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Feridun Cemal Erkin As One of the Important Figures of Turkish Foreign Affairs and His Position in the Turkish Diplomacy

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the career of Feridun Cemal Erkin at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, including his work as secretary-general and foreign minister, and evaluates his position in the history of Turkish diplomacy. Through his biography, the historical course of Turkish foreign policy between 1930 and 1970 also is considered. In his career in foreign affairs, Erkin played an active role in important diplomatic situations considered significant to modern Turkish history, including the resolution of the Hatay (Alexandretta) Issue between Turkey and France, aggressive Soviet Russian demands after the World War II, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Cyprus Issue, and Johnson's Letter. By analyzing Erkin's life, we can analyze the key events enumerated above and understand the processes underlying these plans.

Keywords: Diplomacy, Turkey, Holocaust, Cuban Missile Crisis, Cyprus Issue

INTRODUCTION

After World War I, the old Ottoman Empire was destroyed and Turkey was born from the ashes as a new nation. When modern Turkey was established and organized, the new leaders adopted the Ottoman legacy and traditions. This was also true in the case of foreign affairs (Oran, 2002, p. 23, 24; Karpat, 2012, p. 161). Numan Menemencioğlu, one of the most famous Turkish diplomats and the *éminence grise* of Turkish foreign policy, came from the Ottoman foreign affairs bureaucracy (Güçlü, 2000b). In addition, many newer diplomats, such as Feridun Cemal Erkin, completed their educations in the waning years of the Ottoman Empire. Thus, this study will examine Erkin's life and career, his central place in Turkish foreign relations, and his place in the history of Turkish diplomacy. British documents from the period described Erkin as the most qualified figure in Turkish foreign affairs after only Menemencioğlu (Özdemir and Göktepe, 2008, p. 184, 185). As such, to understand Turkish diplomacy in the 20th century requires evaluating and analyzing his life and career. Feridun Cemal Erkin served as senior bureaucrat and minister in both the central administration and in important capitals for many years and he was in the 'kitchen of Turkish foreign affairs' in sensitive diplomatic negotiations and when critical decisions were made. Analyzing Erkin's biography will provide better insight into diplomacy between 1930s and 1970s.

For the periods that included Feridun Cemal Erkin's career, Turkish foreign policy can be divided into several phases based on external and internal dynamics. Externally, Turkish foreign policy has been examined in two stages: 'the period between two World Wars' and 'the Cold War.' Internally, Turkish diplomacy is also considered in two cycles: the 'period when the founding leaders were dominant,' which lasted until the transition to a multi-party regime in 1950 and the 'period when the ministry gradually became active.' These two overlapping periods saw the organization of Turkish foreign affairs and its institutionalization (Oran, 2002). During these periods, a balanced diplomacy based on the twin priorities of security and friendly relations were advanced into order to safeguard the independence of the state.

Born in Istanbul in 1899, Feridun Cemal Erkin came from an Ottoman dignitary family. His father Mehmet Cemal Bey was born in Ünye and graduated from the Mülkiye Civil Service School, while his mother was Rukiye Nesibe Hanım, the daughter of Abdullah Behçet, a Finance Ministry official from Samsun (Erkin, 1987, p. 5, 6; Çalgan, 1991, p. 19; *Galatasaray–Son*, 1943, p. 4). He studied at the Galatasaray Lyceum and after graduating in 1920, he worked as a deputy accountant in the Istanbul Public Debts Administration until the Ottoman regime's end in 1922. Not long after he graduated from the Paris Law Faculty in 1925 and in 1926 as noted by the Turkish Ambassador to France, Ali Fethi Bey,[1] Erkin began to work as chief secretary in the International Exchange Commission (Muhtelit Mübadele Komisyonu) headed by Şükrü Saraçoğlu.[2] His rigorous work on the commission attracted the attention of Saraçoğlu, who served mentor and brought him was under his patronage (Erkin, 1968, p. 292). Thus in 1928, Tevfik Rüştü Aras,[3] the minister of foreign affairs of the period, accepted Erkin into the Ministry on Saraçoğlu's advice. After joining the Ministry, Erkin's first foreign post was in London from 1928 to 1930. In the 1930s, he played an active role in solving the 'Ottoman Debts' issue and accompanied Foreign Minister Aras to the League of Nations to petition the General Assembly for Turkey's admission. Later, he served as the Undersecretary of the Berlin

[1] See Balkaya (2005) for more information about Ali Fethi Okyar, one the closest friends of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk.

