

The Young Turkish Revolution: an Austro-Hungarian Assessment.

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Johann, Markgraf Pallavicini, (1846-1941) was one of the most able of the career diplomats of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. After a relatively slow start - he was fifty when he secured his first appointment as head of mission - at Bucharest - he served as ambassador at Constantinople for thirteen years, from January 1906 to November 1918; and it was a sign of the high regard in which he was held in Vienna that when Aehrenthal had to take four months' leave for health reasons in 1911, Pallavicini was chosen to take charge of the Foreign Ministry itself. At Constantinople, he soon established a position for himself, and quite a cordial relationship with the Grand Vizier, Ferid Pasha, who in May 1908 actually invited him to dine at his house. (As his even more prestigious German colleague pointed out, perhaps not without a tinge of envy, it had 'never happened before that an ambassador has been invited to eat at the Grand Vizier's. That would have aroused mistrust in the Palace.)¹ Certainly, Pallavicini's contacts were chiefly with the Grand Vizier and not with the Palace: he had a good deal of sympathy for Ferid's complaints about the latter - even at the height of the crisis in July the Sultan, 'instead of acting with a sense of direction and taking the advice of the Grand Vizier and the ministers . . . continues to work as before with his Secretary, Izzet Pasha, and thinks he can master the situation with trifling measures'.² But his reports, precisely because of his contacts with the Grand Vizier, and for the native intelligence and discriminating judgement that imbue them, are a valuable source of information - and are perhaps particularly of interest for the period immediately preceding the Revolution of 1908 owing to the fact that for a month after 10 June Pallavicini was the only ambassador in the capital.³ O'Connor had died in March, and the others had all found that there was nothing in the situation to prevent their taking a month's leave.

Not that Pallavicini's presence in Constantinople was due to any particular anxiety about the situation. He was well aware that the Empire faced great problems, and he had clear views of his own as to their causes. One of the worst running scores was the internecine struggle among the Christians of Macedonia, and he was notably sceptical about the attempts of the Great Powers, at first under Austro-Russian and lately under Anglo-Russian leadership to provide a remedy in the shape of administrative reform under the supervision of European officials. In the first place, Pallavicini wondered whether the task was not simply beyond the Powers:⁴

There can be no doubt that the elimination of the (terrorist) bands in Macedonia is a desirable objective, but ... it is not simply a question of the bands, who count for no more than 1400 men, but of the condition of the whole of the Christian population of Macedonia. The bands are merely the cadres of the

army; the army itself is almost the whole of the Christian population . . . The evil lies far too deep to be eliminated by the gendarmerie, even the Turkish troops are not sufficient for the task. The chief evil lies in the national and religious propaganda organizations. But what is worst of all about the situation is the fact that the leadership of this propaganda lies beyond the frontiers of the state, whatever pious assurances the governments of Sofia, Belgrade, and Athens might give to the contrary. (Indeed, Pallavicini had plenty of evidence from his seven years at Bucharest that even the Rumanian government was not innocent.) Moreover, not only was the intervention of the Powers to improve the lot of the Christians insufficient to cope with the problem; it was actually making it worse, in that it had

aroused hopes amongst the Christians that the time is approaching when they will be masters of the country. It is not surprising, therefore, that they are already fighting for the spoils; and the more we accustom the Christian population to the idea that Turkish rule is coming to an end, the more intensive the struggle between them will become.

This problem was not insuperable, however, and in an interview with the Sultan on 26 June Pallavicini urged him strongly to take more energetic measures against the terrorists and to appoint more effective commanders in Macedonia.⁵ (On 29 June Ferid told Pallavicini that he had made a great impression, and that the Sultan was about to follow his advice - albeit for reasons unknown to the ambassador.)⁶ In June, the government seemed in fact to have the situation in hand, and had, to Pallavicini's relief, suppressed a rising against the Prince of autonomous Samos with remarkable ease. The problem was the usual one: it was significant that the Greek consul in Samos had taken precipitate flight, as the affair was⁷

typical for the attitude of the little Balkan states towards Turkey. It is always the same game and the same confusion of terminology (Begriffe). The same role that was played by the Greek consul in Samos is played by the Greek and Serbian consuls and the Bulgarian commercial agents in Macedonia, and so long as an end is not put to these machinations, there can be no peace. The incidents in Samos show that even where there is complete autonomy and only a homogeneous Christian population ... trouble is stirred up all the time from outside. One can imagine what it would be like in Macedonia if autonomy were established there as England desired.

Yet wearisome though the problem might be, it did not occur to Pallavicini or to anyone else that it could not be contained, or that the Empire was on the brink of revolution. He had evinced no particular interest in February when the Austro-Hungarian ambassador in Paris had reported on a meeting of Turkish malcontents held at the house of the wealthy Prince Sabaheddin and attended by the editor of Mechveret, according to the report, 'a certain Riza Bey, (who) ... is said to make the impression more of a confidence trickster than of a person to be taken seriously'.⁸ After a

meeting with Ferid on 2 June, in which the Grand Vizier had lamented the fact that nothing could be done about the wretched financial situation because the Sultan would not decide on a thoroughgoing reform, it seemed to Pallavicini that 'this financial question is the most worrying one for the future'.⁹ An interview with Ferid at the end of the month, however, suddenly revealed the existence of problems of a different kind.

According to Ferid Pasha¹⁰ the Sultan had been 'extraordinarily preoccupied' with rumours of a Young Turkish movement in the III Army Corps at Salonica, some of whose officers had been found in possession of Young Turkish newspapers of Bulgarian provenance; and twice (on 20 and 21 June) had sent a chamberlain to consult the Grand Vizier. The latter, suspecting that members of the camarilla or the War Ministry might only be exaggerating a 'harmless discovery' to make themselves appear indispensable, had tried to calm the Sultan, assuring him that the newspapers were 'of no importance' and that he could 'rely blindly' on the loyalty of the Army. On 26 June he had even managed to persuade the Sultan to release the commander of the III Army Corps (and brother of the Grand Vizier's son-in-law) who had been brought to Constantinople for questioning. But when he still found the Sultan worried he frankly admitted that discontent was indeed widespread in the Army. It was directed, however, not against the Sultan, but against the Army administration: the soldiers were distressingly short of both food and clothing; whereas it was known that sums of money authorized for their provision had simply disappeared. The discontent was particularly acute in the III Army Corps, suffering all the hardships of what amounted to actual war service in Macedonia for little reward, while the Army administration seemed to reserve all promotions for those engaged in the easy life of the Constantinople garrison.

