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2 copies sent A.F.O. (Mr. Ross)

TURKEY

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Record of a conversation at the Haryce Kosku on August 10
about the Middle East

Present: The Prime Minister
H.M. Ambassador
Turkish Prime Minister
Turkish Foreign Minister

Iraq

Monsieur Zorlu said that the tone of the statements by spokesmen of the new Iraqi Government was steadily deteriorating. From time to time Turkey received assurances of the new Government's wish for closer relations with Turkey. The Turkish Government's impression was that the new regime were playing for time. They were certainly meanwhile receiving arms from Syria. They did not inspire confidence. Monsieur Zorlu agreed with Mr. Macmillan that the new Government consisted of divergent elements and said that it was not known who was the leader, nor what was the attitude of the junior Kurdish officers who had brought the new men into power.

Monsieur Zorlu said that for Turkey one of the main problems was the big Turkish community centered on Kirkuk and Suleymaniye. Complaints had been made by the Turkish Government about one or two incidents involving this Turkish community, including an attack on a library, to which a friendly reply had been received; but the situation was still disquieting.

Kurds

In reply to an enquiry from Mr. Macmillan, Monsieur Menderes said that the Turkish Kurdish population was not very numerous and was spread out over South Eastern Turkey.

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They were broadly assimilated to the Turkish population and their social and economic status was not markedly different. For these reasons they were not for the present being affected by Turkish propaganda, though subversive elements existed. The situation of the Kurds in Iran was more difficult.

Syria

Monsieur Zorlu said that he had received yesterday a report from Damascus to the effect that the United Arab Republic would soon be taking a looser form in order to facilitate the association of Saudi-Arabia, and possibly also Iraq. The report said also that measures were being taken to meet the complaints of the Syrians over their present economic difficulties resulting from the requisitioning of their lorries, shortage of petrol, restrictions on the sale of their produce, and also from the decision taken not long ago by the Turkish Government to close the Turco-Syrian frontier to stop smuggling.

Israel

In reply to a question by Mr. Macmillan, Monsieur Zorlu said that Israel's attitude towards Turkey was generally co-operative. The Turkish Government were now considering the possibility of sending a Minister to Tel Aviv.

General

There followed some general discussion of the situation in the Middle East as a whole. Monsieur Menderes

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said that the present troubles arose from the cardinal error made by the U.S.A. at the time of Suez. Monsieur Zorlu remarked that this had resulted in the loss of the Canal base and had been followed by the loss of the British bastion in Jordan. The Americans might well before long lose Dahran. If the Americans and British left the Lebanon and Jordan respectively the Western position in these two countries would probably be finally lost and the communists would have a firm hold of the whole Middle East.