[2] He was minister of foreign affairs and prime minister respectively during the Second World War and after İsmet İnönü was the most important figure to prevent Turkish involvement in the war. See Arslan (2017) for more information about him.

[3] He was minister of foreign affairs of Turkey throughout Mustafa Kemal Ataturk period. See Tınal (2002) for more information about him.

Embassy, the Consulate General of Beirut, and the Consulate General of Berlin (BCA, 030-11-1/113-17-14).

In these years he spent most of his time in Beirut. Additionally, the Consulate General of Beirut was one of the most important positions in Turkish foreign affairs. Numan Menemencioğlu, Cevat Açıkalın[4] and Fatin Rüştü Zorlu, all important figures in Turkish diplomacy history, also served there (Ülkümen, 1993, p. 19). In those years, the area of responsibility of the Consulate General of Beirut included Syria, which was under French mandate. Important activities that he conducted in Beirut was to monitor Armenians in the region, negotiate border issues, collect intelligence on assassination plots against Mustafa Kemal Pasha by 150 *personae non gratae*, and resolve problems related to Turkish property. His comprehensive report on the Hatay (Alexandretta) Issue, which he prepared during his tenure in Beirut, played an important role in both resolving the issue and advancing his career (Erkin, 1987, pp. 40, 91). He came to the personal attention of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who used Erkin as translator with the British Ambassador Sir Percy Loraine (Harris, 2010, pp. 188-9). Until Erkin's report, Turkey had built its foreign policy on 'extended autonomy,' but his report changed the strategy to 'annexation of Hatay,' and by 1939 Hatay was under full Turkish sovereignty.

After his duty in Beirut, Erkin again served shortly in Berlin, until he was assigned to the Ministry and returned to Ankara, which would prove the most productive period in his professional career. Between 1939 and 1947, he was promoted regularly and eventually became Secretary-General of Turkish foreign affairs with the title of Ambassador. This period was a crucial time as Turkey sought to maintain its neutrality in the midst of the destruction wrought by World War II. He worked diligently with significant figures such as İsmet İnönü, Şükrü Saraçoğlu, Hasan Saka and Numan Menemencioğlu. During the crucial war years, his promotion to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs showed that the ministers and high officials trusted his expertise.

Erkin worked on many vital committees and posts during in Ankara and was a member of Minister Saraçoğlu's team, which visited Moscow at the start of the War. This was a sensitive period during which relations with the Soviets were deteriorating (Deringil, 2004). Although this visit was planned to last only three days, the delegation remained in Moscow for 23 days (23 September-17 October 1939), which shows the intensity and difficulty of negotiations.[5]

One of Erkin's key duties during this period was his active role in sending humanitarian aid to German-occupied Greece, which had severe problems with food supply. In the toughest years of the war, a commission formed under his presidency contacted both hostile sides in the region and carried out the necessary diplomacy to transmit aid smoothly. Due to his efforts, he was awarded the Order of the Phoenix by the Greek government (Erkin, 1987, pp. 129-30; Bakar, 2008, pp. 413-443). Erkin was also part of the Turkish delegation, alongside Prime Minister Şükrü Saraçoğlu, Foreign Minister Numan Menemencioğlu and the commander of the Turkish Armed Forces, Fevzi Çakmak, to the January 30-31, 1943 Adana Conference, which saw the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill meet with President İsmet İnönü (Deringil, 2004;

[4] Cevat Açıkalın was a relative by marriage to Mustafa Kemal Ataturk as their wives were sisters. See *Milliyet* (19/01/1980), and see Güçlü (2000a) for more information about him.

[5] In the context of relations with the Soviets, Saraçoğlu's visit to Moscow was considered a breaking point. Since the National Struggle, Turkey tried to stay close to the Soviets as much as possible in terms of foreign policy. However, in that visit, the Soviets' unacceptable demands caused great disappointment among Turkish officials and Turkish-Soviet relations became. For more information, see Oran (2002, pp. 418-422) and Erkin (1968, p. 140). Interestingly, while Erkin took part in these negotiations that caused Turkish-Soviet relations to deteriorate, in 1964 he also led negotiations in Moscow as the Minister of Foreign Affairs during which Turkish-Russian relations improved. For more information, see Oran (2002, p. 775).

