would be "completely annihilated" and that he probably would be recalled. With this disclosure Talaat relented and promised to bring the matter to the cabinet's attention.²³

The ambassador immediately began to enlist support within the cabinet for an extension. He found most of them opposed to a further delay. From the Grand Vizier, Morgenthau learned that their main objection stemmed from the attitude taken by some of the American school leaders. Most had refused to answer any questions or offer any information about their affairs. After a long discussion Morgenthau agreed to attempt to rectify that matter, and the Grand Vizier consented to favor an additional delay. Owing to the military situation Morgenthau believed that Enver, as Minister of War, carried the greatest weight within the cabinet. He therefore called upon him daily. Although Enver was disinclined to favor a delay, he was finally won over by the persistent ambassador and

²³Diary entries of March 18, 20 (1915), Morgenthau Papers.

agreed to recommend a non-enforcement of the regulations until after the 1914-15 school year.²⁴

On March 27 the ambassador was informed that the Ottoman cabinet had decided to leave all American institutions undisturbed until September. The Minister of Public Instruction promised that if each school filed a certificate naming the responsible director, no other demands as to taxes or other charges would be made. Morgenthau considered this extension his greatest diplomatic accomplishment. The delay also offered him an opportunity to call a conference of the widely scattered Americans in order to discuss a unified policy during the summer months. Morgenthau wrote, "I have been fighting for the delay ever since November and it seemed almost hopeless that I should succeed. I really did some tall sweating to accomplish it and I hope there will be no further hitch about it."²⁵

On March 29 Morgenthau received word that the Euphrates College, located at Harpoot and valued at half a million dollars, had been seized by Turkish authorities. When the American consulate protested it was told that the consulate was no longer recognized. The embassy immediately protested pointing out that it was a "universally recognized ... right of consular officers ... to assist and uphold the rights of their nationals" When the Sublime Porte answered that the consular agents could no longer act as intermediaries, Morgenthau appealed to Enver. The Minister of War informed Morgenthau that the German ambassador had protested that

²⁴Diary entries of March 20, 24 (1915), Morgenthau Papers.

²⁵Diary entries of March 24, 27 (1915), Morgenthau to Stephen S. Wise, March 27, 1915, Morgenthau Papers.

all German schools in Harpoot had been seized while the American schools were not. Enver further pointed out that should the United States declare war on Germany, all American institutions would be occupied within forty-eight hours. When Morgenthau reminded Enver that the Turkish cabinet had just extended the delay to the new regulations' enforcement until September, Enver telegraphed in the ambassador's presence to restore the school to American control as soon as possible. Within a few weeks the college authorities were again in control of the school.²⁶

Despite the Ottoman government's willingness to delay the enforcement of the new regulations, Morgenthau soon observed a growing anti-American feeling among the Turkish leaders. On March 18, one of the leading Constantinople newspapers, La Defense Nationale, editorialized on America's role in the war. It pointed out that "the power of America is founded on dollars, and when it is a question affecting these, no other consideration counts." Four days later Talaat bluntly asked the ambassador if the Turks would merely receive from America in the future, as in the past, only kind words and not any real assistance. Morgenthau replied that he hoped to carry through "some definite scheme in their favor."²⁷

Morgenthau was determined to placate the growing Turkish animosity toward the United States. He hit upon the idea of expanding the efforts of the American Red Cross in the empire. By mid-March a steady stream

²⁶ Foreign Relations, 1915, 1301-04; diary entries of March 29, April 19, 20, June 15 (1915), Morgenthau Papers.

²⁷ "Review of the Local Press," March 18, 1915, diary entry of March 22 (1915), Morgenthau Papers.

of Turkish wounded from the Dardanelles was pouring into Constantinople. The city's hospitals were soon filled and the Turks began establishing improvised hospitals wherever possible. While space was found for the wounded, there appeared no way to fill the great lack of trained doctors and nurses. As the chairman of the American Red Cross in the Ottoman Empire, Morgenthau put out a call for help to the men and women of the American colleges. Soon all the American teachers in Constantinople and in other combat areas were taking courses in bandaging and serving regularly in the hospitals. The activities of the various American hospitals and medical missions throughout Asia Minor were coordinated so that sick and wounded Ottoman soldiers were cared for.²⁸

To better care for the Turkish wounded, Morgenthau urged Caleb Gates and Mary Mills Patrick to convert their old campuses in Constantinople into hospitals.²⁹ This was rapidly done as both presidents were motivated by a sincere desire to help and also a fear that the Turks would take the buildings anyway. In Syria, the Syrian Protestant College offered to care for wounded Ottoman soldiers free of charge which was accepted. Dr. Edwin Ward of the Beirut college established a medical mission in southern Palestine on behalf of the Ottoman army. From January to April Dr. Ward and twenty-two other Americans assisted to the medical needs of the Turks in that area. Tents, bedding, medicines,

²⁸ Gates, Not to Me Only, 214; article "American Red Cross Work in Turkey," Levant Trade Review, no date, Morgenthau Papers; Foreign Relations, 1915, 1040-42; The ambassador was by tradition chairman of the American Red Cross in the Ottoman Empire. In June 1915 the Secretary of State issued a special circular excepting the Constantinople embassy from the departmental regulation forbidding diplomatic and consulate officials from serving as officers of the Red Cross.