Pallavicini broadly endorsed Ferid's analysis, both as regards the general discontent in the Army and the reasons for its being particularly acute in Macedonia.¹¹ There, in his view, the European-controlled reform action was itself a catalyst: in the ragged Macedonian Army 'every officer and every soldier must ask himself how it is that the Padishah has enough money to dress the gendarmerie smartly, while the soldiers lack for everything'. The Powers, all too prone to behave as if Macedonia were inhabited solely by Christians, and paying all too little attention to the views of the Moslems, particularly of the more educated ones in the Army and bureaucracy had created an explosive situation. The Austro-Hungarian Consul General in Salonica also pointed to the importance of the reform

action:¹² whereas it had been generally known for decades that all the intelligent and capable elements in the Turkish bureaucracy and officer corps were inspired by Young Turkish ideals, the reforms, leading to the steady replacement of inferior elements in the civilian and military hierarchy in Macedonia by efficient and capable men, had produced a complete predominance of the Young Turkish element and the reduction of the Old Turkish element and palace spies to a mere handful of persons. At the same time, the attempts by the Powers to improve the lot of the Christians had awakened in the Moslem element a determination to improve their own. Finally, as the demands made by the rebel officers in July showed the prospect of even more drastic European intervention, particularly the prospect after Reval that Turkish troops in Macedonia might be put under foreign command, had convinced the petitioners 'that the Sultan no longer has the power to defend the Empire from the foreigners, and that they must therefore take this in hand themselves'.¹³

Austro-Hungarian reports on the spread of the revolt in July do not contain much specific information on individual Young Turkish leaders who later came to prominence. (Enver Pasha is not even mentioned.) They do, however, throw light on the reactions of the authorities. Of these, it was the Sultan himself who was taking the decisions: as Ferid complained to Pallavicini, 'everything is done in the Palace; the Grand Vizier knows hardly anything of the measures which are taken, in the case of revolutionary movements, by the Sultan'.¹⁴ The signs were hardly auspicious: on 14 July Pallavicini learned from a Palace official that 'in the Palace they seemed to have lost their heads completely';¹⁵ and he wondered whether 'the forces which have been unnaturally held up for thirty years' might be about to sweep everything away.¹⁶ By 20 July he discerned a difference of views between the Sultan and the Grand Vizier: the latter was now talking of the need for far reaching reforms, and significantly adjured the ambassador to read up about the constitution of 1876.¹⁷ But he shrank from risking his position by tendering such advice to the Sultan, who was in no mood for concessions: 'These people have so insulted me, I wish I had never lived to see such an affront'.¹⁸ When Ferid was suddenly dismissed on 22 July Pallavicini immediately attributed this to the suspicions of the Sultan that the Grand Vizier was hand in glove with Albanian rebels who had appealed to him as a fellow-countryman.¹⁹ In August, however, he received (and believed) interesting information from Ferid himself. According to this,²⁰ he had on 21 July screwed up his courage to the point of advising the Sultan to restore the constitution of 1876. Abdul Hamid had given him a non-committal answer and had asked to

see Said Pasha. It was Said Pasha's advice that the Sultan could get by without concessions that had sealed the fate of Ferid, who the next day received a visit from the Sultan's adjutant bearing the imperial greetings together with the news that he was no longer Grand Vizier. It was only during the night of 23/24 July, when news arrived that the rebels had already proclaimed the constitution, in the provinces and in the capital, that the Sultan, the new grand vizier, and all the cabinet decided to give way and issue the proclamation of 24 July.

That the proclamation was immediately welcomed by most discontented elements is clear from all Austro-Hungarian reports. According to the consul at Monastir the whole Moslem population had given its support to the movement, once it had been assured that the deposition of the Sultan was not proposed;²¹ and a large assembly of Albanians at Verisovic pledged their support to the Young Turks once they had been given to understand that their privileges would be maintained and the European reform action ended.²² The fraternisation of Moslems and Christians in Macedonia was equally impressive, although on the Christian side it was clearly more sincere amongst those who had been suffering from the depredations of the bands than those who had organized them.²³ Pallavicini decided, on the very morrow of the restoration of the constitution that the future of the European reform action was now open to question: 'Europe is confronted with a new situation. The element which has been steadily ignored up to now has become conscious of itself', with unforeseeable consequences.²⁴ As for those 'self-styled experts' who were saying that the restoration of the constitution was merely 'a cunning move by the Sultan against the Powers' and the reforms, and that the Sultan was simply 'making a fool of Europe' as he had done in 1876, Pallavicini found such arguments 'ludicrous'.²⁵ In this instance the Sultan, undoubtedly hostile to constitutionalism as he was, had simply been forced to act 'exclusively under the pressure of circumstances'. The ambassador was avowedly very struck by the discipline displayed in the whole affair by both the troops and the Albanians, and concluded rather placidly as early as 24 July that 'one can justifiably assume that in consequence of the imperial decree calm will soon be restored'.²⁶

Admittedly, he was yet to experience some anxious days at the end of July; when, on the 26th, a mob - albeit a friendly one - invaded the antechamber of the Grand Vizier while he was engaged in receiving the diplomatic corps. Pallavicini feared that 'today or tomorrow the Revolution could break out in the capital as in the provinces';²⁷ and on the 27th he

declared the capital to be 'completely in the hands of the mob'.²⁸ He took heart, however, when the government decided to grant an amnesty for political prisoners (though he deplored its extension to common criminals) and to abolish the Palace police: this showed that things were to be 'fundamentally changed' - which was just as well, as it would have been 'dangerous to give the impression that the decisions which have been taken are not serious'.²⁹ By early August, as the dismantling of the old regime continued, and as the Sultan was gradually pushed into appointing a cabinet acceptable to the Committee, under Kiamil Pasha, on the 7th Pallavicini took a fairly positive view as he began to take stock of the forces behind what he now freely referred to as 'the Revolution'. He had discerned by 3 August that 'the Committee seems to be very well organized and will probably get its way. If that happens, the situation will improve'; but there would be 'no peace until the Porte and Palace are occupied by people who enjoy the full confidence of the Committee'.³⁰ As for the Committee itself, the ambassador's reports betray a mixture of admiration and awe that were to be completely lacking later. Ferid Pasha had confessed that although the government had known for about two months of the existence of the revolutionary movement in the Army, they had had simply no idea of the existence of an organization with so many branches (hence it was understandable that the foreign representatives should have had no idea of it, and that consul-general Oppenheimer in Salonica should have dismissed the disturbances as of no importance as late as 3 July)³¹ Pallavicini was certainly impressed: 'It is perhaps without precedent in the history of mankind that such a momentous revolution as we are now witnessing should take place in such a calm and peaceful manner'. Clearly, the Committee consisted of 'excellent (hervorragende) people' and they were 'directing the revolution in calm and confidence'.³²

In this vein Pallavicini felt able on 12 August to pronounce the Hamidian regime 'finally finished': if the Sultan now tried to restore it he would vanish from the scene.³³ The revolution had seen

the awakening to consciousness of the Turkish people. ... The best experts on Turkey did not know this people. .. Only now has it become clear that it has undergone in the last thirty years a change of which people were completely unaware - precisely because of the Hamidian system which rules out all contact with independent circles of the Turkish intelligentsia.

The Kiamil cabinet was 'a brilliant testimony to the moderation and caution of the leaders of the Young Turkish movement'.³⁴ The aged Kiamil himself might be 'physically a broken man, . probably he will not last long';³⁵ but as one who had so often been Grand Vizier under the old regime while yet being noted for his liberalism, he would, as 'a kind of bridge between the

old regime and the new, preserve the Sultan's prestige amongst the broad masses'.³⁶ As for the rest of the cabinet, 'almost all the decently and European educated members of the former cabinet' had been retained.³⁷ Hakki Bey was both minister of education and of the interior - the shortage of adequate personnel in their own ranks was one reason for the Young Turks' reliance on the old hands; and Pallavicini approved of the appointment: Hakki was 'a former legist of the Porte and minister of education in the Said Pasha cabinet ... long known for his liberal views, but at the same time with excellent connexions in the Palace, having been second translator to H.M. the Sultan' and under Ferid Pasha quasi foreign minister.³⁸

The real power in the land was, however, the Committee: men of 'incredible tact and energy', without whom the government could do nothing: 'That which the Palace was before, the Committee is now'.³⁹ Its power was so great that, despite the newly established freedom of the press, it even dominated the newspapers - hence their moderate tone, especially on foreign affairs. At this date the one cloud on the horizon was, in Pallavicini's view, the Army, which had, after all, been 'solely and alone' responsible for 'the great upheaval'. This was why the revolution had been bloodless: with the Army united behind the movement the reactionaries had had no instrument at their disposal to attempt resistance. Ferid Pasha agreed with this analysis: 'the Young Turkish committee in Paris could have agitated for ten years, and there would have been no revolution'.⁴⁰ This was 'exclusively' the work of the officers, especially of those of the III Army corps. But 'as everybody in the country was discontented' the revolution had found fertile soil in the civilian population too.⁴¹ It was, however, this very centrality of the Army's role that was beginning to give the ambassador some cause for concern. Already in July the consul-general in Salonica had warned of the danger of the emergence of 'a praetorian system' (Pratorianerwesen);⁴² and Pallavicini now added his own warning:⁴³

The strength of the Committee lies in the fact that most of the officers are its supporters. These officers are today, therefore, politicians and might get a taste for exercising power in a very significant way. ... An Army that seeks itself to determine the destiny of the state is a permanent danger, both to the state and to its neighbours.

