

THE COMMITTEE OF UNION AND PROGRESS

IN TURKISH POLITICS, 1908 - 1913

by

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ABSTRACT

This is a study of a political society called the Committee of Union and Progress (İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti) between the years 1908 and 1913. Because of the role it played in the insurrection which forced the Sultan to re-establish the 1876 Constitution, the Committee emerged as the dominant political group in July 1908. But the Committee's position did not remain unchallenged for long. Political forces which had previously been obscured by the struggle against the Palace came to the surface, and there began a period of political activity and debate unequalled in the history of modern Turkey.

I have endeavoured to show that the CUP, while being the dominant political group, never had a monopoly of power during this period. Political and social conditions prevailing within (and without) the Ottoman Empire forced it to share power with the traditional ruling groups, such as the bureaucratic elite symbolised by the Sublime Porte (Babıâli) and the army. The Committee also compromised with other political organisations. I have also tried to show how the social and political attributes of the CUP were constantly

changing, so that by 1913 the Committee had narrowed down its affiliations and was in a position to establish the sō-called triumvirate of Enver, Cemal and Talât.

The thesis has been divided for the sake of convenience and symmetry into five chapters, each chapter ending with an event of major importance. Chapter I deals with the rebellion and ends with the restoration of the constitution. Chapter II ends with the counter-revolution of 1909; Chapter III with the resignation of Grand Vezir Hilmi Paşa in December, 1909; it also examines the constitutional amendments. Chapter IV ends with Italy's declaration of war in September 1911, and Chapter V with the coup d'état of 23 January, 1913. I have concluded this study with some general observations on the period of the Committee of Union and Progress as a whole.

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PREFACE

Throughout this thesis I have used the official modern Turkish orthography in transcribing Turkish names, except when quoting from foreign sources. Some notes on pronunciation based on G.L.Lewis, Teach Yourself Turkish, 3rd ed., (1959), are given as an aid to readers unacquainted with the Turkish language.

- c - j as in jam
- ç - ch as in church
- ğ - soft g lengthens the preceding vowel
- ı - something like u in radium
- ö - French eu as in deux or seul
- ş - sh as in shall
- ü - French u as in lumiere.

I have also used modern Turkish place names; thus Istanbul and not Constantinople, Edirne and not Adrianople, again except when quoting. The term 'Ottoman' has been usually confined to official usage; e.g. 'Ottoman Government', 'Ottoman army'.

In the Ottoman Empire at this time four different calendars were in use. There was the Hijri,

the Turkish Solar Hijri, the Julian and the Gregorian. I have standardised all dates using the Gregorian calendar.

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I also wish to thank Bay Burhan Felek of the Cumhuriyet (Istanbul) and ex-President Celâl Bayar for granting interviews and clarifying certain points related to the period of study.

My thanks are also due to the staff of the Public Record Office, London; the libraries of the School of Oriental and African Studies; Belediye and Beyazıt, Istanbul; and Miss D.E.Dormer of the Senate House Library for their kind co-operation.

Lastly there is my wife without whose perseverance and support this thesis would never have been completed.

ABBREVIATIONS

AA	:	Aylık Ansiklopedi
Bell.	:	Belleten
CHJ	:	Cambridge Historical Journal
CR	:	Contemporary Review
EI ¹ , EI ²	:	Encyclopedia of Islam, 1st and 2nd editions
FR	:	Fortnightly Review
IA	:	İslâm Ansiklopedisi
MEA	:	Middle Eastern Affairs
MEJ	:	Middle East Journal
NC	:	The Nineteenth Century
Res.Tar.Mec:		Resimli Tarih Mecmuası
RMM	:	Revue du monde musulman
Tar.Dün.	:	Tarih Dünyası
WI	:	Die Welt des Islams

CHAPTER I

THE ANTECEDENTS OF THE 1908 REVOLUTION

Early in February 1908 a student at the Salonika Law School wrote to a relative in Manastir that he had been asked by his friends at the School to join a secret society. The membership of this society would involve the swearing of a sacred oath and the acceptance of prohibited literature. The relative, a minor judicial functionary, submitted the letter to the authorities who investigated the matter. Their inquiry led to the arrest of some ten law students and about the same number of junior officers from the Third Army Corps stationed at Salonika. They were carefully interrogated and a long and thorough investigation followed. After some weeks most of the detainees were released, though Nazım Bey, chief of the military police in Salonika and the officer who conducted the inquiry, detained one or two of the junior officers.¹

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1. Annual Report, 1908, enclosure in Sir Gerard Lowther to Sir Edward Grey, no.105 con., Pera, 17 Feb., 1909, F.O.371/768/7053. Because of its secret nature this incident does not seem to have found a place in any Turkish source. Yet it may explain why there was an attempt to assassinate Nazım Bey soon after. See below, 10-11.

The failure of the authorities to unearth the secret society is proof of the stringent precautions taken by the Committee of Union and Progress in the initiation of its new members. It also reveals the power the Committee had acquired among some of the higher officials in Macedonia, many of whom are said to have co-operated to quash Nazım Bey's inquiry. It is no coincidence that Manyasizâde Refik, an active and influential Unionist and Minister of Justice in Kâmil Paşa's Cabinet, was one of the principle lecturers at the Law School, while Azmi Bey, the Director of the School, and Hacı Adil Bey, a lecturer and director at the Customs House, were both members of the CUP. The lenient treatment of the law students may be attributed to the influence of these men.²

In May 1908 the Committee of Union and Progress considered coming out into the open and taking charge of the situation in Macedonia. They held a meeting in Salonika and decided that they should reveal to the Powers the existence and influence of their society. The Powers should be told that the Committee alone could bring peace to Macedonia and therefore Europe

2. Ibid.

should abandon its futile schemes of reform. The Unionists drew up a manifesto and sent it to the consuls of the Powers.³ There was no response from the Powers; they could hardly acknowledge the manifesto of an illegal secret organisation whose strength they did not know. But it seems that the Committee had decided on positive action, so that when the insurrection broke out in July the Committee was in a position to direct it.⁴

The immediate and short-term motive for the revolutionary outbreaks of June-July 1908 seems to have been self-preservation. The Committee, alarmed at the success of Abdülhamid's espionage network, decided to take swift and drastic measures against agents of the Palace in Macedonia. Failure to silence them could mean the destruction of the entire secret organisation. Colonel Nazım, who had conducted the February inquiry and made his report to the Palace, was the first agent

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3. Consul-General Lamb to Grey, T.P., Salonica, 23 July, 1908, F.O.371/544/25634; Ali Cevat, İkinci Meşrutiyetin İlâni ve Otuzbir Mart Hadisesi, (1960), 158, and E.F.Knight, The Awakening of Turkey, (1909), 130.
 4. Accounts written after the event state that the Committee had decided to stage a coup. See Knight, ibid., 133; Annual Report, 1908; C.R.Buxton, Turkey in Revolution, (1909), 53-4; Sir Edwin Pears, Forty Years in Constantinople, (1916), 287.

on the list for assassination. On 11 June, the day before he left for Istanbul, Nazım Bey was shot and wounded and next day left for the capital.⁵

The attempt on Nazım Bey's life coincided with the meeting of Edward VII and Nicholas II at Reval. They discussed Anglo-Russian relations and agreed on a joint initiative to introduce far-reaching reform in order to end the anarchy prevailing in Macedonia. But no reform scheme was drawn up.⁶ In the Ottoman Empire this meeting was misinterpreted as the prelude to Anglo-Russian collaboration and intervention in Macedonia. There was alarm and apprehension and Niyazi Bey, who initiated the insurrection in July, is reported to have had three sleepless nights after the Reval meeting.⁷

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5. Halil Menteşe, Eski Meclisi Mebusan Reisi Halil Menteşenin Hatıraları, Cumhuriyet, 17 Oct., 1946; İsmail Hami Danişmend, İzahlı Osmanlı Tarihi Kronolojisi, IV, 2 ed. (1961), 361; A. Sarron, La Jeune Turquie et La Revolution, (1912), 16-17; E.E. Ramsaur, The Young Turks: Prelude to the Revolution of 1908, (1957), 132-3.
 6. C.P. Gooch and H.W.V. Temperley (edd), British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898-1914, V, (1928), 232-46. Russian account of the Reval meeting in M. Isvolski to Count Benckendorff, ibid., 245-6. See also A.W. Ward and C.P. Gooch (edd) The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy, 1783-1919, iii, (1923), 399-401.
 7. Knight, 153; Ward and Gooch, ibid., 400; WI, vi, (1961), 265-6; Danişmend, iv, 360.

Reval then, provided a further reason for changing the government and introducing reform before the Powers did so. It gave a greater sense of urgency to the constitutionalists already stirred by the Sultan's repressive measures.

In Europe the Reval meeting was seen as the event which triggered off the revolution. This was because few people in Europe, indeed in Macedonia itself, were aware of the secret societies at work in the Empire. They noticed that the revolutionary outbursts coincided with the Reval meeting and concluded that the former was directly related to the latter.⁸ But this was not the whole story though it has almost acquired the status of an 'historical fact'. M.Steeg, French delegate on the Macedonian Financial Commission and someone who knew the situation wrote:

"Je suis persuadé, cependant, que la question des réformes n'était que secondaire, et que le mouvement visait essentiellement le régime hamidien, c'est-à-dire l'absolutisme et la corruption du Palais. La question des réformes

8. Ibid., See also Goschen to Grey, no.94 con., Vienna, 22 July, 1908, F.O.371/544/26021, especially enclosures from the Austrian and German press. Annual Report, 1908, 2-3, n.l.

macédoniennes n'est certainement pas au premier des préoccupations des membres du comité." 9

In the same way Europe thought that the constitutional movement was directed from Europe by Ottoman exiles with whom they were familiar. But nothing could have been further from the truth.¹⁰ It is impossible to deny the psychological significance of Reval on the reformers. But the origins of the insurrection must be sought elsewhere.

Nazım Bey, who was shot in Salonika on 11 June, returned to Istanbul and submitted his findings to the Palace. After hearing Nazım's report the Sultan ordered another commission of inquiry to be sent to Salonika, ostensibly to inspect the arsenals of the Third Army, in reality to unearth the secret societies.¹¹ Upon

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9. M.Steeg to M.George Louis, Uskub, 30 July, 1908. Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Documents Diplomatiques Français 1871-1914, (1950-56), 2^e Série, xi, no.419, 719-22 (hereafter cited as D.D.F.). See also General di Robilant's - the Italian commander of the gendarmerie - report on the internal situation and the CUP. Enclosure no.3 in Barclay to Grey, no.392 con., Therapia, 16 July, 1908, F.O.371/544/25303. See also Ramsaur, 134.
10. Ali Haydar Midhat, Hatıralarım, (1946), 189. Ramsaur, 129-30.
11. Ahmed Bedevî Kuran, Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda İnkılâp Hareketleri ve Milli Mücadele, (1959), 466; Ramsaur, 134; Cevat, 158; Annual Report, 1908, n.l.

the arrival of Mahir Paşa's commission in Salonika events began to move with increased momentum. Esat Paşa, Commander-in-Chief of the Third Army, and Ali Rıza Paşa, his Chief of Staff were recalled to Istanbul. They were held primarily responsible for the disaffection in the Third Army, and the Palace calculated that if they were replaced by new officers loyal to the Sultan, who would impose stricter discipline, the movement in the army would collapse.¹² İbrahim Paşa who had been a reactionary earlier replaced Esat Paşa. But now as commander of the Third Army he co-operated with the liberal Hilmi Paşa, Inspector-General of Macedonia. They made representations to the Palace to have the commission recalled, and early in July Mahir Paşa was summoned to the capital.¹³ Some subordinate members of his commission were left behind, but they proved to be ineffective against the Committee's policy of terrorism.

Mahir Paşa had little success in uncovering the secret societies and the organisation of the CUP in Salonika remained intact. In Istanbul, however, he caused some confusion by denouncing Hilmi Paşa and other high

12. Annual Report, ibid. These events not mentioned elsewhere.

13. Ibid.

officials in Macedonia of treasonable activities. He even accused the Grand Vezir Damad Ferid Paşa's son-in-law, Ali Paşa. He may well have been right but his reward for being so bold was exile to Bursa.¹⁴

In another part of Macedonia the Sultan's espionage met with greater success. The Palace agent in Manastır, the Military Chaplain (Alay Müftüsü) of the army units stationed there succeeded in infiltrating the conspiratorial group led by Adjutant-Major Niyazi. Niyazi was already known to the secret police and had once been cited before a court-martial. But on account of a lack of evidence he had been acquitted, and against the advice of the Vali of Manastır he had been allowed to return to his post at Resne. The mufti's discovery forced him to act before his group was broken up. He set about organising his rebellion and called a secret meeting for 28 June. The mufti, who was returning to Istanbul to make his report, was shot and seriously wounded on 12 July.¹⁵

14. Barclay to Grey, no.392, op.cit.

15. Menteşe, Cumhuriyet, 17 Oct.1946; Danişmend, iv,361; Vice-Consul Heathcote to Barclay, Manastır, 13 July,1908, enclosure in Barclay to Grey, no.400 con.,Therapia,20 July, 1908, F.O.371/544/25649; Knight, 151. Menteşe gives 7 July as the date of the assassination, ibid.

The meeting that Niyazi had called for 28 June met at the house of a certain Hacı Ağa. At this meeting Niyazi announced his intention to proclaim open revolt against the Palace and to fight for the re-establishment of the constitution. The problem was discussed and the date for the insurrection was set for Friday, 3 July.¹⁶ When the meeting was over Niyazi sent Cemal Efendi to Manastır "to appraise the central Committee in that town of Niyazi's plan and to obtain permission to carry it out. ... Within two days Cemal returned ... with the required permission from the central Committee and Niyazi made preparations for the fateful Friday."¹⁷ He informed other local conspiratorial units of his plan and gave them their instructions.¹⁸

16. Kuran, 465; Menteşe, ibid.; Knight, 154.

17. Knight, 157; Ahmed Niyazi, Hatıratı Niyazi, (1910), 236. It is important to remember that Niyazi's memoirs were written after a decision had been taken to do so at the 1908 Congress of the CUP. See T.Z.Tunaya, Türkiyede Siyasî Partiler 1859-1952, (1952), 207, clause 4. Though these memoirs are valuable as a source for this period, their political bias must not be forgotten: to exaggerate the role of the Committee in the insurrection, and to make it appear as if the movement was directed at all times and through all stages by the CUP. This is also true of all other Unionist memoirs. But the Committee was most conscious of history and even considered having an official history of the movement specially written. But on account of the turbulent times this project never materialised. See Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, Talât Paşa, (1943), 8.

18. İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, '1908 Yılında İkinci Meşrutiyetin Ne Suretle İlan Edildigine dair Vesikalar', Belleten, xx/77, (1956), 153-4.

On 3 July, while most of the officers of the garrison were away at Friday prayers, Niyazi and his men helped themselves to arms, ammunition and the treasury chest and took to the hills. Niyazi took with him about 200 regular soldiers and about the same number of irregulars and civilians.¹⁹ Among the civilians with Niyazi there was Hoca Cemal the Mayor of Resne, Tahsin Efendi the tax-inspector, and Tahir Bey the Police Commissioner.²⁰ The purpose of including civilians was to try and set up an administration which would be able to gather taxes and administer justice. Niyazi seemed to visualise a long drawn out struggle against the Palace.

On the day of his flight from Resne Niyazi issued certain manifestos to the authorities of the local towns as well as to the Vali of Manastır and Hilmi Paşa.²¹ It is interesting that in all these manifestos Niyazi spoke, not as a representative of the CUP as one might

19. Niyazi, 236; Uzunçarşılı, ibid., 107-8; Danişmend, iv, 361; Kuran, 465 ff.; Military Attaché Surtees to Barclay, Constantinople, 9 July, 1908, enclosure in Barclay to Grey, no.378 con., Therapia, 9 July, 1908, F.O.371/544/24315; Cevat, 159; Knight, 153 ff.

20. Uzunçarşılı, ibid., 108; and Heathcote to Barclay, Manastır, 5 July, 1908, enclosure in Barclay to Grey, no.378, ibid.

21 Niyazi, 83 ff.; Bernard Lewis, The Emergence of Modern Turkey, 3rd ed., (1965), 202; Kuran, 465.

expect, but simply as the leader of "my 200 men". This could mean that the Committee had not as yet taken over the direction of the insurrection, and that Niyazi had taken the initiative on his own. The Committee was essentially an urban organisation and it was in the towns where it aided the rebellion.

The manifesto of 3 July to the Authorities of Ohri stated that the reason for the insurrection was to combat "the injustices and inequities which our fatherland has been suffering for many years..., and to force the government to restore the constitution of 1293 (1876)".²² Next day Niyazi issued another manifesto to the authorities warning them that "the task of feeding and supporting those working for the sacred cause ... of restoring the constitution was incumbent on the people".²³ He appealed to the local people to furnish his men with their basic needs just as they would in wartime.²⁴ In a separate manifesto to the people of Ohri he asked them to stop paying taxes to the government and to pay them to his men

22. Niyazi to the Authorities of Ohri, 3 July, 1908, a French translation of the original enclosed in Barclay to Grey, no.400 con.,Therapia, 20 July, 1908, F.O.371/544/25649.

23. Ibid., 4 July, 1908.

24. Ibid.

instead. In return he promised to guarantee the security of life, honour and property.²⁵ Finally on 6 July Niyazi appealed to the Bulgarian community around Resne. He asked for their co-operation and active help in the struggle for the constitution, which, he pointed out would benefit all regardless of race or religion.²⁶ On the eve of the insurrection Niyazi wrote to a relative to whom he had entrusted his family: "Rather than live basely, I have preferred to die. I am therefore going out now, with two hundred patriots armed with Mausers, to die for our country."²⁷ Niyazi was not being melodramatic. Death was a more probable conclusion for this adventure than salvation of the fatherland.

Niyazi's example was followed by other junior officers - Sadık Bey, Captain Habib, Ziya, Fahri, and İbrahim Şakir to mention a few - the most notable of all being Major Enver, a young officer attached to Hilmi Paşa's

25. Niyazi to the People of Ohri, 4 July, 1908, ibid.

26. Niyazi to the Bulgarians of Resne, 6 July, 1908. Translation from the Bulgarian original enclosed in ibid. no.408, con., Therapia, 22 July, 1908, F.O.371/544/25912. This manifesto is not dated, but Knight, 179 ff., refers to the same manifesto and dates it 6 July.

27. Niyazi, 73; B.Lewis, 204.

staff.²⁸ Eyyüb Sabri, another junior officer who acquired a reputation as a hero of the movement, is said to have joined Niyazi early in July. In fact he did not take to the hills around Ohri until 20 July, three days before the constitution was restored.²⁹ The real importance of this military rising on a minor scale was that it soon involved the CUP. Without this initiative the Committee might have remained dormant for some time to come; but the Sultan's counter-measures forced it to act. The Committee's first act of participation was its manifesto of 6 July "to the Vali of the illegal government" in Manastir.³⁰ Thereafter the initiative passed into the hands of CUP organisations in the towns of Macedonia where the outcome of the constitutional movement was decided.

When the news of Niyazi's insurrection reached Istanbul, the Palace became aware of the extent of the constitutional movement. To begin with the Sultan and

28. Niyazi, 236; Kuran, 466; Knight, 183; Heathcote to Barclay, enclosure in Barclay ..., no.400, op.cit.; see also Ramsaur, 134; and Enver's letter in the Neue Freie Presse, 8 July, 1908, quoted in the Times of 16 July.

29. Uzunçarşılı, Bell., 77, 161-4.

30. Text of the manifesto in Tunaya, 137-9; French translation in Barclay ..., no.408, op.cit.; Cevat, 159.

his advisers had looked upon the situation in Rumelie as the work of a discontented group. They had been content to crush the conspiracy by means of the secret police. But now that the conspiracy had become a rebellion, the Sultan called in the army to crush it. The first reaction of the Palace was to begin an enquiry and to learn exactly what was happening around Manastır.³¹ Meanwhile General Şemsi Paşa was ordered to proceed to the scene of the rebellion, and to crush the movement with all means available.³² On 7 July Şemsi Paşa was passing through Manastır on his way to deal with the rebellion. He had just telegraphed his plan of operation to the Palace, when as he was getting into his carriage outside the post-office, he was assassinated.³³ This event has rightly been regarded as the first positive step towards the constitution. It struck a blow at the Sultan's despotism by killing one of his most trusted generals. At the same time it

31. Kuran, 466; Uzunçarşılı, op.cit., 108.

32. Kuran, ibid; Cevat, 159.

33. Kuran, 469; Cevat, ibid; Uzunçarşılı, 109-10; B.Lewis, 204; Süleyman Külçe, Firzovik Toplantısı ve Meşrutiyet, (1944), 37-45; and Ali Hamdi, 'Fedai Atıf Bey ve Şemsi Paşanın Katli', Resimli Tarih Mecmuası, 65, May 1955, 3828-31.

saved Niyazi Bey from pursuit and destruction and gave the constitutional movement a chance to broaden its base. It is quite probable that had Şemşi Paşa been permitted to proceed against Niyazi, he would have crushed the rebellion.

The assassination of Şemşi Paşa was a desperate and dangerous step for the Committee to take. It was one thing to assassinate a Palace spy, but quite another thing to kill a general of the Ottoman army. In resorting to such action, the Committee risked conflict with Şemsi Paşa's men. After the assassination, the British Consul in Manastır wrote:

"For a time there was great excitement in the town, especially as to the probable action of the late General's own men, a body of some thirty Albanians armed with mausers and apparently dressed as soldiers, but, as I am assured, not belonging to the army. There was, of course, good reason to fear that the band of bashi-bozouks might wish to avenge their master...."³⁴

The CUP was greatly alarmed at the measures which might be taken to crush their movement. To the rank and file in the army the rebellion at Resne was presented as a Serbian insurrection, while the CUP was presented as being pro-Christian and anti-Islam.³⁵ To the Powers, the

34. Heathcote to Barclay, Manastır, 8 July, 1908, enclosure in Barclay to Grey, no.388, con., Therapia, 15 July, 1908, F.O.371/544/25086.

35. Knight, 196.

CUP was described as a nationalist movement which was both anti-Christian and anti-European. The başı-bozüks (civilian irregular troops) with Şemsi Paşa's force were to be used against the Christian population in Macedonia either to bring about a civil war or a massacre of the Christians, in both cases making foreign intervention inevitable.³⁶

Right from the start the CUP worked to destroy its anti-Christian, anti-foreign image. On 12 July, a captain in the army, a member of the Committee, visited the British Consul in Manastır:

"He declared that no hostile action whatever is intended against the Christians. His object in calling on me was to enquire what would be the view of the matter taken by the British Government, especially if some Constitutional Government could be settled here locally. He laid great stress on the desire of his party to return to the traditional policy of friendship with Great Britain, and in this connection he said that no enquiries of this nature were to be addressed to the Consulates of the other Powers here." ³⁷

On the same day the Committee at Manastır sent manifestos in French to all the Consulates of the Great Powers. The manifestos pointed out that agents of the

36. See the Committee's denial of these charges in their manifesto to the European Consuls in Manastır, enclosure in Barclay..., no.408, op.cit.

37. Heathcote to Barclay, Monastır, 13 July, 1908, enclosure in Barclay..., no.400, op.cit.

Palace were active in sowing seeds of distrust amongst the diverse elements of the Empire and the CUP had counteracted these. The fundamental aim of the Committee was to have the Constitution of 1876 restored. The Committee was in no way hostile to the non-Muslims, whose rights it would guarantee constitutionally. If it did use force it was only against the enemies of liberty and in self-defence. It was averse to bloodshed but feared that the Government at Istanbul might precipitate a massacre of the non-Muslims and place the responsibility for it on the Committee. The CUP bands, far from attacking villages had protected them from the incursions of other bands, and they had always propagated fraternity amongst all the elements. The Government had shown its complete lack of scruples by despatching başı-bozüks with Şemsi Paşa. The employment of başı-bozüks who understood no law and only sought to pillage, proved the mistake of the Great Powers in giving friendly counsels to the Porte.³⁸

The replacement for Şemsi Paşa, Marshal Osman Paşa, arrived in Manastir on 12 July, 1908. But he proved to be ineffective against the Committee because his troops were no longer loyal and refused to fire on

38. Manifesto, Barclay..., no.408, op.cit.

their comrades. At the same time the supporters of the Government in the administration were becoming demoralised.³⁹ The Committee, meanwhile, was consolidating its position. The Bulgarian population in Rumelie was by and large on the side of the Committee. The Muslims were slowly won over too. By mid July, the Committee's position in Rumelie seemed impregnable. About ten days before the Constitution was restored, Hilmi Paşa wrote to the Palace that almost all of the officers of the Third Army were connected with the CUP. He advised the Sultan to release the two officers he was holding on suspicion of conspiring against the Palace, or events in Macedonia would take a turn for the worse. The two officers were duly released.⁴⁰ The Committee kept the forces loyal to the Sultan in check by a policy of terrorism. On 6 July, Hakkı Bey, a member of Mahir Paşa's enquiry commission was assassinated in Salonika. On 10 July, the army chaplain from Manastir was shot in Salonika en route for Istanbul. Two days later, Sadık Paşa, the Sultan's A.D.C. was shot aboard the ship Sidon going to the capital. Osman Hidayet Paşa, Commandant

39. Annual Report, 1908, enclosure in Lowther, no.105, op.cit.; Cevat, 159.

40. Hilmi Paşa's letter in Uzunçarşılı, Bell., 77, 135; other officials also wrote to the Palace about the serious situation in Macedonia. See Cevat, ibid.

of the Manastır garrison was shot while reading a proclamation from the Sultan.⁴¹ The situation seemed to be out of the Sultan's control. He tried to restore his authority by sending loyal troops from Anatolia against the rebels. Between 15 and 24 July, 18,000 Anatolian troops were sent, but they proved to be no more effective than the Macedonians.⁴²

On 20 July, the Muslim population of Manastır rose in support of the constitution and seized the military stores.⁴³ The Vali of Manastır, Hıfzı Paşa, had already written to the Palace and said that further resistance to the constitutionalists was futile and that the Sultan should restore the constitution. He had been rebuked for his advice and he had therefore tendered his resignation.⁴⁴ Risings took place at Gribava, Elasma, Kizano, Köyler and Şerifiye, and the Albanians assembled at Firzovik in the province of Kosova and took an oath to restore the Constitution. They sent an ultimatum to the Sultan demanding the restoration of the Constitution

41. Menteşe, Cumhuriyet, 17 Oct., 1946; Danişmend, iv, 361; Barclay to Grey, no. 425 con., Constantinople, 28 July, 1908, F.O. 371/544/26958.

42. Cevat, 159; Annual Report, 1908, op.cit.; Uzunçarşılı, Bell., 77, 111; Buxton, 52; and Pears, 203, write that the Committee had sent Nazım Bey to İzmir, where he infiltrated the ranks of the army in the guise of a tobacco seller (or hoca) and subverted the troops.

43. Annual Report, ibid.; Knight, 218-9.

44. Cevat, 160; Barclay to Grey, no. 176 con., Constantinople, 23 July 1908, F.O. 371/544/25618; Knight, 192-5.

of 1876, threatening to march on Istanbul to depose him if he did not do so.⁴⁵

The Firzovik Incident, generally regarded as an important landmark in the struggle for the Constitution, had very strange origins. It began as a demonstration against an excursion, planned and organised by the Austro-German Railway School, to the village of Sarayışte, renowned for its natural beauty. The workmen who had been sent ahead to prepare the picnic site were driven out, and the demonstrations continued against the local Ottoman officials.⁴⁶ The Austro-German excursion was cancelled but the news of the demonstrations at Firzovik reached the Vali of Kosova, Mahmud Şevket Paşa. He sent the commander of the Kosova Gendarmerie, a certain Galip Bey to investigate. Galip Bey, who happened to be a member of the CUP, informed the general headquarters of the Committee of the prevailing situation, and asked them to exploit it in favour of the constitution. The Albanians were completely

45. Külçe, Firzovik..., 60-1; Tunaya, 139-41; see also Tunaya, Hürriyetin İlânı, (1959), 7; Uzunçarşılı, Bell., 77, 124-5; Cevat, 160.

46. Vice-Consul Satow to Consul-General Lamb (Salonika), Uskub, 11 July, 1908, enclosure in Barclay to Grey, no.393, con., Therapia, 17 July, 1908, F.O.371/544/25304; see also Külçe, Firzovik..., passim, and Uzunçarşılı, Bell., 77, 124-5.

unorganised, but amongst them was a certain Hacı Şaban Efendi, a supporter of the CUP. He took charge of the disorganised rabble and harnessed it into a demonstration in favour of the constitution. The result was the demand for the constitution and the ultimatum to the Sultan.⁴⁷

The situation in Macedonia was now completely out of the Palace's control. Hilmi Paşa again sent a cipher telegram to the Sultan on 22 July explaining the gravity of the situation. He reported that the mission of Múşir Şükrü Paşa and Birinci Ferik Rahmi Paşa to Rumelie had revealed nothing new. He therefore suggested that the Sultan send one or two chosen ministers and vezirs who could examine the situation on the spot and suggest the remedy.⁴⁸ However, by 22 July it was too late for such measures; the Committee had decided to proclaim the constitution. Having established it in Macedonia they hoped to extend it to the rest of the Empire, by force if necessary. As a prelude to a peaceful proclamation, Eyyüb Sabri and his men kidnapped Marshal Osman Paşa from Manastır,⁴⁹

47. Uzunçarşılı, 125-6; Cevat, 160.

48. Uzunçarşılı, 135-6.

49. Ibid., 161-4; Cevat, 160.

and next day (23 July) the constitution was proclaimed.⁵⁰
On the same day, only a few hours later, the constitution was proclaimed in some of the other towns, such as Preşova, Köprülü, Üsküp and Serez. A description of a typical proclamation has been left by the British Vice-Consul at Drama: ⁵¹

"By the usual train from Salonica there arrived at Drama at or about 1.30 p.m. a hundred soldiers and about twenty officers commanded by a young staff officer named Rushen Bey Rushen Bey delivered a speech in which he laid great stress on the absolute necessity of establishing a constitutional government if the Turkish Empire was to be saved from utter ruin, on the abolition of the distinction between race and creed under the Ottoman Government and gave the words 'La Patrie, Liberté, égalité, fraternité' as their motto. He then turned to the soldiers and said: 'You are now going into the town to proclaim a constitutional government; anyone who resists, no matter what his rank and position, is to be shot dead....'

Meanwhile, in the Konak, in the mosque, and in the Greek church, the great majority of the population, both Greek and Mussulman, had been swearing fidelity to the Constitution.... Finally at 4 p.m. it was proclaimed that the constitution was accepted, and telegrams were sent to the Sultan, signed greatly against his will by Zia Pasha, the mutessarif."

Salonika, though the ideological centre of the constitutional movement and the head-quarters of the

50. Ibid. (both), Tunaya, 141-2.

51. Bonham to Barclay, Drama, 23 July, 1908, enclosure in Barclay to Grey, no.423, con., Therapia, 28 July, 1908, F.O.371/544/26956. See also Uzunçarşılı, ibid., 168-70.

Committee of Union and Progress, was the last important town in Macedonia to proclaim the constitution. The Committee had planned to proclaim the constitution in Salonika on 27 July if circumstances permitted. But the march of events was so rapid that the date was forwarded to 25 July. On the morning of 24 July, Hilmi Paşa received a telegram from the Grand Vezir, informing him of the Sultan's decision to accede to the wish of his people and restore the constitution. A little after 9 a.m. Hilmi Paşa read the Sultan's İrade (proclamation) proclaiming the constitution to the salute of a hundred and one guns.⁵²

Events in the capital followed a different pattern. After Şemsi Paşa's assassination and the refusal of Anatolian troops to crush the rebellion, the Palace became demoralised and gave up the policy of repression for one of conciliation. In the classical manner this change was manifested by the dismissal of the Grand Vezir - and in this case the 'Minister of War' as well. On 22 July Damad Ferid Paşa and Rıza Paşa were dismissed and Said Paşa was appointed Grand Vezir with Omer Rusdu Paşa as War Minister (serasker).⁵³ The Sultan could now make concessions

52. Said Paşa's telegram to Hilmi Paşa, enclosure in Barclay to Grey, no.430 con., Therapia, 29 July, 1908, F.O.371/545/26961. See also Annual Report, 1908; and Steeg to Louis, op.cit., D.D.F., XI, no.419, 719-22.

53. Hatt-ı Hümayun appointing Said Paşa in Sabah, 23 July, 1908. See also Uzunçarşılı, Bell, 77, 136-8; Cevat, 160 and Barclay, ibid.

without loss of face; it would appear as if Ferid Paşa had been the stumbling-block. After the constitution was established Abdülhamid took the credit for it, telling Midhat Paşa's son that "the constitution had been established for the good of the country and the nation (in 1876).... But traitors withdrew it and deceived him."⁵⁴ Further discussions took place on the night of 23 July, and telegrams from Macedonia were read reporting the proclamation of the constitution. Faced with what amounted to a fait accompli, the Sultan decided to accede to the demand of the rebels and Hilmi Paşa was informed accordingly. On the same day an Imperial İrade was issued in Istanbul restoring to the Ottoman Empire the Constitution of 1876.⁵⁵ A new era had begun.

54. Midhat, Hatıralarım, 197.

55. Hatt-ı Hümayun restoring the constitution in Sabah, 25 July, 1908 and its translation enclosed in Barclay to Grey, no.179, tel.con., Constantinople, 24 July, 1908, F.O.371/544/25753; Uzunçarşılı, Bel., 77, 138-43. See also Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, Türk İnkılâbı Tarihi, i (1940), 240 ff.

CHAPTER II

THE CONSTITUTIONAL REGIME AND THE COUNTER-

REVOLUTION OF 1909

The proclamation of the Constitution on 23/24 July 1908¹ was a success beyond all expectations of the Committee of Union and Progress.² But as a result of the Sultan's sudden capitulation, the country and its administration were thrown into confusion.³ The government was completely demoralised and administration virtually came to a standstill. Members of the Cabinet no longer knew what powers they had, and therefore lost all sense of initiative.⁴ Meanwhile the people, now knowing what freedom meant, thought that all the old institutions of law and order had come to an end. Having suffered injustices for so long,

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1. The text of the İrade (Imperial decree) proclaiming the constitution and inviting the Chamber of Deputies to assemble is given in A.S.Gözübüyük and Suna Kili, Türk Anayasa Metinleri (1957), 59-60. Sabah, 25 July, 1908.
 2. Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, Talât Paşa, (1943), 16; also Alfred de Bilinski, The Turkish Revolution, The Nineteenth Century, LXIV, 1908, 353. "The re-establishment by Abd-ul-Hamid of the Constitution came as a surprise to everybody, not excepting the chiefs of the Young Turk party, who did not expect such a sudden fruition of their patriotic labours."
 3. Ali Fuat Türkgeldi, Görüp İşittiklerim, (1951), 1-4; Yalçın, Talât Paşa, 16-17.
 4. Türkgeldi, 2-3; Yalçın, 18.

they decided to take matters into their own hands. The people of Trebizond demanded the dismissal of their vali, or threatened to drive him out themselves. Fearing the consequences if he refused, Memduh Paşa, the Minister of the Interior, accepted their demand and dismissed the vali.⁵ In the capital itself, there was no authority capable of controlling the people who had decided to punish members of the old regime.⁶ In this situation there was grave danger of the country drifting into anarchy, unless some form of authority was quickly established.