²⁹ Both the Womans' College and Robert College had moved from their original buildings into newer and more modern facilities. Yet, the institutions still retained ownership of their former buildings.

and other supplies were provided by the American Red Cross. Transportation, hospital tents, and general provisions were supplied by the grateful Ottoman government. Dr. Ward was given the Turkish Military Medal with red ribbon in recognition of the mission's exceptional value.³⁰

When the shortage of trained doctors and nurses in Constantinople became apparent, Morgenthau urgently called for surgeons and nurses from the medical college at Beirut. Dr. Ward and six other American doctors and nurses were released at once and sent to the capital. The ambassador visited the hospitals daily and through his personal efforts equipped a hospital with 450 beds. By the end of the year the American Red Cross had contributed over fourteen thousand dollars in medical aid. During 1915 the American medical teams treated approximately 6,148 Ottoman soldiers. The efforts of the Red Cross and the voluntary help extended by Americans throughout the empire, played an important role in helping Morgenthau maintain friendly relations with the Turkish leaders.³¹

In spite of his efforts to maintain friendly relations problems continued to plague him, particularly concerning diplomatic mail service. In April the privilege of using cipher messages between the embassy and consulates was suddenly revoked. Americans throughout the empire were also forced to accept the most rigorous censorship of their letters. The consular mail trouble actually had begun shortly after the beginning

³⁰Penrose, That They May Have Life, 153-54; Morgenthau to Ottoman Ministry of Foreign Affairs, January 12, 1915, R.G. 84, item 814.2, volume 20.

³¹Penrose, That They May Have Life, 154; New York Times, June 6, 1915, sec. II, 3, July 14, 1915, 18, August 23, 1915, 2; "Report of American National Red Cross, Constantinople Chapter," November 26, 1915, Morgenthau Papers.

of 1915. At that time local Ottoman officials insisted on their right to open all consular mail. Owing to Morgenthau's strong protests and promise that no military information would be sent, the Ottoman government relented. Without the use of the cipher Morgenthau would be unable to determine accurately the status of Americans in the empire.³²

To make matters worse Morgenthau had only recently received several alarming reports from the consul at Smyrna. George Horton reported that lawless Turkish bands were appearing in increasing numbers and were spreading a reign of terror among the Christians. While much of the local Turks' hostility was aimed at Englishmen, the consul reminded the embassy of how easy it was to mistake an American for an Englishman. When a British warship sailed into Smyrna and demanded the immediate surrender of the harbor's forts and batteries, the American colony was thrown into a panic. The consul immediately notified the Archipelago American Steamship Company to keep a ship in the harbor to evacuate the Americans in case the worst should happen.³³

The ambassador had also received several disquieting reports from other areas. The consul at Aleppo reported trouble between Turkish troops and Armenians. Many of the American missionaries in the interior of the empire were working with the Armenians and their safety appeared questionable. The American consul at Beirut had just reported that

³²Morgenthau, Morgenthau's Story, 327-28; Foreign Relations, 1915, Supp, 740; William J. Bryan to Morgenthau, January 14, 1915, R.G. 84, item 871, volume 23.

³³George Horton to State Department, February 4, 1915, March 12, 1915, case 867.00/739, 867.00/753, M353, roll 6; Foreign Relations, 1915, Supp, 964-65; Einstein, A Diplomat Looks Back, 126.

poverty in that city was becoming more evident and that there was "a great scarcity of flour."³⁴

The Turkish mail censorship and cipher restrictions increased the American missionaries' isolation. Most of the missionaries were unable to communicate effectively either with their superiors in Constantinople or with their relatives at home. The few messages that did get through indicated that all of the American Board's seventeen posts desperately needed relief funds. For awhile the missionaries were unable to correspond in the English language due to an Ottoman ban on the use of the "enemy's languages." Ambassador Morgenthau's protest on this restriction resulted in a firman giving full permission to use the "American language." "Great is diplomacy," exclaimed one missionary on this minor triumph.³⁵

Morgenthau appealed to Talaat and Enver to lift the ban on cipher messages. Both Turkish leaders refused on the justification of military necessity. It was not until September 1915 that the ban was finally lifted. Until then the ambassador had to rely upon hand carried messages and word of mouth to receive confidential information.³⁶

³⁴Morgenthau to State Department, March 30, 1915, Capt. Oman to Navy Department, April 6, 1915, case 867.00/746, 867.00/758, M353, roll 6.

³⁵New York Times, May 19, 1915, 4; DeNovo, American Interests, 97; Owing to the cipher restrictions, the American consuls' efforts to report accurately on the welfare of American citizens and conditions in the empire's interior were greatly hindered.

³⁶Diary entry of September 14 (1915), Morgenthau Papers; Morgenthau, Morgenthau's Story, 327-28; Apparently the Ottoman government established the ban on cipher messages to delay news of the Armenian persecution from reaching the outside world. By September, through word of mouth, knowledge of the persecutions was widely known outside the empire. As a result, the Ottoman government thereafter again permitted cipher messages.

The ambassador soon had another reason to concern himself with the welfare of the American missionaries. On June 2 Great Britain notified the American government that it would establish a naval blockade along the entire Asia Minor coast. The consul at Harpoot reported that Turkish authorities there had hinted to him that they might not allow the Americans to leave because they knew too much about the conditions in the interior. Many reports were beginning to drift into the embassy describing wholesale deportations and massacres of the Armenians. To the State Department Morgenthau wired, "I am doing my very best to exercise all the restraining influence I can, but I fear that we are rapidly drifting into a very serious situation." The ambassador immediately called a conference of the leading missionary and educational leaders to decide what action should be taken. They agreed with Morgenthau's suggestion that the Americans should be advised to leave. On June 20 Morgenthau sent instructions to all consuls to advise all American subjects to evacuate the country.³⁷

Owing to the British blockade all commercial ships ceased sailing along the Ottoman seacoast. The Ottoman military authorities then prohibited any departures from Ottoman ports save from Vurla and Constantinople. The Americans in Syria grew very nervous and anxious to find a means to leave the country. The number of Americans wanting to get away was large as many of the missionaries at Beirut and in the interior were scheduled to take vacations or furloughs.

³⁷Foreign Relations, 1915, Supp. 167; Morgenthau to William Phillips, June 7, 1915, R.G. 59, 124.673/45; Leslie A. Davis to Morgenthau, July 11, 1915, diary entry of June 20 (1915), Morgenthau Papers.