Yalçın, 2011, pp. 701-31).[6] And, under the Hasan Saka presidency, Erkin headed the Turkish delegation to the April 1945 San Francisco Conference, where he represented Turkish interests during the negotiations to establish the new United Nations.

One of the critical missions undertaken by Turkish diplomats throughout World War II was to rescue Jews that were under threat of genocide. Ambassador Behiç Erkin, Vice-consul Necdet Kent, Vice-consul Namık Kemal Yolga and Consul Selahattin Ülkümen acted on their own initiative in this dangerous duty that risked their own lives. Protecting victimized Jews under such sensitive circumstances could not be 'official state policy,' as was it would have meant that Turkey had adopted a policy in direct opposition to Nazi Germany at the peak of its power. In this context, it is important to note that Erkin was an important figure at the Ministry during the war and already showed humanitarian initiative in the Greek case. Moreover, Ülkümen, one of the "Turkish Schindlers," stated that Erkin was one of the 'aces [first class]' of Turkish diplomats (Ülkümen, 1993, p. 19). In his memories, Erkin frequently described the Ashkenazim as 'oppressed and victimized' (Erkin, 1987, p. 36, 123). It is noteworthy that all these diplomats were promoted following their heroic service saving Europe's Jews.

Following World War II, Erkin was promoted to Secretary General, which is the chief post in foreign affairs. This period, when he worked with Hasan Saka, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, was critical. Turkish diplomats tried to repair a challenging set of relations with the Soviet Union on the one hand, while Turkey was also busy trying to integrate with this new world order on the other. Erkin was entrusted with preparing responses to the Soviet threatening notes (Erkin, 1968, pp. 149, 253, 416-422, 429-440).

Erkin worked in Ankara throughout World War II and the start of the Cold War, a period with extremely difficult and complex international politics, but after nearly 8 years it was time for him to be posted abroad (Erkin, 1987, pp. 184-192).[7] Due to disputes with Prime Minister Recep Peker, he left his position as Secretary General and went to Rome for his first embassy (BCA, 080-18-01-02/113-39-6). After working in Rome (1947-1948) for a short time, he went on to serve in leading western centers such as Washington (1948-1955), Madrid (1955-1957), Paris (1957-1960) and London (1960-1962) as ambassador.

In 1948 Erkin replaced Hüseyin Ragıp Baydur as ambassador to Washington. His mission there was to consolidate relations between Turkey and the US and work to include Turkey in the Western alliance (Harris, 2010, p. 189). He had been specifically tasked with making effective contacts and establishing the groundwork to join NATO.[8] In this context, Turkey seized every opportunity to be included NATO. When the Korean War broke out, the governing Democratic Party (DP) debated whether to send Turkish troops as part of the US-led effort. DP leaders consulted a group of influential diplomats, including Erkin, who argued in favor of Turkey sending troops (Erkin, 1992, pp. 152-3). Despite the perception that Erkin was close to the Republican People's Party (RPP), İnönü showed confidence in him and his advice. Turkish troops became part of the multinational forces serving in Korea, and in February 1952 Turkey's application for membership in NATO was accepted.

After his seven years in Washington, Erkin was dispatched to Madrid (*The New York Times*, 21 May 1955). He was not as highly active as compared to his Washington years, which undoubtedly reflected that he was no longer in one of the two most important centers of world

[6] See Yalçın (2011) for information about this interview, called 'Sağırlar Diyaloğu [The Deaf Dialogue]'.

[7] For different comments on the subject, see Günver (1986, p. 175) and Dikerdem (1989, pp. 95-6).

[8] For more information on his mission in Washington: Erkin (1987, p. 286) and Erkin (1992, p. 25 and 102). During Erkin's mission of Washington, one of the other issues on his agenda was economic and military aid from the US. For his contacts see, BCA, 030-18-01/128-18-8; BCA, 030-18-01-02/138-130-5; BCA, 030-18-01/128-18-10. Also see Criss (2012).

