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COMMENTS ON 'DEFENSE PLANNING IN TURKEY' BY MICHAEL
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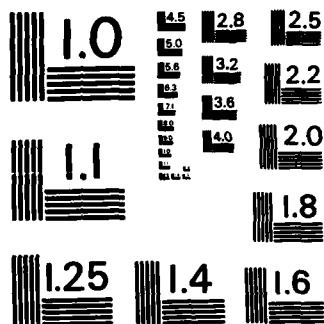
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Charles Wolf, Jr.

May 1982

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COMMENTS ON "DEFENSE PLANNING IN TURKEY," BY MICHAEL MOODIE*

Charles Wolf, Jr.

May 1982

*Prepared for a conference on *Defense Planning in Less Industrialized States*, organized by Dr. Stephanie Neuman, Columbia University, with support from the Rockefeller Foundation, April 30, 1982.

Politically, and notwithstanding the frictions and acute misunderstandings that have marred U.S.-Turkish relations, and which are well-summarized by Mr. Moodie, Turkey has a view of its international and national interests that is by and large reasonably congruent with that of the United States (an attribute that is by no means ubiquitous in the world arena).

Militarily, Turkey possesses extremely valuable assets and capabilities, not only in the Dardanelles and Bosphorus that provide or foreclose Soviet sea access to the eastern Mediterranean, but also in Turkish air-bases that can play a potentially very important role in blocking Soviet LOCs from the TransCaucasus into the Middle East.

And *economically*, under the generally more liberalized and market-oriented economic policies of Mr. Ozal, Turkey has before it the prospect of stable and sustained economic growth, making it one of the very small number of promising developing countries in the 1980s. In the next half-dozen years, Turkey may be added to those few dramatic cases of rapid and sustained modernization in the LDCs in the 1970s: Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Singapore. Since the economic reform measures of September 1980, progress has been encouraging: exports of both goods and services have substantially increased, remittances by Turkish workers have doubled, the balance of payments deficit is down to \$1 billion, the debt service ratio has been lowered, and the rate of inflation, at 30 or 40 percent, continues to decline from the precipitous pace of 1979 and 1980.

In listing these points, I am not really adding much if anything not already reflected between, if not within, the lines of Mr. Moodie's paper. What I want to observe, however, is that the totality of these factors makes Turkey a very important player on the international scene, and one whose importance to the United States should loom larger than has been the case in the past. Some implications follow from this general perspective which I will return to later.

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II

The next general point I want to make concerns the relationship between defense planning and military efforts in Turkey on the one hand, and Turkey's economic development, on the other. In general, the relationship in Turkey between these two efforts and objectives is probably the standard, macroeconomic formulation of a competitive interaction: the "guns vs. butter" tradeoff that we are all familiar with. Higher military expenditures generally divert resources from development, and add to inflation, or make the reversal of Turkey's prior record of hyperinflation more difficult to achieve.

On the other hand, there are several microeconomic considerations that alter, at least in part, this macroeconomic picture. For example, there remains a considerable amount of slack in the Turkish labor force, which is still being absorbed by military conscription. Demographic factors result in a continuing increase in the unemployed population, and this will probably continue to be the case well beyond what the military absorbs. At least at the level of lightly-skilled labor, the military probably does not compete for manpower and, in fact, releases into the civilian population about 150,000 to 200,000 semi- or lightly-skilled workers each year, who are certainly better equipped for higher productivity in the civilian economy than are poor peasants without military training.

Furthermore, the Turkish military is relatively inexpensive by Western standards. Living conditions for conscripts are traditionally minimal, and costs per man are extremely low. The obsolescence of much of Turkey's existing military equipment, as well as further increases in military pay, will undoubtedly bring about a change in this respect, because new technology will require more sophisticated training and maintenance and hence greater outlays for operating and support costs.

Additionally, the Turkish military adds to the civilian economy, both in human capital at managerial levels and in actual investment in production. In recent years, the growth of private industry and the lag of military salaries have led to a flow of experienced Turkish officers into higher levels of industrial management. The numbers reported

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are significant, although substantiating data are elusive. (This is a subject worth more detailed study, both as part of Dr. Neuman's project, and as a possible follow-on to it.) This trend is supported by the "up and out" philosophy within the Turkish military, which does not allow high-level officers to stay in grade for long periods of time. Until recently, the education of military officers was considered of higher quality in training for organization and decisionmaking functions than comparable education of civilians. This is certainly true for those in prime age groups currently, although improvements in civilian education may well be changing that in the near future. (Indeed, I have been peripherally connected with an effort at one of the major Turkish universities to develop a program in policy analysis and public management at a graduate level that, if it is successful, may contribute to altering this situation in the future.)

In this light, it may be worth considering whether there are still further complementarities that might be realized between Turkey's military efforts and its further economic development. For instance, one might want to increase certain types of manpower training in the Turkish military because they are likely to benefit the civil economy, either concurrently or in the future. Training in organization, accounting and management, for example, creates skills that are valuable both in the military and in subsequent civilian employment. Such skills could clearly be of great value in connection with developing opportunities to increase exports of "packaged services," combining management and labor together with machinery and equipment manufactured in Turkey, to be used in foreign construction and engineering contracts, especially in the Middle East.

