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Turkish–American Relations and the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1957–63

SÜLEYMAN SEYDI

When the Washington authorities realized in the spring of 1957 that the Soviet Union (USSR) possessed intermediate- and long-range ballistic missiles, they believed that they had fallen behind the USSR. This belief generated a panic in the US public sphere; and Sputnik only further deepened the sense of national humiliation. Actually, no missile gap emerged, for in reality, the US possessed many more nuclear warheads than the Soviets; and it would soon stand armed with a new generation of Atlas and Titan, inter-continental ballistic missiles, (ICBM), along with new intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs), like Jupiter. Nonetheless, Eisenhower decided to place IRBMs in various NATO countries in order to strengthen NATO, both militarily and psychologically.¹ While NATO members unanimously approved Eisenhower's missile plan, most of them refused the weapons, some because they feared antagonizing the Soviet Union, and others because they did not want to provoke domestic opposition. Only three NATO countries, the United Kingdom, Italy, and Turkey accepted them. In spite of its willingness to receive these weapons, Turkey was not originally the US's first choice, because both General Lauris Norstad, the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), and some authorities in the US Department of State were of the opinion that installing a missile site in the immediate proximity of one of the USSR's borders would provoke strong Soviet reaction. However, the refusal of other countries, particularly France, to cooperate put Turkey on the frontline.² Accordingly, ignoring several Soviet warnings, Turkey signed an agreement on 25 October 1959, accepting an instalment of 15 Jupiter missiles in İzmir, a Turkish city on the coast of the Aegean Sea. This agreement went into effect in early March 1962. The arrangements for ownership and custody were confusing: the missiles would be at the disposal of SACEUR, in time of both peace and war. The decision to launch, however, would be made by SACEUR only with the consent of the US and Turkish governments.³ The interesting thing was that the Jupiter missiles were obsolescent due to their use of liquid fuel, their slow ignition time, their inaccuracy and vulnerability. Moreover, soon after the Jupiter arrangement had been signed, new modern weapons such as the Polaris and the seaborne nuclear force were developed. Obviously, the Jupiter missiles would provoke, not deter an attack. Despite having been informed about the nature of the missiles, several consecutive Turkish governments, both before and after the coup of 1960, were eager to receive these weapons, because their visibility and the prestige associated with a SACEUR defence system offered them a more advantageous political position than that

accompanying the Polaris weapons. However, this matter needs to be further examined.

The year 1957 marked a milestone in American foreign policy regarding the Middle East. The Eisenhower Doctrine of 1957, for example, signalled the White House's resolution to be more actively involved in the Middle East.⁴ Before this, the pro-American Menderes government⁵ had been eager to play a major role in the region in order to gain support from Washington, hence enhancing its own security in the face of the Soviet threat. This stance had also suited US foreign policy in the region, as seen in the Baghdad Pact of 1955, signed by Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan and the United Kingdom thanks to the efforts of John Foster Dulles, an American Secretary of State. Although the Menderes government had worked hard to bring Middle Eastern countries into the pact, its authority was negatively affected by the Suez Crisis of 1956. Iraq pulled out of the Baghdad pact after experiencing a military coup in 1958.⁶ Inevitably, Turkey's role in US policy-making endeavours in the Middle East became a secondary matter; and the US failed to provide the financial aid it had promised, due to the Turkish government's mismanagement of the economy. Consequently, the traditionally pro-American Menderes administration tried to promote a closer relationship with the USSR in order to secure from the Soviets the financial support that Turkey so desperately needed. When one closely examines the Menderes administration's foreign policy track record from 1958 onwards, one is impressed by the evidence that Turkey abandoned a unilateral foreign policy. In fact, Ankara tried to establish a balance in its relations with the superpowers by courting Moscow.⁷

Within the context of this new approach, Lütfi Kırdar, the Turkish Minister of Health, paid a visit to Moscow in 1959, and planned for Menderes and Nikita Khrushchev to exchange visits following the Washington summit between Eisenhower and Khrushchev in September 1959. As American archival documents suggest, these visits raised suspicions among official circles in Washington because they indicated a departure from Western-oriented Turkish foreign policy. At the same time, the Soviet Embassy personnel in Ankara had become more active in their contact with Turkish authorities, institutions and newspapers in an attempt to gain the support of more influential Turks and increase contacts between Turkish and Soviet politicians. Not unsurprisingly, these developments were perceived as a challenge to the American authorities' political establishment in the region.⁸ American authorities even warned Iran about Menderes' visit to Moscow, asking if Turkey was trying to put an end to Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). Following this warning, Turkish diplomats in Iran spent their time and energy trying to convince the Shah that there was nothing to worry about.⁹ Semih Günver, a diplomat in the Turkish Foreign Ministry at that time, claimed that American authorities feared Turkey's new approach to Moscow, taken without permission from Washington, because they believed it could provoke some undesirable moves against American interests by NATO members or other democratic countries.¹⁰ Considering the repercussions of a stand-off with the US, one must ask, then, why Turkey attempted to build a multilateral foreign policy?

As a matter of fact, there had been a more extensive discussion of Turkish foreign policy in the Turkish press since 1959. Many news articles and editorials reflected the public's sense that, due to the developments in strategic missiles, Turkey was losing its

traditional geographic value in US global policy. Although Turkey's firm adherence to the West was constantly reiterated, and not even one article indicated the Turks' disagreement with their country's basic alliance with the West, most pointed out that a new era was beginning and that perhaps tactics should change. An article entitled 'ABD'nin Dış Siyasetindeki Yeni Gelişmeler ve Türkiye' ('New Developments in American Foreign Policy and Turkey'), in the 15 December 1959 issue of a biweekly journal, the *Forum*, summarizes some of the most common arguments and expresses them more bluntly than had been done before. This article is significant because it posed the question of how Turkey could capitalize on its position in the East-West conflict when the strategic value of its geographic position had decreased due to advancements in defence technology. The article correctly observed certain changes in attitudes toward foreign policy that had taken place in the USA since the death of Secretary Dulles and in the USSR since the accession of Khrushchev. Americans were readjusting their view of their allies across the Atlantic.¹¹

At this point, one of the US policymakers' main concerns with Turkey's rapprochement with the USSR was Menderes' readiness to accept financial aid from Moscow, which, they felt, might lead to Soviet influence on Ankara's foreign policy. According to the American National Council, if Ankara itself had not viewed the Soviets as a threat to Turkish sovereignty, its acceptance of financial aid might have signalled a new era, in which the USSR would come to dominate the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. What worried the USA was the possibility that Turkey, a nation whose lands had long been threatened by Russia, and whose unwavering desire to be accepted by Western Europe and the United States as a member of the Western community had helped it to maintain a staunch pro-Western and anti-Soviet foreign policy, might now seek economic, political and military cooperation with Moscow. Considering the strategic importance of Turkey in the American effort to build a position of strength in the Middle East, this was quite a threat!¹² Indeed, the USSR had been trying to influence Turkey by any means in order to remove it from the Western camp. Economic aid was one way to serve this purpose. Hence, from the American perspective, the Menderes government was becoming a fragile structure that might put the US's vital interests at stake.