The American naval vessels stationed at Beirut offered the best means of reaching the outside world. Morgenthau immediately began negotiations with the Ottoman officials to use the naval vessels to evacuate the Americans. The negotiations continued several weeks and often threatened to prove fruitless. The Turks proved very reluctant to allow those Americans who had witnessed the Turkish treatment of the Armenians to leave.³⁸ The ambassador called daily at the Sublime Porte and through his persistence secured permission for the Tennessee and the Des Moines to evacuate the Americans. During the summer months over four hundred Americans were evacuated. In September the Ottoman government rescinded its consent for the American naval vessels to evacuate Americans and visit any Ottoman port.³⁹

Despite the large number of Americans who left, many more decided

³⁸ Leslie A. Davis to Morgenthau, July 11, 1915, diary entry of November 1 (1915), Morgenthau Papers; Davis, the consul at Harput, reported in July that the local Turkish officials hinted that they might not allow American missionaries to leave the interior because "they knew too much." In November 1915 the Grand Vizier admitted to Morgenthau that the Turks had hesitated to allow Americans to leave because "they had too much knowledge about local affairs...."

³⁹ Foreign Relations, 1915, Supp, 955-57; diary entry of June 22 (1915), Morgenthau Papers; Stanley Hollis to Morgenthau, June 28, 1915, "Verbal Note - Sublime Porte to American Embassy," September 16, 1915, R.G. 84, item 870, volume 22, item 711.2, volume 17; Foreign Relations, 1916, Supp, 831-32; The evacuation of American citizens was closely tied to the evacuation of Italians and Jews. In August 1915 Morgenthau took charge of Italian affairs and attempted to receive Ottoman permission for the American naval vessels to evacuate the 8,000 Italian subjects in the empire. The Turks proved very reluctant to allow the Italians to leave. On the other hand, the Turks insisted that before the American naval vessels would be allowed to evacuate Americans, all non-Ottoman Jews had to be evacuated first. A compromise was reached whereby the American ships evacuated both Jews and Americans. In September 1915 the Ottoman government reversed itself and refused to allow Jews out of the country and thereafter closed the ports to American ships.

to remain. They were viewed with considerable suspicion by the Turkish authorities because of their sympathy and assistance to the Armenians. Although he was aware of the Turkish attitude toward the missionaries, Morgenthau did not believe that they were in any personal danger. He informed the State Department that he would keep their situation "constantly in mind" and "take every measure possible for their protection." The ambassador, along with the missionary leaders in America, believed that it was better for them to remain in the empire's interior to aid in any possible relief measures.⁴⁰

The missionaries supported and trusted their ambassador. As one of them wrote, "Mr. Morgenthau has shown himself to be a master of the situation and that he has a strong personal hold upon Enver Pasha and Talaat Bey." Another remarked that "he can be trusted to act wisely and effectively in any emergency that may arise."⁴¹

Morgenthau had to lean heavily upon the consulates to protect the remaining Americans. Since the abrogation of the capitulations the position of the American consular officials throughout the empire had become very difficult. The local Turkish officials took especial pleasure in making plain to all consular officers that they were no longer under any obligation to pay special consideration to them. Any consular representations made to the local officials were accepted from tolerance rather than because of any right of the consuls. Morgenthau believed that the only way to overcome such an attitude was for the consuls to maintain,

⁴⁰ Morgenthau to State Department, August 11, 1915, Morgenthau Papers.

⁴¹ James L. Barton to Secretary of State, July 30, 1915, R.G. 59, 367.116/347.

through their personality and tactful dealings, a working basis of friendly intercourse. He pointed out to the consuls that to do this it would often be necessary to put one's pride aside for the time being and to ignore and overlook some affronts that would not have been tolerated under the capitulations. While not overlooking the seriousness of the infringements of American rights arising from the abrogation, the ambassador found it necessary to look "the situation squarely in the face" and accept its realities. He believed that only through direct, friendly, and cordial relations with the men in power could the most effective measures be accomplished.⁴²

Most of the American consuls readily adjusted to the new demands placed upon them. However, several incidents occurred which hindered Morgenthau's efforts to maintain friendly relations. On June 16 the ambassador learned that George Young, the American consul at Damascus, had exchanged shots with some Turkish soldiers. The Ottoman government immediately requested Young's removal and declared him persona non grata. The situation in the Dasmascus area was already somewhat difficult because the Turkish officials openly expressed anti-American sentiments primarily because American missionaries located there did not attempt to conceal their displeasure at the treatment of Armenians. Not wishing to alarm these American citizens, Morgenthau appealed to Enver and asked that he be allowed to make a thorough investigation of the shooting. The investigation revealed that Young had shot at some soldiers while they were picking fruit from the trees in the

⁴²"Draft to State Department," undated, Morgenthau Papers.

consulate's courtyard. The ambassador sent a strong reprimand to Young and the Ottoman cabinet agreed to drop the matter.⁴³

More serious were the actions of Stanley Hollis, the consul at Beirut. Ever since the abrogation of the capitulations Hollis was frequently in difficulty with the local Turkish officials. Instead of endeavoring to preserve cordial personal relations with the governor-general, he had not called on that important official in person more than twelve times in six months. In the past most consuls found it expedient to call on local officials at least twice a week. Hollis had also incurred Djemal Pasha's wrath the year before when he publicly disagreed with Djemal's policies. Because of his bellicose actions and attitude, Hollis soon found himself annoyed by Turkish gendarmes and accused of unneutral acts.⁴⁴

Beirut was an important consular post because it was headquarters of the American naval vessels in Turkish waters and a medium of transmission for all messages between the embassy and the ships. The ambassador feared that Hollis' irritable temper might get the better of his judgement and create a critical situation. Hollis addressed open telegrams to the embassy concerning Ottoman officials and policies which were almost deliberate affronts. A typical Hollis report, sent in the open, reads: "... Syria is daily sinking deeper and deeper into a slough of misery and despondency, aggravated by the ravages of an army composed of semi-barbarians" While perhaps accurate enough, this

⁴³Diary entries of June 16, 18, 24, July 27, October 23 (1915), Morgenthau Papers.