The CUP was the only body with sufficient authority and prestige to control the situation. Within a few days of the proclamation, the Committee tried to bring about the destruction of the Palace clique and the vast

5. Türkgeldi, 4. There are many examples of people in the provinces taking the initiative against corrupt officials. In Bursa, Yıldız spies were arrested and driven out and the vali, Tevfik Bey was given a list of corrupt officials whose dismissal was demanded. See Mr. Gilbertson to H.C.A. Eyres, Broussa, 28 July, 1908, F.O. 195/2280. Similar action was taken in Konya, and the British Vice-Consul pointed out that in some cases it was the political offenders sent into exile to far-off provinces by Abdülhamid, who led the people. See Vice-Consul Doughty-Wylie to Mr. Barclay, Konia, 27 July, 1908, F.O. 195/2280.

6. Yalçın, 17.

espionage network.⁷ On the advice of Said Paşa, the Grand Vezir, the Sultan proclaimed a general amnesty for all political prisoners and exiles.⁸ Within a short time, the Committee had succeeded in clearing the administration of corrupt officials and in replacing them with more liberal men.⁹

At this stage it seemed quite possible for the Committee to assume power directly. The traditional authority of the Sultan had collapsed, while the Committee had the prestige of having carried out a successful insurrection and the mystique of a secret society. But the Committee did not do so. Instead it left power in the hands of the existing Cabinet, and set itself up as a vigilance committee safeguarding the constitution, exercising its power and influence only when it felt the necessity. The Committee's critics have charged it with intervention in government, of exercising power without

7. Midhat Şükrü Bleda, "Bir Canlı Tarih Konuşuyor", Resimli Tarih Mecmuası, (June 1953), 2392; Uzunçarşılı, Bell. XX/77, 1956, 172-4, gives the text of the proclamation ending espionage. Mr. Barclay to Sir. E. Grey, no. 199 telegraphic confidential, Constantinople, 29 July, 1908, F.O. 371/544/26307. File 544 is full of detailed reports of the first days of the constitution.

8. Uzunçarşılı, ibid.

9. Annual Report, 1908, 5-7, ch. I, n. I.

responsibility.¹⁰ Though there is much truth in this charge, it does not explain why the Committee acted in this way.

The explanation lies in the social background of the Young Turks and their basic conservatism. They were by and large conservative in outlook with little or no interest in promoting social change.¹¹ The CUP was a direct extension of the reform movement of the nineteenth century, especially the Young Ottomans,¹² and like them it was concerned only with the problem of how to save the

10. Kâmil Paşa's interview in Neue Freie Presse, 18 February, 1909, cited in Fortnightly Review, 84, 1909, 397-8. Also Yalçın, Talât Paşa, 20. Bleda, op.cit, n.7.

11. Bleda, ibid. H.C.Yalçın, '1908 İnkılâbı İnkılâpçı Değildi', Yakın Tarihimiz, 2, no.19, 179-80. This title is revealing though the contents of the article do not deal specifically with the social issues. B.Lewis, Emergence ... 208. - The importance of the 1908 'revolution' is not that it was revolutionary in profession, it was not. In fact it wanted to restore a constitution which had already been granted in 1876. Its importance as a revolution only emerged later on, when by its pragmatic policies it was able to introduce reforms which were a little short of revolutionary, and which had a profound effect in the period that followed.

12. The best study of the Young Ottomans is the Turkish political scientist, Serif Mardin's, 'The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought', (1962).

There is also E.E.Ramsaur's, The Young Turks; Prelude to the Revolution of 1908, Princeton, (1957), and T.Z.Tunaya, Türkiye'de Siyasî Partiler, (1952), 89-157.

Empire.¹³ Fundamentally the Young Turks provided the same answer as the Young Ottomans of the 1860's and '70's; to introduce constitutional government, thereby curbing the power of the Sultan, and at the same time satisfying the aspirations of the minorities by giving them equal rights within the law.¹⁴ Socially the Young Ottomans had been in a position to assume power once they had forced the Sultan to concede the constitution. They did, after all, come from "a ruling elite, prepared by education to command and to govern."¹⁵ The Young Turks shared their social values but not their social position. During the period of Abdülhamid's despotic rule, the base of the reform movement had become much broader. This was brought about by Abdülhamid's reforms.¹⁶ Whereas the Young Ottomans were members and products of the ruling

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13. Tunaya, ...Partiler', 167-74, briefly discusses the different solutions that were offered in answer to - How can this state be saved? See also B.Lewis, Emergence..., 208-9.
14. The Young Turks rather naively thought that all the complaints of the different elements came from maladministration, oppression and a lack of freedom. If all these causes of discontent were removed through the constitution and parliamentary government, the Turkish nation would be saved. Yalçın, Talât Paşa, 14. Yalçın concludes: "They had never seen in their lives what a parliament looked like, or how it met and discussed. But they secretly believed in the Constitution and the parliament as one believes in a mighty talisman." - ibid., 14.
15. B.Lewis, 201; Mardin, Genesis...; deals with the social background of the prominent "Young Ottomans". See also Mardin's article in MEJ, XIV, (1962), 169-82.
16. For Abdülhamid's reforms see B.Lewis, 174-90.

institution, the Young Turks belonged to the newly emerging professional classes; lecturers in the recently founded government colleges, lawyers trained in western law, journalists, minor clerks in the bureaucracy, and junior officers trained in the western-style war colleges. Most of them were half-educated¹⁷ and products of the state schools. The well-educated ones had no experience of administration and little idea about running a government. There was not a single experienced statesman amongst them.¹⁸

The Young Ottomans, belonging to the ruling elite, thought they could save the Empire if they were given the opportunity to govern.¹⁹ The Young Turks, a generation later, did not see in themselves the capacity to rule,²⁰ therefore they never considered taking up high governmental posts.²¹ Hüseyin Cahit Yalçın, a CUP deputy for Constantinople and a prominent journalist wrote:

"This country could not have accepted a young man without rank, decorations, a beard, glory and reputation, rising to the Grand Vəzirate. .. Since the public opinion of the country was such, and since they /the Young Turks/ themselves were made up of the same stuff, it would be unfair to

17 Kemal H.Karpat, Turkey's Politics (1959), 14, n.31; Yalçın, Talât Paşa, 13-14.

18. Yalçın, 13-14.

19. B.Lewis, 201.

20. Yalçın, 14.

21. Ibid., 34.

blame them /for not assuming power/.... . In July 1908, the CUP could not proclaim a captain or a major Minister of War, nor Talât Bey, a head postal clerk, Grand Vezir Conditions and circumstances made this impossible. ... If this in fact had happened, anarchy would surely have broken out in the country... The members of the CUP realising this, did not take up positions of power."²²

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22. Ibid., 34-5. - The importance of the social issues seems to have been underrated or ignored in the study of the Young Turk period. The social climate prevailing in the Ottoman Empire was undoubtedly one of the main factors, though it remained latent, which prevented the Young Turks from assuming power openly and completely. Mr.F.Graves, the Times correspondent in Constantinople at the time, aware that European classes were not applicable to Ottoman society, nevertheless describes the Young Turk movement as essentially "upper middle class". He wrote that "the high officials, generally speaking, were hostile to the movement.... The lower classes ... were, as a rule, indifferent. It was among the junior officers of the army and navy, the middle and lower grades of the civil service, the professional classes, and the ulema, that the movement for reform carried all before it." The Times, 24 August, 1908, -. Mr.Noel Buxton, President of the Balkan Committee, visited Istanbul in December 1908. On his return to London he informed Louis Mallet at the Foreign Office that "it would be impossible for men so young as they, /the Young Turks/- to take office in Turkey". Louis Mallet's Minute, F.O.371/761/8892. In an interview with Mr.Hohler, First Secretary at the British Embassy, Istanbul, Cavit Bey, a prominent Young Turk, later Minister of Finance said that the Young Turks "were all young men who lacked experience in administrative work, however much they might have studied; also the respect, which in all countries is conceded to age, is far greater here than elsewhere". Lowther to Grey, no.384 con., Pera, 26 May, 1909, F.O.371/772/20299. - After the fall of Kâmil Paşa in February 1909, opponents of the CUP approached Sir Gerard Lowther and sought British aid "to help them rid themselves of this new despotism of men who, they say, have not even the traditions of the Sultanate and Kaliphate". Lowther to Grey, no.151, con, Pera, 3 March, 1909; F.O.371/761/8914; - That this 'class issue' never came out into the open was due partly to the conservatism of the Young Turks, and partly to their awareness of their own social shortcomings. See also Mandelstam, Le Sort de l'Empire Ottoman, (1918), 24.

The CUP also lacked the organisation required to assume power. Any organisation it had was centred in the Macedonian provinces with headquarters at Salonika.²³ When the insurrection succeeded, the limited number of branches in the rest of the Empire were quite unprepared to take control of the administration.²⁴ During the period of despotism there had been many secret societies. But because of the repression and because of their very nature, they were scattered, isolated and unknown to each other.²⁵ Once the constitution was proclaimed they all came out into the open, with different policies and without any recognised leadership.²⁶ Under these conditions the Committee was unable to assume power openly, and power was left formally in the hands of the official government of Said Paşa. In reality, this power became the bone of contention between three forces, the Palace, the Porte and the Committee.²⁷

23. See below, Chapter I. passim.

24. Yalçın, Talât Paşa, 16.

25. Ibid., 12.

26. Ibid., 12. - A.Sarrou, La Jeune Turquie 34-5, relates how, immediately after the revolution, the CUP sent a delegation to see the Sultan. Abdülhamid agreed to see the president of the delegation, only to be told that the Committee had no president.

27. H.C.Yalçın, Kudretsiz Bir Hükûmet, Müvesvis Bir Padişah! Yakın Tarihimiz. II/16, 75.

The first encounter between the executive and the Committee took place early in August. It took place over the right to appoint the Ministers of War and Marine. Article 27 of the 1876 Constitution vested this prerogative in the person of the Grand Vezir his appointments having to be sanctioned by an Imperial İrade.²⁸ The Sultan appointed only the Grand Vezir and the Şeyhülislâm.²⁹ Article 10 of the Hatt-ı-Hümayun of August 1, gave the Sultan the right to make all four appointments.³⁰ The issue was not merely constitutional; its implications went much deeper. It meant that the person who appointed the two ministers of the armed forces, controlled the armed forces themselves. The Committee, having its main support from the junior officers of the army and navy, realised that its position

28. Gözübüyük and Kili, Anayasa, 27.

29. Ibid.

30. The text of the Hatt-ı-Hümayun in Tanin, 2 August 1908 and Sabah, 2 August, 1908. The other fourteen clauses of the charter guaranteed the inviolability of domicile, freedom from arbitrary arrest, the grant of permission to travel abroad, and to form commercial associations with foreign subjects. It announced the equality of all Ottomans, without distinction of race or religion, and proclaimed full liberty. It announced that projects for the reorganisation of ministries, particularly the ministry of war, and provinces would be prepared and submitted to Parliament.

would be undermined if the Sultan succeeded in establishing a foothold in their preserve. They therefore opposed Clause 10 of the Hatt most fiercely and attacked Said Paşa for having drafted it. Said Paşa and his Minister of the Interior, Memduh Paşa were already regarded with suspicion for having released common criminals along with political prisoners, and also for allowing some of the corrupt officials of the old regime to escape.³¹ The Committee had seen these acts as attempts to discredit and endanger the revolution. Clause 10 confirmed their suspicions.³²

The Committee was not alone in opposing Said Paşa and Clause 10. Cemalüddin Efendi, the Şeyhülislâm, also found it both unconstitutional and contrary to the oath Abdülhamid had sworn, promising to uphold the constitution.³³ In the Cabinet, Said Paşa justified the clause on the ground that since the Sultan was Commander-in-Chief of

31. Türkgeldi, 3. According to Türkgeldi, Memduh Paşa only intended to release political prisoners. But at the instigation of Baba Tahir, owner of "the Malûmat", ordinary criminals threatened violence if they were not released. Memduh Paşa, wishing to avoid further trouble, gave the order to release all criminals. Ibid., 2-3. 'Kanunu Esasî Ve Yeni Hatt-ı Hümayun', Tanin, 3 August, 1908, 4 August, 1908. Yalçın, Talât Paşa, 17, gives the CUP side of the story. Also Lowther to Grey, no.208, tel.-con. Constantinople, 2 August 1908, F.O.371/544/26789.

32. Türkgeldi, ibid., 3.

33. Şeyhülislâm Cemalüddin Efendi, Hatırat-ı Siyasîye (1917), 10-12.

the armed forces, it was within his sacred rights to appoint the two ministers.³⁴ His critics in the Cabinet argued that these offices were not military but civil, and in the past civil servants like Celâl Paşa had held them.³⁵ Unable to accept Said Paşa's explanation, the Şeyhülislâm sent in his resignation, but the Sultan refused to accept it. Said Paşa faced with such determined opposition decided to resign himself.³⁶

Even before 1 August, the Committee had asked the Sultan, through Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa, to be permitted to send a deputation to the capital in order to discuss the situation.³⁷ Permission was reluctantly granted and a deputation composed of Talât, Cavit and Rahmi Beys arrived from Edirne on 1 August.³⁸ They had a long interview with Said Paşa, but the latter was so rude and outspoken that he even shocked his Minister of the Interior, Hacı Akif Bey.³⁹ They then saw Kâmil Paşa and

34. Ibid. To Mr. Fitzmaurice whom he saw on 10 August, he said he had to humour the susceptibilities of the Sultan by not insisting on devolving the right to command the land and sea forces, theoretically vested in His Majesty, on ministers appointed by the Grand Vezir. See Lowther to Grey, no. 459, con., Therapia, 10 August, 1908; F.O. 371/545/28455. - For Said Paşa's defence, see The Levant Herald, 25 August, 1908.

35. Cemalüddin, ibid.

36. Ibid., Ali Cevat, 8.

37. Uzunçarşılı, Bell. 77; 148-9.

38. Ibid.; and Lowther to Grey, no. 448, con. Therapia, 4 August, 1908; F.O. 371/545/27644.

39. Türk geldi, 5.

asked that Recep Paşa, Vali of Tripoli (North Africa) be made War Minister in his ministry.⁴⁰ Finally the deputation visited the Sultan and asked for the formation of another ministry under Kâmil Paşa, with Recep Paşa as Minister of War, and the revision of the Hatt-ı-Hümayun of 1 August. Although Kâmil Paşa had accepted Recep Paşa, the Sultan refused to do so.⁴¹ He regarded Recep Paşa as being too ambitious and independent and therefore preferred Rıza Paşa as Minister of War. But under the pressure of the Committee and through the persuasion of Cemalüddin, the Sultan finally gave in.⁴²

Said Paşa resigned on 5 August and Kâmil Paşa was appointed Grand Vezir on 6 August and asked to form a Cabinet.⁴³ Next day, there appeared in the Sabah a declaration by the Committee promising full support to the new Cabinet, and asking the people to co-operate in maintaining law and order so as not to provoke foreign

40. Uzunçarşılı, op.cit.

41. Cemalüddin, 12.

42. Ibid., for Abdülhamid's assessment of Recep Paşa see Cevat, 8-9 and 10-11.

43. For Said Paşa's resignation and Kâmil Paşa's appointment see Tanin and Sabah of 6 and 7 August 1908; Cemalüddin, 12-13; Cevat, 8; French translation of Hatt in Lowther to Grey, no.473, con., Therapia, 12 August, 1908, F.O.371/545/28469.

criticism.⁴⁴ Thus ended the first attempt to end the anomalous situation. Co-operation between the Committee and the Porte frustrated the Palace's attempt to monopolise power once more. Henceforth power passed into the hands of the Porte, while the Committee continued to play the role of guardian of the Constitution, though still not taking an active part in the administration of the Empire.

The business of government and reform began with Kâmil Paşa's ministry. Most of his ministers, except two, were new men, described by the British Ambassador as "men of experience, ability and energy, enjoying the popularity of all classes."⁴⁵ There was still, however, no one from the Committee.

On 16 August, Kâmil Paşa's programme appeared in the press.⁴⁶ It stated that he resolved to govern according to the Constitution. But since it was not possible to wait

44. Lowther, ibid.; Sabah, ibid.

45. Lowther to Grey; no.473, con., Therapia, 12 August, 1908; F.O.371/545/28469. The two men Kâmil retained from Said Paşa's Cabinet were Cemalüddin Efendi (Şeyhülislâm) and Tevfik Paşa (Minister of Foreign Affairs). For a list of the Cabinet see Türkgeldi, 5 and Cevat, 190-91.

46. Text of programme in Sabah, 16 Aug., 1908, 'Meclisî Vükelânın Programı'; translation enclosed in Lowther to Grey, no.494 con., Therapia, 18 Aug., 1908, F.O.371/546/29298.

for the Chamber of Deputies to assemble before executing this programme, he intended to modify certain laws of the old regime which were not in conformity with the Constitution.

On account of the gravity of the financial situation, existing financial laws would be reformed and a rational budget prepared for the coming year. All ministries would be reformed and surplus functionaries would be pensioned off. The army and navy would also be reorganised.

Since reform would require a larger expenditure, the existing system of taxation would have to be reorganised and resources allocated more rationally. Commercial treaties would be revised.

In the spirit of progress, a programme for the development of commerce, industry, public works and agriculture was under preparation. Scientific progress and education would be encouraged and a law guaranteeing the rights of property would be passed. In the spirit of equality guaranteed by the Constitution, military service would be extended to all Ottomans, including non-Muslims.

The Government, already enjoying good relations with all nations, would base its policy on the maintenance of these good relations, as well as the maintenance of

the integrity and honour of the Ottoman Empire. The Government would work to bring to an end, with the consent of the interested Powers, the privileges and rights, outside the scope of international law, enjoyed by foreigners in the Ottoman Empire by virtue of the Capitulations. To do this the Government would make great efforts to bring all branches of administration to a point where they would inspire confidence amongst all and therefore would make the privileges enjoyed by foreigners unnecessary.

Kâmil Paşa's programme was nothing less than the proclamation of intent to reform the Ottoman Empire into a modern centralised state.⁴⁷ This intention had been stated on earlier occasions, notably in 1839, 1856 and 1876. But little had been done to translate intent into action. By 1908 the situation had changed both in the Empire and the rest of the world. Within the Empire, the threat of secession by the non-Turkish elements was growing day by day, bringing with it the menace of foreign intervention. In Macedonia, where this threat was strongest, there emerged a new social group which saw reform, not as a means of preserving its power as an elite, but as a

47. See also the CUP's official programme for 1908, in Tunaya, Partiler, 208-10.

means of saving the state and bringing it in line with the modern world. With its broader social base, this group was less compromising in its relations with the traditional elements and their values, and accepted more readily the necessity of cultural and social change as an essential part of modernisation. Externally, Japan's success in becoming and being accepted as a modern power by the rest of the world, was possibly the most influential factor in raising Turkish hopes in modernisation.⁴⁸

The Young Turks set out to streamline the entire system of administration. The traditional Millet system "whereby the individual carries his law from place to place", being incompatible with the centralised state, was sentenced to death.⁴⁹ All Ottomans, regardless of ethnic origins or religion, were granted the same rights and duties. Extra-territorial rights enjoyed by foreigners, being incompatible with the idea of one law for

48. The Young Turks already saw themselves as the 'Japan' of the Near East, and in November 1908 asked the English for an alliance, using the Anglo-Japanese Alliance as a precedent. See Ahmed Rıza and Nazım Bey's interview with Grey in Grey to Lowther, private, London, 13 November, 1908; F.O.800/185A (Grey Papers). The Young Turks also considered obtaining Japanese experts instead of European ones to help them with the task of modernisation. But nothing came of it. See Yeni Gazete, cited in Lowther to Grey, no.546, con., Therapia, 6 Sept., 1908, F.O.371/559/31790. Sir Charles Hardinge commented that "the idea would be deeply resented by several of the Great Powers." Ibid

49. R.E.Ward and D.A.Rustow, Political Modernisation in Japan and Turkey (1964), 3-4.

all, were attacked. But the success of this programme hinged on the ability of the new regime to put its finances in order. But no one realised this more than the Young Turks.

Kâmil Paşa's programme established a climate of optimism and it remained only for Parliament to justify it. Meanwhile the Government worked at half-speed, only carrying out measures necessary to keep the administration going. The Palace had followed the policy of appeasing its opponents and rewarding its followers by giving sinecures. As a result, almost all departments of administration were overcrowded with incompetent and corrupt officials.⁵⁰ In the interest of both efficiency and economy, Kâmil Paşa made large reductions in the administrative personnel in almost all departments.⁵¹ This measure caused considerable dissatisfaction, and even within the Cabinet all members were not in favour.⁵²

50. Nazım Bey's interview in Pester Lloyd, 12 May, 1910, enclosure in Mr.C.Howard to Grey, no.40, con., Budapest, 14 May, 1910; F.O.371/1010/19028. Also Annual Report, 1908, 58-9, ch.I, n.l.

51. A list of dismissed officials was published in The Levant Herald, 10 Aug., 1908; also see Annual Report, 1908, 58-9.

52. Ekrem Bey, Minister of Evkaf and later of Education, also a prominent writer, poet and critic, resigned from the ministry because he disagreed with this policy of massive purges. See Fahir İz, 'Ekrem Bey', EI².

The Young Turks, however, preferred to spend a few thousand pounds to pension off incompetent and corrupt officials since retaining them reduced efficiency and could cost much more in the long run.⁵³ This policy took many years to execute. By May 1910, "about 80 per cent of the Government appointments had been reformed!"⁵⁴

The new regime faced its first major crisis in October 1908. On the 5th, Bulgaria declared her independence. Next day, Austria-Hungary announced the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to her Empire. A few days later Crete announced her decision to unite with Greece.⁵⁵ There was little that the Porte could do but protest to the signatories of the Congress of Berlin, since the first two actions were a violation of that treaty, and the position of Crete was also guaranteed by the Powers.⁵⁶ The Powers soon made it known that they

53. Nazım Bey's interview; F.O.371/1010/19028; op.cit, n.50.

54. Ibid.

55. Hikmet Bayur, i, (1940), 245 ff., deals with these problems from the Turkish side. Foreign Office correspondence dealt extensively with these problems too in F.O.371/550 ff. and F.O.371/747 ff.

56. Lowther to Grey, no.294, con., Constantinople, 5 Oct., 1908; F.O.371/550/34514.

would not intervene on Turkey's behalf.⁵⁷

These hostile acts aroused great indignation throughout the Ottoman Empire. There were violent articles and much sabre-rattling in the press, but the only positive action taken was the boycott of Austrian goods.⁵⁸ As the crisis coincided with the month of Ramazan, the Cabinet was not meeting and therefore the matter was not officially discussed.⁵⁹ Kâmil, however, convened a meeting at his home and informed his ministers of his attempts to form alliances with Serbia, Rumania and Greece. Serbia had been in favour, Rumania against, and Greece ambiguous.⁶⁰ Kâmil then asked his War Minister if the army could be mobilised for war. Ali Rıza Paşa gave a negative answer, and it was therefore decided to seek

57. Grey to Lowther; no.284, con., Foreign Office, 5 Oct.1908; F.O.371/551/34595. The British Government was the only one favourably disposed towards the Porte, and the Porte was guided by her advice. Grey informed Rıfat Paşa, the Ottoman Ambassador in London that Britain would not recognise Bulgarian or Austrian actions until she knew the opinions of the other signatories, especially Turkey. He advised the Porte against war and promised to support Turkish proposals for compensation.

58. Türkgeldi, 10-11.

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid., 11.

a political solution.⁶¹ The Porte sent telegraphic protests to the Powers and asked them to safeguard the interests of Turkey by summoning a conference.⁶² On 7 October, Kâmil telegraphed the Macedonian provinces enjoining them to see that there was no violence against Bulgarians residing in the Empire, or any incidents on the border.⁶³ In the capital he called a press conference and asked all papers to be moderate and keep down tension.⁶⁴ By and large the Porte took a moderate line and the situation continued to smoulder for the next six months, ending with compensation for the Ottoman Empire. The effect of these foreign complications on the internal situation, however, was of much greater importance.

The crisis in the Balkans provided some of the

61. Ibid., 12, Rıza Paşa's actual answer was: "We don't even have shoes for our soldiers to wear." The British Ambassador gave another reason for not declaring war; "the necessity of keeping large bodies of troops here to crush any possible reactionary movement". Lowther to Grey; no.296, con., Constantinople, 6 Oct., 1908; F.O.371/551/34666.

62. Lowther to Grey; no.301, con., Constantinople, 7 Oct. 1908; F.O.371/551/34753.

63. Ibid.

64. Ibid.

disaffected elements with an opportunity to attack the new regime. The first manifestation of reaction took place on 7 October, and not surprisingly, it took a purely religious form. A large Ramazan crowd led by Hoca Ali Efendi, better known as "Blind Ali" (Kör Ali), marched to the Palace. He asked to see the Sultan, and when Abdülhamid appeared at the window, Ali Efendi asked for the constitution to be abolished, for the Şeriat to be restored, and for the Sultan to lead his flock once again.⁶⁵ He also asked for the closing down of drinking houses, the prohibition of photography, and an end to Muslim women walking around in the town.⁶⁶ Reactionaries were busy in other parts of the capital as well. In Ayasofya they posted up placards abusing the Şeyhülislâm and calling upon true believers to murder him as the exponent of theories subversive to the dominant faith of which he was supposed to be the guardian.⁶⁷ They created scenes in mosques and theatres

65. Ali Cevat, 15-6; Tunaya, İslâmcılık Cereyanı, (1962), Kör Ali Vakası, 129-30; H.C.Yalçın, 31 Martın Provası Ve Kendisi, Yakın Tarihimiz, 1, 136-7; also Kör Ali, Tanin, 9 Oct., 1908.

66. Cevat, 16.

67. Lowther to Grey, no.670, con., Therapia, 14 Oct.1908; F.O.371/560/36131. See also Yalçın and Tunaya, op.cit.

and even attacked Muslim women in the streets on the pretext that, as a result of the new liberal regime, they were not properly veiled.⁶⁸ Meanwhile Murad Bey, a notorious character from the pre-constitutional era and editor of the Mizan, formed an anti-constitution group in league with a Nazif Sururi and Cemil Molla, the son of a former Şeyhülislâm.⁶⁹ This conspiracy was discovered by the Porte and Murad Bey was arrested and exiled while his accomplices were imprisoned.⁷⁰

The final and potentially the most explosive act of the October reaction was the mutiny at the Taşkıışla barracks.⁷¹ This mutiny was triggered off by an order from the Commander, transferring the 7th and 8th regiments of the 2nd Division of the Imperial Guards Corps to Jedda.⁷² Some 86 soldiers who were

68. Lowther, ibid.; Türkgeldi, 11, relates how Kôr Ali's men smashed the sindows of the Şeyhülislâm's carriage.

69. Türkgeldi, 12. For a more detailed account of the conspiracy and the past activities of these men, see Lowther, ibid.

70. Türkgeldi, ibid.

71. Ali Cevat, 19-20; Yalçın, 'Provası', op.cit; Knight, .. Awakening, 264 ff. gives a contemporary account from the Young Turkish point of view. Foreign Office correspondence, both from Constantinople and from the Military Attaché deal with this incident in some detail. See F.O.371/544 and F.O.195/2290.

72. Cevat, 19; Major Surtees to Lowther, 54 M.A., Constantinople, 2 November, 1908; F.O.195/2290.

about to be posted to Jedda refused to go and demanded immediate discharges from the army.⁷³ They piled up their arms outside the barracks and refused to obey the orders of their general, Şúkrú Paşa, to go back in.⁷⁴

The CUP had already issued, in the Şurayı Ümmet of 22 October, a proclamation stating that it was allied to the army and was therefore able to crush any reaction that might take place.⁷⁵ On 31 October, the day of the mutiny, the CUP issued another proclamation.⁷⁶ The Committee blamed the mutiny on the fact that the rebellious troops had been pampered by the Palace and therefore had no discipline. It demanded severe punishment for the 86 soldiers who had violated military discipline by disobeying orders.⁷⁷ Mahmud Muhtar Paşa, Commander of the 1st Army called in loyal troops from the Macedonian battalions, and the mutiny was crushed at the cost of three killed and as many wounded.⁷⁸

73. Cevat, ibid; Surtees, ibid.

74. Ibid; Ibid.

75. Şurayı Ümmet, 22 October, 1908.

76. A proclamation from the CUP, concerning the Taşkışla incident, 31 Oct., 1908, in İkdam, 1 Nov., 1908.

77. Ibid.

78. Cevat, 19.

Muhtar Paşa wanted to make an example of these men by hanging their corpses for public inspection. But this caused alarm at the Palace and the Porte, and Kâmil Paşa virtually gave him the choice of revoking his decision or resigning. Muhtar Paşa revoked his decision.⁷⁹

The reaction was suppressed without undue difficulty largely because it had been spontaneous and lacked both leadership and organisation. Since the success of any reaction would have favoured only the Palace, the Porte became the ally of the Committee to prevent any such contingency. The Porte dealt promptly with men like Murad Bey, who might have given sophistication and leadership to the reactionary movement.⁸⁰ Kâmil Paşa was extremely confident of his position and underestimated the potential power of the Committee. He "never thought it capable of seizing the absolute power, ... and /he/ used it as a weapon of defense against the Sultan."⁸¹

79. Cevat, 19-20.

80. When Murad Bey was exiled, it was decided to pay him his salary while he was away. Türk geldi, 12.

81. İsmail Kemal, The Memoirs of İsmail Kemal Bey, (1920), 323.

The only reason for co-operation between the Committee and Kâmil was political expediency. The Committee, unable to take control openly, needed someone independent of the Palace and at the same time liberal in outlook, to rule instead. Kâmil was willing to tolerate the Committee while it continued to neutralise the Palace. But this delicate balance could not be maintained indefinitely because both parties could win the dominant position only at the expense of the other.

The Committee was counting on doing this by winning the elections and gaining control of the Chamber of Deputies. Immediately after the July Revolution the Committee sent out emissaries to the provinces to explain the nature of their movement and to set up organisations for securing the election of their candidates.⁸² The Committee also tried to reach agreements with the non-Turkish communities on their candidates who would stand for election, and in many cases it was successful in doing so.⁸³ Candidates were usually elected with the

82. Annual Report, 1908, op.cit., Ch.i, n.i.

83. For the Committee's compromise with the Greeks see Fazlı Bey's interview with the Greek Patriarch in Lowther to Grey; no.535, con., Therapia, 1 Sept., 1908; F.O.371/546/30971. The Armenians had also decided to co-operate with the CUP See Mr.Fitzmaurice's interview with Patriarch Izmirlian in Fitzmaurice to Lowther, no.54D, 30 Nov., 1908; F.O.195/2281. For agreements in Macedonia see Consul Lamb to Lowther in Lowther to Grey, no.647 con., Therapia, 9 Oct., 1908, F.O.371/546/36109.

approval and support of the Committee, and it was difficult to win a seat without this support.⁸⁴ Most of its nominees were usually selected from among professional men in the towns and landed proprietors in the countryside.⁸⁵ But in spite of, or perhaps because of the Committee's active role in the elections of 1908, all elements in the Empire were fairly well represented and satisfied with their representation.⁸⁶ Out of 275 Deputies, there were 60 Arabs, 25 Albanians, 23 Greeks, 12 Armenians, 5 Jews, 4 Bulgars, 3 Serbs and 1 Vlach.⁸⁷

84. Andre Mandelstam, Le Sort de L'Empire Ottoman, (1917), 17.

85. Knight, ..Awakening, 281. Hüseyin Cahit (Yalçın) was chosen by the CUP to stand for election as one of its candidates for Constantinople. Until then he was not a member of the Committee. See H.C.Yalçın, "İttihadi Terakki Cemiyetine Nasıl Girdim?", Yakın Tarihimiz, i, 23-4.

86. By and large the non-Turkish elements were content with the way the elections had been conducted. See Lowther to Grey, no.793, con., Pera, 23 Nov., 1908, F.O.371/546/41691. The Greeks, however, were the exception. They complained against the irregularities committed by the Committee at their expense. Lowther to Grey, no.801, con., Pera, 24 Nov., 1908, F.O.371/546/41699. H.C.Yalçın wrote that if the CUP had not intervened in the elections in Constantinople, it is doubtful if there would have been a single Turkish deputy from there. He wrote that the Greeks were very well organised and had a long experience in electioneering; see "Türkiyeyi Yaşatmak Ve Batırmak İstiyenler", Yakın Tarihimiz, i, 214.

87. Mandelstam, 16. Hilmi Kâmil Bayur, Sadrazam Kâmil Paşa - Siyasî Hayatı, (1954), 296, gives 142 Deputies, 60 Arabs, 25 Albanians, 23 Greeks, 12 Armenians, 5 Jews (Musevi), 4 Bulgars, 1 Ulah (Vlach).

Apart from the CUP, the only other party to contest the elections was the Liberal Union /Osmanlı Ahrar Fırkası⁸⁸ It was officially founded on 14 September, 1908,⁸⁹ and therefore had very little time to organise itself for the elections. In the elections which were held in late November and December, the Liberals failed to win a single seat in the capital, even with such illustrious candidates as Prince Sabaheddin and Kâmil Paşa.⁹⁰ Their only candidate, Mahir Said Bey, came from Ankara.⁹¹ In March 1909, Manyasizâde Refik, the Committee's candidate for Constantinople, died and his seat in the Chamber fell vacant. In the by-election both parties fought for the seat, and the Liberal's candidate, Ali Kemal, a prominent journalist, was defeated by Rıfat Paşa.⁹²

88. Tunaya, .. Partiler, 239 ff.

89. Ibid., 239.

90. Tunaya, Elections in Turkish History, Middle Eastern Affairs, April 1954, 117, and Cumhuriyet, 18 Feb., 1954. Also see Tunaya, ..Partiler, 241; R.E.Kocu, 'Türkiyede Seçimin Tarihi, 1876-1950, Tarih Dünyası, i (1950), 181.

91. Tunaya, ..Partiler, 241.

92. Ibid., 241, n.8.

The Committee's supremacy in the Chamber seemed assured. It strengthened its position in Parliament by weakening the Sultan's control over the Senate. Article 60 of the Constitution gave the Sultan the prerogative of appointing Senators.⁹³ But in December 1908, the Committee put sufficient pressure on the Sultan to force him to exclude from the Senate, men with tarnished reputations under the old regime.⁹⁴

According to Article 43, Parliament should have assembled on 1 November.⁹⁵ But on account of the difficulties of organising the elections, there was a delay of over a month and a half. Finally, when Parliament opened on 17 December, all the deputies still had not arrived.⁹⁶ "His Majesty the Sultan, contrary to all recent custom, and also contrary to the somewhat general expectation, came to Stamboul by land, He entered the Chamber, and His Majesty's First Secretary read the Speech from the Throne."⁹⁷

93. Gözübüyük and Kili, 31.

94. Lowther to Grey, no.873, con., Constantinople, 19 Dec., 1908, F.O.371/546/45087. Full list of Senators enclosed.

95. Gözübüyük and Kili, 29.

96. Babanzâde İsmail Hakkı, 'Tarihî bir Gün', Tanin, 18 Dec. 1908. H.C.Yalçın, 'Meşrutiyetin İlk Mebuslar Alayı,' Yakın Tarihimiz, i, 390. Lowther to Grey, no.686, con., Pera, 17 Dec., 1908, F.O.371/546/44631.

97. Lowther, ibid. Cevat, 28-9. Kâmil Paşa, writes Cevat, threatened to resign if the Sultan did not personally go to the opening of Parliament, 28. The text of the Speech in Takvim-i Vekayi, 18 Dec., 1908; Tanin 18 Dec., 1908.