Faced with such criticism, Menderes tried to persuade Washington and Turkey's other allies that his government's relations with the Soviets represented nothing more than the regional version of a more positive atmosphere created by recent visits and exchanges between the Soviets and Western leaders. He argued that Turkey had never intended to make unilateral concessions to the Soviets which could harm the position of the free world. This new approach, he maintained, was motivated by a purely pragmatic assessment of his country's financial situation, but had been misinterpreted by some of its NATO allies.¹³ It should be noted here that, at the time, American officials categorically denied the possibility of reaching an agreement with the USSR in order to dispel the notion (held in Ankara) that relationships between Moscow and Washington had been improving.¹⁴

Following the military coup of May 1960, the military regime declared its respect for Turkey's commitments to NATO and the USA, emphasizing its loyalty to Turkey's traditional Western-oriented foreign policy. However, it soon became clear that the new leaders were also pursuing a multilateral foreign policy. Not only did they declare their readiness to improve relations with the USSR, but they also openly

extended their sympathy to the neutralist bloc headed by China, India, Indonesia and Yugoslavia, whose main objectives were not formally aligned with or against any major power.¹⁵ In the meantime, the USSR stepped up its efforts to influence Turkey and made enticing offers of economic assistance. Although the military government, strained by the country's economic crisis, was undoubtedly tempted by these offers, it did not accept them. However, in light of serious criticism of Turkey's relations with the West, i.e. of discourse by certain Turkish intellectuals and politicians in the Turkish media,¹⁶ Washington believed that elements within the Turkish government were urging the acceptance of at least some additional Soviet assistance, on the grounds that Turkey was in a position to benefit from both sides of the Cold War, as neutrals did. There seemed to be little likelihood that Turkey would join the ranks of the 'neutralists' as long as the Soviet threat remained, and as long as Turkey's friends and allies provided sufficient aid to make continued resistance to Soviet offers possible.¹⁷ Thus, the US had to find a way to guarantee that Turks would continue to view the USSR as a threat and to ensure that the provisional Turkish government would not be pulled closer to the USSR, out of the grasp of the US and other Western allies.¹⁸

After the military coup, Turkey's main concern in its relations with the United States differed little from that of the former government: first and foremost, it wished to secure American military and economic aid to enhance its own security vis-à-vis the USSR. The major bargaining cards in Turkey's hands, according to Turkish government assessments, were the continued Soviet threat to its sovereignty and its strategic position, which was indispensable to the US. The proposed missile installation was one of the main symbolic responses to the Soviet threat, and hence served both the US's and Turkey's interests. For this reason, Turkish diplomats never missed an opportunity to use this card in their contacts with Americans. On 6 June 1961, in his conversation with Raymond R. Hare, American Ambassador to Ankara, Selim Sarper, the Turkish Foreign Minister, referred to great technological and psychological improvements in the battle against Soviet propaganda aimed at Turks. After the coup, the Soviets had promised many things and had for example urged all citizens to seek power, students to seek more liberty, and Muslims to remain conservative and avoid the West. *Bizim (Our) Radio*, in particular, was an effective source of propaganda in this regard. It was in this context that Sarper informed Hare of the attitude of many senior military officers, who were complaining that the US had not given enough assistance. On the basis of this unsubstantiated but generally accepted premise, Turkish officials went on to connect all issues to their unfulfilled desire for military equipment. Concerns about the US's modification of strategic concepts in a manner possibly detrimental to Turkey culminated in a response to Kennedy's statement emphasizing the importance of Western Europe.¹⁹

At some point immediately prior to Kennedy's entrance into the White House, Turkey became an important element in Soviet foreign policy regarding Cold War politics. In order to strengthen its hand against Washington, the Kremlin desired Turkey's departure from its Western-oriented foreign policy and its establishment of closer relations with Moscow. The Kremlin's stance regarding Turkey should be examined within the missiles context. As the United States built military establishments within the NATO context along its Eastern border, the Kremlin could not remain unmoved. Khrushchev faced intense pressure to strengthen Moscow's position vis-à-vis the Western world, not only from within domestic circles, but also

within the Communist world at large. From the very beginning, Moscow put pressure on Turkey to discontinue the missile plans; sometimes this pressure came in the form of threatening language. For example, in June 1957, when the US first proposed the instalment of the missiles in Turkey, Khrushchev said to the Turks: ‘You regard yourselves as a strong means of defence for NATO. But, in the event of war, General Norstad will not be able to rush to Turkey’s aid and will not be able to be present in time for Turkey’s funeral.’²⁰

Later, on 3 February 1961, he sent an aide memoire to the Turkish government referring to reports in the Turkish press concerning the construction of NATO missile bases in Turkey in immediate proximity to the USSR border, as well as to the intention of that military grouping to provide Turkey with nuclear weapons, and stressing that the Soviet government would be alerted. The Soviet Union had once before secured the attention of the Turkish government, on 28 April 1959, on the occasion of accord negotiations between Turkey and the United States concerning the construction of missile bases on Turkish territory. At that time, the Soviets had reminded the Turkish officials in their aide memoire of the provocative flight of the American U-2 spy-plane, which had taken off from the American airbase in Incirlik, Turkey, and was shot down on 1 May 1960 in the region of Sverdlovsk. They referred to this incident to argue that in utilizing bases placed at their disposal on Turkish territory, foreign military circles threatened not only the security of the USSR and Turkey, but also that of their neighbours. The Turkish government had replied that measures taken by Turkey within the framework of its alliances were not directed against the USSR.²¹

The Soviet tone had not always been so threatening. For example, the Soviets reiterated informal inquiries to ascertain whether or not İsmet İnönü, the Turkish Prime Minister, would accept an invitation to visit the USSR. Some articles that appeared in the Turkish press in early January 1962 claimed that the Soviets would make \$500 million in Soviet credit available on easy financial terms, but that Nikita Khrushchev, the Soviet Ambassador to Ankara, was trying to ascertain how much political *quid pro quo* the Turks might give. A Turkish daily newspaper with socialist leanings, *Cumhuriyet*, claimed that the Soviet offer of aid was contingent on the elimination of missiles and other military bases on Turkish soil. In early January 1962, the Turkish press featured various stories about Soviet offers of aid.²² Meanwhile, İnönü strongly reaffirmed Turkey’s loyalty to the NATO and CENTO alliances on 9 January 1962, as well as its support for UN policy at the party’s congress. He made clear that although Turkey wanted to get along with the USSR within the above frameworks, and would avoid provocative policies, it was not possible to form an alliance with the USSR, just as it was not possible to be neutral. At the same meeting, İnönü spoke of a favourable development in relations with the US, and indicated that the Turkish government would cooperate with a new American approach to economic assistance. A few days earlier, at the Turkish Parliament’s Budget Commission Meeting, Sarper had reportedly been displeased with alleged Soviet offers of aid, characterized the press publicity as ‘part of the Soviet’s own propaganda’, and spoken encouragingly about the American economic and military assistance policy.²³

The magnitude of socio-political developments in Berlin, Cuba and Laos increased the Cold War political tension, just as Kennedy entered the White House.²⁴

American relations with Turkey during the Kennedy administration developed within this context, even though a number of serious debates on the future of the Jupiter missiles had already been held. On 11 February 1961, the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy urged that construction of the missiles not be permitted, since they were 'surplus weapons, insecure, vulnerable and of only first strike capability'. Instead, committee members suggested, a Polaris submarine should be deployed and operated and controlled by American personnel.²⁵

Some memoirs and documents suggest that President Kennedy wanted to end the Jupiter missiles plan and that he ordered their removal before October 1962, because they were considered insecure, vulnerable, and limited in use. Kennedy's memoirs even convey his shock when he learned during the crisis that the missiles were still in Turkey.²⁶ However, Barton J. Bernstein claims the reverse. According to him, Kennedy knew all the details about the Jupiter missiles; and his administration, not Eisenhower's, installed these missiles in late 1961 to fulfil the 1959 agreement.²⁷ If this is true, then the construction of the Jupiter missiles would not yet have begun when Kennedy stepped into power.