He hoped, therefore, that a strong man would appear who would 'put things back to normal ... (and) make the Army what it ought to be, an obedient tool of the state'.

Despite such misgivings, Pallavicini still found a lot to praise in the early days of the new regime. In terms of law and order, for example, it

was a marked improvement on its predecessor. 'never was there more calm in the Turkish Empire than now', he wrote on 27 August.⁴⁴ Even a great fire in the market hall at Skoplje had given proof of the 'unexampled discipline created by the Young Turks': there had this time been no shooting, 'whereas before, even the most trivial fire in the city had given the signal for the wildest, senseless shooting in every street, even those furthest away from the fire'.⁴⁵ The proclamation of freedom and equality between all nation and religions was⁴⁶

now celebrating triumphs that even the best-informed people would not have dreamed of a month ago. The most heterogeneous elements go about arm in arm, embracing, kissing and drinking to each other, and yet, with all the revelry there are no excesses. Whereas before the new era an insufficiently sweetened coffee served to an Albanian in a coffee-house would have sufficed to provoke him to shoot into the coffee-cup with the revolver he always had at the ready, now, under the strict new regime, everybody without exception takes care not to fire a shot.

In Skoplje⁴⁷ the new Young Turkish 'Tribunal' was proceeding forcefully against 'the sexual aberrations that are so common here' (Already in July the Albanians gathered at Verisovic had denounced, at the instigation of Turkish women, the 'caffe-chantans-cum-brothels' that flourished in Skiplje, 'to the detriment of family life and to the enervation of youth'. Now, the sentencing of a

forty-year-old married Turk who, deserting his wife, had had a relationship with a 16-17-year-old youth, together with the sentencing of the youth to 21 baton strokes, is evidence of the determination to control this locally-prevalent evil to strengthen the spirit of family life, and to create thereby the pre-conditions for a healthy generation.

In terms of the Empire's external relations too, the ambassador found much to approve of. The Palace regime, with its 'shameless and boundless backshish system' had ended; and opportunities were presenting themselves for Austrian and Hungarian traders to seize for themselves 'a place in the sun'.⁴⁸ Had not a recent proclamation finally abolished the ban 'applied until recently very strictly, and only very lately rather more leniently on the importation of electrical machines and electrical lighting'? Pallavicini would 'not even be surprised if they did not permit the equally abominable telephone'. These could all be new fields for Austro-Hungarian exports, quite apart from the general economic upsurge to be expected from the change of regime 'which our businessmen ought to prepare in good time to participate in'.⁴⁹ In view of all this it was not surprising that on 10 August Pallavicini advised Vienna against raising the Bosnian question, which might arouse Turkish hostility and even provoke a combination of Turkey and the Balkan states.⁵⁰ That the new Turkey could not be discounted on the

international scene was further brought home to him by the Gueshov incident with Bulgaria in September, in which 'the spirit of the new era appeared for the first time in the field of foreign policy'.⁵¹ After all, 'the Turkey of the future will probably be something quite different from what it was until now'.⁵² On 18 September, Pallavicini elaborated this view:⁵³

Turkish self-confidence has grown markedly since the great upheaval and ... the Turkey of today will not let itself be treated as before. The importance of the upheaval ... lies in the fact that the Turkish people has, ... so to speak, awakened to a consciousness of its power. Whether it is in future governed with or without a parliament is fairly immaterial. The question is, will the Turkish people really become that which it promises to become, a strong, respect-inspiring factor, or will it fall back again into the lethargy that brought it to the edge of the abyss? I rather incline towards the first hypothesis.

The Austro-Turkish crisis over the annexation of Bosnia at the beginning of October naturally affected Pallavicini's general view of the situation. Not only did any prospects of a bigger place in the sun for Austrian traders disappear, the boycott of Austro-Hungarian trade throughout the empire, organized by the Committee, and against which the government refused to take any action, was by November threatening to inflict 'wounds on our trade' which 'can only be described as mortal'.⁵⁴ The ambassador had to admit that 'public opinion here, and particularly the Young Turks, are filled with a great hatred against us', a hatred that sprang not so much from the annexation as from 'the conviction of the Young Turks that we, by raising those foreign-political questions at a moment when the new regime was just getting established have dealt a heavy blow at the latter. The more the internal difficulties grow, the greater becomes the ill-humour of this party against us'.⁵⁵ As the ambassador's attempts to move the government to stop the boycott and to recognise the annexation came up against a blank wall of impassivity, so his exasperation grew, and coloured his reporting of the whole domestic scene.

Already on 27 August he had found certain political trends questionable: 'unfortunately, one cannot say that Kiamil Pasha is master of the situation; the real master is and remains the Committee'.⁵⁶ No minister or state official could continue in office if he lost its favour, and the danger was arising that individual ministers would make the retention of that favour their prime concern. The Sultan's authority had gone; and that of the Grand Vizier bade fair to follow. Convinced that 'the government needs the Committee and would be helpless without it' Pallavicini was naturally sceptical when Kiamil Pasha blandly explained to him on 11 September that 'le Comite est notre police'. But for the time being he consoled himself with the hope that once the parliament had been elected

the Committee would normalise the situation by ceasing to exist as a committee and taking power as a regular political party with a strong parliamentary majority.⁵⁷

As his frustration grew during the Bosnian negotiations however, the ambassador took an altogether gloomier view. He lamented 'the indolence of the government ... chiefly attributable to Kiamil Pasha and his ... incorrigible fatalism'.⁵⁸ He hoped that the Committee might force the Sultan to appoint a new Grand Vizier 'who has eyes for the requirements of a modern state such as Turkey indeed wishes to become'. But the Committee itself did not escape his strictures either:⁵⁹ far from withdrawing from affairs as it should have done in August, when it had established a government in which it had confidence, the Committee had by late October come to constitute 'a veritable shadow-government (Nebenregierung)'. Even those features of Kiamil's cabinet that had at first seemed reassuring were now proving to be flaws: it was the very fact that the ministers were 'rooted with every fibre of their being in the old system, which has imbued the Turkish bureaucracy with the spirit of irresponsibility and lack of initiative' that allowed the Committee, with a membership reckoned at some 20,000, to exercise its tutelege over the government and interfere all over the Empire. Yet, for all its power, the Committee could not 'make up for the loss of government authority or itself replace the government'. Indeed, Pallavicini was beginning to doubt whether the Committee would even be able to form a strong governing party when the parliament was elected. He was in fact becoming increasingly aware of divisions within the Committee's ranks and opposition outside them.

