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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

SPECIAL ASSISTANT
RESEARCH &
INTELLIGENCE

29 JUN 1950

JUN 29 04:00

Mr. W. Park Armstrong, Jr.
Special Assistant, Intelligence
Department of State
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Armstrong:

In connection with efforts currently being made by the Department of State to establish reporting posts concerned with affairs in the Soviet/satellite area (as indicated, for example, in Department of State outgoing Airgram dated 7 March 1950 to Certain Diplomatic and Consular Officers, entitled: "Proposed Establishment of Peripheral Reporting System"), the following comments and suggestions may be of interest and value. It will be noted that reference is made, not only to peripheral intelligence coverage from the post concerned, namely Istanbul, Turkey, but also to Turkey itself, the adequate intelligence coverage of which is considered of particular significance.

The importance of adequate intelligence coverage in Turkey, if only because of its precarious and chronically threatened situation on the Soviet/satellite periphery, cannot be over-emphasized. Turkey's resistance to imperialistic Soviet/Communist expansionism has been of immense significance, not only to the Near and Middle East, but also to the US and other western democratic nations. These US interests make it imperative that adequate US intelligence coverage of developments and trends in Turkey be constantly provided for the benefit of US policy-makers.

The general elections held in Turkey on 14 May 1950 resulted in the victory by a large majority of the opposition Democratic Party, in startling contrast to predictions made by official US representatives in the field. Despite these predictions, CIA held a contrary view, in the belief that field reports were not based upon a thorough survey of national sentiment. The pre-election CIA estimate indicated a Democratic victory as entirely possible, although this forecast was necessarily qualified because

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APPROVED FOR RELEASE - CIA INFO DATE: 09-26-2011

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of the unanimity with which predictions in the field expressed the opposing view. It is felt that the very severe additional burdens imposed upon US officials in Turkey in fulfillment of their duties in connection with the application of the various US aid programs have the effect of weakening essential intelligence coverage. The repetition of misjudgments, such as that recently demonstrated in field election forecasts, might in the future lead to serious misconceptions in the minds of US policy-makers, with potentially dangerous consequences.

Because the opportunities for intelligence coverage from United States posts within the Soviet/satellite states are being swiftly reduced -- and, in the case of Turkey's immediate neighbor, Bulgaria, entirely eliminated -- it has become of increasing consequence that overt sources of information on the Soviet/satellite area be exploited to the fullest possible extent from peripheral posts. Turkey, because of its geographical position and political orientation, offers (in the city of Istanbul) one of the best opportunities for peripheral intelligence of this increasingly significant category.

It is therefore strongly recommended that special efforts be made to strengthen intelligence coverage within Turkey to include such measures as are suggested below:

- a. An increase in the number of personnel assigned to general intelligence coverage in Turkey, particularly political intelligence. Such personnel should not be burdened with excessive administrative duties, which would interfere with their intelligence activities.
- b. The assignment to Turkey of personnel with competence in the Turkish language.
- c. The requirement that personnel travel about Turkey for purposes of observation, and arrangements to make the fulfillment of such a requirement possible, as well as profitable from an intelligence viewpoint. (Observation by IAC agency representatives in Turkey continues to be generally confined to the principal cities of Ankara, Istanbul and, to a lesser extent, Izmir.)
- d. A concerted and vigorous effort, in co-operation with CIA and other interested agencies, to establish a coordinated intelligence gathering organization in

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Istanbul, adequately equipped to collect and forward available political, economic, military, and scientific information on the Soviet/satellite area. In this connection all possible inter-agency support should be given to the preliminary steps already informally undertaken in Istanbul to establish a functioning peripheral reporting unit.

Sincerely,

R. H. Hillenkoetter

R. H. HILLENKOETTER
REAR ADMIRAL, USN
DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

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