Before the installation started, at a National Security Council (NSC) meeting on 29 March 1961, Kennedy had directed a group representing the Departments of State and Defence and the CIA to 'review the question of IRBMs in Turkey and provide recommendations to him'. The NSC had suggested that the projected deployment of IRBMs to Turkey not be cancelled.²⁸ Bernstein suggests that it was no accident that the committee was to be chaired by a representative from the State Department, which, for political reasons, did not look favourably upon the removal of the Jupiter missiles, rather than by one from the Defence Department, which was deeply concerned about the missiles' provocative nature. In short, the NSC's evaluation was based primarily on the State Department's logic. When the Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, raised this matter with Sarper at CENTO, the latter's reaction was strongly adverse. Sarper explained that as the Turkish government had just spent a lot of money on the missile installation, the Turkish people would hardly understand the reason why the missiles were to be removed, unless they were to be replaced by another system that would enhance Turkey's security. Hence, American authorities could not successfully put pressure on the Turkish government, because Turkey's citizens regarded the Jupiter missiles as a symbol of the alliance's determination to use atomic weapons in the case of a Soviet attack on Turkey.²⁹ Ironically, Turkish authorities stated on more than one occasion that Jupiter missiles based on Turkish soil represented 'firm proof of the U.S.'s commitment to Turkey's security' – whereas submarines cruising the Mediterranean with Polaris missiles clearly did not.³⁰ The support of General Norstad, who emphasized the military importance of sending IRBMs to Turkey, displayed in his discussion with Sarper regarding the Jupiter missiles' presence in Turkey, also made it unlikely that any attempt to persuade the Turkish military to abandon the project would succeed.³¹ Accordingly, Nash points out that Kennedy disliked going ahead with the Jupiter project, but understood the Turkish point of view.³²

Turkey's insistence on keeping IRBMs in its territory contains some historical irony. Namely, while Turkey was the most eager of NATO members to receive these weapons, some authorities had a code name for them: instead of IRBM, they said IBRAHIM II. It is unclear whether American or Turks suggested the name;

however, it makes reference to Ibrahim II, an Ottoman sultan who ruled from 1740 to 1748 with some inadequacy, displaying lunatic or psychotic behaviour. In naming the Jupiter missiles after him, it is clear that the authors wanted to emphasize the missiles' lack of defensive capacity.³³ Although it is likely that most Turkish authorities were aware of their limited defensive value, the missiles continued to be viewed as a symbol of Turkey's importance within the Western security system, and also as a source of prestige. But most importantly, the missile installations were a means of getting more economic aid from the US. For this reason alone, Turkish military authorities were also reluctant to give up the missiles. At this point, the account of Admiral Sezai Orkunt, head of the Turkish Military Mission in Washington from 1961 to 1964, becomes significant. Orkunt wrote in his book that the Turkish military authorities had been informed of the Jupiter missiles' low military value for Turkish defence, but that his report was ignored by Turkish military authorities.³⁴ In fact, the Turkish government did not have the luxury of acting against military authorities' wishes, particularly in those years, when the military had a strong influence on governmental decision making. It seems unlikely that the Turkish government could have supported the instalment if the Chiefs of the Turkish General Staff had not wanted it.

The military value of Turkish Jupiter missiles was discussed not only at the administrative level, but also in the Western and the Turkish press. The *Daily Sketch*, a British newspaper, reported that Jupiter missile bases in Turkey and Italy would be removed because the Americans had manufactured a sufficient number of Polaris submarines and launching missiles, and furthermore, that the US would no longer require overseas bases because Polaris missiles could be fired from moving bases upon command. The same newspaper article stated that this change would take place after 1 November 1962. Similar information was dispatched by US newspapers.³⁵ Such reports were then quoted by some Turkish papers, and it was indicated that this decision might also affect US aid to Turkey. For instance, the socialist weekly *Yön* commented that past and present assistance given to Turkey by Western countries had been provided primarily due to Turkey's military importance. Since Polaris missiles would decrease Turkey's role in Western defence, it must, therefore, be expected that future foreign aid would not be as generous. This would, in turn, decrease Turkey's balance of payments deficit. However, *Yön* concluded, the Turkish Foreign Ministry did not want to believe that there would be any question of the removal of the Jupiter missiles for years to come.³⁶

On 23 August 1962, probably under the influence of these discussions, Kennedy once again ordered George Ball, the Under-Secretary of State, to accelerate the study into the removal of Jupiter missiles in Turkey and Italy. Even though the Department of State opposed the removal of the missiles from Turkey because of Turkey's displeasure over the proposal, Kennedy was ready to cancel the project at the expense of offending his ally. However, Kennedy's directive failed again, as the proposal once again faced strong objections, from both Turkey and the US Secretary.³⁷ In reality, Kennedy's directive did not mean that Jupiter missiles in Turkey would be dismantled immediately, for they had become operational only a short time before.³⁸ Faced with such vehement criticism concerning such militarily useless missiles, Kennedy became curious: he wanted to know what the political and military outcome of dismantling the missiles would be. At this point, historians

today might ask why the American authorities could not simply decide to remove the surplus weapons.

In fact, American political circles were well aware that the Jupiter missiles in Turkey were obsolete and provided no military advantage; but the real problem was political and by no means simple. First, Turkey was not a politically or militarily stable nation. Withdrawal of the missiles could cause a major crisis of confidence, which would complicate and deepen the political turmoil and perhaps enhance the establishment of a military dictatorship there. US officials understood that the Turks would view such a decision as desertion by an ally. Moreover, American authorities were not just concerned about Turkey's reaction, but also about the way a trade-off would be read by many other allies, particularly of those on the Asian–Soviet periphery.³⁹

The Jupiter issue acquired more dangerous overtones when the Cuban Crisis erupted on 22 October 1962. On this date, the American government instigated a naval blockade of Cuba, after the White House learned (on 16 October 1962) that the Soviet Union had begun to install intermediate- and long-range missile sites in Cuba, and that certain nuclear warheads targeted the US.⁴⁰

It seems that from the very beginning, the Soviets made an analogy of Cuba and Turkey. However, with the exception of John McCone, the CIA director, no American authorities foresaw that the Soviets would install a missile site in Cuba. When the crisis erupted, American authorities argued that the Soviet weapons were designed for aggression and had been deployed secretly, whereas American weapons (in Turkey) were defensive and had been deployed openly.⁴¹