That the Committee was open to criticism from progressive quarters was clear to Pallavicini in September, when he reported the existence of 'a second committee, with the name "Committee for Decentralization and Private Initiative", originally based in Paris and led by Prince Sabbaheddin.⁶⁰ The differences between the two committees were partly differences of style: whereas the members of the Committee of Union and Progress 'only emerge from their anonymity seldom or not at all, and exercise their functions discreetly but all the more effectively for that - so that for example, their leader is unknown, even today', Sabbaheddin had got himself talked about a great deal, and made spectacular public appearances. His reputed pro-Greek sympathies had earned him a brilliant welcome in the Piraeus on his recent return to Turkey. But there were more fundamental obstacles in the way of the amalgamation that, according to Pallavicini, the Committee of Union and Progress would have liked to

achieve; whereas 'the Committee of Union and Progress, admittedly somewhat naively, represents and proclaims the view that differences of race and religion have from now on lost their divisive significance, and that there is therefore henceforth only one Ottoman Nation, the other Committee stands for the principle of giving the individual nations of the Ottoman Empire a very broad scope in the sense of the development of their nationality'. True, for a brief moment at the end of September, Pallavicini thought that amalgamation had actually been achieved, and that the Committee might lose some influence if the personality cult of Prince Sabaheddin came to prevail over the 'wise policy of the Committee of Union and Progress, whose actions are impersonally directed towards the common good'.⁶¹ But as his own conflict with the Committee developed in the autumn, he did not express any regret over the fact that the Sabaheddin group entered the election campaign as opponents of the Committee, appealing under the banner of 'Ottoman Liberalism' to the more conservative elements Turkish and Christian, outside the Committee, and emerged with 'quite respectable minorities'.⁶²

It would be simplistic to explain the fraternisation of races that marked the first heady days of the revolution solely in terms of emotional speeches such as that with which the Commander of Artillery at Monastir greeted the joyous processions of Greeks, Bulgarians and Jews marching on the barracks: 'the cause of the fraternal strife and of the sufferings of the population was the Sultan's misgovernment alone, playing off the nations against each other to enslave them'.⁶³ Hakki Bey gave Pallavicini another explanation:⁶⁴

the Committee presented the various propaganda organizations with a clear situation. They were asked to join with the Young Turkish Committee in defence of the constitution; but at the same time, it was explained that if they did not take up this invitation, the movement would regard them in the first line as enemies ... and would fight against them with all . . . means. The propaganda organizations, rightly assessing the balance of forces, did not wait to be told twice.

Pallavicini endorsed this analysis; and although he was confident that in future any bands would come up against a very different order of opposition from the troops, he began to wonder whether the Macedonian troubles might not nevertheless recur, once the Committee became identified with the government and ceased to be an element of revolution and upheaval.⁶⁵

It did not yet come to that, but by the end of October there were clear signs of disillusionment among the Greeks, originally wholehearted supporters of the revolution, but now objects of suspicion owing to the raising of the Cretan question in the wake of the annexation of Bosnia and

victims of Committee jobbery in the election campaign.⁶⁶ (This last, Pallavicini explained as to some extent a defensive move by the Turks, who feared they were in danger of being swamped by the culturally more advanced and altogether more active Greeks).⁶⁷ The Armenians meanwhile, were disappointed at the Committee's failure to restrain the Kurds, and resentful of Young Turkish demands for the abrogation of the Armenian articles of the Treaty of Berlin, (although in the election campaign they seemed to return to the idea of one Ottoman nation).⁶⁸ More lasting was the decline of the Committee's prestige in Albania 'whose inhabitants had at first been won over by the Young Turks with all kinds of promises that had since proved illusory'.⁶⁹ In the light of all this, Pallavicini was coming to the conclusion by November that the Young Turks would not get the parliamentary majority necessary to enable them to form a strong government; that the separatist tendencies of the Greeks and Bulgarians would prevent the development of Ottoman patriotism; and that, altogether, the 'pompously proclaimed concept' of equality and fraternity as the cement of the new Ottoman national idea had not stood the test of 'raw realities'.⁷⁰

Perhaps even more ominous were signs of opposition from the opposite end of the spectrum, from those who thought the changes wrought by the revolution not disappointingly meagre, but excessive. Already in August the appointment of the Kiamil Pasha cabinet had been ill received by the conservative notables of Prishten, in Albania. They were not only suspicious of Kiamil's reputation for peculation but fearful that whereas 'in these areas the Moslems already had all the freedom they felt desirable, Young Turkish freedom would only bring in undesirable novelties from Europe'.⁷¹ Such fears were perhaps not ill founded when Riza Bey could declare to a member of the Austro-Hungarian embassy that the Young Turks had 'no sympathy' for the Sultan's ideas, 'above all, for that of Panislamism, which the Young Turks regard as a ludicrous utopia, just as they would like to see the exclusion of religion altogether from all their activities'.⁷² According to Pallavicini 'the Young Turkish intelligentsia consists for the great part of free-thinkers and atheists who have sworn loyalty to the banner of mankind as a whole (des reinen Menschentums) and want the absolute equality of all religions in the Empire'.⁷³ They might find enthusiastic supporters in some quarters, notably among the free-thinking Bektashi sect, but their ideas would have little appeal, the ambassador felt, to the great masses.

On the contrary, the active opposition of the latter was, according to Ferid Pasha,⁷⁴ a thing to be feared if the government pushed ahead too fast with such projects as the emancipation of women - of which Prince Sabaheddin was a keen supporter. Pallavicini had some sympathy himself for this cause, given that its demands were 'in our eyes so modest' - the right to attend conferences and concerts; and he thought that as after all 'as regards their intellectual level women of the educated classes have no reason to be shy of comparison with their European sisters' the cause might indeed make some progress when parliament met.⁷⁵ Before these speculations could be tested, however the power of the elements so feared by Ferid was crudely demonstrated when a Greek, under guard in a Constantinople prison accused of a liaison with a Moslem widow, was 'lynched .. in bestial fashion' by a mob stirred up by reactionary elements.⁷⁶ In Pallavicini's view the affair bore witness to the weakness and inactivity of the government, to the 'lively vigilance of the reactionaries' and, above all, to the fact that 'the great mass is not ripe for Young Turkish ideals by a long way'. He was beginning to have serious doubts⁷⁷ altogether about the 'prominence of anti-religious ideas' coming from a few Committee members whose intellectual development had been confined to Paris. It had been 'a great mistake to seek to transplant West European Liberalism directly into the patriarchal Cherifian Empire'; it had alienated moderate Old Turkish circles that had supported the constitution, while giving the 'ever-vigilant reactionaries a welcome point of attack'. Indeed, by 28 October 'assured of the support of this conservative element the reactionary movement that was originally confined to very dubious elements is gaining in importance day by day'; the Young Turks seemed at a loss to deal with it: the spy system having been abolished, and the police proving 'totally useless' the government lashed out with draconian exemplary punishments and even with death sentences.⁷⁸

As criticism of the government grew, and as the parliamentary elections approached, Pallavicini speculated as to whether the Committee's opponents would manage to exploit the decline in its prestige to oust it from power. True, the individual who had suffered most from its rise, the Sultan, seemed for the moment unable to do much. Not that there was much doubt as to his feelings as Pallavicini had discovered in a bizarre audience on 2 September:⁷⁹ when the ambassador had proffered his congratulations on the popular acclaim he had received after restoring the constitution, Abdul Hamid had interrupted him and

laughing out loud, .. and keeping his eyes steadily on me, ... said, without waiting for the usual translation of my words, that he had no desire to withdraw the constitution ever - in

his own words. 'Not in five, not even in ten, nor in fifteen years' The singular, loud, laughter (eigentumliche laute Lachen) of the Sultan gave me the impression that the congratulations he has had to listen to lately do not actually please him. . Certainly, a lot of rancour has built up in His Majesty's mind. and it will last

For the time being, however the Sultan seemed determined, as Ferid Pasha complained, simply to withdraw himself from affairs, rather than to take his new role as constitutional monarch seriously.⁸⁰ Perhaps this was prudent: although Pallavicini could not say how far the Sultan was associated with the growth of reactionary activity, it was clear to him 'that Abdul Hamid, simply by virtue of the halo that, in the eyes of all Moslems, surrounds the head of the Caliph as leader of the sunnite world, has been the object of deepest mistrust amongst the Young Turks' who were keeping him 'like a prisoner' in Yildiz and watching his every move.⁸¹ Indeed,

the person of Abdul Hamid is so closely involved with the concept of reaction that lese majeste in this country is at present not merely not prosecuted, but regarded as a praiseworthy sign of pure constitutional sentiment, whereas on the other hand demonstrations in front of the Palace are branded as treasonable activities. This confusion of concepts results, for example in no objection being made to telegrams en clair referring to the possible deposition of the Sultan.