politics. Much of his work focused on mediating and resolving disputes between France and Spain. Due to his efforts, Erkin was awarded the 'Order of Isabella the Catholic' by Franco's government (Erkin, 2008, p. 44). His next stop was Paris where he took the post of his famous predecessor Zeki Kuneralp (BCA, 030-18-01/145-120-14). His first task was to lead efforts to establish the Institute of Turkish Studies. Based on his education at the Galatasaray Lyceum, where teaching French and French culture was central to the curriculum and which played an important place in the history of modern Turkey as well as in the history of Turkish education, he tried to establish an equivalent institution in France. Due to his work, the Institute of Turkish Studies was founded at the Sorbonne University and Louis Bazin, a renowned Orientalist and Turkologist, was appointed as director (Erkin, 1992, pp. 139-40). Erkin was recognized in diplomatic circles in France and was elected to the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences of the Institute de France, which had such distinguished members as Winston Churchill and General Dwight Eisenhower. He next moved to London, which would prove to be his last overseas post. As he was in London for the 'May 27 military coup', his most important agenda was to promise British diplomats that Turkey would return to democracy as soon as possible. Erkin intended to step down following the executions of Prime Minister Menderes, Foreign Minister Zorlu and Finance Minister Polatkan, however he never realized this decision (Erner, 1993, p. 89).

After the 27 May coup, Cemal Gürsel became head of state and Selim Sarper the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the two Government of National Unity Committees formed by Gürsel. Gürsel, later was elected President, tasked İnönü to form a government after general elections. İnönü retained Sarper, who also elected as RPP deputy. However, following the '22 February events,' İnönü replaced Sarper with Erkin, as İnönü suspected that Sarper supported coup mastermind Colonel Talat Aydemir (Taşkın, 2014, pp. 112-5; Olgaçay, 1990, p. 292). Working as foreign minister during the 27th and 28th İnönü governments, Erkin's served from March 1962 until he handed over his duties to Hasan Esat Işık in February 1965. Süleyman Demirel, who was elected to the presidency of the Justice Party (JP), built a strong opposition in this period. During budget talks in parliament, the RPP's proposed budget was rejected and the government was forced to resign on 13 February 1965. A new coalition government led by Suat Hayri Ürgüplü was formed and Hasan Esat Işık, the ambassador to Moscow, was appointed Foreign Minister.

During his tenure at the Ministry, crucial events such as the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Cyprus Issue and the Johnson Letter Crisis occurred. His first serious test as minister was the Cuban Missile Crisis, in which two superpowers faced the risk of war for the first time in world political history. Turkey took a great risk and backed the United States as an ally. Senior representatives like Gürsel, İnönü and Erkin always publicly made supportive statements towards the US. Raymond Hare, the US ambassador in Ankara, met frequently with Minister Erkin and said that Turkey's stance on the Cuban Missile Crisis was appreciated by the US (Toker, 1992, pp. 143-44).

The Soviet Union placed its own requests to Turkey. Nikita Rijov, the ambassador in Ankara, met with Minister Erkin and asked for the removal of US Jupiter missiles stationed in Turkey, as well as to protest the US embargo against Cuba. In his response Erkin stated that it was impossible to dismantle the missiles by outlining the ongoing Soviet threats to Turkish territory. He added that the embargo was a problem for the United Nations (Yavuz, 1999, p. 113).

Due to the thread of Soviet missiles in Cuba, the American government ultimately agreed with the Soviets to remove its missiles from Turkey, which came at the expense of damaging its credibility in the eyes of the Turks and its NATO allies (Oran, 2002, pp. 682-3). It suggested that the US would negotiate the status of missiles in Europe. In the context of threatened nuclear

war, the desire to overcome the crisis with the least damage played an important role (Sever, 1997). As a result, the two superpowers agreed mutually to remove all missiles and on 24 January 1963, President Kennedy confirmed that all Jupiter missiles in Turkey would be withdrawn. He reported that submarines equipped with Polaris missiles would be stationed in the Eastern Mediterranean instead. Further – in contradiction to recent events – he stressed that Turkey would never be subject to bargaining in negotiations with the USSR. Turkish authorities were disappointed but had to support the decision. To reassure the public, Erkin stated in a parliamentary speech on 18 February 1963 that the Jupiters were obsolete and that they were removed for Turkey's security (Bölükbaşı, 2001, p. 88). Even if missiles were old, Turkey had been left alone and exposed by its most important ally and this situation was discussed extensively by the public. After Turkey's entry into NATO, the Cuban Missile Crisis was the first serious break in Turkish-American relations, which otherwise had been in a 'honeymoon period.' In subsequent years, the US repeatedly neglected Turkey in its negotiations with the Soviets. Combined with the Cyprus Crisis and Johnson's Letter, bilateral relations between the US and Turkey were damaged significantly. Turkish foreign policy, which had been entirely US and Western-centric, would change, and diplomats increasingly worked to build relationships with diversified the Third World, the Islamic World, and especially the Soviet Union.