Of course, the installation of Jupiter missiles in Turkey was not the main factor in Khrushchev's decision to install missiles in Cuba. Rather, his brinkmanship on the Berlin issue and the unification of Germany, that is, the pressure he put on the US to solve problems in Germany, played a larger role. At the same time, the possibility that Fidel Castro, the revolutionary leader, Prime Minister, and later President of Cuba – might distance himself from Moscow meant that something had to be done by Khrushchev to restore Castro's confidence in Moscow.⁴² In retrospect, it seems that the existence of Jupiter missiles in Turkey provided quite a reasonable excuse for the Soviet installation of intermediate- and long-range missile sites in Cuba. Even so, Khrushchev had long badgered American visitors about missile sites along the Soviet periphery. In 1958, for example, he complained to Adlai Stevenson, the American Ambassador to the UN, saying, 'What would Americans think if the Soviets set up bases in Mexico or some other place?'⁴³ In this light, Averell Harriman's evaluation of the situation from the Soviet point of view, as expressed in his memorandum dated 22 October 1962, is interesting. Harriman stressed the fact that there had undoubtedly been great pressure on Khrushchev for a considerable time to do something about the American ring of bases, an undesirable situation which was only further aggravated by the American placement of Jupiter missiles in Turkey. During his visit to the USSR in June 1959, even citizens in Central Asia and Siberia had asked Harriman, 'Why are your bases threatening to attack us? We were such close allies during the war. Why don't you want to live in peace?'⁴⁴ The Soviets approached Harriman as a friend, since he had been highly regarded during his term as the American Ambassador to Moscow during the Second World War. According

to Harriman, the Soviets felt threatened by nuclear bases close to their borders; and Khrushchev had been under pressure from his military and from the more aggressive members of the Communist party to use Cuba to counter the action and to offset the humiliation. Khrushchev frequently referred in one way or another to what was being discussed in the Kremlin councils. An item of particular interest in this context was his statement that the Soviet Union must be dealt with like America, as a partner equal in strength; and that this relationship had become more definite as a result of new Soviet influence in the Western Hemisphere. Harriman felt that the proposal and actual placement of American missiles in Turkey and Italy had been counter-productive, both to US–Soviet relations and domestically. Even though these missiles could easily be destroyed, their existence had been humiliating to Soviet pride. Harriman had also thought for some years that since the US had begun a policy of abandoning military bases, either because of local pressures or because they were no longer needed, these particular bases should have been used in negotiations with the Soviet Union. Khrushchev could have won the hearts of his people and justified a more cooperative approach if he could have shown that these bases had been eliminated through his negotiation. Harriman even stated that since 1941 he had been convinced that the US should do its best to reduce the influence of the more hawkish group in the Kremlin councils and to increase that of more cooperative members. He claimed that Khrushchev was persuaded to take this dangerous action in Cuba by the more hawkish group.⁴⁵

When the Cuban Missile Crisis erupted on 22 October 1962, the Soviet diplomats in the Western capitals and in the UN suggested to their Western counterparts that the best way to reach a peaceful solution was to trade off the Jupiter missiles in Turkey for the Soviet missiles in Cuba. Khrushchev also followed the same course. He told William E. Knox, an American businessman, on 24 October, ‘You will learn to live with those missiles in Cuba, just as we learned to live with those in Turkey.’⁴⁶ Khrushchev knew, of course, that the Jupiter missiles were first strike weapons and had no further military value; but, he took their psychological effect on his nation into account to appease the hardliners in Moscow.

As the crisis reached its peak, Moscow Radio broadcast a message from Khrushchev, who once again asserted that the missiles had been sent to defend Cuba, not to threaten the US. He also called attention to the double standard inherent in American objections to the presence of missiles in the Caribbean:

You are disturbed by Cuba. You say that this disturbs you because it lies only 90 sea miles from the coast of the US. But, Turkey borders us; our sentries patrol back and forth and see each other. Do you consider, then, that you have the right to demand security for your own country and the removal of the weapons you call offensive, but do not accord the same right to us? You have placed destructive missile weaponry, which you call offensive, in Turkey, literally, right next to us. How then can recognition of our equal military capacities be reconciled with such unequal relations between our great states? This is irreconcilable.⁴⁷

This was a hint from Khrushchev that there was only one way out of this crisis, namely a Turkey–Cuba trade-off to be sounded by Kennedy. It was at this point that Kennedy began to accept the Cuba–Turkey analogy.

The State Department was aware that the Soviet reaction to the Cuban blockade would most likely involve efforts to compare missiles in Cuba with the Jupiter missiles in Turkey. While such a comparison was refutable, it was possible that a solution for the Cuban Missile Crisis would involve the dismantling and removal of the Jupiter missiles. However, the State Department already knew from earlier talks with Turkish officials that this would create serious political and military problems for American–Turkish relations in regard to Turkey’s place in the NATO alliance.⁴⁸ Taking these concerns into account, a carefully prepared contingency plan was needed in order avoid harming American relations with ‘this important ally’. Dean Rusk urgently requested Raymond Hare’s assessment regarding the political consequences of such a removal under various assumptions, including outright removal, removal accompanied by the stationing of a Polaris submarine in the area, or removal with some other significant military offset, such as a seaborne multilateral/nuclear force within NATO.⁴⁹

Sharing Rusk’s concern, Hare replied that the problems in dealing with Ankara would be partly psycho-political and partly substantive; psycho-political in the sense that

Turks were proud, courageous people who do not understand the concept or process of compromise. It was this quality of steadfast, even stolid courage in both spirit and policy, together with traditional Turkish military skill, which is actually the nation’s greatest asset to the U.S. and to the West, generally speaking, and by the same token it is here that we would have the most to lose in the process of the Jupiter removal.⁵⁰

Turks might get the impression that their interests as an ally were being traded off in order to appease an enemy. The problem was substantive in the sense that the Turks set great store on arms, which they felt necessary to meet their needs, and just a year before had been adamant in refusing the American suggestion that the Jupiter project might not be implemented. Since then, there had been no indication that their position had changed; and it could therefore be assumed that if the US insisted on removal, then the Turkish demand for arms to fill the vacuum would be specific and sizeable. In that case, they might have some interest in a Polaris or seaborne nuclear force; but, it was doubtful that they would consider either of these options an adequate compensation for the loss of the Jupiter missiles; and it was foreseeable that they would make alternative or supplemental requests for military hardware.⁵¹

Another interesting evaluation came from Thomas K. Finletter, the permanent US representative to NATO. After his conversation in Paris with Feridun Cemal Erkin, who replaced Sarper on 25 March 1962, Finletter understood the fact that the Jupiter missiles’ obsolete and vulnerable status did not affect Turkish thinking. It was apparent that any arrangement that did not guarantee atomic capability equal to that of the Jupiter missiles on Turkish soil would be rejected by the Turks. The removal of the missiles and subsequent stationing of Polaris submarines in the area left doubts about whether the mere deployment of a Polaris would be attractive to Turkish authorities, since they really would have no power to use a Polaris in a time of crisis. Moreover, they had already turned down a similar proposal in April 1961. It could be argued that the Turks really had no authority over the use of Jupiter

missiles because of custodial arrangements; nevertheless, they must have felt some assurance in having the weapons on their territory and somewhat in their hands. Turkish concern regarding a Polaris substitution might be partially met by consulting them on targeting, so as to assure them that targets in which they were interested would be covered by a Polaris. It would also be important to assure them that three Polaris submarines in the area would effectively more than double the coverage then afforded by obsolete Jupiter missiles. Even so, Finletter doubted that the above arrangements would adequately compensate the Turks. Therefore, he developed a proposal for a small southern command multilateral seaborne force (MLF) on a 'pilot basis'. If such a firm suggestion were made, it should be an acceptable arrangement for the Turks, fairly compensating them for the loss of the obsolete Jupiter missiles. Such an offer would take the form of converting a number of merchant-type vessels to a Middle Range Ballistic Missile (MRBM) force, utilizing Polaris A-2 missiles. Ships could be deployed in the Eastern Mediterranean with appropriate targets of interest to the Mediterranean allies involved, and could be manned by mixed Turkish, Italian, American, and possibly Greek crews. The Polaris deployment would then fill the gap caused by the removal of the Jupiter missiles, while a southern command multilateral force was being put together.⁵²