In these circumstances, although Pallavicini thought it 'impossible in the near future' that the Sultan could recover his power, he thought after the elections that he might be able to make some progress in that direction with the assistance of parliament, 'in which the conservative element seems to be more strongly represented than people had assumed'.⁸²

The authority of the Grand Vizier, meanwhile, was proving more of an element to be reckoned with. As the external problems of the Empire had deepened in the autumn, he had exploited both the decline in the Committee's prestige and his own reputation as a statesman of some international standing to establish what Pallavicini felt he 'might almost term a dictatorship - albeit influenced by the Committee - of the Grand Vizier' - so much so that even his cabinet colleagues were beginning to object to his 'autocratic proclivities'.⁸³ But as the acute stage of the crisis passed - thanks partly to an impressively efficient mobilization against Bulgaria - so Kiamil Pasha began to seem less indispensable, and by 18 November Pallavicini had decided⁸⁴ that it was the Army that was

the most important factor in the life of the state. Turkey will, if she is to survive at all become again what she always was: a military state. Only the Army can maintain Turkey's role, and everything will depend on whether it is possible to make the Army into a solid prop of the Turkish state. Experiences in this regard have not so far been bad ones

It was an encouraging sign that the Army was headed by 'thoroughly competent generals mostly educated in Germany, and whose hands are

no longer tied by the Palace as before'. On the dark side of the picture, however, the Committee was still a force to be reckoned with, and was determined to carry on its activities even after Parliament had met. Indeed, on 4 December Pallavicini described it as 'more powerful than ever'; the fate of the Grand Vizier again depended on its whims; and the fact that the Army, with its enhanced prestige, was 'today completely in the hands of the Committee' seemed to the ambassador one of the chief dangers of the confused situation.⁸⁵

Admittedly, the results of the parliamentary elections gave Pallavicini some grounds for hope. The most significant feature, he observed, was that the Young Turks although they were the only party with a political programme, had not managed to secure a majority.⁸⁶ With about 60 deputies they were confronted by the nationalities and a great mass of 160 Moslem unknown quantities, said to be constitutionalist but conservative. (This, he explained in terms of the isolation of many constituencies and the Old Turkish attitudes prevalent amongst the masses). Parliament, he wrote on 23 December⁸⁷ was an unknown quantity on the political scene: perhaps it would restrain the Young Turks, 'or even perhaps put an end to the rule of the Committee. That would be a blessing for Turkey'. On the other hand, 'perhaps the exact opposite might occur; Parliament too could sink to the position of a tool of the Committee which would make the situation even worse'.

Not surprisingly he cheered up when the government's list of thirty-nine senators, predominantly respected servants of the old regime, was published and escaped criticism even in the Young Turkish press - which he attributed to the 'feeling of respect towards highly placed persons inherent in the Ottomans of today', which was again coming to the fore after its eclipse in the summer.⁸⁸ Obviously Kiamil was hoping through such a conservative senate to strengthen the moderate element which was a good sign for the future, both at home and abroad. The election of Said Pasha as President of the Senate was another good sign; as was the decent showing made by the Albanian leader Ismail Kemal Bey in the vice-presidential election.⁸⁹ The President of the Chamber Achmet Riza Bey, was also said to be supporting Kiamil in view of his valuable contacts with England;⁹⁰ and Pallavicini was delighted with his performance in December when, in what threatened to be an awkward debate on the Bosnian question, the President cut short any speechmaking and secured the acceptance of the speech from the throne by acclamation.⁹¹ The new year started equally well, with the Sultan's giving a gala dinner for all the

members of parliament, on 6 January - the first time since the founding of the Empire that the Sultan-Caliph had sat down to dinner with his subjects, and in Pallavicini's view the most important event since the elections: 'Abdul Hamid has once again proved himself to be a master in politics'.⁹² He was already rumoured to have Achmet Riza Bey in his pay; and he enjoyed the support of Kiamil who was emancipating himself more and more from the Young Turks⁹³ On 11 January, Pallavicini's own relations with Kiamil took an enormous turn for the better with the conclusion of the Austro-Turkish agreement regularizing the annexation of Bosnia in return for a substantial cash payment

Throughout January Pallavicini's reporting took on an increasingly sanguine tone. When Parliament assembled Kiamil received a vote of confidence so nearly unanimous that the ambassador could write of the 'complete defeat - at least for the present - of the Young Turkish party in the House'. It showed, as the elections had done that 'Young Turkish aspirations could not take root in the conservative majority of the Turkish population'. The victory of the Young Turkish revolution in July had been the result of the general discontent that had seized all classes in recent years; but it was now clear that the majority of the country did not want to go along with the Young Turks and disliked them; and Kiamil Pasha 'has managed very cleverly to counter the movement which, because of its conspiratorial character above all else, was a serious threat to the state'.⁹⁴ The general opinion of the summer - which Pallavicini confessed⁹⁵ he had shared - that Kiamil 'this apparently decrepit old man', would not last long had been proved false: he had 'put an end to the abnormal situation of two governing authorities' and was now master of the situation, at least in Parliament. Of course 'this parliament has not yet grown out of its toddling shoes, .. no clear parties have yet emerged, .. and precisely because of the fact that there has been no real organization of parties the government is always exposed to surprises' Here, a banquet given by the Ottoman Liberal Club on 3 February, and attended by the Grand Vizier, almost all the cabinet, and Said Pasha seemed to the ambassador⁹⁶ a hopeful sign of the 'incipient formation of a big Liberal parliamentary party'. But the big question still remained, of whether Young Turkish influence could be eliminated from the Army.

The Grand Vizier's confidence seems to have been even more boosted by the events of January than the ambassador's. At any rate, he now seems to have 'thought the moment had come to deal the decisive blow at the Committee, and strike at it where its power found its chief support: in the

Army' - hence his coup of February, when he suddenly appointed Nazim Bey and Hassan Husni Pasha as ministers of war and marine respectively⁹⁷ As his precipitate fall demonstrated, he had miscalculated. To some extent in Pallavicini's view,⁹⁸ his errors had been tactical: whereas the extremely able Nazim had been a happy choice, Hassan Husni Pasha was not - 'the nomination of this former Palace favourite and spy was highly provocative to the Young Turks in general and to the Navy, which is especially devoted to the Committee'. Kiamil had also erred in refusing to appear in person to answer his critics in the Chamber where 'the power of his personality' might have carried the day. On the other hand, Kiamil had been making enemies for some time: his 'error' in 'seeking to concentrate the whole executive power in his own hands, going over the heads of his ministerial colleagues', laid him open to the charge of absolutist tendencies; whereas the Young Turks resented his gradual ousting of their influence from the Porte, his improved relations with the Sultan his attendance at the Liberal Club banquet and so on. His 'cardinal error', however, had been to underestimate the 'ferment and lack of discipline' in the Army and Navy. After all, it was the fact that the officers of the battleships anchored before Yildiz had refused to obey the new Navy Minister; and that some two hundred army officers were milling around in the parliament building at the time of the critical vote, that had decided the Grand Vizier's fate, reducing his supporters on the confidence motion to a mere 8 out of 206 deputies present. The whole thing, Pallavicini declared, had 'almost the character of a military revolt'; and the sympathetic attitude of the press to the fallen Grand Vizier showed 'that the whole coup was only made possible by intimidating the Chamber and taking it by surprise'.