One of the most critical agenda items of Turkish foreign policy in the 1960s was the Cyprus Issue, and it occupied most of Erkin's time at the Ministry. Makarios III, the President of Cyprus and leader of the Greek Cypriots, visited Ankara between 22-26 November 1962 to negotiate amendments to the constitution that had been accepted in the Zurich and London agreements (*Milliyet,* 21, 23 and 27/11/1962). In the course of his discussions with Gürsel, İnönü and Erkin, Makarios received a negative response. Erkin reported that if there were a change to the constitution of Cyprus, conditions on the island would worsen. Following Makarios' visit, Erkin met with the British ambassador Sir David Allen and noted that despite all the difficulties, contacts were completed in good atmosphere. However, in a meeting with the UK High Commissioner in Nicosia, Makarios stated that he found Erkin to be overly authoritative and was not satisfied with his contacts (Sonyel, 2003, pp. 33-5). Makarios insisted on amendments to constitution. Erkin addressed Makarios: 'if we start to change the constitution, where will we stop and where will reach the end of these changes?' With this speech, Erkin emphasized the impossibility of this situation (Reddaway, 1986, p. 139). While maintaining contacts with both sides, Ambassador Allen visited Erkin and criticized him for taking a firm stance 'contrary to diplomatic conventions'. Erkin told the ambassador: 'Makarios had not done a wise job in putting forward such impossible ideas; moreover, he created a risk of collapse of the United Cyprus Republic.' With this statement, he expressed that Turkey would not change its position.

Due to inability to amend the constitution, clashes on the island increased. Due to attacks against Turkish Cypriots, Erkin met with Allen on 22 December 1963 and stated that a great slaughter had been carried out and that all these events were part of plans carefully prepared by Makarios. He also stated that Greek Cypriot police had participated in the violence. He added that in order to maintain order, he would request help from the British, American, and Greek governments. In a parliamentary speech on 24 December 1963, he expressed his concerns about the aggressive attitudes of the Greeks and also announced to both the national and international public that the Turkish state's patience was running low.[9] On the same day, a high-level meeting was held under the direction of İnönü in which Chief of the General Staff Cevdet Sunay stated that Turkish warplanes had been authorized to fly low over Cyprus as a warning. Additionally, if Greek Cypriot attacks continued, the pilots were authorized to attack

[9] For the full text of the conversation, see, *Millet Meclisi Tutanak Dergisi* (1/23/18, pp. 509-511).

(Bölükbaşı, 2001, p. 101). Erkin forwarded these decisions to the British and Greek ambassadors to show that Turkey was serious. On the 24th and 25th of December, Turkish jets made low flights over the island and on 26 December 1963 Erkin again spoke to the assembly (Gürün, 1983, p. 404). Despite these contacts and warnings, Greek Cypriot attacks continued and Turkish Cypriots were intimidated and forced to flee.

Following these events, a conference was held in London on 13 January 1964. Britain, Turkey and Greece participated in this conference and Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot representatives were included on 15 January 1964. Erkin represented Turkey at the conference.[10] In discussions, he stated that the balance, formed by the London and Zurich agreements, had deteriorated day by day and various violent and unwelcome incidents had occurred. Stressing that Cyprus was very important to Turkey, he declared that those responsible for atrocities on the island must be held accountable and that victims should be compensated (Erim, 1975, p. 237). Returning to Turkey on 2 February 1964, Erkin stressed that the need for a peacekeeping force on the island, which would include Turkey, Britain and Greece, as well as the US and NATO forces. After again informing parliament, Erkin stated that the *sine qua non* for Turkey was to ensure security on the island. He also said that this was accepted by other parties (Gönlübol, 1996, p. 379-380). Because violent incidents continued to increase, UN Security Council Resolution 186 mandated a peacekeeping force for the island.[11] Erkin remarked: 'This was a goal we had elaborated for weeks... So we welcome the plan... Our main purpose was to provide for the safety of life and property on the island…' In essence he declared that Turkey had accepted the decision (Gönlübol, 1996, p. 381).