The Policy Planning Committee of the State Department was of the opinion that the effects of phasing out or eliminating the Jupiter missiles in Turkey could lead to the fall of the Turkish government unless suitable NATO measures were taken. For this reason, the Committee's suggestion for dealing with the Jupiter missiles in Turkey was to 'push hard' to establish the Pilot Southern Command Multilateral Force, as proposed by Finletter. The Committee suggested that Finletter should be instructed to solicit the North Atlantic Council's consideration of the sea-based multilateral MRBM concept.⁵³ However, in a conversation with American officials, Turkey strongly objected to some United States and allied countries' commentators' tendency to equate the Soviet missile bases in Cuba with the missile bases in Turkey. The bases in Turkey, Turks claimed, were not specifically American bases in that they were a joint effort by the United States and Turkey to carry out a NATO requirement. By agreeing to the NATO requirement, Turkey, like Italy and the UK, had demonstrated courage, resolution and a deep commitment to the common defence of the NATO region as a whole. Stressing the nation's good standing as a NATO and UN member which had done its best to contribute to collective security, as in the example of IRBMs and sending Turkish forces to Korea, Turgut Menemencioğlu, Turkish Ambassador to the US, indicated that Turkey bitterly resented being equated 'with a country in the Caribbean, run by a bearded pirate who had turned his island into a base for aggression against the free world'.⁵⁴ In short, the Turks sought to minimize the Turkish–Soviet bilateral irritants and transfer this relationship into a broad pattern of East–West confrontation. Substitution of the local Jupiter missiles for a multinational area force could constitute contribution to this policy objective without constituting a concession to the Soviets.

During the crisis, the Turkish government and military authorities also feared that the allied countries' reaction would not escape the notice of the Soviets, who might decide to take advantage of this atmosphere and put more pressure on Turkey in an effort to eliminate US missile installations. After the Turkish cabinet asked Erkin to

bring this issue to the attention of the American government, he stated to Hare that under these circumstances the dangers of military excursions were greatly increased. Thus, Turkey had to receive desperately needed military equipment as soon as possible.⁵⁵ It became obvious that Turkey, focused on the need for self-defence, would not be eager to dismantle the Jupiter base.

When the Cuban Missile Crisis reached a quite delicate stage on 27 October 1962, President Kennedy instructed Ambassador Hare to hold an urgent meeting with Erkin to present the American government's views on the Soviet's announcement of a proposal to trade Turkish and Cuban bases. Kennedy's message began by reaffirming the solidarity of American commitments to Turkey and emphasized that the US would make no bargain of any kind without Turkish agreement. As Turkey wanted to hear, he made assurances that the bases in Turkey and Cuba were not comparable, despite his prior acceptance of the analogy. What concerned Kennedy about the Soviet announcement was the possibility that it might bring increased hazard to Turkey in the event of a necessary extension of American military action against Cuba. In such circumstances, the President saw a real possibility of an immediate reprisal by the Soviet Union against Turkey or the bases there. In this situation, Kennedy stated that he would understand and equally respect a Turkish refusal to alter the existing situation; or a Turkish decision to render nuclear weapons on its soil inoperable during the Cuban crisis; or Turkish recognition that current weapons systems in Turkey were obsolete and needed to be replaced by other NATO weapons. If the Turkish government should be interested in the last alternative, the President was prepared to commit a Polaris submarine at once to the Eastern Mediterranean for the protection of Turkish soil. The President told Hare that Finletter's suggestion regarding the MLF was relevant, and stressed the fact that these longer range considerations should not be presented to the Turks at once, unless considering them might be helpful. The President's immediate aim was to give the Turks a chance to make their own judgements about a foreign threat.⁵⁶

In one sense, however, the US and the USSR were on the brink of nuclear war, in part because of the obsolete missiles in Turkey. Leaving aside troubles in Berlin and domestic concerns, Khrushchev had already told the world that the reason for the Soviet missile installation in Cuba was the Jupiter missiles in Turkey, and that if the US agreed to remove the bases in Turkey the problem might be easily solved. In other words, Khrushchev's proposal regarding the Cuba–Turkey missiles had already been announced. Kennedy's difficulty in responding to the Khrushchev proposal lay in its timing and the way that it was announced on the radio. The call for a solution was clear. The US would withdraw the blockade and guarantee no invasion of Cuba in return for the Soviets' dismantling of the missiles. The US also agreed to the Soviet demand that missiles in Turkey be dismantled within four to five months, on the condition that the Turkish missile deal, of which only a few people knew, would be kept secret. This ended the crisis.⁵⁷

The way in which Khrushchev made his proposal gave no opportunity for Kennedy to talk privately with the Turks about the missiles. He did not dare to take the risk of appearing to yield to a Soviet demand. He also did not want to risk Charles de Gaulle blaming him for selling out his ally in his own interests, if the trade-off on Turkey were made public.⁵⁸

On 29 October the Turkish government thanked the US for President Kennedy's refusal to strike any deal with the Soviet Union regarding the missile bases in Turkey. However, the Turkish government wanted to dispel the misunderstanding that Turkey had been at fault when the dangers arose by discussing the matter with its allies. Turkey instructed its permanent representative in NATO to urgently request a special session of the North Atlantic Council to review the events that had led up to the IRBM's existence in Turkey, emphasizing that the IRBMs were placed in Turkey not merely for its defence, but also for NATO's defence. At this point, American officials again reassured Turkey that there had been no deal regarding Turkey.⁵⁹ It remains unclear whether Turkish officials knew or at least guessed that a trade-off regarding the Turkish missiles was made in the course of US–Soviet negotiation during the crisis. But there were some indications that they did. First of all, this matter was most probably raised by Rijov to Erkin in Ankara. Second, many newspapers around the world, from Iraq to Great Britain, had commented that a trade-off would be the most likely way to end the crisis, even though the US denied such a trade-off. The same sources stated that Khrushchev had agreed to the removal of the missiles in Cuba in return for the American removal of the Jupiter missiles in Turkey.⁶⁰ In spite of such reports, the Turks preferred to trust Kennedy's word.