⁴⁴Stanley Hollis to Morgenthau, January 7, 1915, R.G. 84, item 711. 1, volume 17.

type of communication hardly ingratiated Hollis with Ottoman officials.⁴⁵

By the summer of 1915 Morgenthau had had enough of Hollis' antics and considered that it would be best to replace him. Nevertheless, instead of arbitrarily deciding the issue, the ambassador took the precautionary step of leaving it up to the American community in Beirut of whether the consul should be removed. Doctors Bliss and Hoskins of the Syrian Protestant College thought it would be a mistake "to swap horses while crossing the stream." This prompted Morgenthau to reply that if "they had an incompetent horse that is apt to lie down in the middle, it would be better to get rid of it." In the end Morgenthau did not remove Hollis owing to the wishes of the American colony, although he wired the State Department that "poor Hollis was peevish and nervous and needs a vacation."⁴⁶

One of the chief problems faced by the consuls throughout 1915 was the protection of naturalized Americans. The status of naturalized Americans who returned to the Ottoman Empire had always been a troublesome matter in Turkish-American relations and the war accentuated the problem. During his tour of the empire Morgenthau had been told by the governor-general of Beirut that most naturalized Americans returned with American vices and not virtues. The Turks regarded all naturalized Americans as renegades and viewed them as prospective spies and traitors. The American consuls reported that they had great difficulty protecting these citizens. The Beirut consul wrote that the authorities "entertain a fierce and fanatical hatred against all former Ottomans ... and they

⁴⁵Stanley Hollis to Morgenthau, July 28, 1915, R.G. 84, item 600. volume 17; "draft to State Department," undated, Morgenthau Papers.

⁴⁶Diary entries of July 2, August 16 (1915), Morgenthau Papers.

show their hatred and resentment on all possible occasions." Morgenthau appealed to the Ottoman government but without effect. He could do little more than reiterate the American claim that under its laws they were United States citizens.⁴⁷

Morgenthau's efforts on behalf of the American educational institutions were more successful. Earlier in March he had gained a five month delay in the enforcement of the educational regulations, a decision which relieved the American educators. They considered the Turkish demand to name a responsible director for each institution reasonable and complied with it. The ambassador considered the extension a great victory because he had in no way committed the American government to an official position in the matter. Morgenthau took advantage of the delay to call for a conference of the presidents of all American schools to meet in Constantinople during the summer. He hoped to clear up during this meeting all misunderstandings concerning the status of the American institutions.⁴⁸

In June the graduation exercises of all the American schools were held. The honorary degree of Doctor of Law was conferred upon the ambassador by the trustees of the Woman's College "in recognition of diplomatic efficiency in an extremely difficult situation." After the graduation ceremonies Morgenthau announced that he intended to make the Woman's College his official headquarters. During the summer he

⁴⁷Diary entry of June 2 (1915), Morgenthau Papers; Stanley Hollis to Morgenthau, March 19, February 9, 1915, Stanley Hollis to State Department, October 19, 1915, Morgenthau to George Horton, November 25, 1915, R.G. 59, 367.11/549, 367.117/23, 367.11/1008.

⁴⁸Morgenthau to Secretary of State, March 27, 1915, April 5, 1915, R.G. 59, 367.116/317, 367.116/324; New York Times, March 28, 1915 (sec. II), 5.

received Enver and other leading Turkish notables at the college to emphasize the fact that the college buildings were officially protected. Upon the ambassador's encouragement Consul-General Bie Ravndal also resided at the college for many months during the war.⁴⁹

On July fifth the conference of the representatives of all major American colleges in the empire was held. Among those attending were the presidents of Tarsus College, Robert College, Constantinople Woman's College, Syrian Protestant College, and Anatolian College at Marsovan, and William Peet of the American Bible House. The conference discussed each of the Ottoman requirements and how they effected the institutes. It was found that only in a few of the schools would the requirement to teach Turkish create a problem as their student bodies were multinational. The conference decided that each institution should approach the Ottoman authorities separately to arrive at a working arrangement. On the requirement concerning religion and the ban on compulsory attendance to prayers, the conference decided to discuss a modification with Turkish officials that would make religious instruction and prayer attendance compulsory only for Christians. As to the question of property rights and taxation it appeared that almost all of the institutions had serious difficulties. Some were required to pay exorbitant amounts as taxes, others were asked to pay taxes on property formerly exempted, the teachers at some schools had been forced to pay temettu taxes, and nearly all of the institutions were prevented from buying additional property and in other ways their growth was hampered. It

⁴⁹New York Times, June 13, 1915 (sec. II), 15,; Jenkins, An Educational Ambassador, 240-41; Patrick, A Bosphorus Adventure, 165, 173-74, 180; diary entry of June 11 (1915), Morgenthau Papers.

was remarked that while the main purpose of the regulations was to deprive foreign institutions of their acquired rights and put them upon an equal footing with the native establishments, they went further and discriminated against foreign institutions. The delegates further pointed out to the ambassador that while their institutions had to pay taxes the native educational establishments paid none.⁵⁰

When asked about the institutions dealing directly with the Ottoman government and not through the embassy, Ambassador Morgenthau made it clear that the American government refused to admit the legality of the abrogation of the capitulations. Therefore, any concessions the various institutions might eventually be willing to make had no official character whatever. Morgenthau pointed out that while the American government reserved the right to disavow any and all agreements between the institutions and the Ottoman government, he did not discourage the institutions from coming to an understanding with the Turkish government.⁵¹

The conference debated the wisdom of opening the schools in September in light of the official American policy. Morgenthau explained to the educators that if they voluntarily closed their schools, then the government could not fight to protect their property. He further pointed out that only when the educators were molested could he begin the fight

⁵⁰Diary entry July 5 (1915), "Minutes of Meeting held July 6th, 1915, at the American Embassy on Educational Question," July 6, 1915, Morgenthau Papers.