Although Greeks continued violent attacks against Turks, there were several reasons for Turkey's lack of actual military intervention. İnönü, who had witnessed two great world wars, did not want to present the Turkish army, which was not ready for an operation that required coordination of land, air and naval forces, with the prospect of a possible failure (Erim, 1975, p. 264). In addition, although it was not desired by Turkey, Britain or the United States, the Soviet Union had also become involved in the issue and strongly supported Makarios's position. On 12 March 1964, a National Security Council meeting was held. At the meeting, an ultimatum was issued to Greek Cypriot leaders. If attacks continued, Turkey would intervene. This situation was communicated to the guarantor states and to the US. Ambassador Hare, who realized that Turkey was serious and determined to intervene, immediately met with Erkin; Hare stated that Turkey had always advocated a compromise and suggested that a military intervention would be imprudent behavior. The Greek ambassador, who was also at the meeting, addressed Erkin: 'Do you think about the consequences of this?' Erkin addressed the two ambassadors, saying everything had been taken into account (Bölükbaşı, 2001, pp. 109-118). Ambassador Hare spoke with İnönü to dissuade Turkey from intervening militarily and he reported that UN peacekeepers would arrive on the island as soon as possible. On 14 March 1964, advance soldiers from the UN peacekeeping force landed in Cyprus. Erkin headed to Washington for discussions with President Johnson, but he could not get a satisfactory answer. Johnson said to Erkin: 'There no solution we prefer, we are only expecting a solution which will not harm anyone and will be permanent' (Sönmezoğlu, 1995, p. 13). On 5 June 1964, Minister Erkin addressed journalists: 'If Greeks continue their activities, one day we are destined to go to Cyprus. They suppose that they can continue to violate the constitution, they kidnap and kill Turks in the secret places and think we will be disinterested. If they suppose so, they are absolutely wrong' (Şahin, 2002, p. 9). In other words, Turkey was no longer going to be patient.

[10] For a statement by Erkin to inform the public before going to London: *Millet Meclisi Tutanak Dergisi*, Period 3, Volume 17, Session 20, pp. 7-10.

[11] For a decision taken by the Security Council on 4 March 1964, see https://undocs.org/S/RES/186(1964) .

As tensions gradually increased, Erkin warned Greece and Britain that if they did not take necessary measures, Turkey would intervene in Cyprus.

After Erkin's statements, the nondiplomatic 'Johnson letter' incident occurred (Erim, 1975, pp. 304-9). Although the contents of the letter were kept hidden 18 months, on 13 January 1966 this letter was broadcast by the media. This letter departed from the sort of diplomatic language that would be expected from an ally and was threatening. Johnson's letter stated that the US would not allow Turkey to use American equipment or supplies, and that if Soviets intervened, NATO would not defend Turkey (Oran, 2002, p. 686). After this, İnönü and Erkin went to Washington to solve the matter face to face.[12] Although a joint declaration was published after negotiations,[13] Turkey did not find the support from the US that it had hoped for. Both the US and Greek Cypriots benefited from crises of the management and the government in Turkey after May 27 and adopted an opportunistic position.

Greeks continued their attacks and raided villages with large Turkish population on 6 August 1964. Following these raids, Turkish jets conducted warning flights over the island and bombed some military bases (Tarakçı, 2010, p. 79-80). Foreign Minister Erkin said to ambassador Hare: 'Turkish bombing will be limited and Greeks can be informed about this' and suggested that the purpose was not conflict but rather to ensure the safety of threatened Turkish Cypriots. Erkin also stated that the US should take responsibility to prevent a possible Turkish-Greek war (Bölükbaşı, 1996, p. 132). Ambassador Hare responded that Turks on the island exaggerated attacks and that the Turkish side could follow a more peaceful path.