In his speech, the Sultan explained why he had prorogued Parliament in 1878. He claimed that his advisers had pointed out to him the difficulties of constitutional government. They had recommended that the execution of the constitution ought to be postponed until the people were ready for it. The Chamber had then been prorogued and its reassembly deferred to a time when people were better educated. To improve education, he said, he had established schools all over the Empire and the level of education had been raised. When the people again expressed their desire for the constitution, "being satisfied that the fulfillment of this wish would promote the present and future happiness of my Empire and Country, I proclaimed the Constitution anew without hesitation, in spite of those who hold views and opinions opposed to this".⁹⁸ He concluded by expressing an absolute and unalterable decision to govern according to the Constitution.⁹⁹ Abdülhamid was obviously trying to improve his standing with Parliament by placing the blame for his past misdeeds on his advisers. If this was his aim he

98. Takvim-i Vekayi, ibid.

99. Ibid.

achieved considerable success. On 31 December, he entertained the deputies to dinner at the Palace. According to one account, he won over a large number of them, including his most uncompromising critic and opponent, Ahmed Rıza.¹⁰⁰

Both Chambers replied to the Sultan's speech.¹⁰¹ Both praised the Sultan for his wisdom and generosity in restoring the Constitution, and condemned his advisers for having misguided him. The Senate alone called attention to the importance of the Cretan question, which was totally ignored by both the Sultan and the Chamber.¹⁰² With regard to the conflict with Bulgaria and Austria, the Chamber promised assistance and support to the Cabinet in seeking a solution consistent with the honour and the rights of the nation. Internally it promised to strive to put in order the finances of the Empire, and also to give attention to establishing security and peace so that means of prosperity and happiness would be insured to everyone in the Empire.

100. H.C.Yalçın, 'Sultan Hamidin İlk ve Son Ziyafeti', Yakın Tarihimiz, 1, 46-7; also Lowther to Grey, no.29, con., Pera, 14 Jan., 1909, F.O.371/760/2283.

101. The Senate's address was read on 26 December, and appeared in Takvim-i Vekayi, 27 Dec., 1908. The Chamber's address was read two days later and appeared in Takvim-i Vekayi, 29 Dec., 1908.

102. Takvim-i Vekayi, 27 Dec. 1908. Lowther thought that this omission seemed to indicate that Turkey proposed to ignore the Cretan declaration, and to rely on the Protecting Powers for a settlement of the question in a manner favourable to herself. Lowther to Grey, no.686, op.cit., n.96.

The Chamber stressed the need for a uniform justice as well as free patriotic education in the public schools. In conclusion Cavit Bey read:

"Nothing but love of fatherland and nation comes from our hearts. Our whole aspiration is to do good work for the state and nation. Our guide is the torch of equality and union; our aim, justice and right. We have undertaken to uphold the rights of thirty million people. In discharging the duty delegated to us, we have no other anxiety than the reproach of conscience and the fear of God." 103

With the opening of Parliament and with the establishment of a constitutional regime, the Sultan ceased to count as a power to be reckoned with. The Committee, at least, no longer regarded him as a possible threat and were content to let him continue as a constitutional ruler.¹⁰⁴ Power was for the time being divided between the Porte and the Committee, and had the Porte exercised a little patience, the Committee may have eliminated itself on account of factionalism within the society. Kâmil, however, resented interference in government from the CUP, especially as it

103. Takvim-i Vekayi, 29 Dec., 1908.

104. Ahmed Rıza and Nazım Bey's interview. Grey to Lowther, pr., London, 13 Nov., 1908; F.O.800/185A.

was a body with no legal standing in the country.¹⁰⁵ He had strongly resented Ahmed Rıza and Nazım Bey's mission to European capitals where they spoke as if they represented the Ottoman Government.¹⁰⁶ When the Committee entrusted Kâmil Paşa with the entertainment of the Balkan Committee, without even consulting him, Kâmil was offended and insulted.¹⁰⁷ Essentially it was the question of a new force challenging the position of the traditional one; the traditional element could not but resent this intrusion into its domain.

Kâmil Paşa had never attached much importance to the CUP. Even after its success in the Istanbul elections, Kâmil did not think it would be able to command a majority in Parliament.¹⁰⁸ Kâmil had seen

105. The İkdam, the principle organ of the Liberal Union accused the CUP of being an illegal body interfering with the government, and challenged it to become a political party instead of a secret society. See 'Cemiyetler, Fırkalar', İkdam, 13 Feb., 1909. The Committee had already decided to form a parliamentary party, though it continued to maintain the secret organisation as well. See Article 3 of 1908 Congress, Tunaya, Partiler, 206.

106. Lowther to Grey, no. 855, con., Pera, 13 Dec., 1908; F.O.371/546/43987. As an example of this mission see above, n.48.

107. Ibid.

108. Lowther to Grey, no. 415, con., Constantinople, 12 Dec., 1908; F.O.371/557/43443.

the Committee only "as a weapon of defense against the Sultan".¹⁰⁹ The Sultan had been the only real danger to the power of the Porte in the past, and Kâmil saw him as the only danger in the future. He had never thought the Committee capable of seizing absolute power,¹¹⁰ he obviously calculated that it would present no problem after it had been used to eliminate the Palace. Meanwhile Kâmil appeased the Committee by making ministerial changes. On 30 November, he brought in Manyasizâde Refik, the first Unionist to enter the Cabinet, as Minister of Justice. Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa, who had made a reputation for himself as a liberal and who had sympathised with the Young Turks while he was Inspector-General of Macedonia, became Minister of the Interior.¹¹¹

The Committee was not entirely happy with Kâmil Paşa either. During the months of November and December, while elections were being held, Kâmil threw in his lot

109. İsmail Kemal, Memoirs, 323.

110. Ibid.

111. Lowther to Grey, no.408, con., Constantinople, 30 Nov., 1908, F.O.371/561/41872; also same to same, no.818, con., Constantinople, 2 Dec., 1908, F.O.371/561/42605. Also Times, 1 Dec., 1908.

with the Liberal Union.¹¹² Therefore throughout these months, the Committee press attacked the Grand Vezir, accusing him of failing to carry out his promise of internal reform, of "slackness and inefficiency both in domestic and foreign policy, and of an attempt to transfer the despotism of the Palace to the Porte."¹¹³ He was rightly held responsible for failing to come to an agreement with Bulgaria and Austria,¹¹⁴ because Kamil was using these negotiations to strengthen his hand in Parliament and to constitute a Cabinet of his own choice.¹¹⁵

In spite of all the criticism, there is no evidence that the Committee wanted to bring about Kâmil's downfall. Talât had informed the British Ambassador that the Committee "had great confidence in Kâmil Paşâ, who had wide experience and great moderation of views, though unfortunately he was somewhat old, though still possessing much energy. They had every intention of doing their best

112. İsmail Kemal, 321 ff.

113. 'Lan Atik bir Sadrazam', Surayî Ümmet, 15 Dec., 1908, and Lowther to Grey, no.894, ccn., Pera, 29 Dec.1908, F.O.371/760/330.

114. Ibid.

115. İsmail Kemal, 324.

to maintain him in power."¹¹⁶ The Committee had good reasons for retaining Kâmil. He was an old and experienced statesman with liberal views and independent ideas. He was respected by almost everyone and actively supported by the British Embassy. This last factor was important because at this stage and indeed up to the Balkan Wars, the Young Turks leaned on England more than on any other power. Therefore, if the Committee were critical of Kâmil, it was because he was disregarding their policies and trying to end their influence. Rather than overthrow him, they preferred to retain him providing he did not try to become all-powerful.

On 13 January, 1909, Hüseyin Cahit, Deputy for Istanbul and said to be a most fervent critic of Kâmil, interpellated the latter on his policy since he assumed office. Kâmil Paşa's statement was read before the Chamber.¹¹⁷ Even Hüseyin Cahit was satisfied with the explanations and the Cabinet received the vote of confidence.¹¹⁸ Dr. Arif İsmet Bey, Deputy for Çanakkale

116. Lowther to Grey, no.541, con., Therapia, 2 Sept., 1908, F.O.371/559/31787.

117. 12th Session, 2nd sitting, 13 Jan., 1909, in Takvim-i Vekayi 16 Jan., 1909. Hüseyin Cahit, 'Sadrazam Paşanın İzahatı', Tanin, 14 Jan., 1909. Ali Kemal, "Kâmil Paşanın Beyanatı", İkdam, 14 Jan., 1909.

118. Türkgeldi, 17-18; Hüseyin Cahit, ibid.

summed up the general feeling in the Chamber when he said that "the Grand Vezir is Young Turkey's only experienced vezir".¹¹⁹ The interpellation and the subsequent vote of confidence was seen by the opposition as a great triumph for themselves and therefore a defeat for the Committee. It distorted the relations between Kâmil and the Committee and made them appear like an open struggle for power.

The almost unanimous vote of confidence seemed to justify Kâmil's estimate of his own position in the Chamber. But it also led him to underestimate the Committee's strength. If the Liberal Union saw this event as a defeat for the CUP, the CUP did not see it as a victory for the Liberal Union. There was a faction in the Committee which wanted to see Kâmil Paşa overthrown. But the Committee as a party had decided not to make the interpellation a party issue. "A deputation composed of Enver Bey and Talât Bey, the Vice-President of the Chamber, called on the Grand Vezir to inform him that the Committee as a body disassociated itself from the hostile attitude towards him taken up by some of its members."¹²⁰ Kâmil saw

119. Ibid., 18.

120. Lowther to Grey, no.29, con., Pera, 14 Jan., 1909, F.O.371/760/2283.

this as a sign of weakness. Thus with the Chamber behind him and the negotiations with Bulgaria and Austria still continuing, Kâmil decided that it was a favourable moment to strengthen his position by appointing his own men to the posts of Ministers of War and Marine.¹²¹

Kâmil Paşa made these changes on 10 February. Nazım Paşa, Commander of the Second Army stationed at Edirne, replaced Ali Rıza Paşa as Minister of War. Vice-Admiral Hüseyin Hüsnü Paşa replaced Arif Paşa as Minister of Marine.¹²² These changes were communicated to the Palace, and the Sultan was asked to issue an irade sanctioning them immediately. If the Sultan wanted to interview his new Minister of War, he was available at the Palace.¹²³ On receiving this urgent request Abdülhamid issued the irade at once, though he remarked to his First Secretary: "I know Kâmil Paşa, this man wants to become a dictator."¹²⁴

121. İsmail Kemal, 324.

122. H.K.Bayur, ...Kâmil Paşa..., 293, ff.; Türkgeldi, 18-9; Cevat, 35; F.McCullagh, The Fall of Abd-ul-Hamid, (1910), 33 ff. Detailed account in Lowther to Grey, no.93, con., Pera, 11 Feb., 1909, F.O.371/760/6295.

123. Cevat, 36; İsmail Kemal, 324 suggests it was chance that Nazım Paşa was to pass through Istanbul at the time.

124. Cevat, 36; McCullagh, 32.

The result of these changes was a crisis of the first magnitude. On 12 February, Hilmi Paşa tendered his resignation, protesting that he could not be a member of a Council of Ministers in which the President made such changes without consulting his colleagues.¹²⁵ His resignation was followed by those of Hasan Fehmi, Manyasizâde Refik and Ziya Paşa.¹²⁶ On the same day a Salonika paper carried the story that Abdülhamid had been deposed and Yusuf İzzettin had become Sultan.¹²⁷ In the capital, there was only a rumour of such a plot, implicating the ex-Minister of War. The Committee was quick to deny this and issued a proclamation saying so.¹²⁸ If the purpose of these

125. İsmail Kemal, 324.

126. Türkgeldi, 20. Ziya Paşa had intended to resign from the Ministry of Finance because he found his task too difficult, ibid.

127. Cevat, 36.

128. Cevat, ibid.; text of the Committee's proclamation in İkdam, 13 Feb., 1909; also see The Times, 15 Feb., 1909. The rumour of a plot seems to have been quite widespread in the capital, and Lowther took it seriously. See Lowther to Grey, no. 93, op.cit. Kâmil Paşa later denied his belief in the existence of any conspiracy, but claimed that as head of the Government, he was bound to take notice of rumours. Interview in Neue Freie Presse of 18 Feb., 1909, given in Fortnightly Review, LXXXIV, 1909, 397-8.

rumours was to create a diversion and draw attention off the ministerial changes, it failed miserably. The Committee was most alarmed at Kâmil's action and was determined to take him to task in the Chamber. The Tanin described Kâmil Paşa's action as a coup d'état, an encroachment on the rights of Parliament, and a violation of constitutional principles.¹²⁹

The Chamber assembled on 13 February to interpellate Kâmil Paşa on the dismissal of the two ministers. Amid the great excitement in the Chamber that eventful Saturday, it was rumoured that Kâmil would not appear to answer the interpellation.¹³⁰ Nevertheless the Grand Vezir was summoned to appear before the House and give his explanation. But Kâmil replied that as the change of the Minister of War was connected with the important foreign complications, he could not give any explanation immediately, and therefore asked for the interpellation to be postponed

129. The Tanin, 12 Feb., 1909 and 'Meşrutî İdareye Mühim bir Darbe', Şurayî Ümmet, 12 Feb., 1909.

130. 21st Session, 13 Feb., 1909 in Takvim-i Vekayi, 18 Feb., 1909 and 19 Feb. 1909; İkdam, 14 Feb., 1909; H.C. Yalçın, 'Deniz Kuvvetlerinin Zoruyla Çekilen Sadrazam', Yakın Tarihimiz, ii/14, 46-7. The proceedings of that day are also described in Türkgeldi, 18-21; and Lowther to Grey, no. 102, con., Pera, 15 Feb., 1909, F.O. 371/760/7050.

until Wednesday the 17th.¹³¹ The Committee saw the postponement as a political manoeuvre designed to win enough time to prepare the press and strengthen his position.¹³² The Chamber rejected this explanation, probably influenced by the two petitions sent by the fleet anchored off Beşiktaş, demanding an explanation from the Grand Vezir, and assurances that the Constitution was in no danger.¹³³ Another invitation was sent and declined. The Chamber then decided to have a vote of no confidence against the Grand Vezir. While all this was going on, a third note arrived from Kâmil Paşa. Kâmil claimed his right under Article 38 of the Constitution, to postpone any explanation until the 17th. He claimed he had to do this on account of considerations of foreign policy, and threatened to place his resignation

131. For a pro-Kâmil account of the crisis see H.K.Bayır, ...Kâmil Paşa, 293 ff. and 301; Yalçın, ibid.; İsmail Kemal, 325 relates that when the message from the Chamber reached him Kâmil was in conference with the Austrian Ambassador and therefore could not go to the Chamber at once.

132. Yalçın, ibid.

133. Yalçın, ibid. The officers of the First Army, commanded by Nazım Paşa, the new Minister of War, also sent a telegram saying while they respected Nazım Paşa as their Commander, they refused to accept his appointment as Minister of War, ibid., 47. Türkgeldi, 19.

before the Sultan if the Chamber continued to pursue the matter. He warned the Chamber that if he were forced to resign, he would publish his explanation in the press and the Chamber would have to bear the responsibility for any prejudice that might be caused to the state.¹³⁴ The threat came too late and the Chamber passed the vote of no confidence by 198 to 8 votes.¹³⁵ Kâmil Paşa, meanwhile went to Şeyhülislâm Cemalüddin and both decided to offer their resignations. But even this was too late, because when Cemalüddin offered his resignation to the Sultan, the latter had already accepted his dismissal.¹³⁶ After the vote, Ahmed Rıza and Talât went to the Palace and informed the Sultan of the Chamber's decision. Next day on 14 February, Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa was appointed Grand Vezir.¹³⁷

134. Yalçın, 47; Lowther, no.760, op.cit., Türkgeldi, 20.

135. Ibid., İkdam, 14 Feb., 1909.

136. Türkgeldi, 20-1. According to Talât Bey this was a package deal; Arab deputies agreed to vote against Kâmil if the Committee agreed to dismiss the Şeyhülislâm. No reference to this in Cemalüddin.

137. Cevat, 36-8. Sabah, 15 Feb., 1909.

Kâmil Paşa's fall was a great setback for the Liberal Union and all other anti CUP elements. Only a month earlier, the Chamber had shown its approval of Kâmil and his policies by giving him an almost unanimous vote of confidence. Yet on the second occasion only eight deputies had the courage to vote against the Committee; about sixty, according to Kâmil, were intimidated by the Committee and left the Chamber without voting.¹³⁸ The Committee had shown its supremacy in Parliament and to defeat it constitutionally now seemed out of the question.¹³⁹ The only way left was to overthrow it by violence.

During the next two months there was a bitter press campaign against the Committee, and the Committee organs paid back in the same coin. Kâmil's fall was seen by the British Embassy and British interests in Turkey as a blow to their prestige, and therefore the British press also joined in the campaign against the Committee. The

138. Kâmil Paşa's defense in İkdam, 3 April, 1909, 'Sadr-i Sabık Kâmil Paşa Hazretlerinin İzahnamesi', and Tanin and Serbesti, 4 April, 1909. French translation enclosed in Lowther to Grey, no.249, con., Pera, 6 April, 1909, F.O.371/761/13689.

139. İsmail Kemal told Sir G.Lowther that the Liberals could only be sure of fifty votes in the Chamber. Lowther to Hardinge, no.16, pr., Constantinople, 2 March, 1909; F.O.800/184, (Hardinge Papers).

Levant Herald, an English language paper in Istanbul, generally associated with the British Embassy, defended Kâmil stoutly and attacked the Committee, thereby provoking some of its members to demand the expulsion of its editor.¹⁴⁰ The opposition was quick to exploit the British attitude towards the Committee and was greatly encouraged by it. Anti-CUP articles in the English press "were welcomed by large sections of the population and were reproduced with comments by anti-Committee organs".¹⁴¹

In view of their weak position in the Chamber, the opposition set out to strengthen their position by winning over the British Embassy. Members of the opposition visited the Ambassador and kept him informed as to the political climate prevailing in the country, or more especially in the capital. Sir G.Lowther wrote in one despatch:

"Many who had concealed their real views began to pluck up courage and give expression to disgust at the unconstitutional and violent

140. Annual Report, 1909, 3, in Lowther to Grey, no.55, con., Pera, 31 January, 1910; F.O.371/1002/4235.

141. Same to same; no.151, con., Pera, 3 March, 1909, F.O.371/761/8914; Annual Report, 1909 and McCullagh, 31 and 56.

action of those who had brought about Kamil Pasha's fall. Many again, strangely enough, look to England to help them rid themselves of this new despotism of men who, they say, have not even the traditions of the Sultanate and Kaliphate, while some Deputies have confidentially approached me to express their alarm at the disastrous turn things are taking, and to appeal to England to ward off the dangers which must inevitably supervene from the dictation of a secret Committee. ...

"The organs of the latter are indulging in fierce attacks on the pro-Kamil papers, and some of their articles have a veiled anti-English tinge. The bulk of the public feeling is as pro-English as before, and would be inclined to set down any internal and external trouble or mishap as the consequence of the Committee's misguided and unconstitutional behaviour. The Sultan, too, at a recent audience confidentially expressed to me his deep anxiety at the present situation..." 142

The Young Turks were aware of the value of English support, and conversely the undesirability of her hostility. They knew that the British Embassy attached great importance to Kâmil's ministry, and that his fall could certainly be seen as a blow against British influence. They tried to counteract this impression as well as the opposition's propaganda by informing Sir Gerard that they had opposed Kâmil only for his unconstitutional acts, and they promised to withhold their support from any ministry which might

142. Lowther, no.151, op.cit.; Cevat, 39-41.

succeed him unless they pursued Kâmil's policy of friendship to England.¹⁴³ On 14 February, Hilmi Paşa declared that his policy towards England would be the same as Kâmil's, and that Turkey would continue to act on the advice of His Majesty's Government.¹⁴⁴ These manifestations of friendship towards England, though motivated by political expediency, were far from insincere. They represented the very basis of whatever foreign policy the Young Turks had since July 1908. The Committee's desire to conclude an alliance with England has already been mentioned elsewhere.¹⁴⁵ But Sir Gerard refused to respond in a favourable manner. He adopted a cold and patronising attitude towards the Committee.¹⁴⁶

143. Hüseyin Cahid, 'Kabînenin Sukutu ve İngiltere', Tanin, 15 Feb., 1909; Annual Report, 1909, 2; Sir Gerard refused to receive the Committee's deputation, telling them that if they had a communication to make they should make it through official channels. See 'X', Les Courants Politiques dans la Turquie; RMM., XXI, (1912), 193.

144. Lowther to Grey, no. 53, tel. con., Constantinople, 15 Feb., 1909; F.O. 371/760/6275.

145. Sir E. Grey, op.cit., F.O. 800/185A, n. 48.

146. To Sir Charles Hardinge he wrote: "I have been a little cold with the Committee which I think has done them good for they are aware that our support is essential - on the slightest sign of their doing good work I shall be more cordial...." Lowther, no. 16, op.cit., n. 139.

The CUP, somewhat apprehensive of the prevailing situation, tried to adopt a conciliatory attitude towards the opposition. To the Sultan, the Manastir branch sent a telegram reassuring him of their loyalty and devotion, and denying the existence of any plot.¹⁴⁷ Paradoxically it was not the Committee press which attacked the Sultan, but the Serbesti, an anti-Committee paper owned by the Sultan's brother Resad Efendi.¹⁴⁸ To the Liberals, the Committee offered a truce, urging them in the name of patriotism to cease attacking the Committee, and to co-operate in finding a remedy for the prevailing situation.¹⁴⁹ After all the Liberal Union was no less under attack from Islamic elements than was the CUP;¹⁵⁰ the social

147. W.S. Edmonds to Lowther; Monastir, 16 Feb., 1909, no. 145 sal.; F.O. 195/2328.

148. Cevat, 40.

149. Hüseyin Cahit, 'İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti ve Ahrar Fırkası', Tanin, 28 March, 1909, and 'Birleşme', Tanin, 12 April, 1909; Ismail Kemal, 330-1; Lowther to Grey, no. 151, con., Pera, 3 March, 1909, F.O. 371/761/8914.

150. The Muhammedan Union, see above, always spoke of the CUP and the Liberal Union as one, both supporting the ideal of Ottomanism, Tunaya, Partiler, 274-5, also 279. The Liberals were aware of the danger of reaction and in October Mutiny at Taşkışla, the İkdam, the most prominent of the Liberal Union papers had welcomed the suppression of the reaction, see above, n. 76.

policy of some Liberals went further than that of the Committee. But the Liberals declared that they would co-operate only if the Committee ceased to be a secret organisation and refrained from all interference in the affairs of the Government and the army.¹⁵¹ İsmail Kemal, who had been sounded by both Talât and Hilmi Paşa, replied: "as it was the Committee and the new Government representing it that had brought things to this pass, it was for them and not for us /the Liberal Union/ to seek for a remedy."¹⁵²

Thus the campaign against the Committee continued unabated. On 6 March, the Serbesti published a document implicating the Committee in blackmail to extract money from corrupt officials of the old regime.¹⁵³ A few days later, the same paper wrote that Niyazi, one of the heroes of the July Revolution, had seceded from the Committee, on account of dis-

151. Lowther, no.151, op.cit.

152. İsmail Kemal, 331.

153. Lowther to Grey, no.181, con., Pera, 12 March, 1909, F.O.371/769/10792.

satisfaction. But this was promptly denied by Niyazi.¹⁵⁴ The situation was aggravated by the murder of Hasan Fehmi, editor of the Serbesti. The opposition held the Committee responsible. The failure to find the murderer placed the odium on the CUP.¹⁵⁵ On 7 April, the funeral was used by the opposition as a demonstration against the Committee, and it also revealed the shape events were taking.¹⁵⁶

Meanwhile, the Committee and the Government were trying to strengthen their position through legislative measures. On 3 March, a law was passed to the effect that notice of public meetings must be given to the authorities at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.¹⁵⁷ Hilmi Paşa had intended to have a law passed curbing the freedom of the press, but

154. Niyazi's repudiation in Yeni Asır, Salonika, 17 March, 1909; in Consul-General Lamb to Lowther, no.89, sal., Salonika, 18 March, 1909, F.O.195/2328.

155. Tunaya, İslâmcılık, 128; Cevat, 46; Lowther to Grey, no.259, con., Pera, 9 April, 1909; F.O.371/774/14539. McCullagh, 73-4. On 23-4 McCullagh suggests the possibility of the Palace's involvement in the murder. Also Cevat, 40.

156. Ali Kemal, 'İlk Kurban', İkdam, 8 April, 1909; Cavit, Tanin, 2,3, Sept., 1943; Halide Edib, Memoirs of Halide Edib (1926), 276; The Times, 8 April, 1909.

157. İkdam, 4 March, 1909; Lowther to Grey, no.176, con., Pera, 10 March, 1909, F.O.371/761/9958.

the opposition to this was so great, that the debate on 25 March, proved to be inconclusive.¹⁵⁸ Finally as a precautionary measure, the Committee decided to remove the rest of the Yıldız Guards and replace them with Anatolians. But the Arab and Albanian troops, loyal to the Sultan, resisted, and were subdued by the Macedonians.¹⁵⁹

While the Committee was consolidating its position, the reactionary forces were getting organised too. On 5 April, 1909, the occasion of the Prophet's birthday, the Society of Muhammed (İttihadi Muhammedî) was officially established; it had been operating earlier through its organ the Volkan, and its political programme was published on 3 March in the columns of its paper.¹⁶⁰ Its doctrines and programme of action were clerical and strongly opposed to the idea of union based on the Ottoman ideal.¹⁶¹

158. Cevat, 39; Lowther to Grey, no.223, con., Pera, 30 March 1909, F.O.371/761/12788.

159. Cevat, 44-5; The Times, 7 April, 1909; Lowther to Grey, no.231, con., Pera, 2 April, 1909, F.O.371/769/13671.

160. Kuran, 500; Tunaya, 261 ff.

161. Proclamation and programme of the society in Tunaya, 270 and 271 ff.

It stood for the rule of the Şeriat, and if there were to be any union, it must be based on the ideal of Islam.¹⁶² The Society was therefore against the westernising reformism of both the CUP and the Liberal Union. Its propaganda was aimed at the religious and conservative elements in the Empire, and through its organ, the Volkan, the Society was able to exercise considerable influence on the traditional deputies in the Chamber and the rank and file in the army.¹⁶³

It was in this atmosphere that the counter-revolution of 13 April took place. On the night of 12/13 April the troops of the First Army Corps mutinied, over-powered their officers, and led by softas marched to the Ayasofya Square, near Parliament, demanding the restoration of the Şeriat.¹⁶⁴ The Government had been long aware of the dangerous situation prevailing in the capital. But the actual turn of events took it

162. Ibid., 271, clause 3.

163. Ibid., 263 and Ahmet Rıza Beyin Hatıraları, Cumhuriyet, 1 Feb., 1950.

164. Cevat, 48; the counter-revolution is an event of great importance in Turkish history, and is a subject of journalistic interpretations every year on the date of its anniversary. The Foreign Office Correspondence dealt with the event in considerable detail in F.O.371/770 ff., as well as Consular correspondence in F.O.195. For a fuller bibliography see B.Lewis, 'Emergence' 212.

completely by surprise.¹⁶⁵ Hilmi Paşa called a meeting of his ministers and sent out his Chief of Police to talk to the softas who were leading the rebellious soldiers to find out exactly what they wanted. The more articulate of the softas demanded the dismissal of the Minister of War and the President of the Chamber, Ahmet Rıza, as well as the restoration of the Şeriat and the restriction of Muslim women to their homes.¹⁶⁶ The Şeyhülislâm, who was sent by the Sultan to talk to the soldiers, found their demands almost identical, save that they wanted a pardon from the Sultan for their actions.

In the Chamber there was utter chaos. The Committee deputies had fled for fear of their lives, and softas and soldiers were everywhere.¹⁶⁷ Hilmi Paşa, finding his position untenable, went to the Palace with his Minister of War and Minister of Education, and tendered the resignation of his cabinet.¹⁶⁸ The

165. Colonel Surtees to Lowther in Lowther to Grey, no.307, con., Constantinople, 28 April, 1909, F.O.371/771/16541.

166. Hilmi Paşa's report in Cevat, 89-90, no.4.

167. İsmail Kemal, 332.

168. Cevat, 48; ibid., 90-2, document 6, gives the minutes of the resignation. It relates the events of the days and explains that it is necessary to resign for the good of the country; Yunus Nâdi, Extracts from 'İhtilâl Ve İnkılâb-i Osmanî' in Cumhuriyet, 4 April, 1959.

resignation was promptly accepted. The Sultan had also accepted all the demands of the soldiers, and he despatched Ali Cevat, his First Secretary, to Ayasofya Square to read the Sultan's proclamation both in the Chamber and before the soldiers, so that order could be restored.¹⁶⁹ The next morning, on 14 April, the royal order appointing Tevfik Paşa Grand Vezir was drawn up. In the text the Sultan included the appointment of the two ministers of the armed forces as his prerogative.¹⁷⁰ Tevfik Paşa refused to accept office under these conditions and the Sultan stepped down.¹⁷¹ But in fact, the Sultan had already appointed Müşir Edhem Paşa, Minister of War.¹⁷²

The CUP seemed to have been completely routed. Hilmi Paşa had resigned; members of the Committee had either fled from the capital or were in hiding, and their newspaper offices in Istanbul sacked. The Liberal Union had filled the vacuum. It seems worthwhile to

169. Cevat, 49.

170. Ibid., 57; Nâdi, op.cit.; Serbesti, 15 April, 1909.

171. Ibid., Türkgeldi, 28.

172. Cevat, 53-4.

examine the sudden collapse of an organisation, which a few days earlier had appeared all-powerful.

The strength of the Committee was always exaggerated, and it never amounted to very much in Istanbul. The Committee had enjoyed considerable support when it was struggling against the despotism of the Palace. But once the despotism was destroyed, only the expectations of a very few were satisfied, and the dissatisfied elements went into opposition. Like many of the independence movements of our own day, the Committee was split into factions once it had achieved its basic aim; those members dedicated to the ideal of reform and the creation of a modern state were always in a minority.¹⁷³ The Committee had created a number of dissatisfied elements. There was the large number of opportunists who had supported the CUP in the hope that they would gain high positions when the 'Palace' was toppled. Their ambitions were frustrated by the Committee's decision not to assume office (in the Government). Larger numbers were thrown out of work when Abdülhamid's espionage network was abolished and when the ministries were reorganised. All these together formed a strong anti-CUP group. The

173. Yalçın, YT, ii, 180.

secular policies of the Young Turks alarmed and alienated the religious elements. The rank and file in the army, in particular, complained of not being given time for ablutions and prayers, and resented being ordered and sworn at by young officers whom they regarded as mere boys.¹⁷⁴ Thus almost all traditional elements in Ottoman society were opposed to the Committee, none more than the Palace and the Porte. They resented the intrusion of men with no authority into preserves of power which were traditionally theirs. This may account for the ready acceptance of the rebels' demands by the Sultan and the Porte. After all the counter-revolution was the traditional alliance between the soldiers and the softas, so reminiscent of the days of Janissary rule.¹⁷⁵

But because the name of the Society of Muhammed is intimately linked with the counter-revolution, the movement has been regarded as having been purely religious, and its political significance has almost

174. Cevat, 47; McCullagh, 67 ff.

175. McCullagh, 59. The ulema denounced the Muhammedan League and its organ, the Volkan "which does not contain good and sincere Musulmans, but alas! but intriguers who seem bent on exploiting religion". Ibid. 61. Hikmet Bayur, 297, note 1, found it strange that an Islamic paper should have a French name.

completely been lost. It is doubtful if the rebellion could have been so restrained and well controlled had its inspiration been only religious fanaticism. The rebels searched out only members of the Committee and with the same care sacked only the offices of the Committee press. The Liberal Unionists, as much open to attack from religious fanaticism, were not harmed, let alone the Christian deputies and foreigners. A religious outbreak, which would normally have struck terror in the hearts of Christians, was praised in the Greek press. The Neologos wrote:

"The Army has gained the great prize for patriotism, and April 13, 1909 ought to be henceforth marked with no less splendour than July 24, 1908. The Army was inspired yesterday by its love for the country and by no other sentiment." 176

Religion was the vehicle for the political struggle which had been continuing since July 1908. Islam had played a vital role in Ottoman society and continued to do so, and used as a weapon against the Committee, it provided the opposition with the largest audience. The religious aspect of the counter-revolution ended with the meaningless demand for the Şeriat; hereafter the politicians took over. The Committee regime floundered and the Liberals took its place. İsmail Kemal

176. McCullagh, 59.

was elected the President of the Chamber, Mizancı Murad, who Kâmil Paşa had exiled in October 1908, offered to support Tevfik establish himself in power.¹⁷⁷ Even the new ministry was regarded as a stop-gap until the situation became calm, and Kâmil Paşa could be appointed Grand Vezir once again.¹⁷⁸ Then the triumph of the Liberals would be complete.

The Committee was totally defeated; it only remained for the Liberals to convince the Third Army in Macedonia that the rebellion had been spontaneous and in no way unconstitutional. But this was far from easy. The Committee was still all-powerful in Macedonia and the Third Army was loyal to the constitution. The Palace was bombarded with telegrams from the Macedonian provinces, accusing Abdülhamid of destroying the constitutional Government and the constitution, and threatening retaliation.¹⁷⁹ Macedonia refused to recognise Tevfik Paşa's Cabinet and the Committee demanded the arrest of certain members of the Liberal Union,

177. See above,

178. Lowther to Hardinge, pr., no. 25, Constantinople, 14 April, 1909, F.O. 800/184, (Hardinge Papers).

179. Cevat, 62.

namely İsmail Kemal, Mizancı Murad, Kâmil's son Said Paşa, the Sultan's Second Chamberlain, Emin Bey, and some prominent newspapermen.¹⁸⁰ On 17 April, the Committee passed on from words to action. The 'Action Army' (Hareket Ordusu) left Salonika, ostensibly to restore discipline among the rebellious troops, and to restore order in the capital. The Sultan welcomed this, and thought it was a good idea so long as force was not used.¹⁸¹ But in the Cabinet the news caused panic. Some members thought it would be wise to send a deputation to meet the 'Action Army' before it reached the capital and to reassure the troops that the Constitution had not been harmed.¹⁸²

Deputations were sent to negotiate with the Army from Salonika, but they met no favourable response; one of the deputations was not even allowed to return to the capital.¹⁸³ The British Ambassador, at the request of İsmail Kemal, instructed his consuls in Macedonia "to assure the population that the Constitution was not

180. Türkgeldi, 29-30.

181. Cevat, 65-6.

182. Türkgeldi, 30.

183. İsmail Kemal, 343; Lowther to Grey, no.287, Con., Constantinople, 20 April, 1909, F.O.371/771/15783.

compromised", thereby hoping to prevent intervention from Macedonia.¹⁸⁴ But the Committee's influence was too pervasive, and such propaganda was either suppressed or countered with propaganda of their own.¹⁸⁵ As a final bid to prevent the occupation of the capital by the 'Action Army', the Porte asked Sir Gerard to permit Mr. Fitzmaurice to join the delegation which was going to negotiate with the Salonika force. The Porte calculated that English support would strengthen their bargaining position and undermine the opposition.¹⁸⁶ Mr. Fitzmaurice went with the delegation, but when he reached Stamboul he found that other counsels prevailed and that it was decided that the deputation should go alone.¹⁸⁷

This deputation proved to be a failure too, and the troops from Salonika continued to surround the capital. Finally, on the night of 23/24 April, the 'Action Army' began operations, and after some skirmishing

184. İsmail Kemal, 343; Lowther, ibid.