⁵¹Ibid.; Morgenthau never received any explicit instructions from the State Department explaining the relationship of the American institutions to the Ottoman government. He therefore acted on his own when he did not discourage the institutions from coming to an understanding with the Turkish government.

as he was instructed to oppose the Ottoman law completely and was not even allowed to discuss it as a law of the empire. One educator exclaimed that "somebody's head must first be broken" before any official action would be taken. The delegates finally decided that as many schools as possible should open in September and voted to send representatives to discuss the Ottoman regulations with the Minister of Public Instruction.⁵²

When the conference's delegates went to see the Minister of Public Instruction they found him pleasantly agreeable. Chukri Bey did not insist upon absolute application of the religious instruction, agreed to support a readjustment of all the schools' taxes, and proved lenient on the statute requiring non-Ottomans to study Turkish. Chukri further told the delegation that his main desire was to have all foreign schools deal directly with Ottoman authorities and not through the embassies or consulates.⁵³

As the matter of the amount of taxes to be paid was not satisfactorily cleared up, the American educators asked Morgenthau to intervene in their behalf. Throughout the months of July and August the ambassador discussed the tax situation with the Turkish leaders. He gained Talaat's agreement not to press the matter until the end of September. Enver admitted that he wanted the American institutions to remain as he knew of no other country that would spend as much money to educate their young men. Chukri promised the ambassador that the American institutions would be given more "liberty" than they expected. However, no agreement

⁵² Stanley White to Robert Lansing, October 7, 1915, R.G. 59, 367.116/376.

⁵³ Diary entry of July 17 (1915), Morgenthau Papers.

on the taxes was reached.⁵⁴

With the tax matter still unresolved the American schools began the 1915-16 academic year. Most of the earlier problems had been ironed out as the Ottoman government agreed that religious exercises and instruction could be obligatory for Christians and optional for non-Christians. Teaching the Turkish language was required only for Ottoman subjects, and then in the lowest classes only. Owing to disruptions in the interior, the American schools there were forced to open under the "gravest difficulties" and many stayed open only briefly. However, the Syrian Protestant College began its fiftieth anniversary with a total of 817 students, a number which was not far below the 970 of the previous year. Robert College opened the new academic year with 350 students and the Woman's College with 182.⁵⁵

While most of the Ottoman demands had been mitigated, the question of taxes still hung over the American institutions like a meat axe ready to bludgeon them to death. On September 4 Morgenthau reported to the State Department that heavy taxes were demanded on school buildings, hospitals, and land owned by all foreigners. The American educators grimly recognized that their institutions and past endeavors were seriously threatened. Caleb F. Gates wired, "The conditions are about as dark as they could be We mean to hold on to the end. We begin work like one stepping out on a stormy sea. We have an unfailing Pilot

⁵⁴Diary entries of August 18, 25, 26, 30 (1915), Morgenthau Papers.

⁵⁵Morgenthau to State Department, September 4, 1915, September 20, 1915, September 21, 1915, R.G. 59, 367.116/361, 367.116/368, 367.116/369; Penrose, That They May Have Life, 156, 160; Gates, Not to Me Only, 217-18, 221.

and we hope to weather the gale."⁵⁶

Morgenthau was determined to save the American schools from the harsh taxes. He persistently called on the Turkish leaders daily asking only that they be "fair" in their policies. Talaat finally proposed that all the American institutions be held subject to half taxes. Those with firmans were to pay the full amount of back taxes and afterwards only half taxes. The ambassador replied that he was satisfied with that arrangement as it at least gave the institutions a stable basis to continue their existence. Morgenthau's efforts were viewed as a success. To preserve the official policy of the American government the ambassador urged each institution to accept graciously the terms on an individual basis which was rapidly done. A thankful Howard Bliss wrote, "The rights and privileges of our American institutions in Turkey are being ruthlessly [sic] attacked, but you have patiently and persistently sought to secure as much redress as possible" Dr. Bliss' sentiments were echoed by many. Stuart Dodge, the president of Robert College's board of trustees, spoke for all of them when he said, "Owing to the personal influence and indefatigable efforts of the Ambassador, important concessions were gained. His persistent and tactful advocacy of [the] most perplexing problems and his unvarying courtesy and recognized integrity have won him a notably honored place."⁵⁷

With the tax matter finally settled the American schools were

⁵⁶ Morgenthau to State Department, September 4, 1915, R.G. 59, 367.116/361; Gates, Not to Me Only, 217-18, 221.

⁵⁷ Diary entry of September 30 (1915), Morgenthau Papers; Howard Bliss to Morgenthau, September 8, 1915, D. Stuart Dodge to Robert Lansing, October 14, 1915, R.G. 59, 367.116/380, 367.116/383.

able to continue their operations in a more secure atmosphere. Upon the ambassador's advice the institutions dealt with the Turkish officials directly which greatly pleased the Ottoman government and left Morgenthau free to deal with other matters. He still took an active interest in the welfare of the American institutions and their personnel. Throughout the remainder of the year he interceded for Americans on a personal basis to ensure fair treatment and justice from the Turks. On October 19 Morgenthau was able to report, "Our American schools here are continuing in an absolutely normal state."⁵⁸

During his negotiations in September and October, with the Ottoman officials, Morgenthau observed that they became increasingly more difficult to deal with. From a desperate band playing a desperate game, the Young Turks had become the allies and friends of two of the more important nations in the world. By the end of 1915 the Turks were convinced that they had been of greater service to their allies than their allies had been to them. They proudly pointed out that they had compelled Great Britain and France to employ half a million men and a tremendous fleet to try and force the Dardanelles, sacrifice numerous ships, and spend millions of pounds worth of ammunition. By their success in holding the Dardanelles the Turks were able to hinder greatly British and French supplies reaching Russia. They had also tied down sizable British forces in Mesopotamia and Egypt. The Turks were not slow to point out that their efforts greatly diminished the Entente