Indeed, according to Pallavicini, 'the significance of the last crisis lies exclusively in the fact that it shows what a role the Army plays here. If the spirit of the revolution cannot be driven out of the Army, people in this country will have to be prepared for anything'⁹⁹ Kiamil had seen this and had tried 'to seize the evil by the root. Unfortunately, he proceeded too rashly and incautiously'. His mistake had been to get into a confrontation with 'those parts of the Army which are in contact with the Committee of Union and Progress but it was not the latter that had overthrown him, but the officers'. 'The officer corps which, for the most part, is devoted to the Committee . . . feared for its present leading role in both the Army and the state'.¹⁰⁰ That was why the Committee had triumphed over Kiamil; without the officers, it would have failed. As to the upshot the ambassador was gloomy: the new Grand Vizier, Hilmi Pasha, might well be Kiamil's natural successor; but he had come into office through a Committee coup, and 'the

hope of seeing the elimination of the shadow-government of the Committee that gnaws at the strength of the Empire has now been buried for a long time'.¹⁰¹ As a result, 'the state of the Empire today is again more precarious than ever'.¹⁰²

The new government was in a weak position from the start.¹⁰³ Part of the problem was the shortage of capable men willing to serve in it; and former grand viziers whom Hilmi approached, such as Ferid and Said, showed no desire to take office in such uncertain times. Pallavicini was amazed to discover that the Finance Ministry, despite the international character of much of its business was in the hands of a man who did not even have a command of French. The Ministry of Justice, since the death of its Young Turkish incumbent had no head at all - Said Pasha had refused the offer of the post - and was said to be 'in perhaps an even more desolate state than under absolutism'. By 10 March Hilmi had come to the conclusion that it was 'in the long run quite impracticable' to combine the posts of Minister of the Interior and Grand Vizier, and had been 'searching in vain for a long time now' for someone to take on the former office: Rechid Akif Pasha, who had been considered for the post in Kiamil's time, now refused it pleading ill health; and Ferid, who had just returned from a long absence abroad, turned the offer down flat.

Ferid's return to the scene at least enabled Pallavicini who had not seen him since October and who had felt compelled 'in the circumstances to to interrupt our former friendly relations' to resume contact with him:¹⁰⁴

Now that circumstances have changed again, we exchanged visits immediately on Ferid Pasha's return from his ... journey abroad. The former Grand Vizier makes no secret of the fact that he absented himself on account of Kiamil Pasha, whose vengeance he feared. He spoke with great bitterness about the latter; on the other hand, he spoke in quite favourable terms of Hilmi Pasha. True, Pallavicini thought that Ferid's appointment as a Senator and provisional governor of Smyrna was significant: he had been mentioned as a possible successor to Hilmi although he would not come to power as an opponent of the Committee. but with their assistance, if Hilmi proved not to be up to the difficult situation.¹⁰⁵ On the other hand, Ferid spoke to Pallavicini of his 'great misgivings' concerning the internal situation,¹⁰⁶

without, however, speaking out openly against the Committee of Union and Progress. Ferid Pasha is a notoriously cautious man. So long as he regards the Committee as a power that will have to be reckoned with, at least for the time being, he takes care not to speak out clearly in hostile terms against them. However I got the impression that he regards present conditions as untenable and is counting on their changing.

As for Kiamil ¹⁰⁷ Pallavicini now found him 'in a very good mood and looking very fresh' but he had no opinion of the Grand Vizier: 'Hilmi Pasha travaille beaucoup, mais il ne pense pas'. Indeed, in Kiamil's view the situation was altogether 'extremely critical; especially because of conditions in the Army, where two parties are in conflict'. Pallavicini had other indications that all was not well in that quarter. Already in February a group of officers had called for the reinstatement of Nazim Bey as War Minister; ¹⁰⁸ while Ali Riza Bey, now restored to that office had given offence by his instructions to commanders to enforce discipline and forbidding officers to participate in politics - and this despite attempts to ingratiate himself with the Committee by promising to purge from the officer corps all those guilty of reprehensible behaviour under the old regime and to demote those whom that regime had promoted too rapidly. ¹⁰⁹

The fundamental problem for Hilmi's cabinet was, as Pallavicini soon observed that it found itself between two stools: the Committee, whose interference even Hilmi was beginning to find very irksome, and the opposition to the Committee which was growing apace. Until recently, although 'serious political circles' had long been aware that the 'secretive (lichtscheu) machinations of the Committee of Union and Progress are gnawing at the vital marrow of the state', no one had dared to say so for fear of being labelled reactionary. ¹¹⁰ On 23 February, however, the Levant Herald had created a sensation with a long article - 'Qu'avons-nous fait jusqu'a present?' - denouncing both 'the machinations of the Committee on the one hand and the unexampled indolence of ruling circles' on the other ¹¹¹ In Pallavicini's view,

this article . . . - assuming it gets the necessary publicity in the Turkish press - will probably have the effect of an alarm signal, and will carry all the more weight in that it draws on the authority of the English press hitherto so well disposed towards the Committee. It is in any case very remarkable for its outspokenness, and the very fact that such an article has been written at all is itself evidence of the fundamental and serious weakening of the prestige of the Committee.

Indeed, it became the signal for a regular press campaign ¹¹² to which Kiamil duly contributed a piece justificative on 3 April. ¹¹³

The Committee, meanwhile, struck back, ¹¹⁴ forcing Hilmi to present to the Chamber - even though the government's press law was still in the drafting stage - a resolution threatening dire punishment for 'journals which attack the honour of the nation and the Army'. and the editor of the Levant Herald was threatened with exile. On this occasion, the government got its way. Although the ensuing debate on 31 March was the stormiest

the Chamber had ever witnessed the opposition was hardly allowed to get a word in, and Achmet Riza Bey 'at the appropriate moment resorted to the oft-used device' of pushing the resolution through by acclamation. Pallavicini thought the government's tactics revealed 'a surprising failure to understand the tasks of a representative assembly'; but he was less critical of the government's next success, in the vote on the Austro-Turkish Protocol ratifying the annexation of Bosnia. In this the government had had to face a new opposition combination in the Chamber, consisting of the Liberal Union (Ahrar) and the Moslem Union 'the latter of a decidedly reactionary character'. These two associations 'although they represent quite different principles had come together in an alliance to overthrow the C.U.P.'.¹¹⁵ But this was the government's last success. Feeling was running increasingly high against it, and its failure to react to the assassination (on 7 April) of the editor of Serbesti, the leading Ahrar newspaper, threw both the entire opposition press and the 'newly founded Moslem League' into paroxysms of rage.¹¹⁶ This was the background to the counter-revolutionary coup of 13 April

On 16 April Pallavicini could report that although the night of 13/14 had been 'particularly uncomfortable ... A lot of bullets flew into the embassy; and one struck directly over my bed, in which I was lying'¹¹⁷, calm had been restored and Young Turkish rule had disappeared from Constantinople.¹¹⁸ The final blow had come suddenly 'and from the quarter from which it was least expected - the Army'; indeed, 'from the most loyal section (Gruppe) of the Committee, from the Salonica Aydschi (Chasseur) Battalions that had been ordered to the capital to bolster the Committee's position'. The causes, it was now clear, lay deep: 'they lie in the way of thinking of the great mass of people whom the Young Turk Committee, and the Hilmi Pasha cabinet it installed, totally ignored, as can now be seen'. The mutineers, led by the hodjas were demanding a clean sweep of the Committee's regime and the establishment of the rule of the Sheriat. The Committee had always been accused of being anti-religious and free-masonic (a cry lately much taken up in the opposition press); and the enemies of religion must also be enemies of the Caliph - hence the many insults to which the Sultan had been subjected. 'Religion and Caliph are, however, concepts which are for the Turkish Moslem the most sacred of all' Even so, 'nobody had had any idea of the subterranean activity of the hodjas among the soldiers of the garrison', least of all their own officers. The hodjas' task had been made easier by the fact that the soldiers had originally been won for the Young Turkish cause by propaganda 'to the effect that the constitution represented the Sheriat (the same slogan which

was used to the advantage of the Young Turks in the assembly of Arnauts in Verisovic last year) was well as improved pay and shorter service' in all of which hopes the men had been disappointed.