185. Lowther, ibid.

186. Lowther to Grey, no.129, tel.pr., Constantinople, 17 April, 1909, F.O.371/770/14474.

187. Same to same, no.287, con., Constantinople, 20 April, 1909, F.O.371/771/15582.

the capital was occupied.¹⁸⁸ On 22 April, the two Chambers sat together at Yeşilköy as a National Assembly. They ratified the proclamation of the investing army, guaranteed the Constitution and security in the country, and declared that the actions of the army were in conformity with the aspirations of the nation.¹⁸⁹ Five days later, the National Assembly proclaimed its decision to depose Abdülhamid and replace him with his brother Mehmed Reşad.¹⁹⁰ The National Assembly's decision was ratified by a fetva extracted from an unwilling Şeyhülislâm,¹⁹¹ and this marked the end

188. Colonel Surtees...no.307, op.cit., also a more detailed account in Lowther to Grey, no.303, con., Pera, 28 April, 1909, F.O.371/771/16537.

189. The proclamation of the Action Army; İkdam, 21 April, 1909. Proclamation of the National Assembly, Takvim-i Vekayi, 24 April, 1909.

190. The charter announcing the decision to depose Abdülhamid in Takvim-i Vekayi, 28 April, 1909; Cevat, 153-4. Abdurrahman Şerif, Minister of Education in Hilmi Paşa's Cabinet relates how this decision was taken in a secret sitting of the National Assembly. 'Abdurrahman Şeref Beyin Eseri', 19-25; cited in Cevat, 145-6; Menteşe, Cumhuriyet, 22 Oct., 1946; Ahmed Rıza, Cumhuriyet, 3 Feb., 1960.

191. B.Lewis, Emergence, 213; Türkgeldi, 36. Text of the fetva in Cevat, 148.

of the counter-revolution, though mopping-up operations continued.

The suppression of the counter-revolution proved to be a mixed blessing for the CUP. The Liberal Union was destroyed as a party though not in spirit; but the Committee did not emerge unchallenged. The events of 13 April had shown the Committee's inability to control the situation and to maintain law and order. The chaos that followed forced the army to intervene as the instrument of law and order, and not as the instrument of the CUP.¹⁹² Until April 1909, the soldier had played the subordinate role to the politician, and only junior officers had been members of the Committee. The revolt brought in the senior officers. Mahmud Şevket Paşa took care to point out that he and his army were not acting as agents of the Committee, and that his only aim was to see law and order maintained and discipline in the army restored.¹⁹³ Significantly his

192. Şevket Paşa's proclamation, Takvim-i Vekayi, 26 April 1909. Also Colonel Surtee's interview with Şevket Paşa in Surtees to Lowther, no.307, op.cit., and no.38 M.A. Constantinople, 12 May, 1909, F.O.195/2323 and no.39 M.A. Constantinople, 14 May, 1909, F.O.195/2323. Also Consul Lamb to Lowther, no.135, sal.tel., Salonica, 21 April, 1909, F.O.195/2328.

193. Proclamation and Surtees, ibid.

Chief of Staff was no other than Mustafa Kemal, a junior officer unconnected with the CUP, and paradoxically a firm believer in the principle that the army should stay out of politics.¹⁹⁴ But the failure of the politicians to maintain law and order brought in the soldier, and the establishment of martial law made a military dictatorship seem inevitable.¹⁹⁵ Though this did not take place, the effects of the soldier's growing role in the politics of the Empire became apparent in the period that followed.

194. For Mustafa Kemal's role in the Action Army see Bayur, i, 299; and Abidin Daver 'Hareket Ordusu Istanbul Nasıl Girmişti', Cumhuriyet, 24 April, 1951.

195. Mandelstam, Sort, 25.

CHAPTER III

(i) THE MILITARY AND THE CUP

It was pointed out at the end of Chapter II that the failure of the politicians to maintain law and order in April 1909 had brought the professional soldier into the area of politics.¹ But the army, not knowing how to run the Empire, left the civilians to govern. It retained, however, the power to veto any measures it did not approve of. Though the CUP was the only political association existing at the time, the army's power of restraint was so effective, that the government was still far from being a "one party dictatorship", as it has sometimes been described.² Nor did the fact that all opposition parties were banned bring to an end all opposition to the Committee's policies. There may have been no Liberal Union Party (Ahrar Fırkası) in May 1909, but there were many Liberal Unionists.

1. See above, 91.

2. Recai G. Okandan, Amme Hukukumuzun Ana Hatları, (1959) 345, writes: "The Unionists took advantage of the April revolt (31 Mart Vak'ası) and disbanded rival political parties, proclaiming a one party dictatorship", and Bayur, i, 301, wrote: "In short, having saved the nation from a grave danger, the CUP emerged even stronger than before." See also Danişmend, IV, 381.

The political situation of May 1909 was neatly summed up by Lieutenant-General Pertev Paşa, Chief of Staff to Mahmud Şevket Paşa. On being asked what the intentions of the military authorities were with regard to the existing political situation, Pertev Paşa replied:

"I will tell you, my dear friend, there is no secret; it is intended that Mahmoud Shevket Pasha, who, as you know, is now practically Military Dictator, shall become Inspector-General of the first three Ordus. There is no intention of interfering with the Committee of Union and Progress, to which we all belong - myself included - but we only acknowledge loyalty to its principles in so far that we have sworn to protect the Constitution and no more officers will join the Committee." 3

The army was certainly the most important single factor in the politics of the Ottoman Empire. But it was not politically monolithic. In political terms it was divided into three quite distinct groups. The largest and least important was the rank and file. This group, like the civilian populace, could be influenced at any moment by the propaganda of the popular demagogue. Therefore it had to be kept isolated from political influence. The second group, that of the junior officers had been educated in the

3. Pertev Paşa's conversation with Conyers Surtees, (Military Attache) in C.Surtees to Lowther, no.39, Pera, 14 May, 1909, F.O.371/776/19410.

Hamidian military colleges, where politics had unofficially and illegally dominated the curriculum.⁴ They were therefore, at least in 1909, supporters of constitutional government and the CUP, and what it stood for, namely union and progress. The third group was that of the senior officers, men like Şevket, Mahmud Muhtar and Pertev Paşas, to mention only a few. They were professional soldiers who symbolised discipline. They were determined to create an army free from the influence of politics so that the events of 13 April could never happen again. In accordance with this principle Şevket Paşa had led the 'Action Army' in order to restore order in the capital and discipline in the army.⁵

All power was virtually in the hands of Mahmud Şevket Paşa.⁶ Though he did not exercise this power directly, at first it was always exercised under his personal supervision.⁷ The Committee of Union and

4. Ahmet Bedevî Kuran, 'Harbiye Mektebinde Hürriyet Mücadelesi', (n.d.), passim.

5. Cevat, 65-6.

6. Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil, Saray ve Ötesi, i, (1940), 42 and 45.

7. Mahmud Kemal İnal, Osmanlı Devrinde Son Sadrazamlar, 14 pts., (1940-53), 1884, where he cites Mahmud Muhtar Paşa's work, 'Maziye bir Nazar', n.14, and the Political Memoirs of an Old Minister (Unnamed), which appeared in Tan on 21 December, 1937.

Progress was at this stage almost powerless. Its entire organisation in the capital had been completely smashed during the counter-revolution. Rather than compete for power, the CUP was occupied with trying to regain some of its old power and influence.⁸ It could do no other than to play second fiddle to Şevket Paşa, and it was in his shadow that it later made its comeback.

Though Şevket Paşa came from Salonika to uphold the constitution, he soon made it abundantly clear that he himself intended to be free of all constitutional checks. The first manifestation of this came on 18 May when Şevket Paşa became the Inspector-General of the first three army corps.⁹ There was no precedent for this post and it seems to have been specially created for the prevailing political situation. Being purely military in function, it placed Şevket Paşa outside the authority of the Minister of War and the Cabinet, especially while martial law was in operation, and martial law was prolonged until March 1911.¹⁰ In the

8. Uşaklıgil, 44. For the destruction of the CUP organisation in the capital, see above, §1 ff.

9. Lowther to Grey, no.360, con., 18 May, 1909, F.O.371/776/19411.

10. Imperial İrade of 11 August, 1909, prolonging martial law until March, 1911, in Lowther to Grey, no.654, con., Therapia, 11 August, 1909, F.O.371/779/30767.

following year when the Committee tried to rationalise the finances of the Empire by means of a budget, Şevket Paşa refused to allow the Ministry of Finance to inspect military expenditure.¹¹

Mahmud Şevket Paşa's desire to be independent of the Cabinet probably sprang from the soldier's innate suspicion of the civilian, especially with regard to military affairs. The Porte also resented the army's independence and its interference in government, since this violated the principles of modern centralised government which the Committee had set out to introduce in July 1908. But in spite of such major differences, the army and the Committee had something in common which enabled them to work together. They both shared the patriotic ideal of territorial integrity, or as Halide Edib has so aptly described the CUP, they were both "Empire men".¹²

It was in this political atmosphere that Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa was appointed Grand Vezir for the second time.¹³ Tevfik

11. See below, 138 ff.

12. Halide Edib, Memoirs, 266.

13. Hatt-ı Hümayun, dated 15 Rebiülahır, 1327, (5 May, 1909) appointing Hilmi Paşa Grand Vezir in İnal, xi, 1671. Five days earlier, Tevfik Paşa had been confirmed in his office of Grand Vezir by a Hatt-ı Hümayun dated 1 May, 1909. See Stamboul, 2 May 1909.

Paşa, however acceptable he may have been, had to go simply because he had come to power during the April revolution. Hilmi Paşa was restored to his old position because he had been overthrown by the counter-revolutionaries.¹⁴ His reappointment was not popular with all sections of the Committee. They made this quite clear on 24 May when Hilmi Paşa came before the Chamber to present his programme and to ask the House for a vote of confidence.¹⁵ He came under heavy attacks, but finally the Chamber gave him the vote 191 to 5. The Committee probably thought it expedient to do so because a Cabinet crisis at such a critical stage would have proved fatal to parliamentary government. There seems to be some truth in what a Cabinet minister is reported to have told the British Ambassador: "that had the Committee not arranged to give a vote, Mahmud Shevket

14. Uşaklıgil, 80-1, suggests that Hilmi Paşa was brought back as a symbol of the Committee's influence and strength. Talât Bey cited by Türkgeldi, 40, said that the resignation of Tevfik Paşa's Cabinet was regarded as being essential on account of the great excitement in the provinces. - It is not likely that the Committee had much to say in Hilmi Paşa's appointment. The Cabinet did not include a single Unionist, while it had Ferid Paşa as Minister of the Interior, and he was definitely hostile towards the Committee.

15. 'Heyet-i Vükelanın Programı' in Tanin, 25 May, 1909, 2.

Pasha might have felt obliged to ~~send~~ the House about its business".¹⁶ It was much too early to challenge the army. Before it could take on such a task, the Committee had to re-establish itself in the capital.

In July 1908, the Committee of Union and Progress had been faced with the problem of what to do with the power they had so suddenly acquired. The Unionists were essentially conservative and had no intentions of destroying the existing governmental machinery. Therefore they left the elder statesmen in power, and set themselves up as guardians of the constitution. But in April 1909 the ease with which the non-Unionist Cabinet of Hilmi Pasa succumbed to the rebels, made the Committee realise the need to strengthen their position by direct participation in government. They did not intend to take over the Cabinet overtly. They thought they could solve the problem by introducing Unionist deputies into the different ministries as under-secretaries.¹⁷ In this way, the Committee would be able to influence the minister without offending traditional prejudice, and also acquire the necessary experience to be able to take

16. Lowther to Grey, no.378, con., Pera, 25 May, 1909, F.O.371/761/20293.

17. H.C.Yalçın, Talât Pasa, 37.

over the ministries at a later date. The Committee had already secured its position in the Palace, by having Halid Ziya appointed as the Sultan's First Secretary and Tevfik Bey as his Second Chamberlain.¹⁸ The under-secretaries were expected to serve a similar though more important function in the cabinet.

Some members of the Committee discussed this idea for the first time during the counter-revolution.¹⁹ But nothing was done until the revolution had been crushed. On 6 May (23 Nisan, 1325), Cavit and Talat went to see Mahmud Şevket Paşa in order to win him over to their side. But the latter dismissed them with a few patronising words.²⁰ They then went to see the Grand Vezir, but Hilmi Paşa was no less discouraging. He told them that in no country were under-secretaries

18. Uşaklıgil, i, 20-4; also Mehmed Kaplan, 'Halid Ziya' in İA, V/i, Istanbul, 1948, 146.

19. Mehmed Cavit, 'Meşrutiyet Devrine ait Cavit Beyin Hatıraları', Tanin, 8 Sept., 1943.

20. Ibid., Cavit wrote of the interview with Şevket Paşa: "He became patronising; he considered us rather young and thought that we were trying to attain position. 'You will become under-secretaries, do not be in a hurry; when you gain experience you will even become ministers', he said". See also Yalçın, Talât Paşa, 37.

to be found in the Cabinet.²¹ Discouraged but undaunted, the Committee decided to take the matter before the Chamber.

If deputies were to be allowed to hold the office of under-secretary, Article 67 of the Constitution would have to be modified. This article laid down that a deputy could not hold, at the same time, any other government appointment. Though a minister could be elected a deputy, other officials elected as deputies were obliged to resign their office if they accepted their mandate as deputy.²² A motion of amendment had first to be passed by the Chamber of Deputies by a two-thirds majority of its members, then approved by the Senate by a similar majority, and finally sanctioned by Imperial İrade, before it came into force.²³ In theory,

21. Cavit, ibid., wrote: "Hilmi Paşa claimed that in no country were under-secretaries to be found in the cabinet." Yalçın thought that the old generation did not wish to dig its own grave by preparing younger men to take over. See Yalçın, Talât Paşa, 37; Türkgeldi, 43 and Hüseyin Cahit, 'Müşteşarlar meselesi', Tanin, 19 May, 1909.

22. Gözübüyük and Kili, 32. The official text of the constitution in French is in G. Aristarchi, Législation ottomane, V, (1878), 17.

23. Ibid., Article 116, 38; Aristarchi, 24-5.

a vote in the Chamber should have been easy to obtain. There was no opposition in June 1909 and the House was packed with Unionists. But the Committee itself was divided over the issue of under-secretaries. In the Party and the Society there were those who did not approve of the idea of choosing under-secretaries from among their members.²⁴

The problem was brought before the Chamber on 1 June, 1909.²⁵ Hilmi Paşa read the modified version of the article and then submitted the text to the Committee for the revision of the constitution. There was a debate in the Chamber on 12 June which was so long and heated, that finally a closure had to be voted.²⁶ The issue was then put to the vote by a show of hands. (This seems to have been Ahmed Rıza's device to steam-roll the issue in favour of the Committee.) But when Ahmed Rıza announced that

24. H.C.Yalçın, Talât Paşa, 37.

25. 84th Session, 1 June, 1909 in Takvim-i Vekayi, 3 June, 1909, 8. and 'Chronique Parlementaire', Stamboul, 2 June, 1909, 2; 'A La Chambre Ottomane', The Levant Herald, 2 June, 1909, 2.

26. 91st Session, 12 June, 1909 in Takvim-i Vekayi, 22, June, 1909; Report of the Proceedings of the Turkish Parliament during the month of June, 1909, enclosure in Lowther to Grey, no.624, con., Therapia, 4 Aug., 1909, F.O.371/761/29787, 9-10.

it had been accepted by a majority, there was an uproar in the House.²⁷ Several deputies demanded a vote by ballot on the whole question. It was decided, at last, to vote by ballot on the question whether the post of under-secretary was compatible with the mandate of a deputy. The result of the vote was 113 for and 74 against, and since this did not constitute a two-thirds majority the question was left undecided.²⁸ On Thursday, 17 June, discussion was again revived. But the opposition was still too great and Talât withdrew the motion on behalf of the Committee.²⁹

In view of this failure to have Article 67 modified, the Unionists revised their entire policy. They decided to place some of their more prominent and talented members directly into the Cabinet. The policy of moderation and co-existence vis-a-vis the Hilmi Paşa Cabinet was brought to an end. And an

27. Ibid., all references.

28. Ibid.; both Stamboul and the Levant Herald of 18 June, 1909 give the result as 108-75.

29. 95th Session, 17 June, 1909 in Takvim-i Vekayi, 27, 28 June 1909, 12 ff and 3 ff, respectively. See also 'Chronique Parlementaire', Stamboul, 18 June, 1909, 2. This time the debate was on another issue and not the under-secretaries at all. The opponents of the scheme argued that the measure had been defeated in the Chamber, or at least had not obtained the two-thirds majority needed to change the constitution. Therefore it was now unconstitutional to re-open the issue.

attempt was made to introduce unity and discipline into the society, since experience had shown that measures in the Chamber were defeated because the Committee deputies failed to support them.

Manyasîzâde Refik was the first Unionist to become a minister.³⁰ But on account of his untimely death he had not been able to play a role of any significance.³¹ It was not he but Cavit Bey, deputy for Salonika and a prominent member of the CUP, who was the first real Unionist in the Cabinet. He joined the Cabinet in June 1909 as Minister of Finance, and in the years that followed played a role of great importance.³²

In July 1909, the Committee seem to have considered the possibility of bringing down the Hilmi Paşa Cabinet, and in its place setting up a new Cabinet much more unionist in complexion. Unable to have a

30. Tunaya, Siyasî Partiler, 177.

31. See above, Chap.II, 58.

32. Lowther to Grey, no.497, con., Therapia, 28 June, 1909, F.O.371/777/25107. Hüseyin Cahit wrote: "Cavit Bey may be counted as the first Minister of Finance since the Revolution of July 10." "Rütbesiz Nazır", Tanin, 27 June, 1909. For a brief account of Cavit's activities during this period see D.A.Rustow, Article Djawid Bey in EI².

Grand Vezir from amongst their number, they secretly approached Kâmil Paşa and offered him his old office on condition that he include some Unionists in his Cabinet, especially Talât Bey as Minister of the Interior.³³ Kâmil did not reject this proposal but pointed out the shortcomings of the Committee candidates,³⁴ and at this point the matter seems to have been dropped.

Meanwhile attacks on the Cabinet continued. The Tanin of 20 July accused the Cabinet of containing members attached to the old regime, and demanded that the government be handed over to active, honourable, and

33. Lowther to Grey, pr., Constantinople, 20 July, 1909, F.O.800/78. Sir Gerard's informant was Kâmil Paşa himself. On its intention to replace Hilmi Paşa with a candidate of its own, the Committee wrote to the Eastern Question Association in Putney:

"Hilmi has upset our projected Bulgarian alliance and will not hold long as Grand Vizir if he does not give way. Talaat would not consent to be nominated Grand Vizir and he is right to keep out of it for a time. Kiamil Pasha is friendly to us now, but his chances are not improved for re-appointment as Grand Vizir in consequence of his name having been pushed forward by your Embassy which ought to desist if it really wishes to help him." (N) Committee of Union and Progress to Mr. Atkin, (Secretary of the Eastern Question Association), Salonica, 2 Sept., 1909, in F.C.371/780/33878.

34. Lowther..., ibid., Kâmil's objection to Talât becoming a minister was that he had been an employee in the telegraph office on £3 a month.

trustworthy men, men of the new regime.³⁵ Three days later on the anniversary of the revolution, the Central Committee in Salonika issued a proclamation.³⁶ As Ottomans, all the different elements in the country were called upon to sink their differences in the interests of the nation as a whole. They were urged to replace the Cabinet, which was full of men imbued with the traditions of the old regime, by a younger Cabinet whose youth and enterprise alone could save the country.³⁷ As a consequence of these attacks, Ferid Paşa, whose name was intimately connected with the old regime, resigned as Minister of the Interior, and his place was taken by Talât.³⁸

With Cavit and Talât in the Cabinet the Committee's position was more secure. The Committee now set out to remedy the factionalism and lack of unity amongst its members in the Chamber. As early as December 1908, even before Parliament had met, Sir

35. Tanin, 20 July, 1909, 1.

36. 'İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyetinin Osmanlılara Beyannamesi', Text in Tanin, 24 July, 1909.

37. Ibid.

38. Lowther to Grey, no. 263, con., Constantinople, 7 August, 1909, F.O. 371/761/29709.

Gerard Lowther had predicted that deputies elected on the Committee's ticket would not always vote with it in the Chamber.³⁹ This prediction was vindicated when the Committee was forced to disown its dissident members who insisted on voting against Kamil Paşa on 13 January, 1909.⁴⁰

The Committee, realising its weak position in the Chamber, tried a political manoeuvre. At an official dinner of the CUP at the Pera Palas Hotel on 12 March, Hilmi Paşa announced that the Committee had renounced its old role since the opening of parliament in order to form a political party.⁴¹ The purpose of this announcement was to appease the dissidents in the Chamber who wanted independence of action, and the opposition who challenged the Committee to come out into the open. Having made this concession to its deputies, the Committee hoped they would vote

39. Lowther to Grey, no.855, con., Pera, 13 December, 1908, F.O.371/546/43987.

40. See above, Chap.II, 65-7.

41. The Levant Herald, 15 March, 1909. - This was the first official announcement of a parliamentary party within the CUP. A few hours before the outbreak of 13 April, it was repeated with a view to calming down the opposition and avoiding the fast approaching calamity. See Tunaya, Siyasi Partiler, 183; and McCullagh, Abd-ul-Hamid, 74.

in accordance with its wishes. On 12 June, the same day as Article 67 was to be discussed in the Chamber, the press published the official charter of the Parliamentary Party of Union and Progress.⁴² The concession did not have the desired result and Article 67 was not modified. Unity seemed to be as far away as ever. Just before the Second Congress of the CUP, Hüseyin Cahit wrote an article on the position of the Society and the Party.⁴³ He called for unity and discipline and pointed out that those deputies who had been elected under the auspices of the Committee, had a duty to obey its orders. But to those deputies and members of the Committee who did not like its programme, he offered the alternative of making their own programme and forming a separate party.⁴⁴ In February 1910 some Unionist deputies, as if acting on Cahit Bey's advice, formed the Ahaîi Fırkası (People's Party) and ended the myth of a monolithic Committee.⁴⁵

42. Meclisi Mebusanı Osmaniden Mütetsekkil İttihad ve Terakki Fırkasının Nizamnamei Dahilisi, text in Tunaya, Siyasî Partiler, 210-11.

43. 'Cemiyet ve Fırka', Tanin, 7 Sept., 1909.

44. Ibid.

45. Tunaya, Siyasî Partiler, 294-5.

The conflict between the civilians and the military was much more complex, and is therefore more difficult to put ones finger on. In theory both elements were allied against reaction and committed to the Constitution. In practice they differed on the question of power. The military, having restored a constitutional regime, recognised the civilians' legal right to power. The civilians, in their turn, conceded to the military the right to interfere in politics by consenting to the establishment of martial law, which in practice placed the military above the civilian administration. The result was an ambiguous situation with two legal authorities enjoying undefined powers.

Hüseyin Cahit's article of 26 October was an attempt to find a solution to this situation favourable to the Committee.⁴⁶ He appreciated the army's role in defending the constitution, but pointed out that further interference was unnecessary now that a constitutional regime was firmly established. He warned that continued interference would be harmful

46. Hüseyin Cahit, 'Askerler ve Cemiyet', Tanin, 26 Oct., 1909.

both to the state and to military discipline.⁴⁷

Because of the changed situation, the Committee had decided that in future soldiers would not be members of the Committee, its clubs, or in any way be connected with it. But at the same time they would not leave the Committee.⁴⁸ This double talk can only be taken to mean that while the Committee expected the senior officers to opt out of politics, it expected junior officers to continue supporting it.

Mahmud Şevket Paşa was of the opposite view. He expected all (junior) officers to terminate their affiliations with political parties and societies, since political involvement undermined the unity and discipline of the army.⁴⁹ The Imperial proclamation of 29 May, appealing to officers in the armed forces to stay out of politics, made this quite plain.⁵⁰ In a speech at Second Army headquarters at

47. Ibid.

48. Ibid., also see Tunaya, Siyasî Partiler, 183-4.

49. Consul Lamb to Lowther, tel., no. 135 sal., Salonica, 21 April, 1909, F.O. 195/2328.

50. Hatt-ı Hümayun dated 16 May, 1325 in Tanin, 30 May, 1909, 2.

Edirne in November, Şevket Paşa personally urged his officers to abstain from politics. As an example of exploiting the army for political ends, he pointed to Colonel Sadık's election as the Committee's delegate in negotiations between the Committee and the Porte.⁵¹

The differences between the military and the Committee were not always expressed in such open terms. More often they were shrouded in the Anglo-German rivalry then taking place in the Ottoman Empire. The Committee looked to Britain and the military to Germany, and any criticism of Germany in the Committee press could be taken to mean criticism of the military.

This also partially explains the Committee's feelers to Kâmil Paşa in July 1909.⁵² Kâmil was a notorious Anglophile and was known to have the support and goodwill of the British Embassy at Istanbul. He also had the prestige and experience necessary to become independent of Şevket Paşa, something which Hüseyin Hilmi did not seem to be anxious to do.

51. Mr. Marling to Grey, no. 896, con., Constantinople, 10 Nov., 1909, F.O. 371/761/41733.

52. See above, 105.

July 1909 seemed a good time for the Committee to attempt to bring about a rapprochement with Britain. An Ottoman Parliamentary Delegation was visiting Paris and London,⁵³ and General Von der Goltz was in Istanbul to reorganise the army.⁵⁴

In December, a project to amalgamate the Hamidieh, an Ottoman navigation company on the River Euphrates, and the Lynch Company, a British concern, became another occasion to air the conflict between the Committee and Şevket Paşa.⁵⁵ The Committee press ascribed the opposition to the fusion scheme to German instigation. Şevket Paşa and Von der Goltz were accused of planning to overthrow the CUP in order to set up a military regime devoted to German interests.⁵⁶

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53. Lowther to Grey, no.510, con., Therapia, 1 July, 1909, F.O.371/778/25436; and The Times, 16 July, 1909.
54. Lowther to Grey, no.552, con., Therapia, 14 July, 1909, F.O.371/775/27099.
55. There is a very detailed documentary account of the 'Lynch Affair' in F.O.371/759.
56. Jeune Turc, 12 Decembre, 1909, enclosure in Marling to Grey, no.967, v.con., Constantinople, 14 Dec., 1909, F.O.371/781/46061. The main opponent of the fusion scheme was Babanzâde İsmail Hakkı, deputy for Baghdad. He was a very prominent Unionist and opposed to fusion on the grounds that Britain was already powerful in Iraq, and control of the river system would make her even more powerful. As a good Unionist he wanted the Porte to strengthen its hold in Iraq, rather than make it weaker. - The whole problem was of course linked with the Baghdad Railway and German interests therein.

There were further attacks on Germany in the Tanin, particularly in the issue of 17 December.⁵⁷ These attacks were so displeasing to the military that it was thought that Cahit Bey would be summoned before the court-martial.⁵⁸ Though Cahit Bey was not summoned, the court-martial suspended the Tanin on 22 December.⁵⁹ The military made it quite clear as to who had the real power.

In the Chamber, the Lynch Affair aroused much spirited debate.⁶⁰ Finally Hilmi Paşa, who favoured the fusion scheme, asked for a vote of confidence. The vote he received was almost unanimous.⁶¹ Yet in spite of his mandate from the Chamber, Hilmi Paşa

57. Hüseyin Cahid, 'Almanlar ve Osmanlılar', Tanin, 17 Dec., 1909. See also Mr. Marling to Grey, no. 994, con., Constantinople, 26 Dec., 1909, F.O.371/992/178.

58. Mr. Marling, ibid.

59. Yeni Tanin, 23 Dec., 1909.

60. 'Chronique Parlementaire', Stamboul, 30 Nov., 1909, 2. The interpellation of Hilmi Paşa on this subject was asked for by three deputies from Mesopotamia. See also Stamboul, 13 Dec., 1909, 'Chronique Parlementaire'; 'L'Affaire Lynch a la Chambre', - also The Levant Herald, 30 Dec., 1909.

61. Stamboul, 14 Dec., 1909; Levant Herald, 14 Dec., 1909.

tendered his resignation on 23 December.⁶² The resignation was accepted and the office offered to Hakkı Paşa, Ambassador to Rome. After some hesitation and negotiations, Hakkı Paşa accepted and the Hatt announcing his appointment was issued on 12 January, 1910.⁶³

(ii) THE PERIOD OF CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

The first session of the Ottoman Parliament ended on 27 August, 1909.⁶⁴ It was a long and eventful session, and for the sake of convenience may be divided into three quite distinct periods. The first period lasted from the opening of parliament on 17 December, 1908 to the fall of Kâmil Paşa on 13 February, 1909.⁶⁵ During this period parliament was more concerned about the crisis brought on by Austria-Hungary's annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Bulgaria's

62. Yeni Tanin, 29 Dec., 1909; and also Sabah and İkdam of the same date.

63. A.A.A. (Adıvar), İbrahim Hakkı Paşa, İA, V/ii, 892. Hatt-ı Hümayun in Yeni Tanin, 13 Jan., 1910.

64. Tanin, 28 Aug., 1909.

65. See above, Chap. II, 59 ff

declaration of independence, than with legislation. Moreover, the Chamber was still too inexperienced and inarticulate and lacked the unity necessary for legislating. The second period began with Kâmil's fall and ended with the deposition of Abdülhamid II and the accession of Mehmed V in May 1909. The failure of the revolt of 13 April temporarily discredited the conservative, anti-reformist element in the Empire, and gave an impetus to the radical, reformist group in the Chamber. It was, therefore during the third period, lasting from the beginning of May to 27 August, that most of the legislative work was done.

In his closing address to the Chamber Ahmed Rıza, President of the Chamber, summed up the legislative work of the first session.⁶⁶ The Government had submitted 73 Bills to the Chamber. The Chamber had passed 53 of these after discussion, and the remainder had gone to various committees. Deputies had submitted 668 motions to the House, of which 158 were accepted and passed on to the competent ministries by special committees appointed for the purpose.⁶⁷ Ahmed

66. Ahmed Rıza's speech in Tanin, op.cit, n.64.

67. Ibid.

Rıza was simply pointing out that the Chamber had legislated on almost every kind of problem, from the vital to the trivial. The Chamber had passed such an important law as the 'Law of the Provisional Budget of 1909',⁶⁸ as well as laws of minor importance, such as the 'Law Prohibiting the Use of Spirits of Wine in Beverages'.⁶⁹ Essentially the purpose of the legislation enacted in this period was three-fold. Firstly, to write into the constitution the political changes which had taken place since July 1908. Secondly, to modernise and give unity to the Ottoman Empire and its administrative machinery. Finally, and closely bound up with the second aim, to enact such legislation as to make the capitulations unnecessary, and thus bring about their abolition.

The question as to who was the supreme authority in the Empire had already been decided in favour of the Chamber of Deputies. The amendments legalised the fait accompli. Of the 119 articles of the 1876 Constitution, 21 were modified, one annulled and three

68. Takvim-i Vekayi, 16 March, 1909.

69. Takvim-i Vekayi, 30 Aug., 1909.

new ones were added on.⁷⁰ Not all the modifications recorded a change in the power structure; some, Article 28 for example, were changed only verbally.⁷¹ But the amendment of Articles, 3, 7, 27, 77 and 113 virtually mark the end of the Sultan's power and prerogatives. The modified version of Articles 29, 30, 35, 38, 44, 53 and 54 show how completely the Porte had fallen into the shadow of Parliament.

Article 3 which had vested unconditional sovereignty in the House of Osman was revised. Sovereignty was made conditional on the Sultan's oath before the General Assembly to respect the Şeriat and the Constitution, and to remain faithful to the country and to the nation.⁷² The Sultan's prerogative to nominate and revoke ministers was omitted from Article 7. Though he was permitted to nominate persons to high office, he had to do so in conformity with special laws. He retained most of his old prerogatives, though the right to make a treaty of almost any kind

70. H.N.Kubalı, Kanun-i Esasi, in IA, vi, 170.

71. The 1909 amendments of the 1876 Constitution are published in Takvim-i Vekayi, 4 Sept., 1909. The modern Turkish text of these amendments is found in Gözübüyük and Kili, op.cit., 70-3 and the complete text of the 1876 Constitution on 25-38. For convenience all future references to the Constitution will be made to Gözübüyük and Kili and Aristarchi, op.cit., n.22.

72. Gözübüyük and Kili, old article on 25, modified version 70 (article 3); Aristarchi, 7.

which had been his in the past, was now made subject to the approval of Farliament.⁷³

The appointment of ministers was taken out of the hands of the Sultan. He still retained his prerogative to appoint the Grand Vezir and the Seyhülislam. But the duty of choosing the rest of the Cabinet was vested in the Grand Vezir, who was expected to submit his list to the Sultan for his sanction.⁷⁴ In the same way, the President and the two Vice-Presidents of the Chamber of Deputies were no longer appointed by the Sultan. They were elected by the deputies and the result of the election was submitted to the Sultan for his sanction.⁷⁵ Finally, Article 113, that notorious article which had given the Sultan the right to banish anyone who was regarded as a danger to the security of the State, and which had been used to exile Midhat Paşa, the architect of the 1876 Constitution, was so completely modified that the Sultan was not even mentioned in it.⁷⁶

73. Ibid., (Article 7), 25 and 70; Aristarchi, 7-8.

74. Ibid., (Article 27), 27 and 70; Aristarchi, 10.

75. Ibid., (Article 77), 33 and 72; Aristarchi, 18.

76. Ibid., (Article 113), 37 and 73; Aristarchi, 24.

The result of the modification of these five articles was that the Sultan "reigned but no longer ruled". His function in the government of the Ottoman Empire was restricted to confirming decisions already taken by the Cabinet or Parliament.

The Unionists were as determined to curb the powers of the Porte as those of the Palace. That is why they had taken such a firm stand against Kâmil Paşa, bringing about his fall in 1909. The amendments were a manifestation of the weakened position of the Porte. Article 29 limited the discretionary power which had been the Grand Vezir's in the past.⁷⁷ Ministers were made responsible to the Chamber of Deputies, jointly for the overall policy of the government, and individually for the policy of their departments.⁷⁸

In case of any disagreement between the Cabinet and the Chamber, the Cabinet had either to submit to the ruling of the Chamber or resign. If the Cabinet resigned and a new ministry was formed which

77. Ibid., (Article 29), 27 and 71; Aristarchi, 10.

78. Ibid., (Article 30), 28 and 71; Aristarchi, 10.

adopted its predecessor's posture, and if the Chamber rejected it with a vote of no-confidence, the Sultan was bound to dissolve the Chamber and order new elections in accordance with the Constitution. But if the new Chamber maintained the decision of its predecessor, then the ministry was obliged to abide by the ruling. In short, the last word was always with the Chamber.⁷⁹ The Cabinet became almost totally dependent on the goodwill of the Chamber. The Chamber could summon, by a majority vote, a minister and interpellate him on any matter. If after the interpellation a vote of no-confidence was passed, the minister would fall. If the minister happened to be the Grand Vezir, his Cabinet would fall with him.⁸⁰

In the past, all proposals for new legislation had gone through the Cabinet, which had drawn up the Bill. But Article 53 was revised in 1909. Initiative for legislation could now come directly from both Chambers, and legislation could be carried out without the Cabinet's intervention, though it had to be sanctioned by the Sultan before it became law.⁸¹ Article 54 strengthened Parliament's hold over the legislative process further.⁸²

79. Ibid., (Article 35), 28 and 71; Aristarchi, 11.

80. Ibid., (Article 38), 29 and 71; Aristarchi, 12.

81. Ibid., (Article 53), 30-1 and 72; Aristarchi, 14-15.

82. Ibid., (Article 54), 31 and 72; Aristarchi, 15.

If one of the aims of amending the constitution was to weaken the executive and strengthen the legislature, it was fulfilled beyond all expectations. Ever since July 1908 the Unionists had placed the hopes of their reform movement in a strong parliament, which they expected to act as a counter-balance to the more conservative forces in the Palace and the Porte. How powerful they had succeeded in making Parliament only became clear in 1912, when the Committee found the Chamber of its own creation unmanageable. But in 1909, for better or for worse, the centre of gravity had definitely shifted in favour of the legislature.