⁵⁸Diary entries of August 3, September 1, October 2 (1915), Morgenthau to Stephen S. Wise, October 19, 1915, Morgenthau Papers.

powers' ability to defeat the Germans.⁵⁹

The first indication of this new bellicose attitude occurred early in September. On September 4 the Sublime Porte notified Morgenthau that it considered all discussion of the capitulations as exhausted and would "pay no attention to the matter" in the future. This abrupt move jerked the State Department out of its doldrums. For the first time it allowed its ambassador the opportunity to indicate an American willingness to consider a modification of the capitulations. Morgenthau was instructed to reply that the United States "will upon the establishment of judicial and administrative reforms ... consider whether they are of such a character as to warrant the surrender of extraterritorial rights" Unfortunately, the State Department still did not say anything about the economic capitulations. When the consul-general at Constantinople requested a commercial treaty with Turkey the department quickly vetoed the suggestion. Albert H. Putney, the chief of the Near Eastern Division, believed that "a commercial treaty with Turkey at the present time means the surrender of our capitulatory rights in Turkey." The Ottoman government, recognizing that the final determinant on the capitulations was either victory or defeat, thereafter ignored all American representations dealing with the abrogation.⁶⁰

Late in September the State Department instructed Morgenthau to have the Sublime Porte state its attitude regarding claims arising from

⁵⁹ Morgenthau to Robert Lansing, November 4, 1915, case 867.00/797, M353, roll 6.

⁶⁰ Foreign Relations, 1915, 1304-06; Robert Lansing to Morgenthau, November 6, 1915, case 711.673/66, M365, roll 8; Albert H. Putney to Baker, January 13, 1916, R.G. 59, 667.003/59.

Turkish seizures of American property. The Turks ignored the first request and on September 30 Morgenthau again requested "some plan for the early adjustment of these claims" The ambassador on that very day received his answer through an official proclamation printed in the local newspapers. The notice claimed that unless persons presented their receipts "before the end of September" to the "competent commission" no payment would be made! The intent of the pugnacious Turks was apparent. Morgenthau protested this action reminding the Ottoman government that the provincial authorities had not, in many cases, issued even temporary receipts. The Turks refused to alter their policy, and no agreement was reached until after the war.⁶¹

Throughout 1915 Ambassador Morgenthau had labored long and difficult hours to protect the hard pressed American institutions. His firm and steadfast representations in behalf of the American schools and missionaries enabled their continued existence. Morgenthau's unstinted devotion was greatly appreciated by the Americans. James L. Barton claimed that he "is not the best, but stands alone and in his own class." Perhaps one of the professors at the Woman's College put it best when she said, "Mr. Morgenthau is the best Ambassador we ever had in Turkey."⁶²

Morgenthau's success was remarkable because he had to work without the State Department's support. Ever since the abrogation of the capitulations in October 1914 the ambassador was continually instructed not to discuss the possibilities of any modification of American rights. It

⁶¹Morgenthau to State Department, November 20, 1915, December 31, 1915, R.G. 59, 367.11/1054, 467.11/1.

⁶²Stephen S. Wise to Morgenthau, September 21, 1915, Morgenthau Papers.

was only when the Sublime Porte refused to discuss any matter in relation to American extraterritorial rights that the lethargic State Department finally allowed its ambassador to mention the possibility of the United States considering modifications in the future. While the State Department steadfastly refused to discuss any changes in its position on the capitulations, Ambassador Morgenthau gained a lenient policy for the American institutions entrusted to his care. Morgenthau's accomplishments in achieving revisions to Ottoman policies resulted more from his personal relations with the Turkish leaders than from any other source.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

By October 1915 the status of American institutions appeared to be stabilized as all major differences between them and the Ottoman government apparently had been resolved. The American schools had adapted to the new regulations, the tax matter had been adjusted with Morgenthau's help, and the Ottoman government was pleased that the American schools reported directly to it instead of the embassy. Thereafter, their concerns and difficulties arose more from the war's deteriorating affects within the empire than from Ottoman policies directed explicitly against the schools.

Protection of Americans and their concerns always remained Morgenthau's first and primary duty. Yet, he also endeavored to safeguard other interests. When the Ottoman Empire entered the war the ambassador found himself representing the interests of the Entente powers and their citizens. From November 1914 and throughout 1915 he attempted to protect from Turkish **cruelty** those citizens of the belligerent powers still remaining in the empire. He gained Ottoman permission for American representatives to visit all interned belligerents and war prisoners, and provide relief for their welfare. Also, Ottoman policies directed against the Jews in Palestine and the Armenians aroused Morgenthau's humanitarian instincts and compassion.

Throughout 1915 he struggled valiantly to protect these Ottoman minorities. During the nineteenth century both minorities had gained the protection of one or more of the European powers. However, with the Turkish entry into World War I European protection was removed, and the

Jews and Armenians again soon found themselves oppressed by Ottoman officials. The Ottoman government attempted to oust most Zionists from Palestine and, beginning in early 1915, to liquidate the Armenians. For the Jews, Morgenthau successfully achieved some moderation of the harsh Ottoman requirements. He succeeded in evacuating many of them to Egypt and other areas outside the empire, and managed to have food and other provisions sent to Palestine. His efforts on behalf of the Armenians, however, proved unsuccessful.

Beginning in March 1915 reports began arriving at the embassy describing scattered disturbances between the Turks and Armenians. Though the Turks refused to permit cipher messages between the embassy and consulates, reports of violence in the empire's interior continued to filter into the embassy. By July 16, enough was known for Morgenthau to report to the State Department that "a campaign of race extermination is in progress" The ambassador did all he could to mitigate the heinous persecution. He pleaded with Talaat and Enver, and even considered advising the State Department to recall him.¹

Morgenthau found the State Department sympathetic, yet unable to help. When he advised it that he had done all he could to alleviate the situation and asked for further guidance, that agency replied that it could "offer no additional suggestions... other than that you continue to act as in the past." His efforts were to no avail. During 1915 and 1916 approximately 800,000 to 1,396,000 Armenians perished.²

¹Morgenthau to State Department, July 16, 1915, 867.4016/76, M353, roll 43; Morgenthau to State Department, July 10, 1915, diary entry of August 11 (1915), Morgenthau Papers.