And there may also be opportunities for joint military-civilian production of such items as heavy trucks, automotive parts, and component electronics. Capitalizing on such opportunities would permit levels of output to be reached at which economies of scale can be realized, resulting in efficient supply for meeting both civil demand and military demand in Turkey, as well as in the larger NATO military market. To the extent this opportunity is to be exploited, it is important to emphasize that the resulting investment and production

capacity should be required to meet international competitive prices, and to avoid the unhappy experience of the protected State Economic Enterprises of the past.

III

Mr. Moodie refers (p. 16) to the potential need and use of theatre nuclear forces "as alternative to conventional reinforcement" from NATO. I disagree with this formulation. Enhanced conventional capabilities within Turkey, and deployable from NATO, or in the form of U.S. RDF, are valuable and necessary in their own right. Indeed, a low conventional threshold for triggering use of nuclear weapons *diminishes the credibility* that they will be used at all. On the other hand, there are numerous opportunities for enhancing Turkish *conventional* capabilities through advanced technology systems that are also manpower-intensive, e.g., small and light, individually operated anti-tank weapons; surface-to-air missile systems with similar light and individually operated characteristics. These conventional options warrant serious consideration in Turkish and U.S. defense planning. Nuclear weapons should not be viewed as an alternative to these conventional options.

IV

→ Finally, I would like to step back for a moment from the specific case of defense planning in Turkey, and indeed of the other countries that have been dealt with in this symposium, as well. I want to raise for your consideration → what I think is a central problem, as well as an opportunity from the U.S. point of view, to relate the general issue of defense planning in less industrialized states to certain major issues of U.S. defense and foreign policy in the world at large. This relationship, I believe, pertains directly to Turkey, as well as to several other countries, for example perhaps Egypt and Pakistan, in the set of countries being considered in this symposium, as well as

to several other countries, such as Korea, outside of this set. In these very brief remarks, I will be drawing on a more extensive treatment of the subject contained in a paper, entitled "Beyond Containment," that I wrote for the Winter 1982 issue of *The Washington Quarterly*.

To summarize an argument dealt with more extensively there, it seems to me that, as one contemplates the long-term competition between the United States and the Soviet Union in the areas of the third world, there are two striking asymmetries that appear. To redress these asymmetries requires an extension and reformulation of the containment policies that principally seem to guide the Administration's present thinking.

The first of these asymmetries relates to continued Soviet support for "Wars of National Liberation" from Western colonialism and imperialism. Under this doctrine, the Soviet Union has managed selectively, adroitly, and in a controlled, measured way, to build on the profound and intractable sources of friction, instability, and inequity in the countries of the third world. It is definitely not the case that the Soviet Union has created these conditions. However, what it manages to do with remarkable adroitness and selectivity is to exploit the existing environment in these areas so as to extend and expand the Soviet Empire, as we have seen take place over the past 10 years in Angola, South Yemen, Ethiopia, Southeast Asia, Nicaragua, Congo-Brazzaville, and so on.

The second asymmetry relates to use by the Soviet Union of well-trained and generally effective surrogate or proxy forces, notably those from Cuba and East Germany, which are supported by Soviet airlift, sea-lift, command, communications, control, and intelligence, to supplement the provisioning of the internal "Wars of National Liberation," that grow out of the indigenous conditions I have previously mentioned.

I do not think the U.S. has developed an adequate countervailing strategy for waging long-term competition with the Soviet Union in the context of these asymmetries. A policy of containment is not enough, as the record of the past decade suggests. What is needed, I believe, has two dimensions, one of which I would like to develop very briefly here, because it bears on the subject of defense planning in certain less industrialized states. This dimension would seek to provide a direct,

responsible, and respectable counterpoint to Soviet use of proxy or surrogate forces. This would entail an expressed U.S. intention to collaborate with, and provide support for, certain "Associated Countries" whose interests converge with those of the United States in opposing the use of Communist proxy forces in third areas. In general, these areas need be geographically no closer to the specified "Associated Countries" than the areas are to the Cuban and East German forces associated with the Soviet Union.

The Associated Country Forces (ACF) would become the free world counter to Soviet use of proxy forces in the third world. What I have in mind is not a formal alliance, but a loose association between the U.S. and certain other countries whose worldviews, and views of their own prudent interests, are sufficiently congruent with those of the United States to warrant collaboration in selected cases, to deter or to counter the use of proxy forces by the Soviet Union that have occurred and recurred in recent years.

To implement such a policy would require both defense planning initiatives by the U.S. with respect to its own forces, and in the planning and modernization, supported by U.S. assistance, of forces in the Associated Countries themselves. I would include as potential candidates for such an associative role Turkey, Egypt, Pakistan, Korea, Brazil, and Venezuela.

To implement this policy, U.S. air- and sealift forces should themselves be specifically earmarked to provide mobility for forces from the Associated Countries. If the policy were taken seriously, and the U.S. role were to be central and active, specific U.S. units should also be designated and exercised to provide resupply and logistic support. These earmarked U.S. support forces should be configured and trained to operate in conjunction with the ACF, rather than operating principally or exclusively with U.S. forces as is proposed for the Rapid Deployment Force. Notwithstanding its acknowledged limitations, the RDF would retain several essential functions. The RDF would provide a backup, a protective carapace, to deter Soviet intervention, and to be committed only as a last resort in the event that Soviet forces are directly committed, or seen likely to be committed. Even in the absence

of their direct use, the RDF would thus perform an invaluable role as a reassuring and protective guarantor for the ACF. Without such reassurance, the likelihood of ACF participation in the first place would be severely diminished.