Apart from the constitutional amendments, the Chamber passed other legislation whose aim seems to have been to curb some of the freedom released by the Revolution of 1908, and to prevent the recurrence of a counter-revolution of the type that had just been suppressed. With these legislative measures the Unionists also tried to centralise the government and to bring unity to the Empire by "ottomanizing" all the diverse elements therein. Thus within the span of a few months the Chamber passed the "Law on Vagabondage

and Suspected Persons',⁸³ the 'Law on Public Meetings',⁸⁴ the 'Laws on the Press and Printing Establishments',⁸⁵ the 'Law on Strikes',⁸⁶ the 'Law concerning the Conscription of non-Muslims',⁸⁷ the 'Law on Associations',⁸⁸ and the 'Law for the Prevention of Brigandage and Sedition'.⁸⁹

The purpose of these laws was to place in the government's hands the power to curb any movement expressing dissatisfaction against its policies. The 'Law on Vagabondage and Suspected Persons' curbed any kind of individual action, while the 'Law on Public Meetings' made any public protest impossible. Before any meeting, the organiser was expected to present a written declaration stating his name and

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83. Takvim-i Vekayi, 14 May, 1909. Text (French) in Lowther to Grey, no. 588, con., Therapia, 26 July, 1909, F.O. 371/779/28919.
84. Takvim-i Vekayi, 17 June, 1909. Translation of law in Lowther to Grey, no. 466, con., Therapia, 22 June, 1909 F.O. 371/777/23981.
85. Printed as two separate laws in Takvim-i Vekayi, 31 July, 1909. Texts of both laws in Lowther to Grey, no. 655, con., Therapia, Aug. 11, 1909, F.O. 371/779/30768.
86. Takvim-i Vekayi, 15 Aug., 1909.
87. Takvim-i Vekayi, 11 Aug., 1909.
88. Takvim-i Vekayi, 23 Aug., 1909. French text in Sтамбул, 24 Aug., 1909.
89. Y.H. Bayur, i, 306.

profession, and indicating the place, date and time of the meeting. The 'Laws on the Press and Printing Establishments', while not actually censoring the newspapers, acted as a great restraint on the freedom of the press. The anti-strike law checkmated any action that might have been taken by the growing labour movement. And the 'Law of Association', the 'Law for the Prevention of Brigandage and Sedition', and the 'Law on the Conscription of non-Muslims' were a belated attempt to end the difference existing among the various ethnic groups in the Empire and to bring about unity. The first law forbade the formation of political clubs or associations which had an ethnic basis or a national name.⁹⁰ The second law authorised the formation of special military units to be used for disarming and repressing Greek and Bulgarian bands in Ramele and Armenian bands in Eastern Turkey.

Those measures which had aimed at centralisation met with a certain amount of success. But the growth of nationalism among the subject peoples of the Empire

90. Article 120, one of the new articles added to the constitution laid down this principle in the constitution itself. See Gözübüyük and Kili, 73.

made it too late in the day to realise "the 'ottomanist' dream of the free, equal, and peaceful association of peoples in a common loyalty to the dynastic sovereign of a multi-national, multi-denominational empire."⁹¹ Even while the association law was being discussed in the Chamber, Dalcheff Efendi, a Bulgarian deputy had pointed out "that union of different elements would not be brought about by the passing of laws, but by community of interests".⁹² This is exactly what was lacking in the Ottoman Empire.

The Unionists were concerned with one other problem; the creation of a modern state. For this it was essential to abolish the capitulation, "long resented as a symbol of inferiority and subservience",⁹³ and absolutely incompatible with the status of a modern state since they violated its sovereignty. Knowing that they were not powerful enough to abrogate the capitulatory rights of foreigners by force, the Unionists tried to

91. B.Lewis, Emergence, 214.

92. 'Report of the Proceedings in the Ottoman Parliament during July and August 1909', 6, enclosure in Lowther to Grey, no.799, con., Therapia, 29 Sept., 1909, F.O.371/761/36622.

93. B.Lewis, Emergence, 249.

overcome this weakness by legislation. By introducing sound legislation, they hoped to make the administration of the Empire efficient so that foreigners would no longer need to claim their special privileges. At the same time, the new laws would violate the capitulations in such a discreet way that the Great Powers would either be forced to ignore the violation or they would not be able to intervene effectively. In a short time, it was hoped, a precedent would be set, and the capitulations would either wither away or would be renounced by the Powers voluntarily.⁹⁴

But the Unionists, far from being anti-foreign, had sought foreign assistance in reforming and modernising the administration of the Empire. A few months

94. Even in the 19th century "one of the main purposes of these changes was to meet foreign criticisms of Ottoman justice, and thus prepare the way for the abrogation or limitation of foreign judicial privileges recognized by the capitulations". B Lewis, Emergence, 179. During this period there was considerable optimism that the capitulations would soon be abolished. Thus while discussing the privileges that various elements enjoyed in the field of education, Talât Bey said in the Chamber that he "failed to understand how, at a time when the Capitulations were about to be abolished, school privileges could be retained". - Debate, 3 June, 1909, Report of the Proceedings of the Turkish Parliament during the month of June, 1909, in Lowther to Grey, no.624, con., Therapia, 4 Aug., 1909, F.O.371/761/29787; and Tanin, 9 June, 1909.

after the revolution, the Porte obtained the services of Mr. Crawford, a British customs official, to re-organise the Ottoman Customs. His work was appreciated so much that the Porte asked for his term to be extended for a further two years.⁹⁵ In the same way the Porte wanted its Post and Telegraphic services modernised so that foreign post offices could be abolished. The Ministry of Post and Telegraph was opened on 23 July, 1909, and in his speech, Nail Bey, significantly, spoke of the foreign post offices as an infringement of Turkish sovereignty, and asked for efficiency so that they could be removed.⁹⁶ A few weeks later, M. Sterpin was engaged as director-general of the new ministry,⁹⁷ and a new article was attached to the constitution guaranteeing the privacy of letters in the Ottoman post.⁹⁸ In August, Count

95. Grey to Lloyd George, (Chancellor of the Exchequer), London, 29 July, 1909, F.O.371/763/34737.

96. Lowther to Grey, no.594, con., Therapia, 26 July, 1909, F.O.371/779/28925.

97. Mr. Sterpin, a Belgian, was engaged because Belgium had no post office in the Ottoman Empire, and he was therefore acceptable to everyone. Lowther to Grey, no.656, con., Therapia, 10 Aug., 1909, F.O.371/779/30769.

98. Article 119, Gözübüyük and Kili, 73.

Ostrorog was appointed 'Conseiller de Justice'. His duties were mainly those of drafting laws for presentation to the Chamber, and bringing the Ottoman code of law in line with that of Europe.⁹⁹

The Porte's attempt to violate the capitulations did not go unnoticed. The British Ambassador pointed out to his government that each law often infringed upon the treaty rights of foreigners. To overcome this he suggested that each law as passed be examined and action taken as required.¹⁰⁰ It was the result of such diplomatic surveillance that the Porte withdrew Article 13 of the 'Law concerning Vagabonds..' This article sanctioned flogging as a punishment for vagabondage, and the foreign missions refused to allow their subjects to be flogged by the Ottoman authorities.¹⁰¹ The foreign embassies maintained their surveillance over all new legislation passed by the Chamber, and frustrated the Porte's attempt to abrogate the

99. Lowther to Grey, no.632, con., Therapia, 6 Aug.,1909, F.O.371/779/30745.

100. Lowther to Grey, no.665, con., Therapia, 14 Aug.,1909, F.O.371/779/31623.

101. Ibid.

capitulations. The capitulations continued to haunt the Turks until 24 July, 1924 when they were abolished by the Treaty of Lausanne.¹⁰² While they remained in force, the Ottoman Empire retained its status of a 'semi-colony'.¹⁰³

102. B.Lewis, Emergence, 249.

103. Hüseyin Avni, Biryarı Müstemleke Oluş Tarihi, (1932), Istanbul, passim.

CHAPTER IV

THE GROWTH OF OPPOSITION

The role of the Committee of Union and Progress in the politics of the period under review has been exaggerated to an extent that discourages any attempt to look beyond the obvious. Almost all political happenings have been reduced to the machinations of the Committee. In conformity with this convenient pattern, Hilmi Paşa's resignation on 28 December, 1909 - a fortnight after receiving an overwhelming vote of confidence - has also been put down to Unionist pressure and intrigue.¹ It is true that the Unionists had not been happy with Hilmi during both his terms of office. He had succumbed to the counter-revolutionaries on 13 April without offering any resistance. After the counter-revolution had been crushed he was restored to power by Şevket Paşa, and throughout the rest of the year he remained virtually neutral in the masked

1. Bayur, i, 318; Danişmend, iv, 381; Okandan, 345; Inal, 1572 ff.; Tunaya, 178, n.16, cites an article by Eabanzâde İsmail Hakkı as evidence of Unionist collusion; Sabah, İkdam and Stamboul of 29 Dec., 1909; and Lowther to Grey, no.8, con., Constantinople, 1 Jan., 1910, F.O.371/1000/928; Uşaklıgil, ii, 24.

struggle between the Committee and the military. All this may have provided sufficient motive for some Unionists to seek his resignation. But it is doubtful if they were in a position to bring it about.

Besides there is no reason why we should not believe Hilmi Paşa's own testimony regarding his resignation. To the press he declared that he had resigned purely on personal grounds, that the Committee had put no pressure on him as was being suggested, and that there was no disagreement between him and the Committee. Hilmi's declaration was confirmed by Halil Bey, President of the Parliamentary Party of the CUP.² But the truth probably lies somewhere in the middle. While not discounting completely the Committee's role, especially its harassment of the government in the Chamber, it is necessary to look for more convincing reasons for Hilmi Paşa's resignation.

2. Yeni Tanin, nos.14 and 15, 7,8 Jan.,1910 respectively; Stamboul, 8 Jan.,1910; Times, 29,30 Dec.,1909; in the issue of the 30th the Times correspondent cited Hilmi Paşa's interview with the Reuter's correspondent. Inal, 1672-3. - It is worth noting that in August 1912, because Ahmed Muhtar Paşa's Cabinet was persecuting Unionists, Hilmi Paşa resigned his portfolio as Minister of Justice; see Abdurrahman Bey cited in Inal, 1674.

One factor was Hilmi Paşa's own reluctance for office during such troubled and uncertain times. He had had most of his experience in provincial administration and had made his reputation as Inspector-General of Macedonia.³ After the revolution he was Minister of the Interior in Kâmil Paşa's Cabinet, and when Kâmil fell in February 1909, he succeeded him as Grand Vezir.⁴ Hilmi's first term in office was a period of great political unrest culminating in the mutiny of April 1909. It was during this period that he expressed his regret at not having gained more experience under such well-tried Grand Vezirs as Said and Kâmil Paşas, before himself assuming that post.⁵

Hilmi's second term as Grand Vezir passed under the shadow of Mahmud Şevket Paşa and martial law, and he was deprived of virtually all independence of action.⁶ The debate in the Chamber on the 'Lynch Affair' was the straw that broke the camel's back.⁷ Hilmi (and Cavit),

3. İnal, 1654-64; Uşaklıgil, ii, 23-4.

4. İnal, 1655; see above, Chap II, 72.

5. Türkgeldi, 23.

6. Abdürrahman Efendi, quoted in İnal, 1673; A Minister's Political Memoirs, Tan, 21 Jan., 1937, quoted in İnal, 1844.

7. See above, 112-14.

finding the behaviour of the Chamber unreasonable and unpredictable, decided to settle the matter once and for all. In this situation and mood Hilmi went to submit his resignation to the Sultan. To Halid Ziya, the Sultan's First Secretary, he exclaimed: "It is not possible to have an understanding with the Party. No Grand Vezir can remain in office without relying on the majority...."⁸ But Hilmi was not simply throwing in his hand and admitting defeat. Through Halid Ziya he placed before the Sultan a number of alternatives. The Sultan could reject his resignation. If he accepted it, however, he could reappoint Hilmi. If the new Cabinet did not have the confidence of Parliament, the Sultan could dissolve the Chamber and order fresh elections. Or finally, if he accepted the resignation, he should summon the Presidents of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies and appoint the new Grand Vezir on their advice.⁹ But the Sultan thought it more expedient to accept his resignation.

8. Uşaklıgil, ii, 24.

9. Ibid., 29-30.

There was another factor which might conceivably have had something to do with the resignation: the Lynch Concession. Hilmi Paşa's overwhelming vote of confidence over the Lynch Affair created a new problem. Technically it left Hilmi free to grant the concession to the English firm. But 'national' interest prevented him from doing so. Talking about the political implications of granting a concession for a railway from Baghdad to the Persian Gulf, Hilmi had said: "This question puts us between the hammer and the anvil. For political reasons I cannot grant this concession to the British...."¹⁰ The same political reasons applied to the granting of the 'Lynch Concession'. The fear of British expansion in Iraq was strong among Arab deputies and within Iraq itself. Politically it was too potent a factor for the Porte to ignore. Even while the question was being discussed in the Chamber, there had been protest meetings in Baghdad against the concession being granted to an

10. E.T.S.Dugdale (ed.and trans.), German Diplomatic Documents, 1871-1914, iii, London, 1930, 367; Baron von Marschall to the German Foreign Office, Constantinople, 25 Oct., 1909. (Hereafter cited as G.D.D.)

English concern.¹¹ The situation in Baghdad and Basra became so serious that the Porte considered proclaiming martial law.¹² It would be dangerous to grant the concession to the Lynch Company, but also "very difficult for us to reject the British ... whose help we depend on in various questions".¹³ Under such conditions Hilmi's resignation offered the best way out of this impasse; it would free his successors from established policy and decisions.¹⁴ Thus Hakkı Paşa was able to reverse Hilmi's 'decision' concerning the Lynch Concession, and even cancelled some other concessions earmarked for British enterprise in and around Iraq.¹⁵

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11. Bayur, i, 318; Stamboul, 22 Dec., 1909; Times, 11 Dec. 1909. The Times correspondent wrote: "...Ismail Hakki Babanzadeh and Deputies from the Arab districts, who cherished a sincere, if unfounded, belief that the scheme of amalgamation covered an ingenious design on the part of Great Britain to effect the economic conquest of Irak...."; and same to same, Constantinople, 26 Oct., 1909, and 6 Nov., 1909, G.D.D., iii, 368 and 385 respectively.
 12. The Levant Herald, 29 Dec., 1909.
 13. Hilmi Paşa's conversation with von Marschall, D.D.F., op.cit, n.10.
 14. Levant Herald, op.cit.
 15. Lowther to Grey, no.25, con., Constantinople, 15 Jan., 1910, F.O.371/1000/1348; Grey to Lowther, no.37, tel.con., Foreign Office, 17 Feb., 1910, F.O.371/1004/5693; Memorandum: Sir H.B.Smith's interview with Hakkı Paşa, enclosure in Smith to Nicolson, Constantinople, 30 Dec., 1910, F.O.371/1240/636.

There was considerable speculation about Hilmi Paşa's successor. Hakkı, Kâmil, Said and Ferid Paşas are said to have been considered, but Hakkı was chosen because he was the least controversial and most acceptable candidate. The fact that he had been legal adviser to the Porte and ambassador to Italy gave him roots in traditional institutions and made him acceptable to the conservative element. His liberal education in political science and law and his early career as a lecturer brought him "closer to youth, to innovation and Europeanisation than the earlier vezirs".¹⁶ Not being a partisan of any faction he was able to bargain with all sides. He demanded absolute freedom in forming his Cabinet and once this condition was met he accepted office. One of his first acts as Grand Vezir was to appoint Şevket Paşa Minister of War, thereby hoping to end the anomaly of having the administrator of martial law and the Inspector-General of the first three army corps outside Cabinet

16. Yalçın, Talât Paşa, 36; İnâl, 1763 and 1783-4; Uşaklıgil, ii, 44 ff.; 'Sadrazam Kim Olacak?' İkdam, and Tanin of 29 Dec., 1909; Lowther to Grey, op.cit., n.1.

control.¹⁷ But Şevket Paşa's inclusion in the Cabinet created problems of its own.

Yusuf Hikmet Bayur has noted that the year 1910 was the first and last year when the Ottoman Empire was free of irksome external problems (excepting Crete) and the pressure of foreign governments.¹⁸ But this favourable external situation did not make for internal political stability; if anything it aggravated it. M.Milanovitch, the Servian Minister for Foreign Affairs, who visited Istanbul early in 1910 observed that "the position of Hakki Pasha was ... not paramount; there was the Committee, and there was, above all, the army, not to speak of the various elements which were not friendly to the new order of things".¹⁹ This, briefly, was the political situation prevailing in the capital. The discord between the military and the politicians continued unabated. But a development of greater

17. A.A.A.(Adıvar), İbrahim Hakki Paşa, I.A., 892. İnal, 1871 and 1884; Political Memoirs, op.cit., n.6; Mahmud Muhtar Paşa, Maziye bir Nazar, cited in İnal, 1884; Yeni Gazete, 3 Jan., 1910, quoted in Stamboul of 3 Jan., 1910, Lowther to Grey, ibid., and also no.27, con., Constantinople, 16 Jan., 1910, F.O.371/1000/3550.

18. Bayur, i, 316.

19. Nicolson to Grey, no.158, con., St.Petersburg, 26 March, 1910, F.O.371/1008/11717.

political significance was the re-appearance of conservative groups, both within the CUP and without; groups which had lain dormant since May 1909. The formation of the People's Party (Ahali Fırkası) on 21 February 1910 was the first manifestation of this.²⁰ At the time it aroused little comment because everyone was preoccupied with martial law. But it was not long before people realised the long-term consequences of the growth of a conservative opposition.

20. İkdam, 22 Feb., 1910; Tunaya, 294-303; A.B.Kuran, 522-3. During this period 1909-11 other conservative groups were also formed. There was the Müteditl Hürriyetperveran Fırkası also known as Müteditl Liberaller or Moderate Liberals, Tunaya, 254-61, and the Osmanlı Demokrat Fırkası (Firkai İbad) or the Ottoman Democratic Party, ibid. There was also the New Party or Hizb-i Cedid. All these liberal-conservative groups acted together against the Committee and therefore hardly functioned as separate groups. Finally in November 1911 all opposition groups united to form the Hurriyet ve İtilâf Fırkası or the Freedom and Association Party, see below. There were also some left-wing groups. In Sept. 1910 the Osmanlı Sosyalist Fırkası (Ottoman Socialist Party) was formed. See Tunaya, 303-14; G.Haupt, Le Debut du Mouvement Socialiste en Turquie, Mouvement Social, no. 45, 1963, 121-37; Joshua Starr, The Socialist Federation of Salonika, Jewish Social Studies, vii, 1945, 323-36; on the activities of one of the founders and president of the Socialist Party, Hüseyin Hilmi, see M.S.Çapanoglu, Türkiye'de Sosyalizm Hareketleri ve Sosyalist Hilmi, Istanbul, 1964. - The socialist movement had very little success; its leaders were persecuted and exiled and the party soon disappeared. Kemal H.Karpat, Turkey's Politics, The Transition to a Multi-Party System, Princeton, 1959, 353-4, n.16, writes, "This persecution was explained as stemming from the fact that since the country had no industry, socialism was an artificially planted movement in Turkey". Another rather smugly held idea emerges in parliamentary debates that Ottoman (Muslim) society was essentially egalitarian and classless and therefore socialism had no relevance in the Ottoman Empire.

The continued existence of martial law made a mockery of constitutional government. Hakkı Paşa tried to modify this situation by bringing Şevket Paşa into the Cabinet, and in his programme read before the Chamber on 25 January, he promised to end martial law "now that the situation was normal once more".²¹ Not only did he fail to carry out this promise, but his idea of using Şevket Paşa to strengthen the position of his Cabinet also boomeranged. Şevket's presence in the Cabinet weakened the reformist group, especially with regard to financial reform.

The Committee had set itself the task of reforming the administration of the Empire, and naturally financial reform came very high in the order of priorities. Mehmed Cavit, Minister of Finance in Hakkı Paşa's Cabinet, had set out to educate the 'public' on the importance of financial reform even during the first days of the constitution.²² When he became Hilmi Paşa's Finance Minister in June 1909, he set up a

21. Hakkı Paşa's programme in Yeni Tanin, 26 Jan., 1910; French translation in Stamboul of same date.

22. Mehmed Cavid, 'Bütçe Nedir?', in Sabah, 10 Aug., 1908.

a special committee to prepare the budget for the following year. The estimated budget was presented in December and soon after Hilmi Paşa resigned.²³ Hakkı Paşa, however, promised to apply scrupulously his predecessor's budget, and at the same time promised to increase revenue by reforming the system of taxation, and by reaching an agreement with the Powers which would permit the Porte to raise certain tariffs on imports. He said his Cabinet would try to cut down expenditure, but never at the expense of the dignity and prestige of the Empire, nor at the expense of good administration. He added that he realised that the Ottoman Empire was a Great Power with a vast coast line and extensive borders. Therefore he would always give the utmost attention to the needs of the army and the navy.²⁴

The partial reform of the system of taxation in

23. Estimated budget is given in Marling to Grey, no.999, con., Constantinople, 28 Dec., 1909, F.O.371/993/183. Actual budget given in W.W.Cumberland, The Public Treasury, E.M.Mears, Modern Turkey, New York, (1924) 390.

24. Hakkı Paşa's programme, Yeni Tanin, op.cit, n.21.

1909 had produced encouraging results.²⁵ At the end of 1910, in spite of all the difficulties, the achievements of Cavit's financial administration were generously praised by Sir Adam Block, President of the Public Debt.²⁶ But despite this substantial increase in revenues, it was still not possible to meet the deficit in the budget or to carry out any real and lasting reforms because the military dominated the political scene. Their heavy demands on the budget and their interference in the administration would not permit this. General Von der Goltz, addressing the German Asiatic Society on his return from Turkey,

25. Improvement in revenues in 1909; extract from the Tanin, 10 March, 1910, in Lowther to Grey, no.186, con., 29 March, 1910, F.O.371/1007/11227.

	1910	1909	Increase	Decrease
Real Property				
Tax	26,625,980	15,780,892	10,872,088	
Tax on Pro-				
fits(Temettu)	2,052,256	1,717,755	334,501	
Tithes	85,718,059	76,568,397	9,149,662	
Sheep Tax	1,093,004	525,435	567,569	
Military Ser-				
vice Exemption				
Tax	837,626	7,190,565		6,352,939
Other Sources	38,050,110	18,484,901	19,565,209	
Total	154,404,035	120,267,945	40,489,029	6,352,939
Customs	24,249,854	21,734,404	2,515,450	
Posts and				
Telegraphs	6,291,014	6,312,270		21,256
Total	184,944,903	148,314,619	43,004,479	6,374,195

26. Achievements of the new regime: Sir Adam Block's view. Times, 15 Dec., 1910; see also Tanin, 24 Dec. 1910.

observed that internal reform in the Ottoman Empire was not possible while the Porte faced the possibility of external aggression. In the prevailing situation the only real desire of the Young Turks was to increase their military strength.²⁷ While this idea was endorsed by the Committee, it was dogma to the military. Men like Cavit, however, criticised on rational grounds the policy of sacrificing other much needed reforms to the exigencies of a renovated army and navy. They asked why the military expenditure could not be curtailed and more money devoted to productive ends.

The debate on the military budget commenced on 16 June. Mahmud Şevket Paşa spoke in support of his estimate. Security, he declared, was the first need of the Empire; without security, public works and the re-organisation of finances would prove futile. He pointed out that as defence was not a party issue, deputies ought to forget party affiliations when voting. He requested that the military budget be voted unanimously, so that everyone might see that the Ottoman nation had resolved to maintain its power. He concluded by asking the Chamber to vote an extra-ordinary credit amounting to

27. Goltz's speech reported in the Times, 9 Dec.1910.

five million liras, as well as the ordinary budget of nine and a half millions.²⁸ Cavit Bey spoke against the inflated military budget and appealed to the Chamber to reject it in its present form. He pointed out that the already large deficit would swell dangerously if the budget were allowed through. But Şevket Paşa dismissed Cavit's arguments about a lack of money by concluding: "we will spare nothing for the army".²⁹ Cavit's arguments made no impression on the Chamber either. Three days later the ordinary and extra-ordinary military budget was voted by the Chamber, and soon after Cavit left for Paris to raise a loan on the Paris Bourse.³⁰ On the budget Lowther commented:

28. 115th Session of the Chamber of Deputies, 16 June, 1910, Takvim-i Vekayi, viii, 2303 ff.; Tanin, Yeni İkdam and Stamboul of 17 June, 1910; Annual Report, 1910, in Lowther to Grey, no. 103, con., Constantinople, 14 Feb., 1911, F.O. 371/1245/6167; Annual Register, 1910, (London, 1911) 337-8.

29. Ibid.

30. 116th Session of the Chamber of Deputies, 19 June, 1910, Takvim-i Vekayi, viii, 2356 ff.; Tanin and Stamboul of 20 June, 1910; Lowther to Grey, no. 434, very con., Therapia, 27 June, 1910, F.O. 371/993/23954; Major Tyrrell, the Military Attache, wrote that there was a rumour that the military budget had been voted under compulsion. See Major Tyrrell to Marling, Constantinople, 21 Nov., 1910 in Marling to Grey, no. 858, con., Constantinople, 23 Nov. 1910, F.O. 371/1017/43077.

"The only object on which money and attention are lavished is the army... His budget /Şevket Paşa's/, by far the largest of all /ā third of the entire budget/, was the only one which was passed without discussion, and, in fact, he appears to plunge his hand into the public purse exactly as he likes, leaving it to Javid Bey, the Finance Minister, to arrange the account-books afterwards.... It is difficult to believe that a man of Javid Bey's intelligence should contemplate the heavy military expenditure without disquietude, but he seems quite powerless in the hands of the military...."³¹

Such was the relationship between the military and the Committee.

The Committee's concession to Şevket Paşa regarding the military budget may be explained away by arguing that the Committee had conceded no principle. It may be argued that the Unionists in parliament, aware that the inflated military budget would increase the deficit, nevertheless voted for it because they shared the belief in the need of a powerful army. But such arguments cannot explain away Cavit's capitulation to Şevket Paşa in a conflict which took place later in the year. This time the conflict was one of constitutional principles: whether the Ministry of War would submit its accounts to the scrutiny of the Ministry of Finance.

As a part of the programme to reorganise the financial administration, Cavit created an audit department.

31. Lowther..., ibid.

The function of this department was to examine the accounts of all other ministries, and to make sure that money was being spent as specified in the budget. The aim of this measure was to check corruption.³²

There was already some tension between the military and certain Unionists, caused by the latter's demand for an investigation regarding the Yıldız treasure. In this demand there was a strong suggestion of embezzlement by the martial law authorities while they had been occupying the Palace after April 1909. But the matter had aroused great controversy and had been dropped at the insistence of Şevket Paşa.³³ The Finance Ministry's claim to inspect military accounts brought the conflict into the open.³⁴ This conflict came to a head when Şevket Paşa, who had ordered certain war materials not provided for in his budget, asked the Finance Ministry to pay. The ministry refused on the grounds that such expenditure was provided for in the extra-ordinary military budget. The question

32. Halil Menteşe, Cumhuriyet, 18 Oct., 1946. - Halil Bey, deputy for Menteşe, was elected President of the Parliamentary Party of the CUP on 27 Feb., 1910, see Tanin, 28 Feb., 1910 - Annual Report, 1910 and Annual Register, 1910, op.cit, n.28.

33. Menteşe, ibid.

34. Ibid.

came before Cavit who upheld his department's decision. But rather than abide by this decision, the Minister of War sent in his resignation.³⁵

While the Yeni İkdâm described this confrontation between Şevket Paşa and Cavit as a "ministerial crisis", the Tanin dismissed it as "differences within the cabinet".³⁶ Hüseyin Cahit's editorial gave the first hint of the Committee's desire to reach a compromise with the Minister of War, rather than make this issue into a first-class crisis. He wrote that it had been obvious since the beginning of September that the subject of public accounts would lead to differences between the Ministers of War and Finance. But since such differences were not of an important character there was no need for anxiety. The Committee had summoned a special meeting to discuss this question and decided to follow a reasonable policy. Hüseyin Cahit concluded:

35. Ibid., and Tanin, 18 Oct., 1910; Yeni İkdâm, 17, 18 Oct., 1910 respectively; Lowther to Grey, no. 211, tel. con., Pera, 30 Sept., 1910, F.O. 371/993/35428 and no. 224 tel. pr., Constantinople, 17 Oct., 1910, F.O. 371/994/37832.

36. 'Buhran-ı Vükelâ', Yeni İkdâm, ibid., and Heyet-i Vükelâda İhtilâf, Tanin, ibid.

"Knowing all this, we refuse to believe that we are faced with a ministerial crisis today Looking at the internal and external situation, we have smiled sceptically at the words 'a ministerial crisis may take place any time'. No ministry can remain in power for ever. But is the application of the above-mentioned law so urgent that ministers should disagree about it twenty or twenty-five days before the opening of Parliament? No one who trusts the judgement of our ministers can think so." 37

In accordance with Hüseyin Cahit's prophecy a deputation consisting of Halil, Rahmi, and Dr. Nazım visited Şevket Paşa at his residence, only to receive a rude welcome.³⁸ In spite of a cool beginning they soon got down to discussion. Halil Bey reminded the generalissimo that though he had accomplished great deeds for the country, he had done so in collaboration with the Committee. It was still in the interests of the country that this collaboration continue and therefore the two sides should come to an understanding. An understanding was finally reached on the basis that Cavit Bey should agree not to apply the audit law to the Ministry of War, since that ministry needed absolute

37. Tanin, ibid.

38. Menteşe, op.cit., gives an account of the reception:
Şevket Paşa: "Why have you come in this manner, so early in the morning?"

Halil Bey: "To drink a cup of your morning coffee, Paşa",

Şevket Paşa: "Halil Bey, I can no longer work with those who want to stab me in the back."

secrecy and security. This decision, however, was to be referred to the Chamber for its sanction.³⁹

No matter how hard the Committee tried to disguise the fact, there had been a ministerial crisis and it had been resolved on Mahmud Şevket Paşa's terms.⁴⁰ The Committee's prestige suffered a setback while Şevket Paşa's prestige increased. On 24 December, going from strength to strength, the War Minister asked Parliament for authority to divert at his discretion three million liras out of a total of nine millions assigned to his ministry. Though there was some opposition in the Chamber to this request, Şevket Paşa once again carried the day.⁴¹

The epilogue of this conflict between the Ministers of War and Finance occurred in August 1911. Cavit Bey had resigned meanwhile, but his successor, Nail Bey, though not a Unionist, also objected to Şevket Paşa's capricious handling of finances. Again

39. Ibid.

40. H.Cahit, 'Buhran-ı Vûkelâ, Şayiası ve Tefsiratı', Tanin, 24 Oct., 1910.

41. 'L'Armée à la Chambre' and 'Chronique Parlementaire' Stamboul, 26 Dec., 1910, 1-2; Marling to Grey, no. 937, con., Pera, 28 Dec., 1910, F.O.371/1235/27; Tyrrell to Marling, Constantinople, 2 Jan., 1911, enclosure in Marling to Grey, no. 4, con., Constantinople, 3 Jan., 1911, F.O.371/1242/838.

Şevket Paşa refused to reduce his estimated budget or to subject his accounts to examination by the audit department. The events of the previous year were re-enacted and a ministerial crisis was in the air.⁴²

But on 29 August, Grand Vezir Hakkı Paşa assured Lowther "that an arrangement would easily be found ... and that the rumours of his (Hakkı's) resignation were quite unfounded".⁴³ However, no solution seemed to be forthcoming. Nail Bey threatened to resign, Şevket Paşa took to his bed, and the cabinet was forced to await his return before it could discuss the question.⁴⁴ In this situation the Cabinet decided to postpone discussion until the re-opening of Parliament.⁴⁵ But in the meantime events took a turn of their own and made all such discussion academic. Italy declared war on the Ottoman Empire, and in time of war it became impossible to question the position of the Minister of War.

42. Tanin, 29 Aug., 1911; Stamboul, 'Le Cabinet - L'Armee et le Defecit', 28 Aug., 1911 and also 29 Aug., 1911. Lowther to Grey, no. 614, con., Constantinople, 30 Aug., 1911, F.O. 371/1244/34689.

43. Lowther..., ibid.

44. Tanin, 31 Aug., 1911.

45. Tanin and Stamboul, 4 Sept., 1911.

Before passing on to the growth of an opposition during 1910 and 1911, it is necessary to discuss briefly the conclusion of the loan of 1910. The implications of this loan on the internal politics of Turkey are still far from clear.

The requirement of waging the Crimean War had forced the Porte to float its first foreign loan on the money markets of London and Paris. Hereafter the issue of foreign loans became the accepted practice of meeting the financial needs of the Empire. In 1875 the Porte failed to pay the charges on a foreign debt of two hundred million pounds sterling. Six years later it was forced to permit its creditors to take charge of certain imperial revenues - salt, tobacco monopolies, silk and fisheries - in order to redeem their money. The body set up to carry out this task was known as the Administration of the Ottoman Public Debt.⁴⁶

The Public Debt, technically a department of the Ottoman Ministry of Finance, functioned as an independent body. Its executive members were elected by the foreign

46. On the early loans see F.S.Rodkey, Ottoman Concern about Western Economic Penetration in the Levant, 1849-1856, Journal of Modern History, xxx, 1956, 348-53; Blaisdell, ...Financial Control..., passim; Bernard Lewis, Dûyun-i Umumiye, E.I.² (1963).

bondholders in their respective countries, and it was to them that the executive was responsible. In 1881 the Public Debt had at its disposal over 300 revenue collectors; by 1911 its total staff numbered 8,931 - more than that of the Ottoman finance ministry.⁴⁷

Moreover, this body had become powerful enough to exercise great influence on the political, social and economic life of the Empire. Such was its influence that the Porte found it difficult to raise a foreign loan without the guarantee of the Public Debt.⁴⁸

The aspiration of the Young Turks to redeem their Empire from European control has already been noted. In order to achieve this aim they considered it essential to reorganise the administration and to make it a paying concern, so that foreign loans would no longer be necessary. But they were unwilling to risk reform for the sake of financial parsimony. In the beginning the cost of reform was high. Inefficient and corrupt officials who were entrenched in large numbers, had to be paid either a sum of money

47. B.Lewis, ibid.

48. Hüseyin Cahit (Ottoman Representative on the Public Debt in 1910), 'İstikraz Etrafında', Tanin, 9 Sept.1909; B.Lewis, ibid.; Blaisdell, 6-8.

or regular pensions. But the Unionists considered this method less costly in the long run than the retention of useless functionaries.⁴⁹ There was also the cost of a renovated army to be met, and this increased year after year. Thus circumstances forced the Young Turks to continue the practice of borrowing abroad in order to make ends meet.

Hüseyin Cahit expressed the hopes and aspirations of the Unionists concerning the raising of loans abroad by the new regime.⁵⁰ He wrote of Turkey's bad reputation in European financial circles prior to the re-establishment of the constitution, when "the Public Debt was our guarantee and financiers would not trust anything to our Sultan, our Grand Vezir or our Finance Minister, while they would give millions to the Public Debt, an institution set up by foreigners".⁵¹ He hoped that European financiers would show more confidence in the new regime, and allow it to float loans without imposing terms derogatory to the dignity of an independent country. He concluded that it would not be long, the Porte having settled its debts, the Public Debt would be abolished and the Empire would be free.⁵²

49. Interview with Nazım Bey in Pester Lloyd, 12 May, 1909, enclosure in Mr. C. Howard to Grey, no. 40, con., Budapest, 14 May, 1909, F.O. 371/1010/19028.