²Robert Lansing to Morgenthau, July 16, 1915, 867.4016/74, M353, roll 43; Sachar, Emergence of the Middle East, 107.

The Armenian persecutions shocked the Morgenthau family to their very depths. Owing to the sufferings of the Armenians, Mrs. Morgenthau returned to the United States in September 1915. Like her husband she found it increasingly difficult to "endure to live in such a country." By October the ambassador was considering leaving his post. When he wrote to Stephen Wise that he might return to the United States, the rabbi answered that to do so "would be a grave blunder ... at this time." Wise pointed out that "nothing stands between us and the annihilation of non-Moslem interests in Turkey save your own personality and influence." When Morgenthau mentioned the possibility of his leaving Constantinople to Enver Pasha, that official claimed that Morgenthau "could do more with them than any other man they [the American government] could send."³

Despite these opinions Morgenthau was determined to return to the United States. Although the increasing strain caused by the Armenian problem was a factor, the major reason apparently was the approaching presidential campaign. Early in November 1915 he wrote President Wilson not to forget him when forming the campaign committee. He added, "... I absolutely insist upon being in the fray"⁴

Apparently Wilson also desired to have Morgenthau return. He suggestively replied to the ambassador, "It would be great if we could have a talk, wouldn't it, and exchange impressions directly?" This was

³Morgenthau to Robert Lansing, November 18, 1915, 867.00/798, M353, roll 6; Morgenthau, Morgenthau's Story, 339-40; Stephen Wise to Morgenthau, October 22, 1915, diary entry of October 18 (1915), Morgenthau Papers.

⁴Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 234; Morgenthau to Wilson, November 10, 1915, Wilson Papers.

enough for Morgenthau to construe that Wilson approved his return to the United States. He was now determined to leave as soon as possible "so that it does not look as though I came home especially for the election" On December 18, he wrote William G. McAdoo that as soon as a replacement could be found, McAdoo was to wire: "President ready to act soon," and Morgenthau would immediately wire his resignation.⁵

Whether the message was ever sent is unknown. What is known is that in January 1916 Morgenthau applied for a leave of absence which was quickly granted. On January 28 the ambassador began packing and left Constantinople on February 1. He wrote in his diary: "It is impossible to describe my feelings at leaving the city ... I shall always remember it."⁶

The American colony at Constantinople regretted Morgenthau's departure. Mary Mills Patrick wrote, "I feel as if the foundation of the world had been removed, but we shall live in hope of your return." Another writer claimed, "We realize that no one can be such a friend to us and our colleges as you have been." Caleb F. Gates, president of Robert College, considered Morgenthau's departure "particularly regrettable because he had a prestige which no new man could at once command."⁷

After twenty-eight months of service Henry Morgenthau arrived in New York City on February 22, 1916. He appeared to be in "fine health" and upon stepping ashore was greeted by his family and a welcoming

⁵Wilson to Morgenthau, December 9, 1915, Morgenthau to William McAdoo, December 18, 1915, Wilson Papers.

⁶Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 234; Diary entries of January 28, February 1 (1916), Morgenthau Papers.

⁷Mary Patrick to Morgenthau, January 28, 1916, Louis B. Wallace to Morgenthau, January 28, 1916, Morgenthau Papers; Gates, Not to Me Only, 224.

committee appointed by New York City mayor John Purroy Mitchel. Among the committee members were such distinguished individuals and "old friends" as Cleveland H. Dodge, Stephen Wise, Lillian Wald, and Oscar Straus. Morgenthau made a brief speech that was rather "guarded" because of a note that he received from Secretary of State Lansing.⁸

Two weeks after arriving in New York City he went to Washington to report to both President Wilson and Secretary of State Lansing. The ambassador described the conditions of American schools in the empire and discussed the Armenian situation. The approaching presidential campaign also must have been mentioned because six days later he wrote the President, "I am hard at work familiarizing myself with the [political patronage] situation."⁹

Despite Morgenthau's public statements that he had returned to the United States merely "for a rest," rumors were rife that he planned to resign. One version had it that he was to become Secretary of War while another had him replacing William C. McAdoo as Secretary of the Treasury. Therefore Morgenthau's resignation as ambassador on March 23, 1916 came as no great surprise. He wrote Wilson that he felt free to resign because the embassy's work was "in such shape" that his successor "can take it up without any difficulty." The President accepted the resignation, and Morgenthau immediately immersed himself in the presidential campaign. Within six weeks he began a personal tour of the country speaking in support of Wilson's policies and seeking political

⁸ New York Times, April 25, 1916, 10, February 23, 1916, 5; "Mayors Committee to Receive and Welcome Honorable Henry Morgenthau," no date, Morgenthau Papers; Robert Lansing to Morgenthau, February 17, 1916, R.G. 59, 123M823/22.

⁹ New York Times, March 9, 1916, 3, March 10, 1916, 4; Morgenthau to Wilson, March 14, 1916, Wilson Papers.

support.¹⁰

Morgenthau's two year tour of duty in Constantinople and his efforts to protect American interests contradicted past American foreign policy in the Near East. Prior to World War I the United States had no strategic plans or interests which involved that part of the world. It therefore assumed a position of non-interference in the political affairs of Turkey. While the State Department's policy, during 1914 and 1915, was designed to continue such a policy, Morgenthau attempted to involve himself in Ottoman affairs on a personal basis. On his own responsibility he undertook a social-economic study of the empire, advised the Turkish cabinet to remain neutral when World War I broke out, and even suggested that the United States would renounce its economic privileges. The State Department, for its part, refused to commit itself to any modification of its capitulatory privileges and constantly demanded that its ambassador maintain a strict neutral attitude. Thus, Morgenthau's views and actions regarding American policy in the Near East varied from the State Department's. While both policies were designed to protect American interests, the tactics to achieve the same result greatly differed.