Erkin had a busy and stressful job with the Cyprus issue as foreign minister. He never hesitated to declare that Turkey would uphold its guarantorship rights in Cyprus and often used a harsh tone. Soviet presence in the region caused uneasiness with the US. US diplomats believed that a unilateral Turkish intervention would disrupt the balance of power in the Middle East and the Mediterranean, and accordingly they tried to prevent one as much possible as. Although President Johnson's letter increased tensions in Turkish-American relations, Turkey tried to maintain relations. Erkin, by making speeches in the parliament, tried to bring the ruling party and the opposition together on the Cyprus issue. As a result, reliance on the US was broken and Turkey started to explore and implement alternative diplomatic policies, including by improving relations with the Soviet Union. This approach had started already during the last Menderes government, but the goals were not achieved due to the 27 May coup.[14] Erkin's visit to Moscow was officially announced on 20 October 1964, which represented the first official visit by a Turkish foreign minister to Moscow since after Saraçoğlu's trip in 1939 (Gönlübol, 1996, p. 425).

Erkin was warmly welcomed in Moscow and he discussed various important issues with Soviet Premier Anastas Mikoyan, Prime Minister Alexei Kosygin, Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrei Gromyko and Foreign Trade Minister Nikolai Patolichev (Tellal, 2000, pp. 222-3). The Soviets were mainly concerned about Turkey's NATO membership. They regarded NATO and US soldiers and military bases in Turkey as a threat to their security. The Turkish delegation emphasized that they considered NATO as a defense pact rather than an aggressive force, and assured the USSR that Turkey would never allow any attack against the Soviet Union from Turkish land. As the Soviets realized that Turkey's insisted on remaining in NATO, the topic was dropped and other issues were discussed.[15] Another matter of dispute between the Soviets

[12] See: *Milliyet* (22/06/1964).
[13] For the full text of the declaration: *Dışişleri Belleteni, Dışişleri Bakanlığı Yayınları*, Ankara (July 1964, pp. 16-7).
[14] For more information, see: Kurban (2014).
[15] Erkin, in his memoirs published many years later, shared the following lines about his visit to Moscow: 'During

and Turkey was the Soviet attitude towards the Cyprus issue.[16] Until Erkin's visit, the USSR supported the Greek Cypriot side, but after his visit they moved closer to the Turkish position (*Dışişleri Belleteni*, October-December-1964, p. 6). A statement by the parliamentary speaker Nicolai Podgorny emphasized local rights for everyone living on the island and advocated regional autonomy within Cyprus. This statement provoked an angry reaction from AKEL, the Greek Cypriot Communist Party (*Dışişleri Belleteni*, January 1965, p. 36). A Cultural-Scientific Cooperation Agreement was signed between two countries and on the last day of the visit, they issued a joint declaration. Erkin said in a parliamentary speech that his visit had been highly productive (BCA 030-18-01/181-70-1).[17] A year after Erkin's visit to Moscow, Podgorny and Gromyko visited Turkey.[18] The Turkish Prime Minister Suat Hayri Ürgüplü visited Moscow in August 1965 to improve economic co-operation between the two countries. The Justice Party, which became the ruling party after the 1965 general elections, deepened these relations and several mutual protocols were signed in this period (Armaoğlu, 2009, pp. 988-999). Following Erkin's critical Moscow visit, the relationship between Turkey and the USSR started to normalize. Hasan Esat Işık, ambassador to Moscow, became foreign minister after Erkin, a choice that suggested that the government wanted to continue to improve relations with the USSR.

Erkin's time at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ended on 19 February 1965. Afterwards, he launched a political career and was elected as a Republican People's Party to represent Ordu in parliament (Tamkoç, 1976, p. 427; *TBMM Albümü*, 2010, p. 363). During his term as a member of parliament, Erkin was generally devoted to issues related to Ordu and in 1967 unexpectedly resigned from the RPP (*Millet Meclisi Tutanak Dergisi*, 2/2/30, p. 21, and 2/9/13). Journalists tried to discover the motives behind this decision several times, but Erkin never clarified this resignation with a statement (*Cumhuriyet*, 25 and 26/04/1967).[19] Erkin continued his work in parliament for a year and in 1968 joined Demirel's Justice Party, the political rival of İnönü, expressing his gratitude to Demirel. He praised the JP, saying: 'I'm joining the JP with the hope that morality and virtue will prevail in politics. I'm participating in the JP as your friend who wants to protect dignity of state' (*Hürriyet* and *Cumhuriyet*, 18/04/1968). Erkin's unexpected resignation, and his accusations against İnönü, were criticized by his colleagues.[20] Although he accused İnönü and the RPP of a lack of virtue, and joined the JP in demonstrations, Erkin was not included on Demirel's list for the 1969 general elections. This effectively marked the end of his political career. President Cevdet Sunay soon appointed Erkin to the senate following the resignation of journalist and writer Nadir Nadi (5 June 1970-10 October 1971). Erkin served on the foreign affairs, tourism and promotion commissions of the Senate, and also represented Turkey at various meetings of NATO and the UN (BCA, 030-18-01-02/271-66-6 and 030-18-

my visit to Moscow, in my speeches with the Soviet leaders, I guaranteed that unless Russians attacked us, such a danger never would come from Turkey, and I witnessed that they were pleased with my words.' Erkin, (2008, p. 355).