50. H. Cahit, op.cit., n. 48.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid.

In the summer of 1910 Cavit went to Paris to negotiate a loan. It was natural for an Ottoman Finance Minister to go first to Paris because the Ottoman economy was irrevocably tied to France.⁵³ Most of the earlier loans had been negotiated through the Ottoman Bank, a French concern established in 1856. These loans had been guaranteed by the Public Debt, 55% of whose bonds were held in France, while Germany held 30% and Britain only 5%.⁵⁴

The French Government had been alarmed by what it saw as a tendency amongst Unionists to attack foreign financial and industrial institutions in the Ottoman Empire. As a counter-measure against this tendency, M. Pichon, the Foreign Minister suggested:

"Comme cette campagne ... de compromettre tous les intérêts étrangers en Turquie, je verrais des avantages à ce que les Gouvernements occidentaux unissent leurs efforts pour l'arrêter

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53. On French interests in the Ottoman Empire see Communication du Ministère des Finances, Paris, 8 Evrier, 1909 in Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, D.D.F., 2^e Série, xi, no.643, 1067-9. On French cultural interests see Constans to Pichon, Pera, 1 Juin, 1909, ibid., 206-7; Also Times, 17 and 24 June, 1910; Blaisdell, 5; Moukhtar Pacha, La Turquie, L'Allemagne et l'Europe, Paris, 1924, 102-4.
54. Times, 17 June, 1910; on the Ottoman Bank see M. Boppe to M. de Selves, Therapia, 27 Sept., 1911; D.D.F. 2^e Serie, xiv, no.370, 531-6; it is interesting to note that the Ottoman Bank's correspondence with the Ottoman Finance Ministry was conducted in French, see H.C. Yalçın, Meşrutiyette ilk İstikraz, Yakın Tarihimiz, i, 366-7.

des ses debuts en faisant comprendre au Gouvernement ottoman qu'an moment où il cherche à reorganiser ses finances, il a interêt a ne pas se montrer hostile aux capitaux etrangers engagés dans l'Empire." 55

The French naturally did not share the Committee's enthusiasm for setting up a new economic and political structure independent of Europe and more particularly France. In 1910, therefore, Pichon decided to settle the issue by making it plain to the Porte that French money would be available only if the Turks recognised the continued preponderance of French finances in the Empire. That this decision had been taken before Cavit's departure, and what French strategy was to be in the loan negotiations, are revealed in Lowther's very confidential despatch to Grey:

"... A suggestion had been made to me as to French policy, which seems not at all improbable. It is that the French financiers will put off Javid Bey in his negotiations with them and will leave him without money till the end of the year, by which time the financial pressure will be even more severe than now, and the amount required will be

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55. Pichon to Ambassadors in Vienna and Berlin, (strangely not London and St.Petersburg), Paris, 9 April, 1909, D.D.F., 2^e Série, xii, no.164, 203. The French were most alarmed at the Unionists' desire to nationalise 'La Regie des Tabacs' which was in French hands; for this purpose Cavit had set up a committee. See ibid. and Communication, D.D.F., 2^e Série, xi, no.643, 1068-9.

considerably increased. They will be able to impose such terms as they like, including the grant of those concessions which they most value."⁵⁶

Lowther's information proved to be correct. In Paris the Ottoman Bank did indeed 'put off' Cavit by offering terms which would place both Ottoman finances and the Ministry of Finance under French control.⁵⁷ Cavit offered to guarantee the loan with the customs receipts of Istanbul, but refused to have the loan underwritten by the Public Debt as was customary or to subordinate his ministry to the Ottoman Bank. Unable to accept such terms, Cavit went elsewhere and succeeded in concluding the loan on his own terms with another French syndicate.

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56. Lowther to Grey, no.434, very con., Therapia, 27 June, 1910, F.O.371/993/23945. - The French Ambassador, M.Bompard claimed that Cavit went to Paris with the intention of fouling up the negotiations with the Ottoman Bank, his purpose being to embarrass M.Laurent, his French financial adviser. Bompard claimed that Cavit was being coaxed by English financiers, represented in Istanbul by Sir Adam Block, Sir H.B.Smith and Sir Ernest Cassels; Bompard to Pichon, Pera, 9 Nov., 1910, D.D.F., 2^e Série, xiii, no.20, 33-6; Cambon to Pichon, Berlin, 7 Sept., 1910, ibid. 884, n.2.; see also the French Finance Ministry's brief on Cavit Bey, on his visit to Paris to discuss outstanding financial matters between the two governments. D.D.F., 3^e Série, vi, no.144, 182-5. René Pinon, L'Europe et la Jeune Turquie, Paris, (1911), 140, blames Baron Marschall, the German Ambassador at the Porte for the failure of the loan negotiations.
57. Bayur, i, 323; Yalçın, op.cit.; E.M.Earle, Turkey, the Great Powers and the Baghdad Railway, London, 1923, 244 ff; Times, 17 Aug., 1910; Bertie to Tyrrell, pr. and con., Paris, 11 Aug., 1910, F.O.800/172, (Bertie Papers).

Cavit revealed the terms of this loan at a meeting he addressed in Salonika, on his way back to Istanbul. He informed his constituents that the loan was for 11 million liras of which 6 millions would mature in 1910 and 5 million in 1911. A group of four French banks - the Credit Mobilier, the Louis Dreyfus, the Bernard-Janislowsky, and the Syndicate of Provincial Banks - had taken up the loan. The price to the Government was fixed at 86 and this would amount to about 92 to the public, including commission. The interest was 4% and the only guarantee he had given was the customs receipts of the vilayet of Istanbul. On these terms, he said, he was confident that the quotation of the loan on the Paris Bourse was now a mere formality.⁵⁸

But on 3 September, M.Pichon informed Hakki Pasa - who was then in Paris - that the loan could not be admitted on the Bourse under the present conditions.⁵⁹

58. Lowther to Grey, no.599, con.,Therapia, 23 Aug.,1910, F.O.371/993/31382; Stamboul, 23 Aug.,1910, gives a part of Cavit's speech. - Since this loan was ephemeral it does not find much space in most books.

59.Bertie to Grey, no.332, con.,Paris, 4 Sept.,1910, F.O.371/993/32248; the Foreign Office was already aware of this and was actively collaborating with France. See Grey to Bertie, nos.225 and 380, con., Foreign Office, 30 April 1910 and 18 Aug.,1910, F.O.371/993/11472 and 29823 respectively.

Pichon declared that the loan could only be quoted if the guarantee given by the Porte appeared to rest on solid foundations, and justified the confidence of the French investor.⁶⁰ Unable to accept any direct French control over its finances, the Porte broke off negotiations.⁶¹

While negotiating with Paris, Cavit had sent out feelers to London and Berlin about the possibility of floating a loan there. He was optimistic about borrowing in Britain from Sir Ernest Cassel's group. There was even a rumour in Le Temps of 20 September that the Turks had signed a contract with Sir Ernest's National Bank of Turkey.⁶² But since Grey was co-operating with Pichon, the issue of a loan in London was out of the question. Therefore when Cassel was approached by the Turks he advised them to conclude the loan in Paris as they would not get more favourable terms in London.⁶³ In Istanbul

60. Bertie to Grey, no.334, con., Paris, 4 Sept.1910, F.O.371/993/32407 and Bertie to Tyrrell, op.cit. French terms also given in Bayur, i, 323; Blaisdell, 215.

61. Bertie to Nicolson, Paris, 20 Oct.,1910, F.O.371/994/38330; Blaisdell, 215-6; Bayur, ibid.; Times, 23-27 Sept.,1910; Tanin, 9 Sept.,1910.

62. Lowther to Grey, no.196, tel.con., Constantinople, 20 Sept.,1910, F.O.371/993/34141; Bertie to Grey, no.359, con., Paris, 20 Sept.,1910, F.O.371/993/34166.

63. Grey to Bertie, no.326, tel.pr., Foreign Office, 22 Sept., 1910, F.O.371/993/34385; Earle, 225.

Sir H.B.Smith, director of the National Bank, "guided by the desire to act in conformity with the views of the British Government...", was also advising Cavit to be more conciliatory towards the French.⁶⁴

In the critical political situation prevailing in the capital during the autumn of 1910, Cavit could not concede anything which would compromise the sovereignty of the Porte. Such an act would undermine the Committee's already shaky position.⁶⁵ In fact the Tanin saw this Anglo-French pressure as a means of bringing about Cavit's fall, while Block had already observed that "by striking a blow at Djavid Bey the French are striking a blow at the party of Union and Progress and may bring about the fall of that party."⁶⁶

64. Sir H.B.Smith to Grey, London, 4 Oct., 1910, F.O.371/993/36803; Block to Hardinge, Constantinople, 21 Sept., 1910, F.O.371/994/38775; Earle, ibid; Moukhtar Pacha, 106; while Grey was supporting the French, the French, especially the Ottoman Bank, were trying to sabotage Britain's position in the Ottoman Empire. See Lowther to Grey, no.631, con., Therapia, 6 Sept., 1910, and Block to Hardinge, 10 Sept., 1910, F.O.371/993/33040 and 33484 respectively.

65. See above, 140, ff.

66. Tanin, 18 Oct., 1910; Block..., 21 Sept., op.cit, n.64.

The Germans had meanwhile promised to provide the money if no one else would.⁶⁷ On 1 November, representatives of the German banks arrived in Istanbul. By 7 November an arrangement was arrived at for a loan of 11 million liras, 7 million to be drawn in 1910 with an option for a further 4 million in 1911. The price was fixed at 86 with the interest at 4%. Two days later the contract was officially signed.⁶⁸ Later Cavit recalled how the "Germans handled the business with great intelligence and tact. They brought up no points which were not related directly to the loan, and they made no conditions which would have been inconsistent with the dignity of Turkey. This attitude of Germany met with great approval on the part of the Turkish Government which was then in a very difficult position".⁶⁹

German financial help came just in time to avert Cavit's fall. Though the Unionists were grateful to Germany, this did not, as Earle suggests, enable "German

67. Seymour to Grey, no.263, secret, Berlin, 28 Sept.1910, F.O.371/993/35473; Earle, 225-6; Moukhtar Pacha, 106.

68. Lowther to Grey, nos.243, , 286, con., Constantinople, 1, 7, 10, Nov., 1910, F.O.371/994/39840, 40350, 41560, respectively; Earle, 225; Bayur, i, 323.

69. Cavit cited by Earle, 225-6, from a memo which Cavit wrote specially for Earle, see 236, n.4.

diplomacy and the Deutsche Bank to re-establish themselves thoroughly in the good graces of the Ottoman Government".⁷⁰ Whatever good-will Germany earned by this act was lost in the following year, when her ally Italy declared war on Turkey. In fact there seems to have been no change in the Committee's attitude towards Britain and France. Soon after concluding the loan with Germany, Cavit wrote to the then Turcophile, Noel Buxton, expressing his disappointment at being let down in Britain, but adding: "Croyez neanmoins, que cela n'a altéré en rien les sentiments d'amitié que la Jeune Turquie a l'égard de l'Angleterre."⁷¹ But in internal politics Cavit's failure to float the loan in Paris or London became another weapon in the hands of the anti-Unionist opposition.

By the beginning of 1910, the political climate had thawed sufficiently to permit the opposition to come out into the open. This was manifested by the formation of an opposition group calling itself the People's Party.⁷²

70. Earle, 224.

71. T.P. Conwell-Evans, Foreign Policy from a Back Bench 1904-1918, a study based on the private papers of Lord Noel Buxton, (London, 1932), 30-1.

72. See above, 137, n.20.

This party was formed by deputies - inside as well as outside the CUP - who were dissatisfied with the Committee on personal as well as ideological grounds. But in 1910 it was still too early for bold political activity, since all activities - the Committee's as well as the opposition's - were inhibited by the prevalence of martial law. Therefore in the beginning the People's Party confined itself to harassing the Cabinet and the Committee in the Chamber.⁷³

The People's Party, however, was much more powerful and influential than its membership suggested. It had a large following in the Chamber and amongst Unionists who had not joined its ranks, but who sympathised with it and disrupted the Committee from within. The reappearance of a conservative opposition helped to bring the Committee and the military together, and it would seem that this saved the Committee from an early fall. Nevertheless the prestige and influence of the CUP declined in 1910, especially after Şevket Paşa's victory in the conflict between the Ministers of War and Finance.

The debate on the budget on 30 April gave the opposition an opportunity to embarrass the Committee. Cavit Bey, who was presenting his annual budget, proposed

73. Tunaya, 295-6.

a small increase in the allowances of the Sultan's sons-in-law. This proposal was rejected by the Chamber. As a protest against the excessive interference by the Chamber in the workings of the government, Cavit tendered his resignation. Hakkı Pasa supported his Finance Minister and announced his intention to resign should the Chamber fail to revise its decision.⁷⁴ The Committee found itself in a crisis very similar to the one brought about by the Lynch Affair in December 1909. Once again Halil Bey, President of the Committee's Parliamentary Party, rallied the Unionist parliamentary group, and on 4 May the Chamber, invoking Article 35, withdrew its decision, enabling Cavit to resume office.⁷⁵

Opposition in Istanbul was one thing, Opposition in Macedonia, which had been the Committee's stronghold, another. Macedonia had so far remained loyal to the Unionist cause. When some Unionists had seceded to form the People's Party, Committee clubs in Rumelie had been quick to shower the capital with telegrams of protest.⁷⁶

74. 81st Session of the Chamber of Deputies, 30 April, 1910 Takvim-i Vekayi, viii, 1403 ff.; 'Buhran-ı Vükelâ' Tanin, 1 May, 1910; Stamboul, 2, 3 May, 1910, 'Chronique Parlementaire'.

75. 82nd Session..., 4 May, 1910, Takvim-i Vekayi, viii, 1461 ff.; Tanin and Stamboul of 5 May, 1910.

76. Tunaya, 301.

Therefore the news that anti-Committee groups were being set up in Macedonia caused great alarm. The Committee was determined to crush this opposition before it took root. On 31 May, therefore, the premises of an opposition club at Manastir were forcibly closed and some of its members arrested. The official pretext for this action was that the club was reactionary and had been supporting the Albanians in their recent revolt.⁷⁷

In the capital the murder of Ahmed Samim, editor of the Sedayi Millet on 9 June, gave the government the opportunity to stamp on the opposition. The similarity between this crime and the murder of Hasan Fehmi was too striking to go unnoticed.⁷⁸ "The crime of Bahçekapı" wrote Hüseyin Cahit, "strongly resembles the murder committed last year on the bridge. If one remembers how this inflamed public opinion against the Committee of Union and Progress and how the reactionaries exploited it to arouse the soldiery at Yıldız, the repetition of a

77. Vice-Consul Geary to Lowther, Monastir, 2 June, 1910, enclosure in Lowther to Grey, no.366, con., Constantinople, 7 June, 1910, F.O.371/1010/20903; also enclosure in nos. 450 and 469 con., Constantinople, 5, 18 July, 1910, F.O. 371/1010/24856 and 26779 respectively.

78. See above Chap.II; also Tanin, 10 June, 1910 and Constantinople press of the same date; Bayur, i,322; H.C.Yalçın, 'Siyasî bir Cinayet', Kurban Giden Gazeteci Ahmet Samim', Yakın Tarihimiz, i,108; Lowther to Grey, no.379, con., Therapia, 14 June, 1910, F.O.371/1011/21934.

similar deed cannot but arouse the suspicion that the act was premeditated and aimed at arousing reaction against the same party."⁷⁹ The Committee was accused of the crime and a letter, alleged to have been written by Ahmed Samim to a certain Şevket Bey, was published in a certain paper, revealing that the victim had in fact been threatened by the Committee.⁸⁰

The lesson of 13 April had been a hard one but it had been well learned. This time the Government took no risks. Opponents of the regime were quickly arrested, and in July 1910 the authorities claimed they were on the tracks of a reactionary conspiracy, leading to the arrest of Dr. Rıza Nur, Deputy of Sinop, on 19 July.⁸¹ Next day the press published the story of the conspiracy, giving details of the organisation and aims of the secret association behind the plot. This association was said to be organised into cells of four: president, secretary and two members. The central committee consisted of a treasurer, a subscription

79. Tanin, 11 June, 1910; Lowther, never partial to the Committee, cleared the Committee of both this murder and that of Hasan Fehmi, see Lowther..., ibid.

80. Ahmet Samim's letter, enclosure in Lowther, op.cit., no.379; Bayur, i, 322.

81. İsmail Hakkı, 'Bir Mebusun Tevkifi', Tanin, 20 July, 1910; Lowther to Grey, no.481, con., Therapia, 13 July, 1910, F.O.371/1010/25840; Tunaya, 295-6; B.Lewis, 215.

collector, an assassin (fedayi), and two members. The aim of this group was to provoke an uprising by assassinating certain members of the Cabinet and some deputies. Once in power it would dissolve parliament, hold fresh elections, end martial law and re-employ dismissed officials. The headquarters of the movement were in Paris where it functioned under the name of 'Osmanlı İslâhatı Esasiyei Fırkası' or 'Le Parti Radical Ottoman'. Şerif Paşa, ex-Ottoman Ambassador to Stockholm was its president.⁸² When Major Tyrrell asked Mahmud Şevket Paşa whether he attached any importance to the reported reactionary conspiracy, the generalissimo replied: "No; but if I did not crush these people now they would become important."⁸³

Şevket Paşa's remark sums up the nature of the conspiracy: it was a pretext to crush the opposition before it became a threat. The way in which the case fizzled out against most of those arrested confirms this view. The court-martial, finding no evidence against

82. Tanin, 19, 20 July, 1910; Jeune Turc, 20 July, 1910, enclosure in Lowther to Grey, no. 500, con., F.O. 371/1010/26783; Tunaya, 285-94; for Şerif Paşa's denial of this charge of conspiracy see Şerif Paşa's letter to Grey, Paris, 25 July, 1910, in F.O. 371/1010/25710.

83. Tyrrell to Lowther, Constantinople, 21 July, 1910, in Lowther to Grey, no. 507, con., Constantinople, 25 July, 1910, F.O. 371/1010/27811.

the accused, was forced to acquit them.⁸⁴ The short term effect of this manoeuvre was to break up and cause confusion in the ranks of the opposition. But its side effects were more important: they convinced the opposition that parliamentary and legal methods would prove useless against a ruthless opponent.

While Şevket Paşa was dealing with the opposition, the Committee was reconsidering its policies and trying to strengthen its position. The second anniversary of the revolution was the occasion for an examination of the events of the past year and for a statement of policy.⁸⁵ In the proclamation to the nation, the Committee confessed that its measures to bring about the union of the different communities had failed, owing to the excessive zeal it had shown in the first two years of constitutional rule. It now recognised the opposition of the different elements to Ottomanism, and would therefore

84. Dr. Rıza Nur, Cemiyeti Hafiye, (İSTANBUL, 1914) (Dersaadet 1330), cited by Tunaya, 288; Lowther to Grey, no. 773, con., Constantinople, 25 Oct., 1910, F.O. 371/1010/39486; Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into the proceedings of the secret association, a newspaper extract, enclosure in Lowther to Grey, no. 605, con., Therapia, 24 Aug., 1910, F.O. 371/1010/31388.

85. 'Osmanlı İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyetinin Millete Beyannamesi', Tanin, 27 July, 1910.

leave them alone. The Committee would now pursue the cause of unity in a different way, namely, by concentrating all its energy on the material and educational development of the Empire, hoping thereby to unite all the elements through a community of interests.⁸⁶

The administrative policy remained as firm as before. The proclamation called upon the Porte to collect taxes and enlist soldiers from places which were providing neither; to collect arms when their possession led to brigandage and to crush political and non-political bands. The proclamation ended with the words:

"...the provision of soldiers and money are the foundations of a nation's sovereignty, its defense and good government. Those who give neither taxes nor military service do nothing for their country.... Sovereignty is a political and holy right which is neither given nor inherited. It is conditional on a man being worthy of it."⁸⁷

The moderate policy towards the non-Turkish elements was no doubt intended to take the sting out of their opposition to the Committee. Talât, Cavit, and Halil Beys' tour of Macedonia in August 1910 was directed towards promoting harmony amongst the Unionist organisations,

86. Ibid.

87. Ibid.

now ridden with dissension. It is in this light that we must consider the speech said to have been made by Talât before a 'secret conclave' of the Salonika CUP.⁸⁸ It was in order to give confidence to demoralised Unionists that Talât spoke in harsh terms and purposely exaggerated the strength of the Committee in the capital. His claims, that "at the present moment the reins of power are entirely in our hands... and the cabinet is essentially in the hands of the Committee ..."; or that "we have a majority in the House of Representatives and all attempts to oppose us in the House have failed miserably...", were not altogether justified by past events or the existing situation.⁸⁹ Immediately after making these claims Talât contradicted himself by saying: "In some cases Djavid Bey, myself, and other members may fail to obtain the complete success to which we aspire...."⁹⁰

The Committee's efforts to rally its Macedonian clubs and the attempt, at the 1910 Congress, to resolve the differences between the Committee and the Parliamentary

88. Vice-Consul Geary to Lowther, Monastir, 28 Aug., 1910, F.O.195/2358; B.D., ix/I, 207-9.

89. Ibid.

90. Ibid.

Party, bear witness to the Committee's decline.⁹¹

But these efforts met with little success and in the situation the opposition became bolder too. In spite of martial law a Salonika paper called Turkia: Journal Democrate published an article on 'The Committee of Union and Progress and the Causes of its Decline'.⁹²

In December, the British Consul in Edirne reported the formation of an opposition group of junior officers in the Second Army, but which had originated in the Third Army. This movement was anti-Committee and it criticised the Government because of its policies of retrenchment, of making political appointments in the army, and for raising the loan in Germany and thus losing the good-will of France and Britain.⁹³

91. Resolutions of the 1910 Congress, Tanin, 19 Nov., 1910; Tunaya, 191; French translation in Marling to Grey, no. 844, con., Pera, 22 Nov., 1910, F.O.371/1017/43063.

92. Turkia: Journal Democrate, 19 Nov., 1910, enclosure in Marling..., ibid.

93. Consul Samson to Marling, Adrianople, 2 Dec., 1910 in Marling to Grey, no.3 con., Constantinople, 3 Jan., 1911, F.O.371/1242/8371; Tyrrell to Marling, enclosure in same; the man behind this movement was Colonel Sad k, who was arrested, nominally on the charge of drunkenness. But on the representation of Eyüp Sabri, one of the members of the Central Committee of the CUP (Tunaya, 191), he was released. See Samson to Lowther, Adrianople, 26 Dec., 1910, in Lowther to Grey, no.71, con., Constantinople, 3 Jan., 1911, F.O.371/1242/4280.

The failure of the Porte's repressive policy in Albania, Macedonia and the Yemen, and the Committee's inability to contain Şevket Paşa, further weakened its position and encouraged the opposition.⁹⁴ By the beginning of 1911, opposition which had been crushed the previous summer reappeared, calling itself the 'New Party' (Hizb-i Cedid).⁹⁵ Like the People's Party, this party was also an off-shoot of the CUP, formed under the leadership of Colonel Sadık and Abdülaziz Mecdi Bey.⁹⁶ Like the earlier opposition this group was conservative and traditional in character, and therefore strongly opposed to the social and political ideas of the Unionists. In late January the political situation had become serious enough for the Istanbul correspondent of the National Zeitung to report that:

"Sensational rumours are current here, according to which a dissolution of Parliament is imminent. The Young Turks are even said to be disposed, in view of the revolution in Arabia and the critical situation in Albania and Macedonia to acquiesce in the dictatorship schemes of the War Minister ..., and after overthrowing Hakki Pasa to form a Shevket Cabinet." 97

94. For the Government's policy towards Albania, Macedonia, and the Yemen, see Bayur, i, 318-22 and ii/I, 35-53.

95. Tanin, 9 Jan., 1911; Tunaya, 186-8; Bayur, ii/I 55; B.Lewis, 215-6.

96. Tunaya, 186; B.Lewis, ibid.

97. National Zeitung, 22 Jan., 1911, reported in Times, 23 Jan., 1911.

The situation was not as serious as rumours suggested. But it was serious enough for the Committee to sacrifice Talât to appease the opposition. Talât was the corner-stone of the Committee and as Minister of the Interior was responsible for the 'hard line' in the provinces. He resigned on 10 February and was succeeded by the more moderate Halil Bey.⁹⁸ Halil's appointment saw immediate changes in the Committee's policies. Towards the provinces and the non-Turkish elements the principle of centralisation was quietly withdrawn, while the capitulations were not attacked with the same vigour as before. These changes were recorded in a circular to provincial governors in which Halil pointed out, that the fundamental policy of the Porte was that all Ottomans should enjoy the benefits of liberty and justice, the object being "to attain unity and thus efface the discord of nationalities which was the greatest wound in the State." Governors were told to treat foreigners as guests of the State and in conformity with the capitulations.⁹⁹ Talât was

98. Talât Beyin İstifası, Tanin, 11 Feb., 1911; Stamboul, 11 Feb., 1911; 'X', ...Courants Politiques..., wrote "...le Comité, s'il cédait parfois sur les questions de personnes, n'abdiquait rien de son autorité, et ne changait rien à sa politique." RMM, xxi, (1912), 195.

99. Translation of circular, enclosure in Lowther to Grey, no.131, con., Pera, 20 Jan., 1911, F.O.371/1244/7134.

taken out of the limelight and elected President of the Parliamentary Party into which he was expected to instil discipline and harmony.¹⁰⁰

After Talât's resignation the Committee tried hard to regain the initiative from the opposition. In what followed Mahmud Şevket Paşa was the key figure. But the Committee was never sure of his position. Sometimes he seemed to favour the Committee while at other times his attitude was ambivalent.¹⁰¹ In this uncertainty the Committee could never act without or against him, especially as they considered him to be too popular with the people (avam) and the army.¹⁰² The Committee tried to disorganise the opposition by having its leader, Colonel Sadık, posted away from the capital. Şevket Paşa refused to do this.¹⁰³ When this failed the Committee decided to try and come to an understanding with the opposition. On 20 April, Talât went to confer with Colonel Sadık. But hours

100. Tanin, 22 Feb., 1911; Stamboul, same date; Talât (Edirne) President; Said Bey (İzmir); Münir Bey (Çorum); Ali Cenani Bey (Aleppo); Mansur Paşa (Bengazi) Vice-Presidents, and Galib Efendi (Karaçi) Treasurer.

101. Cavit's Memoirs, Tanin, 28 Sept., 1943; also 20, 21, 22 Sept., 1943.

102. Cavit, Tanin, 5 Oct., 1943.

103. Ibid., 27 Sept., 1943; Bayur, ii/I, 55.

of discussion led nowhere; Sadık hurled the same old charges at the Unionists - that they were irreligious, free-masons, pro-Zionist and self-seekers. Before he could reach an understanding, he wanted the Committee to withdraw from the Cabinet and the Chamber.¹⁰⁴

When an understanding with the opposition proved impossible, a small group of Unionists discussed another plan. The Committee would confront the opposition with two alternatives: either to accept the old Unionist programme as a whole, or to assume power, form a cabinet and accept all responsibility. If they accepted the second alternative, the Committee, which they thought could still count on about fifty loyal adherents, would retain the name of 'Union and Progress' and go into opposition.¹⁰⁵ But this extreme stand was not accepted by the other Unionists, who preferred to appease the opposition but to stay in power at all costs.¹⁰⁶ The result of these discussions was the publication of the Committee's new ten-point programme in the press on 23 April, 1911.¹⁰⁷ This

104. Ibid., 28 Sept., 1943.

105. Ibid., 29 Sept., 1943.

106. Ibid.

107. Tanin, 23 April, 1911; Stamboul, 24 April, 1911; Tunaya, 186; B.Lewis, 216.

programme conceded all the opposition's demands on condition that they be endorsed by the next CUP congress.

Broadly speaking and for the sake of convenience, the opposition can be divided into two groups. The traditional-religious group whose members adhered to the old institutions and values, and whose leader, Colonel Sadık was appropriately a member of the Melâmî Order of Dervishes.¹⁰⁸ Articles 6, 7 and 9 of the new programme met their demands. Article 6 read, "while preserving general religious and national ethics and morals, to make use of the advances and products of Western Civilization for the development of the Ottoman Empire": Article 7 called for "the maintenance and safeguarding, within the framework of the constitution, of historic Ottoman traditions"; and Article 9 required the modification of certain articles in the constitution "so as to reinforce the sacred rights of the Caliphate and Sultanate".¹⁰⁹

108. 'Situation en Turquie', Constantinople, 13 30 Avril, 1911, a memorandum written by Count Ostrorog, soon after his resignation as judicial adviser to the Ottoman Ministry of Justice, and communicated privately to Sir Eyre Crowe. See F.O.371/1247/25257. - On Sadık Bey's religious background also see Ali Canip Yöntem, 'Hizb-i Cedid', Yakın Tarihimiz, ii, 353-5, and Kandemir, 'Yahudiler, Filistin ve İttihat-Terakki', Yakın Tarihimiz, ii, 243-4.

109. B.Lewis, 216.

The second group may be said to consist of those motivated by personal interest and ambition. They were either disgruntled officials who had lost their positions after the revolution, or those who had joined the Committee and whose high expectations were not met by either the revolution or the CUP. Hüseyin Cahit (Yalçın) rightly gives this group the importance it deserves.¹¹⁰ The remaining seven articles of the programme appeased this group. Article 1 laid down that deputies should not interest themselves in concessions or similar affairs; Article 2 stated that in future deputies should not accept government posts; Article 3 that no deputy could become a minister without the consent of two-thirds of the members of the parliamentary party; Article 4 said there must be absolute respect for the laws and ministerial responsibility must be established; Article 5 that the Committee would work for Ottomanism...; Article 8, appointment and dismissal of functionaries must be regularised; and Article 10 that the establishment and working of secret societies must be brought to an end.¹¹¹

Count Ostrorog, who until very recently had been Judicial Adviser to the Porte, saw this political confrontation as an issue between two concepts of State. On

110. Tanin, 24 April, 1911; and H.C.Yalçın, 'Bizde İlk Hızıpleşme', Yakın Tarihimiz, ii, 153-4.

111. Tanin, op.cit, n.107.

the one side there was:

"le 'Rechtsstaat' de Bluntschli, un Empire constitutionnel, ayant à sa tête un monarque placé au-dessus des luttes de parti, irresponsable, et régi par un ensemble des lois qu'élaborent les membres d'un Parlement, discontant librement les questions d'intérêt général aux lumières de la raison et de l'expérience",

On the other extreme stood:

"... la conception des conservateurs musulmans du groupe dissident, laquelle a pour idéal extrême mais logique le Dar-ul-Islam de Mawerdi ou d'Ibu-Halboun /Haldun?/...." 112

Behind these ideological differences between the Committee and the opposition, Count Ostrorog saw the economic motive. Not only were the Unionists for a modern constitutional, centralised state, they (at least Cavit and his group) had also declared themselves convinced partisans of the system of state monopoly, especially of tobacco. As a result they had become the irreconcilable enemies of those who:

"par conviction, préférence ou intérêt se faisant les défenseurs de la manufacture et la vente libre du tabac, sous réserve de la perception d'un droit d'Etat par l'apposition d'une banderole fiscale sur les boîtes ou les paquets mis en vente." 113

We have already seen how alarmed the French were at the possibility of the 'tobacco régie', which they administered,

112. Situation, op.cit. n.108.

113. Ibid.

being taken over by the Porte.¹¹⁴ No doubt the establishment of French interests in the Empire over a period of fifty years and more, had created an Ottoman group dependent on France. This group would be as anxious as the French to see that their interests and institutions were maintained. Thus the attacks on Cavit for not raising the 1910 loan in France, whatever the conditions. But whatever the strength of this economic motive, it usually found expression in religious terms, particularly as the Committee was thought to be intimately associated with Salonika, that predominantly Jewish city.¹¹⁵

For the moment the dissidents seemed to be check-mated by the issue of the new programme. There was even a possibility that the programme and its concessions might be rejected at the congress. Meanwhile the political storm seemed to have blown over. On 27 April, Hakkı Paşa received a vote of confidence by a substantial majority of 145 - 45.¹¹⁶ A few days

114. See above, 152-3, n.55.

115. 'Situation', op.cit., and Fitzmaurice to Tyrrell, n.d., (received in London on 9 March, 1911) F.O.800/79, Grey Papers.

116. Tanin and Yeni İkdâm, 28 April, 1911.

later, Colonel Sadık, whom the Committee had been trying to remove from the capital, was transferred to Salonika.¹¹⁷

In fact all this was illusory and the Committee's situation did not improve at all. Mahmud Şevket Paşa was still in control, and with the prolongation of the state of siege indefinitely on 13 March, his mandate had been extended as well.¹¹⁸ The position of the two remaining Unionists in the Cabinet, Cavit and Babanzâde İsmail Hakkı, became untenable. Both therefore resigned on 8 May.¹¹⁹ Their successors Nail Bey and Abdürrahman Efendi were chosen from the Senate, as if to meet the terms of Article 2 of the new programme. Because of the continuing dissension in the Committee, Talat resigned his post as president of the party. He was succeeded by Said Bey, deputy for İzmir.¹²⁰ On 18 May, the court-martial suppressed Tanin and the defeat of the CUP now seemed complete.¹²¹

117. Cavit, Tanin, 5 Oct., 1943; Bayur, 41/I, 55

118. Lowther to Grey, no. 171, con., Pera, 15 March, 1911, F.O. 371/1246/10018.

119. Tanin, 9 May, 1911; Bayur, ii, i, 57.

120. Tanin, 15 May, 1911, and 'Les Unionistes a Beicos' (Beykoz), Stamboul, 15 May, 1911.

121. Cavit, Tanin, 10, 11 Oct., 1943; Senin, 19 May, 1911; Stamboul, 19 May, 1911.

The opposition took advantage of its strong position and put greater pressure on the Committee. From Salonika, Colonel Sadık issued a manifesto appealing to all Unionists to make the Committee a national body embracing all Ottomans regardless of race or religion. The soldiers were asked to abstain from politics and not become tools in the hands of politicians. He concluded by announcing his intention to resign his commission in the army.¹²² The end of the parliamentary session on 4 June took some of the life out of political issues. But pressure against the Committee continued.¹²³ Sadık Bey's efforts in Macedonia were proving effective. On 4 July the Mitrovitza branch of the CUP announced its dissolution.¹²⁴ In August, the appointment of Rifâat Paşa, Minister of Foreign Affairs, as Ambassador to Paris seemed the final blow to Unionist prestige. The Senin is reported

122. Yeni İkdam, 21 May, 1911. The manifesto was dated 19 May, 1911.

123. Lowther to Grey, no.403, con., Therapia, 13 June, 1911, F.O.371/1250/23772.

124. Vice-Consul Hough to Lamb (Salonika), Uskub, 4 July, 1911, in Marling to Grey, no.497, con., Constantinople, 9 July, 1911, F.O.371/1250/27808.

to have hinted that it was time for Hakkı Paşa to go.¹²⁵
In such a political situation it is only possible to
guess what may have followed had Italy not declared
war in late September. However detrimental the war
may have proved to be for the interests of the Empire,
for the CUP it came as a blessing in disguise and
gave the Committee a new lease of life.