In a sense, the political crisis went back to the July revolution which, Pallavicini said, had created a 'completely abnormal situation in Turkey. Precisely the rapid and bloodless course of the July Revolution, so much admired, seems to me the reason why the upheaval has not created anything definitive'.¹¹⁹ The constitution had been established and the Sultan effectively eliminated; but the Committee had in reality 'assumed for itself all the rights of the sovereign' and hopes that it would eventually cease to operate behind the scenes and transform itself into a regular political party had failed to materialize: 'herein is the cause of all the later difficulties', and of the opposition to the Committee. Whether the Liberal Union had actually been involved in the coup of 13 April, Pallavicini could not say; but Kiamil Pasha's newspaper article of 3 April had been the first link in the chain of events; and the murder of the editor of Serbesti had intensified the agitation.¹²⁰ Pallavicini was equally cautious as to the Sultan's involvement reporting the claim of the new Grand Vizier Tewfik, that the Sultan had been taken completely by surprise. on the other hand the newspapers talked of his having paid #T 10.000 to the softas; and Pallavicini surmised that Abdul Hamid had probably had knowledge of the fermentation amongst the ulemas.¹²¹ (The German ambassador was later much more definite, and 'put the whole blame for last week's military revolt on the Sultan, who had spent great sums on bribing the soldiers'¹²²

Even so, for the moment, Pallavicini took a fairly sanguine view of the outcome of the putsch. He gave Hilmi's government credit for avoiding bloodshed by its precipitate resignation - only Riza Bey, apparently, had been prepared to advocate armed resistance to the mutineers; and on 16 April, he even ventured the opinion that the Sultan might, if he manoeuvred with skill - preserving constitutional forms, and refraining from recalling to power detested representatives of the old regime - might get power back in his hands.¹²³ Things were looking distinctly brighter: calm had been restored in the capital; the troops had shown a 'discipline worthy of admiration'; there was absolutely no danger to foreigners or any need for European intervention; and if Tewfik, although old, could establish order, things should soon settle down.¹²⁴ Yet even now Pallavicini recognised that the future would depend on the reactions from the provinces, and here a cloud had appeared on the horizon, as troops were reported to be moving towards the capital from Salonica. This Pallavicini feared, might mean a

fight, unless these troops equally were to leave their officers in the lurch, 'which is to be hoped'.¹²⁵

This hope was, of course, soon dashed; and as the Salonica army proceeded to stamp out the counter-revolution Pallavicini resignedly concluded¹²⁶ that

the decisive (massgebend) factor in this country since the July Revolution has actually been the liberal (freisinnig gesinnte) officer corps which has now emerged victorious yet again. The power that people ascribed to the Committee of Union and Progress consisted in the very fact that the greater part of the officer corps belongs either directly or indirectly to the Committee. To that extent one can also talk of a victory of the Committee

That one could only so talk with great qualifications, the ambassador was emphatic: 'Not the Committee of Union and Progress, but the officers are the masters of the situation today';¹²⁷ and on 28 April he put the point even more strongly:¹²⁸ the recovery of the Committee was

solely and alone attributable to the great blunder of their opponents in stirring up the Constantinople garrison to mutiny against their officers. This moved the officers of the Salonica Army to intervene swiftly and effectively. This was not just a question of the continued existence of the Army but of the generals' and officers' own skins. If the mutinous soldiery had retained the upper hand in Constantinople, that would not only have been the end of all discipline in the Army, but the very lives of all officers who had emerged from schools, and not from the ranks would have been in jeopardy. The generals of Salonica and Adrianople were, therefore, acting for the most part in self-defence

As for the politicians, it seemed to Pallavicini

a quite mistaken view, which it seemed to me is also shared by our consuls, that the Army has acted on the orders of the Committee of Union and Progress, the leaders of which had, after all fled the scene or foresworn their principles - as had their deputies in parliament. Moreover, Mahmud Shevket Pasha had

declared in an official announcement that he and his army had by no means appeared on instructions or orders from the Committee, with which he and his officers had no connexion. In the European press there is constant talk of the 'Army of the Committee' or the 'young Turkish Army'. This terminology contributes to the false assessment of the situation: not the Committee, and not parliament either, but the Army is master of the situation.

The corollary to the enormous importance which Pallavicini attributed to the Army in the immediate aftermath of the defeat of the counter-revolution was an extremely low - too low, as it was to prove - estimate of the other factors on the political scene. The deposition of the Sultan would not change much, he declared;¹²⁹ for his successor would be merely a shadow. After all, Abdul Hamid had really been dethroned on 24

July; since then he had ceased to rule, and his only role had been to intrigue against the regime. Whether or not he had actually been involved, there was no doubt that he had approved of the events of 13 April; indeed, 'for a few days after that remarkable date, he was in fact master of the situation'. But now his deposition had gone off smoothly enough: he was said to have received the news 'with a distraught countenance (mit verstörter Miene)' but then to have 'pulled himself together and answered, "It seems to be my Kismet".'¹³⁰ The Grand Vizier and the ministers had been if anything, even more pusillanimous. Faced with the counter-revolution the government had reigned without the least show of resistance, and Hilmi Pasha had 'shown himself especially panicky (kopflös) and cowardly, and 'crept away and has not been seen since'.¹³¹ Despite its restoration the Committee had 'paradoxically lost much of its authority' with the flight of its leaders and the submission of the rest to the reactionaries during the counter-revolution. As for the other political organizations, they were now totally discredited particularly the Liberal Union and the Moslem Union.

The role of Parliament altogether had been, in Pallavicini's view, 'pitiful'.¹³² The Army's 'fine words about protecting the constitution are empty phrases.'¹³³

At no time since Parliament was created has its reputation sunk so low as now. Today, nobody pays any attention to the decisions of this body which has in quite arbitrary fashion, constituted itself into a 'National Assembly' under the presidency of the President of the Senate, Said Pasha. Rifaat Pasha told me recently with a smile, that the 'National Assembly' owed its existence chiefly to the fact that in San Stefano only one single suitable building, the Yacht Club, could be found; and that therefore the Chamber was forced to sit together with the Senate.

the decision of this 'National Assembly' - a body not envisaged in the constitution - to depose Abdul Hamid had, therefore, had no legal validity of all, and the legal form of the fetva had had to be observed in the end; but here again, the decision had really been taken by the Army.¹³⁴ It was characteristic that Mahmud Shevket Pasha had been applying the new vagabond law in the capital without waiting for parliament to vote on it; and that the Army was dictating the pace over such matters as the press law and the military service of Christians.¹³⁵ 'this fate of the Turkish Chamber is a well merited one'. Pallavicini concluded: in its five months of existence it had settled nothing apart from the vagabond law and the Austro-Turkish Protocol and 'even the formation of parties has hardly got beyond the first stage'.¹³⁶ Altogether, 'so much is clear that Turkey is still not ripe for the parliamentary system by a long way'.¹³⁷

As the anniversary of the Revolution approached Pallavicini saw no reason to revise this opinion.¹³⁸

In everything there prevails a decousu, a naivety, a lack of direction and lack of knowledge of the most elementary parliamentary and legislative affairs. The results of Parliament's activity so far are in line with this, - the Austro Turkish Protocol and the laws on the press and on vagabonds - indeed an extraordinarily modest achievement.