Even though US officials began to investigate the idea of building a Mediterranean MLF immediately following the resolution of the crisis, the removal of the Jupiter missiles took on a particular urgency in the Department of State, when Robert McNamara, the Secretary of Defence, directed that the missiles be moved from Italy and Turkey by no later than May 1963. McNamara told the State Department that this move would require almost immediate initial approaches to NATO and preparatory steps to be taken with the Italians and Turks.⁶¹

McNamara's early removal plan was opposed by some bureaucrats in the Department of Defence and the Department of State. William Taylor, for example, asserted that from a military point of view, the missiles remained a significant military asset of NATO, despite the fact that they were obsolete and in a certain respect vulnerable, because 80 per cent of them could be fired with a 15-minute alert at Soviet targets. Also, he argued, that it was not advisable for the US to remove these missiles quickly, regardless of their strategic importance. When the time was ripe for removal, the US had to be able to offer the Turks and Italians immediate participation in a defence force. For this reason, and because of the President's keen interest in this matter, Taylor suggested to Paul Nitze of the Department of State, who also opposed the early removal of missiles, that they should send a memorandum to the President containing detailed analysis of this subject and emphasizing the symbolic and psychological importance that the Turkish IRBMs had since assumed. Clearly, no matter how vigorous the US denials, an immediate proposal for removal would give rise to suspicion of the existence of a secret US–Soviet deal.⁶² However, the memorandum stated that this line of argument was not accepted by Dean Rusk, as Kennedy did not see any need to stall the removal plan.

Another objection to the immediate removal of the Jupiter missiles came from Robert W. Komer, the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, who did not know about the secret American–Soviet deal over the Turkish missiles. Taking the political climate of the Mediterranean/Middle East area into consideration, Komer reiterated his view that

an early removal of the Jupiter missiles from Turkey and Italy could create 'one hell of a mess' and would revive all their latent fears. Turkey was not the strongman of the Middle East; rather, it was in the throes of a continuing domestic political crisis. Furthermore, the withdrawal of the missiles would be widely regarded, and played up by the Soviets, as a retraction of US power.⁶³

One of the cruxes of the matter was that the historical and geographical framework in which the Turks viewed their security interests was different in important respects from that of the American and continental European NATO partners. The Turkish public, as well as Turkish authorities, focused on the Soviets as the supreme enemy, against whom they had stood guard and battled for several centuries. The most characteristic Turkish diplomatic policy was to identify and align Turkey with the most powerful Western nation opposing Russian or Soviet aggression. This mindset was as sharp and clear as at any time in the past. The Soviets were more powerful, militarily and psychologically, and certainly no less aggressive than in the past; while Turkey, as a member of NATO, had the support of Western Europe and, most particularly, of the US. In light of this reality, Hare brought the department's attention to the fact that the balance of tension between friend and foe still existed, but that it involved a higher level of military power, higher stakes, and the possibility of greater destruction. Because Turkey lacked independent military strength of a determining nature, the 'Turkish authorities developed a compulsive desire to see, hear, and even feel manifestations of Western support on a constant basis. In this sense, the Jupiter missiles performed a vital symbolic role in the attitudes of Turkish bureaucracy towards their nation's security.'⁶⁴ At this point, Hare stressed the fact that a substitute force or arrangement, such as a nuclear fleet, would need to fill the same role just as convincingly as the Jupiter missiles did, 'if we are not to risk opening several Pandora boxes worth of possible consequences'.⁶⁵

In providing an adequate substitute, the US would avoid appearing as if they had struck a bilateral bargain with the Soviets during the time of the Cuban crisis, in which Turkish security was part of the price to pay. Hare warned that they 'should shun then like the plague giving an impression that the sea born missile force and any subsequent effort we may make in the direction of having the Jupiters removed is similarly connected with Cuba'.⁶⁶

In this context, one local reaction in Ankara to the Soviet proposal for removal of American missiles in Turkey in conjunction with removal of Soviet missiles from Cuba was 'a glacial insistence' that the security of Turkey not be linked with the Cuban problem. For example, Hare suggested that even though the Turks would consider a more up-to-date effective weapons system, like a seaborne force, as an acceptable replacement for the Jupiter missiles, the State Department would have to manage the transfer in a way that would not give rise to suspicions that they were creating, however indirectly, such a linkage.⁶⁷

In fact, Turkey was greatly disturbed by James Reston's (American journalist and Washington Bureau Chief of the *New York Times*) talk on a BBC television programme, in which he suggested that President Kennedy had sought the removal of American bases in Turkey in 1961, and that it was the Turks who had insisted that they be left intact. Reston also stated, 'I believe that President Kennedy is of the opinion that since there are ICBM's and Polaris submarines, there is no need for

such bases set to be up right in front of the Soviet Union.’ In addition to this, the BBC television programme cited a recent large advertisement in the *New York Times* by the American Policy Planning Committee asking President Kennedy why the US did not recognize the right of the Soviet Union to demand the dismantling of the missile sites in Turkey. This advertisement had been republished in the 3 November 1962 issue of *Moscow*, in an article titled ‘Triumph of Logic’. What really concerned the Turks was the continued publicity equating the missiles in Cuba with those in Turkey. The Turkish Foreign Ministry recommended that world newspapers be thoroughly briefed on the differences between the missiles in Cuba and those in Turkey.⁶⁸

It was clear that one element in the successful transfer of Turkey’s land missiles into a seaborne force would be how well American officials could maintain the aforementioned separation. As far as the proposal itself was concerned, the Turkish authorities could conceivably find advantage in the eventual phasing out of the Jupiter system, if the seaborne force’s military superiority could be conclusively demonstrated. The Jupiter missiles were expensive for the Turks as well as for the Americans in terms of trained manpower and money. It was also known by American diplomats who had been dealing with Turkish affairs, like Hare and others, that the advantages of an MLF would not prevent the Turks from asking for additional *quid pro quo* for the Jupiter missiles, such as several additional squadrons of F-104s (single-engined, high-performance, supersonic interceptor aircraft). Hare warned the department that anything done regarding the missiles in Turkey should be in a NATO context. If pressure were put on Turkey to make a unilateral statement which would single it out from the rest of NATO, it could remind Turkey of the Soviet treatment of Castro. ‘Since the missiles came in through NATO, they should leave by same door.’⁶⁹

In light of the discussions which took place in Turkish newspapers and diplomatic circles, members of the Turkish government became aware that they would soon no longer be in a position to keep the Jupiter missiles in their territory; and by the end of December 1962 they seemed to be ready to take a more realistic approach towards the Jupiter issue. Erkin indicated to Hare on 27 December that the Turkish government would most likely agree to the removal of the missiles, provided they were replaced with something which knowledgeable members of the Turkish public would consider effective. Erkin suggested to Hare that the first step should be to prepare the Turkish public via an official announcement by – or leaks from – American sources about an alteration in strategic positions and the search for new means to assure Western deterrence capabilities. According to Erkin’s plan, the sources would state that NATO is always in the process of reviewing changes in strategic circumstances and their implications in terms of weapon systems. This general statement would be followed by a more specific announcement that a new, up-to-date means of defence, one not vulnerable to immediate retaliation, would be placed in position in order to protect Turkey. Following such a foreign explanation of the changes NATO and the US had proposed regarding the Jupiter missiles, such as the instalment of Polaris missiles, an advanced date for F-104s, and other measures; the Turkish government could then more easily make an ‘announcement of the removal of the Jupiters which’, in Erkin’s estimation, ‘would make transition palatable’. In short, winning over the Turkish public involved a story originating

from NATO and/or Washington sources. The political success of this kind of operation, of course, would depend on the proper order and timing of US actions, and the degree to which these were carried out in cooperation with Ankara, when both capitals agreed to do so.⁷⁰ In fact, the Turkish government had already commenced to make its public ready via the press. For instance, the Turkish daily *Milliyet*, at the behest of the Turkish government, wrote on 25 December 1962 that missile bases in Turkey would not be removed until new weapons and Polaris missiles were given to Turkey, and that a new defence strategy would be discussed at the NATO meeting to be held in Canada in May.⁷¹ The pro-government Turkish newspaper *Dünya* also stated that an official had verified that the Polaris would be given to Turkey, saying that NATO's two strong members, Turkey and Greece, would possess these nuclear war weapons along with a defence strategy to be established.⁷²