125. Reported in Times, 14 Aug., 1911.

CHAPTER V

THE DECLINE, FALL AND RESURGENCE OF THE CUP

Italy declared war on the Ottoman Empire on 29 September, 1911. The Italian ultimatum was delivered on 28 September and it stated that as the Italian government found that it could not obtain satisfaction from the Porte in questions relating to Italian interests in Tripoli, and in view of the dangers to which Italian subjects were exposed, it had decided to occupy the province. The Porte was instructed not to resist the invading army, and to send necessary instructions to Ottoman officials in Tripoli in this vein. The Turkish Government was given 24 hours to accept Italy's terms; if it did not do so war would follow.¹

The timing of the ultimatum - the ultimatum itself was not totally unexpected - came as a surprise

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1. Text of the ultimatum in Rodd to Grey, no.67, tel.con., Rome, 28 Sept.,1911, F.O.371/1251/38003; Bayur, ii, I, 93-5; text of the declaration of war in Signor de Martino to the Grand Vezir, Therapia, 29 Sept.,1911, enclosure in Lowther to Grey, no.663, con.,Therapia, 29 Sept.,1911, F.O.371/1252/38771. See also Lowther to Grey, no.248, Constantinople, 28 Sept.,1911; B.D.,ix/I, 282-3; Ward and Gooch, Cambridge History..., iii, 454-6; Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette 1871-1914, 30/I, Berlin,1926, 61-3; Jagow to Bethmann-Hallweg, 28 Sept.,1911.

to Hakkı Paşa and the leeway of only 24 hours threw the Cabinet into a panic.² The Turks had been aware for some time of Italian designs on their North African province. Eight months earlier Hüseyin Cahit, writing in Tanin, had acknowledged the bankruptcy of Ottoman sovereignty in Tripoli and prophesied that it would "fall of its own weight like over-ripe fruit" since the Turks could not defend it directly.³ A little later Babanzâde İsmail Hakkı, the Unionist expert on foreign affairs, warned that the Italians, who regarded Tripoli as their private domain and who were alarmed by rumours of concessions being granted to American enterprise, would resort to arms.⁴ The simultaneous replacement of Italy's Ambassador at İstanbul and her Consul-General in Tripoli in late July was "regarded in Rome as indicating a definite alteration of Italian policy towards Turkey".⁵ No doubt the implications of these changes was understood in the Turkish capital

2. Uşaklıgil, ii, 212.

3. Tanin, 21 Jan., 1911.

4. Ibid., 17 Feb., 1911; Kuran, 541-2.

5. Rodd to Grey, no. 117, con., Rome, 31 July, 1911, F.O. 371/1251/30691.

for on 6 September the Tanin summed up the situation in no uncertain terms. "The Italians" it complained, "regard Tripoli as their promised land.... They deny us the right, not merely to defend ourselves but also to question them. They want to take from us the right to consider the future of that province."⁶ In the light of the Italian ultimatum how correct this estimate proved to be!

In spite of this awareness of their weak and hopeless situation, no Turkish cabinet could surrender Tripoli without a struggle and still hope to survive. Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa told the British Ambassador that the "Government..., which is already being accused of being too Ottoman and too much inclined to neglect the interests of the other races of the Empire, especially the Arabs, could never agree to relinquish an Arab Province to a Christian Power. It would mean the rising en masse of all the Arab Provinces of the Empire against the Government."⁷ The inflexible conditions of the ultimatum, especially the time limit, placed the cabinet in a predicament. It had either to capitulate or fight and the Porte knew it could do neither.

6. Tanin, 6 Sept., 1911.

7. Lowther to Grey, no. 893, con., Pera, 4 Dec., 1911, F.O. 371/1259/49376.

It therefore reacted in the only other way it knew how, namely "by showering telegrams upon its ambassadors and diplomatic notes upon the Powers...."⁸ Its reply to Italy was couched in the most moderate terms with the object of playing for time. Though the Italian demand to occupy Tripoli was rejected firmly, the Porte agreed to open negotiations to work out guarantees which the Italians might consider sufficient to safeguard their interests in the province. Italy was also offered special economic privileges and the only reservation that the Porte made was that Italy recognise Ottoman sovereignty in the area. Had negotiations been opened it seems likely that the Turks would have made further concessions. Only a month later Said Pasa told the French Ambassador: "Nous demandons la 'souveraineté',... mais si la conférence insistait pour la 'suzeraineté', peut-être devrions-nous nous y résigner."⁹ But Italy refused to compromise and in accordance with her ultimatum declared war on the Ottoman Empire.

8. Moukhtar, La Turquie..., 136.

9. Bompard to M.de Selves, Therapia, 29 Oct., 1911, D.D.F., 2^e Serie, xiv, no. 492, 722-5; significantly Said Paşa refused to be appeased by Italian recognition of the Sultan's 'spiritual sovereignty' over Tripoli. See also the Porte's reply to the Italian Ambassador, 29 Sept., 1911, in F.O. 371/1252/38347; and Danişmend, ...Kronoloji, iv, 384-6.

The outbreak of war had immediate repercussions on the internal political situation. The anti-Unionist opposition which had been gathering strength throughout the years attacked the Committee with fresh vigour. As a result Hakki Paşa was forced to resign, assuming full responsibility for the prevailing situation.¹⁰ Hakki's resignation created the problem of finding a Grand Vezir able and willing to face up to such a critical situation. Kâmil Paşa was asked to form a ministry. He refused to do so unless the Committee refrained from interfering in politics.¹¹ The Sultan then turned to the other veteran Said Paşa, who accepted and was appointed Grand Vezir for the eighth time on 30 September, 1911.¹² Said Paşa had some difficulty in forming a ministry. When he managed to form one a few days

10. İkdam, 30 Sept., 1911; Bayur, ii/I, 109; Uşaklıgil, ii, 214-27; Danişmend, ibid. 386; İnâl, 1776; Menteşe, Cumhuriyet, 21, 22 Oct., 1946; and Lowther to Grey, no. 226, tel.con., Constantinople, 1 Oct., 1911, F.O.371/1252/38491.

11. Kâmil's conversation with Lowther and M. Boppe, the French Chargé d'Affaires, see Lowther to Grey, no. 224, tel.con., Constantinople, 1 Oct., 1911, F.O.371/1251/38318; and Boppe to M. de Selves, Therapia, 3 Oct., 1911, D.D.F., 2^e Serie, xiv, no. 391, 580.

12. Hatt appointing Said Paşa in İkdam, 1 Oct., 1911; also İnâl, 1082-3; Bayur, op.cit.; Moukhtar La Tnnquie, 139.

later, it turned out to be colourless and consisted "of men not generally supposed to be in sympathy with extremists of the committee, and it may be (described) as a Cabinet d'Affaires."¹³

On party politics - particularly after Hakkı's resignation - the effect of the war was to bring about a temporary and uneasy truce. For the moment patriotism got the better of partisanship. While the Committee's prestige declined sharply the opposition were unable to exploit their advantage, and both sides concentrated on the Italian aggression. Since Italy was Germany's ally there was a resurgence of pro-British sentiment. The Tanin urged the Ottoman press to refrain from arousing Pan-Islamic sentiments as this would conflict with the interests of England, France and Russia.¹⁴ Earlier Hüseyin Cahit had rebuked the Osmanischer Lloyd, the German Embassy paper in Istanbul for trying to exploit Islam as a weapon against the Triple Entente. He asked the German paper to stop this practice as it

13. Cabinet given in İkdam and Tanin of 5 Oct., 1911; Bayur, ibid; Danişmend, op.cit.; Lowther..., op.cit.; and also Lowther to Grey, no.239, tel., Therapia, 5 Oct., 1911, F.O.371/1252/39063.

14. Hüseyin Cahit, 'İttihadi İslâm ve Matbuatı Osmaniye', Tanin, 23 Sept., 1911.

was opposed to Ottoman principles and policy.¹⁵

Finally, on 28 September, the Tanin warned Germany that if she could do nothing on behalf of Turkey the Ottomans would have to reach an agreement with the Triple Entente.¹⁶

Consequently on the day Said Pasa assumed office he addressed a communique to Great Britain appealing for British intervention in the Turco-Italian Conflict.¹⁷ When this appeal did not bring a favourable response he proposed a formal alliance with either Britain alone, or with the Triple Entente. The only condition he laid

15. Tanin, 28 Aug., 1911. Hüseyin Cahit wrote: "The Sultan is the ruler of all Ottomans and Caliph of the Muslims of the entire world. It is therefore natural for Muslims... to turn their eyes towards Istanbul, the home of the Caliphate. But this is only a religious, moral and sentimental tie and it would be absolutely against our principles and ideas to debase this sacred tie by exploiting it for political ends."

16. H. Cahit, 'İttifak ve İtilâflar Karşısında Türkiye', Tanin, 28 Sept., 1911. - Neither the Committee nor the Porte wanted to become entangled in the dangerous web of Pan-Islam. Earlier in February 1911, Rifat Paşa, the Foreign Minister told the Russian Ambassador: "Ni le gouvernement ni le comité de Salonique ne cherchaient à poursuivre de panislamisme, cars ils se rendaient nettement compte qu'une telle politique menerait à des complications dangereuses avec la Russie, l'Angleterre et la France...." Quoted in Moukhtar La Turquie, 100.

17. Grand Vizier to Tewfik Pasha, 30 Sept., 1911, F.O.371/1252/38364; Bayur, ii/I, 110 ff.

down was that Britain should intervene and induce Italy to accept an arrangement on the basis of recognition of the sovereign rights of the Sultan over Tripoli.¹⁸ But an alliance was not forthcoming, and Turkey's isolation and Europe's reaction - or the lack of it - could not but make the Turks cynical about Europe's attitude towards constitutionalism in the Ottoman Empire. To Boppe Kâmil Paşa expressed some of this disillusionment:

"Nous reposions confiants dans notre maison; les portes et les fenêtres étaient grandes ouvertes... et voici qu'un est entre et que l'on nous a dérobé une province. Qu'est-ce donc que le droit? Qu'est que la parole de l'Europe?"¹⁹

The outbreak of hostilities coincided with the third annual congress of the Committee of Union and Progress in Salonika. Delegates from the various branches had assembled as arranged when the first session opened on 30 September. On account of the war the order of the day was abandoned and the assembly

18. Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Foreign Office, 31 Oct., 1911, F.O.371/1263/48554; Bayur, ii/I, 175-83.

19. Boppe to M.de Selves, Therapia, 4 Oct., 1911, D.D.F., 2^e Serie, xiv, no.394, 584.

converted itself into a 'Committee of National Defense' (C.N.D.).²⁰ It may be recalled that one of the chief issues to be discussed and resolved at this Congress was the dissension within the CUP, and the programme which its dissident members had forced the radical wing to accept in April 1911.²¹ But in the emotional climate of war the problem was not resolved and the dissidents, unable to press for a solution, had to accept a compromise. The partisan political activity which followed in the wake of the Congress suggests that the agreement reached did "little more than paper over the cracks".²²

20. Tunaya, 191-2. The manifesto inaugurating the C.N.D. was issued on 5 October. This body was made up of 8 members and its function was to recruit volunteers for military service. Non-Muslim communities were asked to co-operate with this body through their religious heads. See Tanin, 6 Oct., 1911, and Lowther to Grey, no. 689, con., Therapia, 6 Oct., 1911, F.O.371/1253/39719.

21. See above, 172 ff.

22. B.Lewis, 216-7; the solution was not mentioned in the official decisions of the 1911 Congress, see Tanin, 16 Oct., 1911; French translation in 'X', 'Doctrines et Programmes des Partis Politiques Ottoman', R.M.M., xxii, (1913), 152-8; nor in the 'secret decisions' sent to the F.O. by the British Consul in Salonika, see F.O.371/1263/51124. It seems that the Committee dismissed this issue in a summary manner in the guise of a patriotic proclamation proclaiming unity. See Tunaya, 192, n.65, who quotes a part of the proclamation from Tanin, 27 Sept. 1327, o.s. (10 Oct., 1911); French translation of which is found in Jeune Turc, 10 Oct., 1911, enclosure in Lowther to Grey, no. 796, con., Constantinople, 7 Nov., 1911, F.O.371/1257/44814.

For some months past the Committee had been on the defensive. The war gave the Committee an opportunity to exploit patriotism to assume the offensive and regain the initiative. It aroused public opinion to demand that the honour of the country be saved by a show of resistance to Italian aggression. Being unable to answer the Italians in kind, at least effectively, the Turks turned to the tried device of the boycott, which had worked against Austria, and applied it against Italian commerce. On 7 October the Ministry of Justice issued a circular unilaterally abrogating the capitulatory rights of Italians in the Ottoman Empire.²³

These measures, however, did little to elevate the Committee's position and prestige in the long run. Cavit Bey writes how during "Said Paşa's first days they had nourished a great secret hope...and how it had proved empty."²⁴ The Committee was still thought to be powerful but every day it found itself face to face with a new crisis. It was thought that the Committee

23. Uşaklıgil, ii, 230 ff.; Moukhtar, La Turquie, 138; the circular enclosed in Lowther to Grey, no. 737, con., Therapia, 12 Oct., 1911, F.O.371/1255/41663.

24. Cavit, Tanin, 16 Oct., 1911, and Tanin, 15 Oct. 1911.

had brought Said to power and formed the cabinet. But this "was not true...; we did not even have the power to criticise this body /and/ every sign of moderation /itidal/, concession /sukut/ and compromise /itilaf/ came from our side".²⁵ Finding their position difficult, on 16 October some members of the inner circle of the CUP - Talât, Cahit, Cavit, Dr. Nazım - discussed the possibility of setting up a coalition government, which they considered "a seductive idea for the present".²⁶

In moments of crisis politicians tend to be guided by intuition and the general good as well as by calculated cunning and self-interest. The Unionists were no exception and saw in a coalition government the end of political strife and animosity especially while the country faced a crisis. They had discussed this idea earlier while Said Paşa had been forming his ministry. But because some members had refused to enter the cabinet at that point - particularly Huseyin Cahit - the idea had been dropped.²⁷ A coalition, they reasoned, would mollify the opposition in all parts of the country and smooth over all political and ideological differences.²⁸

25. Cavit, ibid.

26. Ibid., 17 Oct., 1943.

27. Ibid.; Talât was to become Minister of Post and Telegraph, and Cavit Finance.

28. Menteşe, Cumhuriyet, 20 Oct., 1946.

Once the Unionists had agreed about the practicability of their scheme, Talât and Halil Bey were chosen for the delicate task of negotiating with the opposition and persuading them to join a coalition. Talât and Halil first called upon the ideologue of the opposition, Prince Sabaheddin at his villa in Kuruçeşme. They offered him a post in the government which he turned down and without his active co-operation the coalition scheme was bound to fail.²⁹

It would have been a grave tactical error for the opposition to have formed a coalition with the Committee. A coalition government would have maintained the CUP in power, forced the opposition to share the blame for the declining situation, while conferring no real advantage upon them. As it was, the Committee was fast waning and given a little more rope they were sure to hang themselves. The opposition had only to bide their time and the government would be theirs. Consul Samson reported that the Committee's influence

29. Ibid.; Dr.Nihad Reşad, a confidant of Sabaheddin's answering Halil Bey's memoirs, wrote that during this period he and the Prince were in Paris and that the meeting took place a year later during the Balkan War. This, according to the Doctor, was the last meeting between Sabaheddin and the CUP. See Dr.Nihad Reşad, 'İttihad ve Terakkinin Muhaliflerle Temasları', Cumhuriyet 22 Nov.,1946. - It is probably the Doctor's memory at fault because as we shall see the Committee was in no position to offer terms a year later.

was eroding in the vilayet of Edirne, and Kâmil Paşa was convinced that the Committee would collapse at the fourth session of Parliament when the majority of the deputies would come out in opposition.³⁰ Parliament convened for the fourth session on 14 October and Said Paşa came before the Chamber to seek a vote of confidence. This would have been a difficult undertaking under normal circumstances, and even during such critical times the parties had to meet and discuss before consenting to give the cabinet their mandate. The parties met on 17 October and next day Said's cabinet received a vote of 125 for and 6 against.³¹ For the moment the political atmosphere had been cleared by the vote. The opposition had to temporise until the war - not yet a month old - had reached a deadlock and emotions had calmed before going into the offensive.

By November the war had been reduced to a stalemate. The Italians, because of their naval

30. Sanson to Lowther, Adrianople, 20 Oct., 3 Nov., and 31 Dec., 1911, F.O.195/2364; and Mr. Ryan's interview with Kâmil Paşa, in Lowther to Grey, no.236, tel.con., Therapia, 4 Oct., 1911, F.O.371/1252/39009; also Tunaya, 192, n.66.

31. On the opening of Parliament see Tanin and Yeni İkdâm, 15 Oct., 1911; on the meeting of the parties see 'Fırkaların Dünkü İçtimaşı', Yeni İkdâm, 18 Oct., 1911; on the vote of confidence see Tanin and Yeni İkdâm, 19 Oct., 1911; also Lowther to Grey, no.714, con., Therapia, 20 Oct., 1911, F.O.371/1255/41858.

supremacy, made it virtually impossible for the Turks to send troops and munitions in large quantities. The Porte and the Committee had sent a token force of officers, (including Enver and Mustafa Kemal) who organised the local bedouins and harassed the Italian troops from the inaccessible desert. In this kind of warfare neither side could be defeated quickly. In the spring of 1912, therefore, the Italians tried to force the pace by occupying some Turkish islands, bombarding coastal towns like Beirut and İzmir and even trying to force the Straits. But these measures had international implications and were opposed by the other Great Powers whose commerce they endangered.³²

This stalemate was reflected politically by the formation of the Liberal Union (Hürriyet ve İtilâf Fırkası) on 21 November. This party was formed under the auspices of ex-Colonel Sadık, Damad Ferid, İsmail Hakkı Paşa, Lütü Fikri, Rıza Tevfik, Dr. Rıza Nur and others, men who had only one thing in common: they were all bitterly opposed to the CUP. Otherwise the Liberal Union was a mass of contrasts and confusions

32. For accounts of the Tripoli war see Bayur, ii/I, 99-440 passim; Kuran, 541 ff.; Danişmend, iv, 384-6. G.F. Abbott, The Holy War in Tripoli, (1912), and W.C. Askew, Europe and Italy's Acquisition of Libya, (1942), which has an extensive bibliography.

where "liberals mingled with conservatives, clericals with free-thinkers, and constitutionalists with absolutists".³³ The strength of this party lay in its ability to unite all those elements which had been long hostile to one another. Greeks, Bulgars, Armenians, Arabs and Turks now worked together, though only with the limited aim of overthrowing the CUP.³⁴ The founding of the Liberal Union coincided with Kâmil Paşa's meeting with King Edward VII at Port Said, an event which the opposition press exploited to further its own political ends. One outcome of all this activity was what Baron Marschall described as a "remarkable mania of enthusiasm for England".³⁵

33. 'X', ...Courants Politiques..., R.M.M.xxi, 207 and 218-9; The fullest treatment of this party is found in Tunaya, 315-44; and Rıza Nur, Hürriyet ve İtilâf Nasıl Doğdu, Nasıl Öldü? (1917); also see Kuran, 552-3; Bayur, ii/I, 233-4; B.Lewis, 217; D.A.Rustow, Damad Ferid Pasha, E.I. 2; accounts in the press of the day, especially Yeni İkdam and Tanin of 22,23 Nov., 1911; and Lowther to Grey, no.864, con., Constantinople, 25 Nov., 1911, F.O.371/1263/48319.
34. Rıza Nur, ibid., quoted by Menteşe, Cumhuriyet, 23 Oct., 1946; Tunaya, 318-9; Bayur, ibid.; B.Lewis, 217.
35. Marschall to the German Foreign Office, Constantinople, 30 Nov., 1911, G.D.D., iv, 65-6. Cavit complained to Marschall that "Bompard as well as Lowther have been agitating against the Committee and so, indirectly in favour of Kiamil Pasha", see Same to Same, Constantinople, 31 Oct., 1911, ibid., 64. See also 'İngiltere Kralı - Kâmil Paşa, Bir Hatıra', Yeni İkdam, 23 Nov., 1911; R.Storrs, Orientations, (1937), 125-6.

Internal politics were now irrevocably intermingled with foreign affairs.

The Liberals chalked up their first success after only 20 days of formal existence. This was marked by the victory of Tahir Hayrettin, the son of the famous Grand Vezir of Tunis, Hayrettin Paşa, over the Unionist candidate and Minister of the Interior, Memduh Bey in the İstanbul by-election on 11 December, 1911. The by-election was fought for the seat which had fallen vacant when Rifat Paşa was appointed Ottoman Ambassador to Paris. The Liberal victory by a mere one vote proved to have great significance in the politics of the day.³⁶ On the day of the election Mehmed Cavit wrote in his diary:

"To-day the İstanbul by-election took place and in spite of all our hopes the nominee of the Liberal Union won.... This may be counted as the Committee of Union and Progress's first defeat. For some days past something within me made me sense this reverse, but I did not want to believe it. I thought they were pulling my leg. I do not think I know of anything which has affected me so much since 31 Mart." ³⁷

36. The İstanbul press of 12 Dec., 1911; Tunaya, Middle Eastern Affairs, April, 1954, 117-8; and its Turkish original in Cumhuriyet, 18 Feb., 1954; Tunaya, 322; Bayur, ii/I, 236; Kuran, 553 and B.Lewis, 217.

37. Cavit, Tanin, 30 Oct., 1943.

The opposition made great capital out of their triumph. They spoke of the CUP as a force which had passed into the pages of history. Having destroyed it they thought they had also laid the foundations of another institution to replace it.³⁸ This election set the mood for the future political activities of both parties. To the Liberals it seemed as if the tide had finally turned immutably in their favour. The Unionists saw it as the sign of their impending fall and therefore the signal for immediate action.

The Committee's first move in this direction was to try to have some Unionists - particularly Talât, Cavit and İsmail Hakkı - appointed to the cabinet. But this move was effectively blocked by Mahmud Şevket Paşa and Hayri Bey, Minister of Justice and Evkaf.³⁹ After much endeavour the Unionists succeeded in having Hacı Adil Bey appointed Minister of the Interior. But there was an immediate reaction from the opposition. Hurşid Paşa, who was Minister of Marine, sent in his resignation, refusing to work with a member of the CUP, and therefore Hacı Adil stepped down.⁴⁰

38. Ibid., Yeni İkdam, 12 Dec., 1911; Tunaya, 322, n.31; the Tanin played down the Committee's defeat representing it as a triumph of reaction. See H. Cahit, 'İstanbul İntihabı', Tanin, 13 Dec., 1911.

39. Cavit, Tanin, 4 Nov., 1943.

40. Ibid., 5 Nov., 1943.

Finding themselves in this impasse the Committee were forced to turn in another direction. Already in August 1910 Talât had told the 'secret conclave' of the CUP in Salonika that "should we ever observe the smallest possibility of a vote of no confidence..., we are prepared to secure the immediate dissolution /of the Chamber7".⁴¹ Though the circumstances were not as Talât had speculated, the situation had now arisen where these tactics were required.

The dissolution of the Chamber of Deputies would force both parties 'to go to the country' where the Committee thought it could win comfortably. Though the Committee was on the decline in the Empire, its hold on the provincial administration was still secure. This was a great asset in an electoral campaign held in a country such as the Ottoman Empire, where 'democratic habits and values' had still to take root, and where the electoral system was indirect, providing for the election of a local electoral college which then voted for a candidate for parliament. The Committee also enjoyed the added advantage of having an Empire-wide organisation and experience of many years. All these

41. See above, 167, n.88.

points would score heavily especially if elections were held before the Liberals could set up their own organisation or break up that of the Committee.

The vehicle for bringing about the dissolution of the Chamber was the modification of Article 35 of the constitution. This article had been amended in 1909 depriving the Sultan of some of his prerogatives, and giving the last word to the Chamber of Deputies in case of disagreement between the Chamber and the Cabinet.⁴² Said Paşa wanted to remodify this article to its original form thereby restoring to the sovereign the power to dissolve the Chamber without consulting the Senate. He introduced the Bill on 16 December explaining to his audience the need for a strong and stable government to direct a war or negotiate a peace with Italy. He also pointed out that his Bill conformed with the demands of the opposition, who stated that the restoration to the Sultan of some of his former powers was one of the fundamental principles of their programme.⁴³

42. See above, 120.

43. On the amendment of 'Article 35' see 'Yine Kanunu Esasi', Yeni Ikdam, 14 Dec., 1911; H. Cahit, 'Kanunu Esasinin Tebdili', Tanin, 15 Dec., 1911; Cavit, Tanin, 1, 2, 3, Nov., 1943; Bayur, ii/I, 237 ff.; Kuran, 553-4. Text of Said Paşa's speech of 16 Dec., in Takvim-i Vekayi, 20 Dec., 1911. See also Lowther to Grey, no. 934, con., Pera, 18 Dec., 1911, F.O. 371/1263/51583 with extract from Liberté of 18 Dec., 1911.

The opposition could not refute Said Paşa's arguments especially after having called for the restoration of the Sultan to his former position time and again.⁴⁴ Though thoroughly out-manoeuvred by Said Paşa, the Chamber refused to surrender its recently acquired privileges voluntarily. Therefore Said Paşa resigned on 30 December, only to be reappointed the following day.⁴⁵ Said's 'new ministry', in which there were no important changes, received the Sultan's sanction on 3 January, 1912.⁴⁶ Next day the debate on Article 35 was resumed and it continued until 13 January when the matter was finally put to the vote. The Bill to remodify Article 35 was defeated because it failed to obtain the two-thirds majority necessary to carry a

44. See above, 172 ff., n.107 and 109. See also Ferid Paşa's speech before the Senate, in Tanin and Stamboul, 23 Feb., 1910 and enclosure in Lowther to Grey, no.109, con., Constantinople, 23 Feb., 1910, F.O.371/1000/6989; and his letter to Stamboul, 19 Feb., 1910. Ferid Paşa argued that the constitutional amendments of 1909 had constituted a total break with the past and marked an end of the Sultan's prerogatives. The Empire, he said, would have done better to simulate the British rather than the example of the French Revolution. In a country like Turkey the application of the theory of the sovereignty of the people would lead to the dismemberment of the Empire since the Turkish element was in a minority. Consequently the 1909 amendments must be undone.

45. Tanin and Yeni İkdâm, 31 Dec., 1911, and 1, 2, Jan., 1912. İnal, 1086-7; Bayur, ii/I, 240; Danişmend, iv, 386-7.

46. Yeni İkdâm, 4 Jan., 1912.

constitutional amendment.⁴⁷ Two days later the Sultan dissolved the Chamber and ordered fresh elections, and in accordance with the requirements of the constitution this decision was sanctioned by the Senate on 17 January..⁴⁸

With the Chamber dissolved both parties began campaigning feverishly for the coming election. Some of the Committee's advantages over the opposition have already been noted. The Committee further strengthened its position by having its members appointed to the cabinet and to other positions of influence. Adil Bey gave up his post as Secretary-General of the CUP and became Minister of the Interior. Talât became Minister of Post and Telegraph, Ahmed Rıza went to the Senate, Said Halim Paşa was made President of the Council of State, and finally on 18 February Cavit Bey entered the cabinet as Minister of Public Works.⁴⁹

47. 'Yine 35^{inci} Madde', Tanin, 5 Jan., 1912. The measure received 125 votes for, 105 against with 4 abstentions. See Tanin and Yeni İkdâm, 14 Jan., 1912, and 'X', ... Courants Politiques..., R.M.M., xxi, 199-200.

48. The Sultan's Hatt and the Senate's decree in Tanin and Yeni İkdâm, 16, 18 Jan., 1912. Also see Bayur, ii/I, 242; İnâl, 1087; Kuran, 554; and Lowther to Grey, nos. 52 and 66, con., Pera, 17 and 24 Jan., 1912, F.O. 371/1487/2877 and 3939 respectively.

49. Tanin, 23, 24 and 25 Jan., 1912, and Yeni İkdâm, 19 Feb., 1912.

The 1912 election is known in Turkish history as the 'big-stick election' (Sopali Seçim or Dayaklı Seçim).⁵⁰ Though there was some violence this aspect of the campaign has been exaggerated. The belabouring of Rıza Tevfik at the hustings at Gümölcüne has even been immortalised in the poem 'The Star of Truth' (Hakikatın Yıldızı), in which Tevfik Fikret is said to have evoked the image of Christ before his tormentors:⁵¹

"All those feverish gangs armed with stones
Attacked justice in the name of 'justice'.
But every blow restored and every curse refreshed
And from that holy face blood trickled as stones flew.

The Committee's methods, however, were more sophisticated than simply the use of the stick. While both sides canvassed the Committee was in a position to offer some positive reward in return for votes. Hacı Adil's object in touring Macedonia and Albania was to appease the disgruntled elements by promises and con-

50. B.Lewis, 218; R.E.Koçu, 'Türkiye'de Seçimin Tarihi, 1876-1950', Tarih Dünyası, i/v-vii, 1950; Tunaya, 322; Kuran, 496-7.

51. Quoted by Mustafa Ragıp, 'Meşrutiyet Devrinde İntihab Mücadeleri', Akşam, 18 March, 1943. See also Mehmet Kaplan, Tevfik Fikret ve Şiiri, 1946, 120.

Ve bütün kabile taşlarla mücehhez mahmum,
Ettiler "hak" diyerek hakka hücum.
Ona her darbe şifa, her acı söz bir müjde;
Taşlar indikçe sızan kanlar o kudsi yüzde.

cessions and thus win their support.⁵² On the other hand the government was also able to pass restrictive legislation against the press and the holding of public meetings, measures which hindered the opposition's electioneering campaign.⁵³

The opposition could muster nothing as powerful against the Committee's big guns. In February 1912 they tried to damage the Committee's position by publishing Kâmil Paşa's letter to the Sultan, which amounted to no more than an indictment of the CUP and its policies. Kâmil had written the letter from Egypt on 20 December, 1911, flushed with prestige from his meeting with the English monarch. "He blamed the Unionists for the misfortunes of the Empire, and demanded the raising of the state of siege and the dissolution of the Committee of Union and Progress. At the

52. Lamb to Lowther, Salonica, 22 Feb., 1912, enclosure in Lowther to Grey, no.170, con., Pera, 27 Feb., 1912, F.O. 371/1487/9316; and 'Hacı Adil Bey ile Mülâkat', Tanin, 25 Feb., 1912.

53. The Press Laws are in Tanin, İktihâm (İkdam) and Jeune Turc of 19 March, 1912, the latter being an enclosure in Lowther to Grey, no.230, con., Constantinople, 20 March, 1912, F.O.371/1493/12552; Server İskit, Türkiyede Matbuat Rejimleri, 1939, Tahlil ve Tarihçe Kısmı, 104-5. The Trade on Public Meetings is in Tanin and İktihâm, ibid.; and enclosure in same to same, no.235, con., Constantinople, 20 March, 1912, F.O.371/1493/12557.

same time he proposed an alliance with England as the best means of preventing further disaster." This feeble attack, dismissed by Hüseyin Cahit as 'A Voice from the Grave' had no noticeable effect on the fortunes of the Liberals.⁵⁴ In March Damad Ferid Paşa resigned as president of the Liberal Union, making way for Marshal Fuad Paşa, presumably with the idea of arousing more active support from the army.⁵⁵ The result of the election, however, was a landslide for the CUP. Out of a total of 275 deputies only 6 belonged to the Liberal Union. Writing about the election in the vilayet of Manastir where 9 out of the 10 deputies elected were Unionists, Acting Vice-Consul Morgan wrote: "I have no need to say that all legal and illegal means were used to secure this result."⁵⁶ This verdict is just as applicable to the elctions throughout the Empire.

54. B.Lewis, 217-8. The text of Kâmil's letter was published in Tanin, 16 Feb., 1912 along with Hüseyin Cahit's counter-attack, and in Hilmi Kâmil Bayur (Kâmil's grandson),Kâmil Paşa...., 308-12. A french translation was enclosed in Lowther to Grey, no.152, con., Pera, 19 Feb., 1912, F.O.371/1486/8187.

55. İktihâm, 20 March, 1912.

56. Morgan to Lowther, Monastir, 18 May, 1912, enclosure in Lowther to Grey, no.435, con., Constantinople, 24 May, 1912, F.O.371/1495/23463; B.Lewis, 218.

Parliament was opened officially on 18 April, 1912. But because there was no quorum the first meeting could not be held until 15 May. Halil Bey, who had recently been elected President of the Parliamentary Party of the CUP, was elected President of the Chamber of Deputies.⁵⁷ Within a few days Nail Bey, finding that he was unable to cope with the financial situation during wartime, resigned. He was replaced by Cavit Bey, whose post at the Ministry of Public Works was filled by Halaçyan Efendi.⁵⁸ The cabinet now took on a decidedly Unionist colouring. On 5 June Hacı Adil, who had made an extensive tour of Macedonia and Albania before the elections, made an important statement in Parliament. He described the situation prevailing in the areas he had visited as explosive and proposed measures he intended to take to ameliorate the situation. The point of departure in his proposals was the abandonment of coercion as a means of bringing about centralisation for a policy of concessions and conciliation, carrying with it the implication of decentralisation. This important change was welcomed by all and Hüseyin Cahit

57. Tanin and İktiham, 19 April, 1912, and ibid. 15, 16 May, 1912; also Bayur, ii/I, 244.

58. Tanin, İktiham, 23 May, 1912.

in particular, expressed his impatience to see reform introduced as soon as possible.⁵⁹

The amendment of Article 35 was still very much on the cards. This should have been easy to carry out with their huge majority in the Chamber. But in spite of this majority, Unionists were most uncertain about being able to carry this measure through, because of opposition from within the ranks of the party. This problem was discussed at Cavit Bey's house by Said Paşa, Emrullah, Midhat, Nesimi, Ziya, Hayri and Dr. Nazım, and they all agreed that it would not be possible to have Article 35 amended at the moment. They thought that if the cabinet insisted upon it, it would fall.⁶⁰ The Chamber was divided on this issue and to bring about unity seemed an impossible task. "In the Chamber even our best friends, Halaçyan for example, /were/ canvassing against our proposal."⁶¹ The situation seemed a repeat performance. As in 1908 the Chamber was packed with deputies elected under the auspices of the CUP, but who refused to subscribe to all its policies. It was to

59. Hacı Adil's speech in the Chamber, and H.Cahit's editorial, 'Hacı Adil Beyin Beyanâtı', Tanin, 6 June, 1912; Bayur, ii/I, 262-5.

60. Cavit, Tanin, 2 Jan., 1944.

61. Ibid.

remedy this state of affairs that the Committee was determined to revise the constitution and dispossess the Chamber of its power. The Committee of Union and Progress had come a full circle: in 1908 the Committee had invested all the hopes of the revolution in the legislature; after four short years it was reverting to the old situation by handing back the power to the executive. It was on 11 June that the Committee's Parliamentary Party finally agreed to remodify some of those articles which had been amended in 1909, and taken away the Sultan's prerogatives.⁶² The Bill to remodify Articles 7 and 35 came before the Chamber on 22 June and after some discussion it was voted by the Chamber 210 votes to 13.⁶³

The government's manipulation of the Chamber and its disregard for the opposition showed again the futility of trying to bring about change peacefully and according to the law. The measures which the government had taken - the dissolution of Parliament, the elections and the constitutional amendments, though absolutely legal - did much to discredit constitutionalism and its practitioners, the politicians and more particularly the

62. See above, 117-9, n. 70, 72; and Tanin, 22 June, 1912; Tunaya, 323 ff.

63. Tanin, İktiham, 23 June, 1912.

Unionists. Their acts revealed a total lack of direction and ideology and led to a mood of cynicism and disillusionment. In the circumstances there seemed no other way but for the junior officers, who had long been in the background, to step on to the stage of politics.