It seems almost appropriate that a naive and inexperienced diplomat should represent the American interests in the Ottoman Empire. While the other major powers had definite material or strategic interests in Turkey, American interests were for the most part altruistic. Americans

¹⁰ New York Times, February 1, 1916, 4, February 23, 1916, 5, March 9, 1916, 3; Morgenthau to Wilson, March 23, 1916, Wilson Papers, Morgenthau, All in a Life-Time, 234-48.

were shocked and rather astonished to find their benevolent interests considered by the Turks in the same light as all other foreign interests in the empire. Americans were indeed as naive when it came to principles of national integrity as the ambassador who represented them. Twenty years after World War I, one educator finally agreed that the Turks were right in their efforts to control education, but that during the war it seemed a simple act of pure ingratitude.¹¹

Henry Morgenthau grew into his responsibilities. He arrived in Constantinople with the simplistic notion that American interests could be protected by contrasting the limited and largely non-material concerns of the United States with those pursued by the major European powers. He also hoped to evoke the admiration of the Young Turks by pointing out the humanitarian services rendered to the Ottoman people by American institutions. Sensing that these policies were not realistic, Morgenthau unhesitatingly attempted to provide American capital. He genuinely believed that with a growing Ottoman dependency upon American investments, the philanthropic interests would be better safeguarded. When the American loans failed to materialize, he was willing to cooperate with the Young Turks to aid their financial discussions with the French. Morgenthau sympathized with the Turkish leaders, thought them progressive, and understandably gained their confidence.

While the Smyrna incident in June 1914 changed his previously favorable opinion of the Young Turks, he did not allow it to disrupt his relations with them. Even when they abrogated the capitulations

¹¹Gates, Not to Me Only, 195.

Morgenthau was determined to continue his policy of cooperating with the Ottoman government. He ordered the American consulates to maintain friendly relations with the local Turkish officials and successfully resisted the demands of the American citizens at Smyrna for an American warship when the Turks closed that port to all foreign ships. When Stanley Hollis, the consul at Beirut, threatened to use armed American sailors to protect American interests, Morgenthau reminded him that American naval vessels were merely to serve "as a restraining influence." To the ambassador, unless Americans were prepared to leave the empire they would have to depend upon Ottoman protection.¹²

One historian has indicated that Morgenthau became "quite excited" early in 1915 over reports that Baghdad officials were discontented and he recommended to the State Department that they "should be encouraged and pushed onward." As proof he cites a despatch from Morgenthau to the State Department which contains the statement, "If opportunity offers I believe present governor general should have support of this Consulate and Embassy but, of course, most discretely [sic] given." This is completely false. This statement is part of a report sent by the Baghdad consul which Morgenthau merely forwarded to the State Department without comment. Morgenthau never attempted to encourage any efforts to undermine Ottoman authority.¹³

In his efforts to protect American interests Morgenthau found the State Department his greatest hindrance. While the ambassador

¹²Morgenthau to State Department, November 12, 1914, 867.00/741, M353, roll 6.

¹³Morgenthau to State Department, February 10, 1915, 867.00/741, M353, roll 6; See Weber, Eagles on the Crescent, 130-31 for mistaken quote.

attempted to temper the Ottoman regulations dealing with foreign institutions, the State Department refused even to discuss a possible moderation of its capitulatory position. When Morgenthau suggested the possibility of not protesting the abrogation of the economic capitulations, the State Department quickly ordered him to declare the entire Ottoman action as null and void. The ambassador was therefore left with little bargaining power. The arrangements that were finally accepted must therefore be seen as products of Morgenthau's personal influence with the Turkish leaders. It is difficult to understand why the State Department, while not disclaiming its capitulatory privileges, was not willing at least to discuss possible changes in its position in return for better treatment of American institutions.

Yet in fairness to the State Department it must be pointed out that its position of not accepting any modification was completely supported by the missionary interests. In fact, it was they who suggested that the department take such action. Neither Secretary of State Bryan nor Lansing could give much attention to the Near East since matters relating to Mexico, Japan, and Europe were more important. From the records it would seem that Albert H. Putney, chief of the near eastern division, made most of the important decisions affecting the Ottoman Empire. Nor can Morgenthau be absolved from responsibility for the State Department's unwillingness to moderate its position. Once his suggestion on the economic capitulations had been overruled he at no time proposed that the department alter its position.

It is debatable whether an American willingness to discuss its capitulatory position would have made any difference to the final

outcome, especially in view of the nationalistic mood of the Young Turks. The only possible difference such a change in policy would have made may have been an earlier agreement on the status of American institutions. The American community probably could have been spared much of the doubts and troubles it experienced for over a year had the State Department taken such a course.

Despite Morgenthau's inexperience, he unquestionably gained the respect and confidence of Americans in Turkey. He visited daily the two American schools in Constantinople, and personally corresponded with missionary leaders in the interior. His office was always open to any American who desired to see him.

Morgenthau's relations with the Young Turks is more difficult to assess. He always maintained that his influence on the Turkish leaders and their decisions was great. He undoubtedly established a friendly working relationship with them. After his return to the United States Morgenthau claimed that the Turkish cabinet had even offered to make him Minister of Commerce and Agriculture which his successor found difficult to explain. This writer has found no proof whatsoever for Morgenthau's claim.¹⁴

Yet Morgenthau did establish close relations with the Turks. He willingly cooperated with them in their search for financial assistance and made an economic study of the empire at their request. Above all, through his intervention and influence the American institutions

¹⁴New York Times, March 3, 1916, 4; Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: Lansing Papers, 1914-1920, Vol. 1, 783-86.

were able to continue their work. Because American missionaries, educators and their institutions were able to endure, Ambassador Henry Morgenthau's mission must be considered a success.

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