It was not easy to control all of the press comments or news regarding the dismantling of the missiles, which, of course, had their effect on the opinions of the Turkish public, including the Grand National Assembly (GNA). Throughout the first week of January 1963, several Turkish papers published reports based on the *Herald Tribune* article of 31 December concerning possible reductions in Western bases located in Turkey. Çetin Altan, one of Turkey's most influential columnists from *Milliyet* wrote on 1 January 1963 that bases located in NATO countries, including Turkey, had lost their strategic importance with the development of advanced weaponry such as the Polaris, and hence that the tactic of bargaining with the United States for aid in return for allowing it or NATO to use certain facilities was losing its effectiveness.⁷³ Other columnists from various Turkish newspapers expressed the same views.

Erkin complained to Hare that these kinds of press reports put him in an embarrassing position since he would have difficulty concocting an ad hoc reply due to lack of information about Washington's thoughts on the matter. He would also face the same difficulty in the foreign policy debate within the GNA and cabinet discussions, where the question of missiles in Turkey would be raised under the subject heading of 'the Turkish role in NATO'.⁷⁴ Finally, the White House assured Turkey in early January via Ambassador Hare that Turkish press article references indicating that the existence of new weapons, such as the Polaris, were reducing the value of Turkey to the West, as well as US aid to and interest in Turkey, were completely unsubstantiated. The White House also stated that the American government was not discussing the details of this matter with representatives of the Turkish press.⁷⁵ Hare also emphasized, as instructed by Washington, the importance of Turkey in the move to create a stronger NATO, and the specific advantage of substituting the Polaris deterrent for the Jupiter missiles.⁷⁶

Due to widespread speculation about the removal of missiles in Italy and Turkey, Erkin was forced to make a statement in the Turkish Senate on 17 January 1963. In this speech, he said that if NATO decided to terminate the role of the Jupiter missiles in the alliance's defence strategy, both NATO's general security and Turkey's individual security would be ensured by the most modern and effective conventional and nuclear devices. Erkin stressed three points: first, that any and all changes would be made in full consideration of the NATO context; second, that Turkey's security would be fully maintained; and third, that no action directly concerning Turkey had

yet been taken. Erkin continued to speak to the Turkish Senate about NATO and the missiles, reminding it that Moscow had attempted to use them as bargaining material during the Cuban Missile Crisis, but their trade-off offer had been rejected by the White House. It was during the US–Soviet bargaining that the missiles in Turkey had become a hot subject of discussion in domestic and foreign presses. Some foreign newspapers had advanced theories that there might be change in the value of the Jupiter missiles in Turkey and in the important duties performed by Turkey within NATO. However, Erkin stated that such news and reports had no value or truth, other than reflecting the personal opinion of the writers.⁷⁷

The Minister of Defence, Sancar, supported Erkin's views with more detailed information in his Senate speeches. He stated, for example, that no change had yet taken place in NATO's strategic concept, but he left the door open to the possibility of such a change in the future. He insisted that Turkey would be part of any development, from the planning stage to the final decision. Sancar also explained that even if Turkey were not a member of NATO, it would be obliged to make the same efforts and maintain the same forces for its own national defence. He praised NATO and the United States for the military assistance they had given Turkey, and indicated that there were no grounds for Turkey to feel slighted on this score. He also reaffirmed Turkey's continuing strategic importance.⁷⁸

The Turkish press continued to publicize, possibly with the backing of the government, the removal of Turkish missiles. Then, on 21 January 1963, a *New York Times* front page article stated (in its lead sentence) that the Turkish government had responded favourably to proposals of the American removal of the Jupiter missile bases. The article also stated that removal had been made possible by an agreement that US Polaris submarines under NATO command would be stationed within six months. In the light of this new public information about the possible removal of missile sites, Finletter wanted to be authorized to make statements on the matter at the North Atlantic Council meeting on 23 January.⁷⁹ Erkin had, in principle, no objection to Hare's authorization to release a statement; nevertheless, he requested that the statement specify that the three governments had been discussing modernization for some time, and furthermore, that it not state that the plan had been proposed by the American government and accepted by Turkey and Italy – this was in order to avoid any indication that the initiation of action was connected in any way with the Cuban Missile Crisis or US–Soviet deals.⁸⁰

However, two editorials in *Milliyet* and *Yeni Gün* were more critical of the proposed removal of Jupiter missiles from Turkey. One of them, entitled 'Before Our Shortcomings are Revealed', by Cetin Altan, appeared in *Milliyet* on 23 January 1963, and referred to reports from US sources that the Jupiter missiles in Turkey would be replaced by Polaris missiles. Altan remarked that the word 'replaced' was a transparent attempt to appease Turkish sensibilities, because the Polaris would be fired from an offshore submarine. In fact, he argued, the announcement simply meant that missile bases in Turkey were being removed. Altan linked this development with a report that the Soviets had accepted US inspection of nuclear disarmament in their own territory. He concluded that the two blocs were drawing closer together, and the 'odour of many great changes was being felt'. This new dynamic posed great problems for Turkey, who could no longer use the justification, 'we are a NATO base', in order to request Western aid.⁸¹

A second editorial, published in *Yeni Gün* on 24 January 1963, stated that there was little logic in the US claim of giving more advanced weapons to replace the Jupiter rockets. *Yeni Gün* asked, 'What has been the reason for retaining bases on our territory for many years after the Polaris was invented?' The article stressed the fact that, according to American sources, several proposals to remove the missile bases had been made to the Turkish government in 1961. It then asked the crucial question: Was the delay caused, in fact, by the Turkish government's belief that removal of these bases would lessen the strategic importance of the country and, in turn, increase public anxiety that Western economic assistance would be decreased? The article harshly criticized the game Turkey had played with the missiles in order to secure US economic assistance. Last, but not least, it argued that 'It would be very dangerous [for us] to remain in a state of idleness, on the assumption that the West [would] provide us assistance and consequently assist us in our economic development, merely on the premise that our country is important.'⁸²

On 22 January 1963, the Turkish Foreign Minister Erkin agreed to the American proposal to substitute the Polaris for Jupiter missiles in April 1963. In return, Turkey was to receive F-104s. Erkin also expressed his desire that a Turkish crew should physically participate in MLF. Erkin may have already known that the American proposal did not meet his demand, although he tried his best to make it happen.⁸³ Finally, on 17 February 1963, Erkin officially announced in the GNA that Turkey had accepted the removal of the Jupiter missiles.