[16] About one year before Erkin's visit to Moscow, on 26 December 1963 and 29 January 1964, Turkey stated to Russia as well as all other countries that situations in Cyprus were getting desperate and Turkish Cypriots were waiting for help. Turkey's only demand from Soviet Union in that time was a conscientiously response to the massacres. But the Soviet Union acted in accordance with its interests and ignored the attacks on Turks. Besides, with an implicit threat, they stated that no external intervention should be made to the island. For more information, see Gönlübol (1996, p. 422-423).

[17] For the full text of conversation: *Millet Meclisi Tutanak Dergisi*, 1964, 33/12/1, p. 530-533.

[18] For full information on his visit, see: *Cumhuriyetin 75 Yılı* (1998, p. 576), Gürün (1983, p. 207-8) and *Dışişleri Belleteni* (January 1965, pp. 8-9).

[19] *Cumhuriyet*, 25, 26/04/1967.

[20] Mahmut Dikerdem commented in his memoirs on Erkin's political move as follows: '...This attitude of Erkin, who proved to be a competent diplomat, shows that the ambition of the position and the disease of the superiority sometimes drags people to a sad place.' (Dikerdem, 1989, p. 58-59).

01-02/252-44-17).[21] Living alone after his senatorship, Erkin died on 21 June 1980 at the age of 81 (*Tercüman*, 22/06/1980; *Cumhuriyet*, 23/06/1980).

When we consider Erkin's personal life and conception of the world, the secular and modern citizen who idealized modern Turkey and built on radical changes becomes visible. His most distinctive features were his patience, his disciplined work ethic and his voluntary loyalty to his work. In many ways, Erkin, as well as his family, personified the idealized modern and secular Turkish citizen. His wife Mukaddes Erkin was herself a modern Turkish woman, an accomplished musician and soprano (she had treble). On the diplomatic circuit, at cocktail parties, balls and other diplomatic functions, she attracted notice. Erkin hosted a party while ambassador to the United States at his residence, where Mukaddes gave a concert for the assembled guests (Erkin, 1999, p. 538). Erkin's younger brother, Ulvi Cemal, became a state artist and a noted composer. A member of the pioneering group of Turkish symphonic composers who came to be known as The Turkish Five, Cemal and his peers set the musical direction for the newly established Turkish Republic. These composers distinguished themselves with their use of Turkish folk music and modal elements in an entirely Western symphonic style. Cemal was an important figure in the Turkish music revolution and performed for both Ataturk and İnonü. He also traveled widely and gave concerts in Berlin (1943), Moscow (1946, 1963), Prague (1947), and Vienna (1965) (Günver, 1984, p. 91). The Erkin family was modern, secularist, and nationalist, and sought to represent the modern Turkish nation on both the national and international stage.

Erkin's legacy is perhaps best summed up by the testimony of those with whom he most closely worked. Peers and even rivals praised his discipline and work ethic and said that he was a virtual 'ecole' (Günver, 1990, pp. 269-70).[22] Statesmen such as Atatürk, İnönü, Saraçoğlu and Menderes appreciated his work, and British Intelligence described him as the most quick-witted and sophisticated among the Turkish diplomats except for Numan Menemencioğlu. Nonetheless, he did not hesitate to show his childish side in joyful moments (Erner, 1993, p. 177). However, some of his colleagues saw him quite ambitious and rude so that his last political preference was seen as out-of-place by his colleagues. While this article does not claim to exhaust all issues worth discussing about Erkin and Turkish foreign policy from that period, our inferences are likely to contribute to future studies.

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[21] Also see Çoker (1999, p. 771) and Özgişi (2012, p. 518).
[22] Also see Gürün (1994, p. 93), Günver (1986, p. 172) and Ülkümen (1993, p. 19).

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