A group of officers had formed an association in Istanbul in May-June 1912 known as the 'Group of Saviour Officers' (Halâskar Zabitân Grubu). This group had connections with both the rebellious troops in Macedonia and the Liberal Union in the capital.⁶⁴ Their objective was to destroy the power of the CUP and restore 'legal government'. They also demanded the withdrawal of the armed forces from politics and wanted the government to be left to politicians and officials. Having ousted the Committee from power in July, they remained faithful to this principle and did not permit their members to accept governmental posts.⁶⁵

Faced with a revolution reminiscent of the movement of 1908, the Porte's first reaction, like that of

64. Tunaya, 354 ff.; Major Tyrrell to Lowther, Constantinople, 27 April, 1912, enclosure in Lowther to Grey, no. 371, con., Constantinople, 1 May, 1912, F.C. 371/1486/19065.

65. Bayur, ii/I, 253-8; Tunaya, 347; Lewis, 219.

Abdülhamid, was to take repressive action. A Bill forbidding officers to take part in politics and laying down heavy penalties for those who disobeyed was drafted by Mahmud Şevket Paşa. While presenting his Bill in Parliament the War Minister declared that he had always regretted the interference of the military in politics. Even as vali of Üsküb in 1908 and subsequently, he said he had tried to check such activity. Events in Macedonia had finally forced him to take stern measures which he hoped the Chamber would pass.⁶⁶

Şevket Paşa's legislation came too late in the day to save the situation, much less his own position. The rebellion continued unabated and on 9 July the Minister of War resigned as a concession to the rebels.⁶⁷ His resignation, rather than solving any problem, created a new one; that of finding someone to fill the vacant post. In the prevailing chaos no one responsible or with any political acumen was willing to become War Minister, and this only discredited the cabinet. To appease the rebels the post was offered to Nazım Paşa but

66. Tanin, 2 July, 1912; Cavit, Tanin, 14-20 Jan., 1944.

67. İktiham, Tanin, 10 July, 1912; Cavit, Tanin, 15 Jan., 1944; İnal, 1871-3; Bayur, ii/I, 258-9.

he would have none of it. Mahmud Muhtar Paşa was approached but he too declined as did other prospective candidates.⁶⁸ But in spite of the crisis and the cabinet's precarious position, Said Paşa was given an almost unanimous vote of confidence (194 to 4) on 15 July.⁶⁹

The vote confirmed the opposition's charge that the Chamber was not independent but merely echoed the Committee's opinions. 'The Saviour Officers' now went into action. "A manifesto in the press, a declaration sent through the Army Council to the Sultan and, above all, certain ominous military movements and preparations, brought swift results".⁷⁰ The situation deteriorated rapidly. Said Paşa lost heart and resigned on 17 July. When the Sultan asked "Why did you resign? They still have confidence in you." Said Paşa replied, "they have confidence in me, but I have no confidence in them".⁷¹

68. M.Ragıp, İttihad ve Terakki Tarihinde Esrar Perdesi, (1934), 96-100; Cavit, Tanin, 14, 15 Jan., 1944; Moukhtar, La Turquie, 159.

69. Tanin, İktiham, 16 July, 1912; İnâl, 1089; Ragıp, ibid. 102.

70. B.Lewis, 219; Tunaya, 349; Ragıp, ibid., 101

71. Türkgeldi, 55 and İnâl, 1089 give the same quotation, İnâl using slightly older language; B.Lewis, 219.

The Committee had also lost the will to continue and finally seemed resigned to its fall. Talât is reported to have told Halil Bey:

"My dear friend we go through one crisis after another without ever overcoming it. I keep asking myself the question are we ruining the country? Therefore let others come, they are also sons of the country, are they not? Perhaps they will do better than us. We will help them. The purpose is service to the country, is it not?" 72

The Empire was without a government and it was left to the Sultan to take charge. One of his first acts was to issue a proclamation to the army. In the proclamation he rebuked those soldiers who had sent the declaration to him a few days earlier, and asked the army to refrain from interfering in politics. He announced that he had consulted the Presidents of both Chambers and decided that, at a time such as this, it was desirable and necessary to have a new cabinet made up of personalities with great experience in the affairs of state, independent views, and free from external political influences. Therefore he had invited Tevfik Paşa, his Ambassador in London, to come and lead the new government. Until the new government was formed

72. Menteşe, Cumhuriyet, 23 Oct., 1946; Ragıp, ...Esrar Perdesi, 103.

he expected his troops to remain loyal to the constitution and to the sacred rights of the Caliphate and the Sultanate.⁷³

Tevfik Paşa, who had formed the caretaker government on 13 April 1909, rejected the Sultan's appeal by placing too many conditions, and the problem of finding a suitable Grand Vezir remained. Kâmil Paşa, Ferid Paşa and Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa were considered possible candidates but were dismissed as being too controversial. In the case of Kâmil Paşa, Talât Bey even asked Halid Ziya to use his influence with the Sultan to prevent Kâmil's appointment since this would lead to civil war.⁷⁴

Gazi Ahmed Muhtar Paşa was the most suitable choice in the circumstances and he was appointed Grand Vezir on 21 July, 1912. He was known to stand above politics and also possessed a military reputation sufficient to win and command the respect of the rebellious army. His cabinet - known as the 'Father and

73. Royal proclamation in Tanin, 20 July, 1912, with French translation enclosed in Marling to Grey, no.622, con., Constantinople, 23 July, 1912, F.O.371/1496/31978; also Inal, 1713-4.

74. Uşaklıgil, iii, 47; Türkgeldi, 49; Bayur, ii/I, 279-80; Ragıp, ...Esrar Perdesi, 104-6.

Son Cabinet' (Baba-Cğul Kabinesi) because of the presence of his son Mahmud Muhtar, or as the 'Great Cabinet' (Büyük Kabine) because of the array of three ex-Grand Vezirs in its ranks - contained "Personalities with great experience in the affairs of state..." as the Sultan had desired. Only a few of its members were free of outside political influence; the majority was determined to destroy the Committee as a political force.⁷⁵ In the cabinet Kâmil Paşa was President of the Council of State, Damad Ferid was Minister of the Interior, Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa was Minister of Justice, Nazım Paşa was Minister of War, and Mahmud Muhtar was Minister of Marine. The İktiham which called this line-up the 'Muhtar Paşa-Kâmil Paşa Cabinet' was proclaiming an open secret; that once the political storm had blown, Ahmed Muhtar would make way for Kâmil Paşa.⁷⁶

The Committee had been formally ousted from power and the new government immediately set about digging up its roots. At the first meeting of the cabinet the Grand Vezir told Nazım Paşa that the Committee "had only three or four days more to live".⁷⁷

75. Hatt appointing Ahmet Muhtar Paşa in Tanin, 22 July, 1912; İnal, 1812-5; Türkgeldi, 49; Moukhtar, La Turquie, 159; Uşaklıgil, iii, 47-8.

76. List of cabinet in İktiham, 22 July, 1912; İnal, 1812-5; and Tewfik Pasha to Grey, 23 July, 1912, F.O.371/1496/31368.

77. Uşaklıgil, iii, 52.

On 23 July, fittingly, the fourth anniversary of the revolution, the state of siege was lifted though only to be re-established on 6 August, 1912.⁷⁸ Hereafter it was the government's policy to crush the Committee and replace officials associated with the CUP with ones who were hostile to it. Being opposed to this policy because it accentuated the differences rather than bring about harmony, Hilmi Paşa resigned in August.⁷⁹

The 'Saviour Officers', who had only partially achieved their objective went into action again on 24 July. They sent an ultimatum to the President of the Chamber demanding the dissolution of Parliament within 48 hours.⁸⁰ The Committee, still a force to be reckoned with in the Chamber, decided to meet the challenge. Halil Bey had the ultimatum read and amid an uproar the Unionists clamoured for an explanation from the government for the overt role which the military was being permitted to play in politics. Ömer Naci,

78. Takvim-i Vekayi, 24 July, 1912; İnal, 1816; B. Lewis, 220; Ragip, ... Esrar Perdesi, 118.

79. İnal, 1617; Türkgeldi, 56; İkdam, 15 Aug., 1912; Cavit, Tanin, 23 Jan. 1944; and Marling to Grey, no. 647, con., Constantinople, 30 July, 1912, F.O. 371/1496/32942; also same to same, no. 352, tel. pr., 14 Aug., 1912, F.O. 371/1509/36732.

80. Menteşe, Cumhuriyet, 29 Oct., 1946; Cavit, Tanin, 18, 19 Jan., 1944; Tunaya, 229.

himself an ex-soldier, refused to believe that the ultimatum had come from the military who, he said, were not capable of such action. He implied that it was purely a political act inspired by opponents of the Committee.⁸¹ The War Minister was held responsible and summoned to give an explanation. Nazım Paşa, however, dismissed the ultimatum as a bluff but said he would take action against papers which had published the ultimatum.⁸² It was Nazım Paşa who was bluffing; the 'Group of Saviour Officers' was in fact the military extension of the Liberal Union and both Nazım and Prince Sabaheddin were connected with it.⁸³

After this debate it became evident that so long as the Committee continued to dominate the Chamber the cabinet's position would be insecure. The dissolution of the Chamber - constitutionally - became the aim of the government. On 30 July, following a sharp debate the

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81. Debate in Tanin, 26 July, 1912; see also Babanzâde İsmail Hakkı, 'Meclis-i Mebusanda Tarihi bir Gün', ibid., Kuran, 565-7; Ragıp, ...Esrar Perdesi, 109.
82. Debate, ibid.
83. Menteşe, Cumhuriyet, 23 Oct., 1912, and Tyrrell to Marling, Constantinople, 29 July, 1912, enclosure in Marling to Grey, no. 657, con., 4 Aug., 1912, F.O. 371/1495/33863; Tunaya, 346-7.

cabinet received a vote of confidence of 167 votes to 45 with 9 abstentions.⁸⁴ The government, now more secure, submitted Article 35, which had already been passed by the Chamber, to the Senate. Ahmet Muhtar Paşa, who had been President of the Senate and who had great influence with Senators, many of whom were ex-officers, had no difficulty in persuading the Upper House. Article 35 was sanctioned on 4 August, and in the same session the Senate sanctioned the modified form of Article 43, which stipulated that in the event of dissolution, the session of the new Chamber would be an extra-ordinary session lasting two months, and which could be prolonged for another term. The Tanin described this measure as the 'final blow' against the Committee and the constitution.⁸⁵ Knowing that the Chamber would be dissolved next day, the Unionist deputies met early in the morning, passed a motion of censure against the government and adjourned sine die.⁸⁶ Immediately after, the Sultan issued an Irade declaring

84. İktihâm, Tanin, 31 July, 1912; Bayur, ii/I, 290-3; Ragıp, ...Esrar Perdesi, 110-11.

85. Babanzâde İsmail Hakkı, 'Son Darbe', Tanin, 5 Aug., 1912; Ragıp, ibid., 111-2.

86. Tanin, 6 Aug., 1912.

the Chamber's action illegal and a Hatt-ı Hümayun dissolving the Chamber and ordering fresh elections.⁸⁷

The Unionists had felt their way carefully after the formation of the 'Great Cabinet'. The editorial in the Tanin of 23 July had been most moderate and they were hoping to function as an active opposition in the Chamber.⁸⁸ But the dissolution dispelled these hopes, and fearing there were harder times ahead the Unionists began to shift their activities from the capital to Salonika.⁸⁹ But the government, fearing a resurgence of Unionist power in Macedonia, proclaimed martial law on 8 August.⁹⁰ The government's measures against the Committee became more repressive, and the fortunes of the Tanin reflect their harshness and the Committee's decline. The Tanin suspended

87. Ibid.; İnal, 1817-8; translations of the irade and hatt enclosed in Marling to Grey, no.663, con., Constantinople, 6 Aug., 1912, F.O.371/1496/33869.

88. İsmail Hakkı, '10 Temmuz ve Yeni Kabine'.

89. Cavit, Tanin, 22 Jan., 1944.

90. İktiham, 9 Aug., 1912; 'X', ...Courants Politiques..., R.M.M., xxi, 205; circular proclaiming martial law enclosed in Marling to Grey, no.695, con., Constantinople, 10 Aug., 1912, F.O.371/1482/35852.

publication 'voluntarily' on 11 August under government pressure, reappearing on 21 August and continuing publication until it was suspended on 3 September. Next day it appeared as Cenin and was immediately suspended. The following day it emerged as Senin and appeared until 12 September. It was then suspended and came out next day as Hak. This game of hide and seek continued into November when Tanin suspended publication until more favourable times.⁹¹

Yet the Committee did not lose heart; the 1912 Congress bears testimony to this. It was the first Congress to be held outside Salonika, meeting in the capital under police surveillance. It denounced the government's action of dissolving Parliament, which had been sanctioned by the Sultan, as unconstitutional.⁹² But having denounced the dissolution as illegal unanimously, the delegates disagreed over participation in the coming elections. Participation would be inconsistent with the denunciation and when it was put to the vote it was defeated. But Talât, always the realist,

91. Cenin, 4 Sept., 1912; Senin, 5 Sept., 1912; Hak, 13 Sept., 1912; Cavit, Tanin, 24 Jan., 1944 and L. Bouvat, 'La Guerre Balkanique dans la Presse Ottomane', R.M.M., xxi, 234 and 226-7.

92. Resolutions of the 1912 Congress enclosed in Marling to Grey, no. 788, con., Constantinople, 16 Sept., 1912, F.O. 371/1486/39742; Tunaya, 192-3; Ragıp, ... Esrar Perdesi, 208 ff.

argued that refusal to participate would bring the Committee into open conflict with the government, enabling it to crush the Committee. After much heated discussion it was again put to the vote and those in favour of participation won by 85 votes.⁹³

The impending war with the Balkan states made all political debate academic. For the moment political activity went into the background, elections were postponed, and political factions concluded a spontaneous and informal truce to meet the challenge. Mobilisation in the Balkans on 30 September was followed next day by the Turkish mobilisation decree. On 2 October the allies presented their minimum demands. The Porte was asked to nominate with the consent of the Powers a Swiss or Belgian Governor-General for Macedonia; set up local legislative assemblies; create local gendarmeries; and lastly, carry out reform under the supervision of the Ambassadors of the Great Powers and the representatives of the four Balkan States. The French Minister of Foreign Affairs commented that after ordering mobilisation these demands were virtually an ultimatum.⁹⁴

93. Resolution, ibid.; Ragıp, ibid., 214-6.

94. Bertie to Grey, no.145, tel.con., Paris, 2 Oct., 1912, F.O.371/1499/41350; Ragıp, ibid., 120.

The Porte agreed to carry out the necessary reform in accordance with the proposals of the Eastern Rumelian International Commission of 1880. But it refused to give any guarantees until Parliament met and gave its sanction.⁹⁵ No cabinet could have leaned back further to meet the demands of the allies. Public opinion as expressed in the press agreed that reform was necessary, but only to prevent European intervention. Reform must not take the form of autonomy or decentralisation.⁹⁶ The Committee warned that no cabinet should take upon itself a guarantee to carry out reform under the mandate of the Powers, or recognise Europe's right to exercise direct or indirect control over Ottoman affairs.⁹⁷ Once war was declared opinion against concessions hardened and "all sections of the native press took up a hostile attitude towards the acceptance by the Porte of any intervention.... They were unanimous in declaring that war would be preferable to such humiliation."⁹⁸

95. The Sublime Porte's official note to the Powers is in F.O.371/1501/43420.

96. Tanin, İkdam, 8 Oct., 1912; Bouvat, op.cit., n.91, 225; Moukhtar, La Turquie, 170-1.

97. H.Cahit, 'Devletlerin Teşebbüsü', Tanin, 10 Oct., 1912, İsmail Hakkı, 'Harp ve Diplomasi', Tanin, 22 Oct., 1912.

98. Lowther to Grey, no.875, con., Constantinople, 18 Oct., 1912, F.O.371/1502/44676.

The new situation called for certain changes. The first need was to end the war with Italy, and peace was signed at Lausanne on 17 October, the day before war broke out in the Balkans. Italy retained Tripoli but allowed the Porte to save face by permitting the Sultan-Caliph to retain his right of appointing the Kadi of Tripoli. His representative was also permitted to act as the religious liason between the Caliph and his Libyan followers.⁹⁹ In order to assume the offensive on the diplomatic front the experienced, Anglophile Grand Vezir, Kâmil Paşa was recalled on 29 October.¹⁰⁰ On 3 November the Foreign Minister "considered the moment opportune for the intervention and mediation of the Powers".¹⁰¹ Four days later Kâmil wrote a personal letter to Sir Edward Grey appealing to Britain "to induce Russia, her ally, to prevent this war, the sole object of which is to weaken Turkey."¹⁰²

99. Karl Strupp, Aktenstücke zur Orientalischen Frage, (1916), 256-61; Danismend, iv, 395-6.

100. İkdam, 30 Oct., 1912; İnal, 1410; Türkgeldi, 67-8.

101. Lowther to Grey, no.576, tel.con., Constantinople, 3 Nov., 1912, F.O.371/1513/46564.

102. Kâmil Paşa to Grey, 7 Nov., 1912, F.O.800/79, (Grey Papers).

Externally Kâmil's appointment did not have the desired effect of winning the sympathy of Britain or the Triple Entente. Internally, however, it had the unfortunate effect of ending the political truce brought about spontaneously by the threat of war. The Committee's opponents welcomed Kâmil's appointment; the Unionists denounced it as a direct threat and challenge to the Committee of which Kâmil was described as being the arch-enemy.¹⁰³

The outbreak of war proved disastrous for Ottoman arms. The Turkish army which had been at war with Italy took time to mobilise. War against new adversaries in a new theatre of war caught the army unprepared for fresh mobilisation and concentration. Any preconceived plans which might have been used in Macedonia were upset by political changes at the War Ministry. Nazım Paşa, when asked if war plans were ready, replied: "There is a set of plans prepared during the time of Mahmud Şevket Paşa, I am going to obtain and examine them."¹⁰⁴ But they were never used.

103. Tanin, İkdam, 30 Oct., 1912.

104. Türkgeldi, 60; Ragıp, Esrar Perdesi, 118-20, and 129 ff.; for accounts of the Balkan Wars see Kuran, 573-85; R. Rankin, The Inner History of the Balkan War, (1914), passim.

Fighting with the minimum of organisation, Turkish troops were routed everywhere. By early November they had been driven back to the Catalca line of defence, about 40 miles from the capital. Total defeat seemed imminent and the cabinet, having no stomach for a fight, sought the best possible terms from the enemy.

On the evening of 6 November when the Ottoman armies were in full retreat, Kâmil summoned a Council of Ministers. Such was their state of despair that they agreed to allow the Powers to despatch one warship each to the Bosphorus to safeguard their interests in Istanbul. This was an open confession that the Porte no longer considered itself capable of maintaining law and order. This was severely criticised in the Renin the following day.¹⁰⁵ Some days later Kâmil saw Mr. Fitzmaurice and confided that since the Powers had rejected his request for mediation he was now seeking to communicate directly with the King of Bulgaria. He said that he had also given his War Minister discretionary powers to ask for an armistice if he found that the position at Catalca was untenable.¹⁰⁶ Talking

105. Renin (Tanin), 7 Nov., 1912.

106. Lowther to Grey, no. 611, tel. con., Constantinople, 11 Nov., 1912, F.O. 371/1513/48125.

to Kâmil, Mr. Fitzmaurice could not fail to get the impression "that the Turks have no real stomach for further fighting with the Bulgars".¹⁰⁷

While Kâmil was working for an early peace, the Committee was advocating resistance. Turkey, wrote Huseyin Cahit, had nothing to gain from a conference. If the Porte could obtain the cessation of hostilities either by the recognition of the status quo ante bellum or by some small sacrifice, it should do so. But to place Turkey unconditionally into the hands of Europe would be disastrous.¹⁰⁸ Later in November, however, the Bulgarian advance was halted at Catalca. Hereafter Turkish arms regained their confidence and made a recovery while the Bulgars with their extended lines of supply fought at a disadvantage.¹⁰⁹ This placed the Porte in a better position to negotiate an armistice though it raised a clamour amongst the Unionists. Kâmil, who . thought that the CUP should go along with Salonika

107. Fitzmaurice to Tyrrell, pr., Constantinople, 6 Jan., 1913, F.O.800/79, (Grey Papers).

108. Tanin, 9 Nov., 1912.

109. George Pilcher, 'In the Chatalja Lines During the November Battle', The 19th Century, 73, 1913, 624-43; Ragıp, Esrar Perdesi, 130.

which had fallen to the Greeks on 8 November - took strong measures against the Committee. Unionists were arrested in large numbers and either imprisoned or exiled to Anatolia, while others escaped to Europe.¹¹⁰ With the vocal elements of the CUP out of the way, the Porte was able to sign an armistice on 3 December on condition that the belligerents open negotiations within a week.¹¹¹

For the moment the initiative had passed from the battle field to the conference table and the issue of war and peace now hinged on the besieged town of Edirne. Both parties met in London in December-January to discuss the terms of peace. But the Turkish delegation had already stated in Paris that they could conclude peace only on honourable terms. Reşid Paşa pointed out that Turkey's military strength was increasing daily and that fighting would break out if one of the two parties attempted to impose onerous terms on the other.¹¹² On 1 January, 1913, the Turkish peace proposals were stated at the conference.¹¹³

110. 'Tevkifata Dair - İdarei Örfiye Beyannamesi', İkdam, 26 Nov., 1912; Cavit, Tanin, 12, 14, 18 Feb., 1914. After the fall of Salonika Kâmil is reported to have said: "Now they have no future; they were a revolutionary party and their centre was Salonika, Salonika has gone; they should clear out too." See Türkgeldi, 76.

111. İkdam, 4 Dec., 1912.

112. Reported in The Times, 14 Dec., 1912.

113. İkdam and The Times, 2 Jan., 1913.

i) All occupied territories to the west of the vilayet of Edirne would be ceded, but the determination of the boundaries and status of autonomous Albania must be submitted to the decision of the Great Powers.

ii) The vilayet of Edirne would remain in direct possession of the Ottoman Empire, and Turkey and Bulgaria would negotiate any rectification of the frontier recognised by them as necessary.

iii) Turkey would not cede any of the Aegean islands, but would discuss with the Great Powers questions relating to them.

iv) Turkey would consent to any resolution that the protecting powers may come to regarding Crete.

v) The four points above form an indivisible whole.

The Turkish proposals were not accepted by the allies, and though the Porte made other minor concessions a deadlock was soon reached. But for Grey's patience and perseverance the conference would have broken up. He intervened personally and decided to settle the dispute by imposing the will of the Powers on both parties. On Monday, 13 January he summoned a meeting of Ambassadors of the Powers. The meeting drafted a

collective note asking the Porte to cede Edirne to Bulgaria and to leave the question of the islands to the Powers. If the Porte failed to accept their 'advice', the note warned that there would be a renewal of war which would expose Turkey to grave perils. In the final conclusion of peace the Porte would require the moral and material support of the Powers, but this would depend upon how she took their advice. This note was communicated to the Porte on 17 January.¹¹⁴ Faced with what was virtually an order from the Powers, the Porte found itself in a difficult situation. There seemed no way out but to give in. On 23 January the Unionists, assuming that Kâmil was about to surrender Edirne, carried out a coup d'état, forced Kâmil to resign and formed a government of their own.

The coup, known as 'the Attack on the Sublime Porte' (Babiâli Baskını), was not an act of desperation made in the simple belief that Edirne was about to be surrendered. Much thought and organisation went into the coup and its seed is to be found in Kâmil's appointment as Grand Vezir.

114. Grey to Lowther, London, 17 Jan., 1913, B.D.ix/II, 417; Bompard to Poincare, Pera, 17 Jan., 1913, D.D.F., 3^e Série, v, no.230, 290-1; The Times, 14 and 17, Jan., 1913; and G.F.Abbott, 'Peace?', The 19th Century, 73, 1913, 41-52.

We may recall how, at the outbreak of the war with Italy, the Committee attempted and failed to reach an understanding with the opposition by proposing a coalition. With the threat of war in the Balkans the Committee, now in opposition, again endeavoured to have a non-partisan government in power. When the allies put forward their demands, the Committee responded at once with a proclamation declaring their solidarity with the government, offering their co-operation and showing a willingness to let bygones be bygones. But Kâmil's appointment ended the good-will and reintroduced animosity and suspicion on the political scene.¹¹⁵

But in spite of this change - adverse from the Committee's point of view - the Committee tried to come to an understanding with Kâmil though with no success. They wanted a more representative cabinet with Şevket Paşa as War Minister. He had held that office for two and a half years and had prepared the war plans, and was therefore better equipped to deal with the situation. Nazım Paşa's name was linked with the Liberals and he was known to be an opponent of the CUP. Furthermore, he had been vali of Baghdad and had been out of touch with the military situation.

115. See above, 190-1, n.29; and Ragıp, Esrar Perdesi, 96-100.

Talât and Said Halim Paşa saw Kâmil on 6 November in order to discuss the situation, but Kamil refused to co-operate. He dismissed them with "a short dry statement" that reports from the front revealed extremely low morale among the troops. Since fighting was out of the question he was seeking mediation and carrying out negotiations.¹¹⁶ Talât also saw Şevket Paşa and the latter complained of ill-health declaring that he was unable to accept any position.¹¹⁷ On 8 November the Tanin published the news that Şevket Paşa was to be appointed Inspector-General. This news caused confusion in government circles and "Damads, Kâmil Paşa and the Şeyhülislâm went to the Sultan to prevent this appointment",¹¹⁸ and the Tanin was immediately suppressed.¹¹⁹ What appears to have been the last meeting between the Committee and Kâmil took place on 9 November. This encounter did not prove to be fruitful either. In Kâmil's words, "since their

116. H.K.Bayur, ...Kâmil Paşa..., 390; Cavit, Tanin, 7 and 9 Feb., 1944.

117. Cavit, ibid., 7 Feb., 1944.

118. Ibid., 8 Feb., 1944.

119. Ibid., 10 Feb., 1944; also see above, 216-7.

situation and opinions did not reveal any good intentions the matter was dropped after suitable advice (on both sides)".¹²⁰ Kâmil's policy became more repressive and the Committee also turned from words to conspiracy.¹²¹

Having failed to move Kâmil the Committee turned to Nazım Paşa. In a letter to Unionist exiles in Brussels Talât wrote of how they finally decided to stage a coup.¹²² He described how they approached Nazım Paşa first and encouraged him to continue fighting, and to use experienced men like İzzet Paşa, the Chief of General Staff, as well as Unionist officers like Enver, Fethi and Cemal. But Nazım did not respond to their overtures either, and after some time, having done all they could, they gave up having hope in Nazım.

120. H.K.Bayur, ...Kâmil Paşa..., 390.

121. See above, 216ff. Çavit, Tanin, 12, 14 and 18 Feb., 1944, and The Times, 11, 18 and 20 Nov., 1912.

122. Talât's letter was reproduced by H.C.Yalçın in Tanin, 24 Feb., 1944 as an annex to Çavit's memoirs. This letter of 444 words and dated 14 Jan., 1913 (1 Kanunisanı, 1328 o.s.) described Unionist activity over a period of about two months, from mid-November to mid-January. Throughout Talât gives no dates and it is therefore never clear when the meetings he mentions took place, or, more important, when the Committee changed its plan of action. Nevertheless it is a most valuable document.

They then turned to Mahmud Şevket Paşa, İzzet Paşa and their own officers and discussed the possibility of overthrowing the government and taking over.¹²³

At a special meeting (no date) all eventualities were discussed and plans made, all top secret. But it was decided that since they (the Turks) did not possess the means to wage war, - especially to take the offensive and to break out of the Çatalca lines - a coup would only demoralise the people (efrad) further. Therefore for the time being, all plans for the coup were shelved. A little later (it is difficult to say when), they found that some members of the cabinet were arguing that since the existing cabinet was committed to retaining Edirne - though it lacked the means to do so - it ought to resign and the ministry that followed would be able to cede the town and save the country from a difficult situation.¹²⁴

Kâmil Paşa was meanwhile proposing to convene a consultative council (meclisi meşveret), though some

123. Ibid.; on 12 January, two days before the date of Talât's letter, a "Lieutenant Zeki Bey...the most influential leader after Enver Bey, of the Unionist Officers" visited the German Ambassador and told him that "his comrades condemned Kiamil Pacha's vacillating attitude in the peace question and wished to overthrow the cabinet in order to go on with the war." See Baron von Wangenheim to the German Foreign Office, 12 Jan., 1913, G.D.D., iv, 156.

124. Talât, ibid.

ministers thought that this would lower the cabinet's prestige further and bring the country nearer to calamity.¹²⁵ The Unionists decided not to interfere while the cabinet was negotiating. But if the cabinet resigned they resolved that they would:

"...prevent harmful characters like Albanian Ferid (Paşa) or Reşid from coming to power. If Nazım were asked to form a ministry they would /remain neutral/ neither commit themselves nor enter his cabinet... In any peace which resulted the army would certainly wish to punish those responsible for this situation, namely the cabinet; and this too had been prepared. After that our plan would be brought into operation. The cabinet would be overthrown and as Cavit and Cahit had proposed, we would come to power and try to bring the country back to life, if this were destined. For this eventuality we must prepare from now."¹²⁶

Talât's letter suggests that the Committee wanted to assume power and responsibility only after someone else had made peace and borne the odium for doing so. Their only condition was that peace must not be made at the cost of Edirne. But after the Collective Note of 17 January this condition was impossible. Kâmil, who had been pessimistic even earlier, was aware of this. But he was too shrewd and experienced a politician to accept the reprobation for surrendering Edirne. His way

125. Ibid.

126. Ibid.

out of this impasse was to summon a Grand Council, composed of important and responsible people in the Empire, which would shoulder the responsibility for ceding the town to the Bulgars collectively.

The Grand Council was summoned and met at Dolmabahce on 22 January and almost unanimously supported the cabinet's policy of peace.¹²⁷ Next day the cabinet met at the Sublime Porte in order to draft the reply to the Collective Note. But before the cabinet had drafted the reply the Unionists launched their attack. Enver and a small group burst into the cabinet chamber and at gun-point forced Kâmil to write out his resignation.¹²⁸ Nazım Paşa who confronted them at the door of the chamber was shot. His remark, "You have deceived me: is this what you promised?" suggests complicity between him and the Committee.¹²⁹ His assassination, on the other hand, seems to have been the punishment which the army would want to inflict on "those responsible for the situation".¹³⁰

127. İkdam, 22 and 23 Jan., 1913; H.K.Bayur, ...Kâmil Paşa..., 384-6; Bompard to Jonnart, Constantinople, 23 Jan., 1913, D.D.F., 3^e Série, v, no.242, 300.

128. On the coup d'etat see Ragıp, Esrar Perdesi, passim; Kuran, 586 ff.; Danişmend, iv, 397-401; Y.H.Bayur, ii/I, 254 ff.; H.K.Bayur, ibid., 386 ff.; Inal, 1411 ff.; and 1874, ff.; Türkgeldi, 78-9; Halidé Edip, Memoirs, 342.

129. Nazım Paşa's remark quoted in Türkgeldi, 79-80 and Kuran 588; on the complicity between Nazım and the Unionists see H.K.Bayur, ibid.

130. Talât's letter, op.cit., n.122.

One can only speculate on whether Kâmil would have surrendered Edirne; though there is some evidence which suggests that he would have ceded the town. The very summoning of the Grand Council was for the purpose of having a consensus on war and peace. Twelve days after his fall Kâmil expressed to Mr. Fitzmaurice, who was escorting him to the Khedival liner departing for Egypt, "his fears that the refusal of his successors to accept the friendly counsels of Europe would eventually entail greater territorial and financial losses on Turkey. He said he had hoped to save the guns and military equipment ... which would cost about £T. 2,000,000 and which would have been required for the fortification of Chatalja..."¹³¹ The implication is clear: Kâmil was prepared to give up Edirne.

Whether the Committee made a mistake in thinking that Kâmil had already ceded Edirne is of no importance. They had decided on overthrowing the government long before. The question of Edirne, which had become an emotional factor in current politics, provided them with a good opportunity and justification for staging their coup. The Unionists were also aware of the difficulties of holding the town. But once in power they themselves

131. Mr. Fitzmaurice's Report, 5 Feb., 1913, F.O.195/2451/340.

could not surrender the town without loss of face or indeed their very position. Edirne fell to a joint Serbo-Bulgar assault after a long and brave resistance on 26 March, 1913. But when the allies began bickering among themselves over the spoils of war, the Committee took advantage, recaptured Edirne in July, and vindicated their claim as saviours of Edirne.

CONCLUSION

The Committee of Union and Progress passed into history along with the Ottoman Empire in the wake of defeat in World War I. The society disbanded and some of its leaders fled the country. Because of the disastrous end the judgement of history on the Committee has been unduly harsh and biased, especially when we consider the legacy they left for the Republican era. The achievements of the Young Turks have been noted in greater detail by more competent authorities;¹ my purpose here is to consider their work in the political field.

The CUP emerged in July 1908, not as a political party representing limited political and socio-economic interests, but as a society which considered itself the agent of the general will. This was a legacy from the days of the struggle against the Palace and it remained a part of the Committee's psychological personality. Under pressure from other political forces which came to the surface after the constitution was restored, the

1. See B.Lewis, 'Emergence....', 222-33; K.Karpat, 'Turkey's Politics', 29-31; and Hikmet Bayur, 'İkinci Meşrutiyet Devri Üzerinde bazı Düşünceler', Bell., xxiii, (1959), 267-85.

Committee declared itself a parliamentary party. It continued to retain, however, all the embracing structure and identity of a society.

Though the Committee adhered to the principle of constitutionalism, in practice its aims were always in contradiction to this principle. The Unionists wanted to unite all the politically articulate elements and concentrate their efforts on the single task of saving the Empire. While the Committee acquiesced to a multi-party system, it tried to avoid political strife by reaching understandings with factions behind the scene rather than in parliament. Parliament was intended to serve as a platform for expressing decisions already agreed upon. But opposition groups did not fall in with this plan, so that when parliament convened it was full of factions struggling for conflicting ends.

One of the main charges against the Committee has been its role in destroying the multi-party system and setting up a dictatorship. This is sometimes attributed to the failure of the Young Turks to understand the parliamentary system of government and the functions of a loyal opposition within it. There is some truth in this, for the Young Turks were indeed trying to set up a western institution in an alien

environment. But unfavourable circumstances played their part, possibly a dominant one. The entire decade was crisis-ridden, opening with Bulgaria's declaration of independence and closing with the signing of the Mudros Armistice. It was precisely under such unsuitable conditions that the Turks began their experiment in constitutional government, and the experiment was bound to fail.

This failure had grave consequences: it led to the intrusion of the military in politics. The army which had played an important role in having the constitution restored was a potential political factor at all times. Civilians in the CUP seemed aware of this danger and took certain precautions. It is no coincidence that the more prominent junior officers - such as Enver, Fethi, Hakkı, and later Mustafa Kemal - were kept out of active politics by being posted to Ottoman Embassies as Military Attaches. But the constant bickering among the civilians and their inability to maintain law and order always provided the occasion, indeed the need, for military intervention. It was not only the Committee which made use of the army when in difficulties. The opposition too, finding that they could not make headway alone, called in the soldier.

The senior officers, who were more reluctant to interfere in politics, might have saved the situation. But they went down with the traditional bureaucratic elite during the Balkan War, the climax being the assassination of Nazım Paşa - and Şevket Paşa six months later - and the resignation of Kâmil. Thereafter the military within the CUP eclipsed the civilian element; all the more as the scene was set for the 1914 war.

If on the Committee's debit side we put the failure to establish parliamentary government, and the intrusion of the army into politics, on its credit side we ought certainly to place the impetus it gave to modernisation and secularism. Many of the obstacles which had stood in the way of reform for generations were cleared away. Traditional institutions like the Palace and the Porte were totally discredited and lost their positions as leaders of the Turkish community. All these changes facilitated the setting up of the Republic, while some Unionist policies became a model for their successors. Even in the field of parliamentary government and the multi-party system, the seed did not fall on barren soil. The plant that emerged, though not always strong, survived.

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