Following official Turkish agreement on 28 February 1963, McNamara directed that the process of dismantling the missiles in Turkey commence on 15 April 1963, and be completed under the auspices of the US Air Force as expeditiously as possible.⁸⁴ General Robert J. Wood was sent to Turkey on 12 March 1963 to discuss the details of the removal with the Turks. American authorities were worried about the physical removal of the Jupiter missiles because the Turkish military had the capacity to stall the process via a Parliamentary ratification of (1) their bilateral agreement to the removal, (2) technical agreements as to the precise details of the physical dismantling of the missiles, and (3) the basic context of future Turkish–American relations. One critical element in the success of the Wood Mission in these contexts was the nature of any future US military aid programme for Turkey, as it would affect the modernization of the Turkish armed forces. More specifically, Turkish military leaders were concerned about the Turkish army's capacity to defend itself against potentially hostile neighbours. For reassurance, the Turks badly wanted, and sincerely believed that they needed and deserved a rate of military modernization much higher than anything the US was proposing to help provide in the next few years. In fact, American officials were preparing to reduce military aid to Turkey.⁸⁵

In order to prevent a stall in the removal of the Jupiter missiles, Wood had to assure the Turkish authorities that Turkey remained important in US and NATO strategic plans. It was clear to General Wood, when he arrived in Turkey, that the Turkish military had been badly shaken by the possible implications of the Jupiter removal to future plans for US military assistance. To dispel those kinds of worries, Sancar asked him to do what he could to see that Turkish personnel participated in the Polaris forces. General Wood told him that this was a Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) matter, but that he would look into it. In the end,

General Wood's mission was successful, as Turkish authorities agreed to the removal as planned.⁸⁶

Following the Wood mission, the US decided to send a Polaris submarine to Izmir on 14 April 1963 for publicity purposes. The White House hoped that its visibility would offset the removal of the Jupiter missiles and restore Turkey's confidence. Since the Jupiter missiles had been located near Izmir, the Polaris visit to that city would be seen as a great opportunity for public demonstration of the proposition that the Jupiter missiles had been dismantled due to modernization requirements. Ambassador Hare stated that it would be quite a publicity stunt.⁸⁷

Finally, towards the end of April, the Jupiter missiles were dismantled. Turkish military personnel joined the MLF by boarding the American warship *Ricketts* in 1964; however, Turkey soon withdrew its personnel from the MLF because of the cost of maintenance and the fact that the ship did not serve Turkey's interests. The MLF did not last long past this time.⁸⁸

It is clear that the removal of the Jupiter missiles from Turkey marked a significant shift in Turkey's strategic importance in Cold War politics, because no nuclear weapons directed at the USSR remained on Turkish soil. However, in retrospect, we can say that this did not mean that Turkey's strategic position in American world politics changed dramatically. Rather, the US kept some military bases in Turkey, leaving Turkey's strategic value intact. Furthermore, Turkey's continued control over the Straits of Dardanelles and the Bosphorus put it in a unique position, as it rendered Turkey capable of preventing the largest Soviet fleet, the Black Sea Fleet, from freely entering the Mediterranean during the Cold War.⁸⁹

Despite Kennedy's guarantee that he would make no bargain of any kind without Turkish agreement, the secret US–USSR deal regarding Turkish missiles was made at the height of the Cuban Missile Crisis behind Turkey's back. Turkish authorities learned about the secret deal a few months after the crisis; and both the Turkish government and the public were bitterly disappointed. As İnönü said to the Grand National Assembly in January 1970:

The Americans told us that they would remove the missiles because they had become outmoded, and that they would replace them with the Polaris. However we later learned that they had made a deal with the USSR. This event showed us that Turkish authorities should not let the Americans drag us into an unwanted crisis.⁹⁰

It can be argued that İnönü's reaction represents a rather emotional approach toward a particular Cold War crisis. In fact, Turkish authorities obstinately refused to acknowledge the true (obsolete) nature of the missiles and dragged themselves into the middle of a Cold War political game when they told the Americans, 'You are here as long as the Jupiters are installed in Turkey'. All Turkish governments, both before and after the military coup, failed to analyze the disadvantages of keeping surplus nuclear weapons on their soil, which could have cost them much more than they actually did. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, Turkish authorities felt as if they were on the verge of being attacked by nuclear missiles. They even worried that

major Turkish cities, such as Istanbul, Ankara, or Izmir, might share the same fate as Hiroshima and Nagasaki.⁹¹ In this sense, the departure of the Jupiter missiles removed a major irritant in Soviet–Turkish relations. Without a doubt, this development also helped to trigger a Soviet peace offensive calling for a relaxation of tension between Turkey and the USSR.

Following the missile crisis, the İnönü government began to discuss a multilateral foreign policy without changing its fundamentally Western-oriented foreign policy. The Cuban crisis is usually viewed as the factor triggering Turkey’s departure from single-track foreign policy. However, this shift was not the exact result of the crisis; rather, it developed as a consequence of new elements that entered Turkish–US relations immediately following the crisis. One such element was the international argument surrounding the status of Cyprus, whose heated tension was felt by Turkey, Greece, and Turkish and Greek Cypriots, and in which the US felt obligated to get involved.

Notes

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2. *Ibid.*, pp.42–5.
3. B.J. Bernstein, ‘The Cuban Missile Crisis: Trading the Jupiters in Turkey?’, *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol.95, No.1 (Spring 1980), p.99.
4. In January 1957, Eisenhower made a speech in Congress, in which he recommended the use of American forces to protect Middle Eastern states against overt aggression from nations ‘controlled by international communism’. He also urged the provision of economic aid to those countries with anti-communist governments. This new foreign policy became known as the Eisenhower Doctrine.
5. Adnan Menderes was the leader of the Democrat Party and had been Prime Minister for ten years with huge popular support. With the coup of 27 May 1960, a military government ruled until İsmet İnönü came to power on 20 Nov. 1961.
6. The headquarters of the pact moved to Ankara, and its name was changed to CENTO, the Central Treaty Organization. CENTO survived until the 1979 Iranian revolution. B.K. Bursa, ‘The Baghdad Pact and Anglo-American Defence Policies in the Middle East, 1955–56’ (unpublished PhD Diss., Manchester, 1996); A. Sever, *Soğuk Savaş Kuşatmasında Türkiye, Batı ve Ortadoğu 1945–1958* (İstanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 1997), pp.197–49; C. Göktepe, ‘Bağdat Paktı’ndan CENTO’ya Geçiş’, *Türkler*, Vol.16 (2002), pp.928–42.
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8. Summary of a statement made by the Prime Minister during an interview granted to Fletcher Warren (the US Ambassador) on 13 Jan. 1960, 611.82/1-1360, Microfilm Publication M1855, Records of the Department of State Relating to Political Relations Between the United States and Other States, 1960–63, Political Relations between US and Turkey, National Archives.
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14. Telegram, Raymond R. Hare to Secretary of State, 4 May 1961, No.1194, 611.82/4-561, Microfilm Publication M1855, Records of the Department of State Relating to Political Relations Between the United States and Other States, 1960–63, Political Relations between US and Turkey, National Archives.
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16. *Ibid.*, pp.15–62; Mütercimler and Öke, *Düşler ve Entrikalar*, pp.395–432.
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18. Statement, James S. Lay to the National Security Council, Policy Papers, No. 6015–6109, 5 Oct. 1963, folder RG 273, Records of the National Security Council (NSC), Box 53, National Archives.
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29. Telegram, Thomas K. Finletter to Dean Rusk, Polto 506, 25 Oct. 1962, National Security Files: Regional Security, Box 226, JFKL.
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