Meanwhile the budget, expenditure on the Army, and the question of the military service obligations of the Christian population remained unsettled.

the sessions of the Chamber of Deputies are taken up with numerous and endless debates between the various provincial bigwigs (Landesvater) about the most disparate subjects; they are concerned only with making as much use as possible of the freedom of speech which they have at last achieved, always in areas of special interest to particular individual deputies. ... to take two recent examples, in one session the house occupied itself for several hours with the question of the maintenance of the Yildiz Palace, criticism of the city prefecture responsible for it, the alleged selling off at ridiculously low prices of the ostriches parrots, and canaries of the Yildiz Palace etc;

- and with a debate on the instructions for a parliamentary delegation that had gone to London to plead for the setting up of a world parliament to meet in Constantinople in 1910 and thereafter in other capitals to settle international disputes and 'to put right the mistakes made by diplomacy'.

As for the government, it in no way gives a lead to Parliament and has just as little idea of its own duties as a parliamentary government as Parliament has

When some Christian deputies had recently demanded the immediate extension of military service to Christians ahead of the government's announced schedule, 'the Grand Vizier stood up and declared that he had no objection' provided Parliament passed the necessary legislation; whereupon the War Minister rose to say that arrangements could not possibly be made within the current year, no decision was taken and the debate was simply adjourned.

The Sultan, the ministers, and Parliament proving to be so woefully inadequate, it was not surprising that Pallavicini was on 5 May declaring¹³⁹ it

desirable in the interests of a peaceful development of affairs that Mahmud Shevket Pasha, who has so far displayed so much energy should continue to retain the power in his hands. In present circumstances it would, in my view, be the best thing if for the immediate future a military dictatorship were established,

- even though the Army for its part seemed to wish to preserve constitutional forms. The big question now, as Pallavicini saw it, was 'whether the generals at the head of the Army will be able to keep the

Army in hand' At least, of the two great Weltanschauungen that were in conflict. although it was by no means certain that the power of Islam might not prevail in the long run it was for the moment 'the progressive movement that finds its strongest support in the Army' that was the dominating factor.

Even in the progressive camp there were divisions, however. as Pallavicini explained at length on 5 May:¹⁴⁰

The upholders of the progressive movement (Richtung) in Turkey are the so-called Young Turks. In European public opinion certain ideas have developed about them that do not quite accord with the real state of affairs. People very often confuse the term 'Young Turks' with 'supporters of the Committee of Union and Progress' The term 'Young Turks' is to be understood to include all those who wish for a progressive system of government in Turkey. But these ideas are held, not only by the supporters of the C.U.P. but by other elements who are in opposition to this same Committee. The officer corps, especially that of the III Army corps has had very close relations with the C.U.P. so far. Each in fact has needed the other. Now however, when the Army is master of the situation, its relationship with the C.U.P. will probably change.

Mahmud Shevket Pasha, having explained that he had come to Constantinople 'on his own initiative in order to restore order here' had now published a communique 'expressly stating that the Army has no connexion with the Committee and must have none'. Indeed, the generals seemed to be intending 'to dissolve the Committee altogether:

If this should happen, public opinion in Europe, which is still today in the grip of the illusion (Wahn) that everything which has happened here in the last eight months comes from the C.U.P., will be utterly at a loss (desorientiert). People will then realise that the determining factor in this country since the July Revolution has been the liberal-inclined officer corps of the Army and that both Parliament and Committee only counted for anything so long as they could lean on the Army for support.

Whatever hopes Pallavicini may have glimpsed during the brief counter-revolution he was now clearly reconciled to this state of affairs:¹⁴¹ 'The military have got things in their hands and are proceeding with energy and determination' Indeed, in this situation, he even expressed a tentative hope for the future:

the chief thing would be, in my view, to cut the lifeline (Lebensfaden) of the Committee. That would be the greatest blessing (Gluck) for the country. So long as the Committee continues its machinations, governing in Turkey is an impossibility.

These hopes did not last, however and by mid-May Pallavicini was becoming disillusioned even with the new rulers:¹⁴²

Although I am generally inclined to optimism, I must admit that I look to this country's future with great pessimism. To put it in terms of figures I should say that today my optimism is in a proportion of 20 to 80 against my pessimism.

Those in power might have the II and III Army corps under their control, but there remained a great risk of risings breaking out all over the provinces (The Adana massacres had been a worrying sign.) As for the Committee the ambassador was even more disheartened: by 21 June it was 'becoming clear that Mahmud Shevket Pasha has not yet succeeded at all in restoring discipline among the younger officers. The greater part of them has remained loyal to the Committee despite all bans', and it was growing in importance again.¹⁴³ The bland assurances of Hilmi and the Foreign Minister at this time, that the government was now stronger and that the Committee, although it had not ceased to exist 'was now a political party and does not interfere in the affairs of the government' the ambassador declared to be 'according to everything I hear from other quarters, quite incorrect'.¹⁴⁴ The younger officers, temporarily overawed by Mehmet Shevket Pasha's military victory in April, were re-discovering their old attachment to the Committee. By July, the confusion was deepening in politics as new divisions appeared:¹⁴⁵ radical young army officers were beginning to form an entity distinct from their seniors on the one hand, while among the Committee politicians a conservative group was emerging of people who had been sobered up by the responsibilities of office. (Djavid Pasha, for example, who as a deputy had declared that the Finance Ministry must be completely reformed in a few months now said that he would need three years for the task). Just a year after the momentous events of July 1908 the ambassador was reduced to the conclusion¹⁴⁶ that 'the overall picture that emerges of the present internal situation here is one of complete chaos. How it is to be sorted out cannot for the moment be foreseen. At present the destructive elements are still at work, and all authority is to be destroyed.' This bleak interim judgement cannot be accounted for solely in terms of the 'example' the ambassador proceeded to cite, which, admittedly, touched him personally: at the troop parade in commemoration of the Revolution on 23 July 'as a result of the arrangements made, or rather of the failure to make any arrangements at all, ambassadors and baggage-porters were all jumbled up together'.

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110. ibid. No. 18F. 26 February 1909.
111. ibid.
112. ibid. No. 23B, 17 March 1909.
113. ibid. No. 28H, 7 April 1909. In this article the former Grand Vizier, professedly writing 'maintenant que l'excitation des esprits a disparu' explained his falling out of favour with the Committee in somewhat personal terms: the trouble had started in December, when Hakki Bey and Rahmi had called to inform him that some members of the British Balkan Committee, then in Constantinople as guests of the C.U.P. had been invited to dine at his house - 'il m'a paru bien etrange qu'on ait invite a diner chez moi. a mon insu comme a un hotel des gens dont je n'avais pas encore fait la connaissance' - and when Kiamil had protested, his interlocutors had left in a rage and had tried to secure his dismissal. After consulting the Sultan, who had advised offering the English visitors tea, Kiamil had nevertheless in the end given a dinner for twenty-eight people; but two weeks later his