

**COMMAND FILE
WORLD WAR II**

U. S. NAVAL DETACHMENT IN TURKISH WATERS, 1919-1924

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Turkey entered the World War of 1914-1918 on the side of the Central Powers in the fall of 1914, and was the last nation to make peace with the Allies. The defeat of the Turks by the British in Mesopotamia, Arabia, Palestine, and Syria and the surrender of Bulgaria on the western border of Turkey forced her to sign an armistice on board the British battleship Agamemnon at the island of Mudros on October 30, 1918. As soon as the mine fields were cleared away, Allied forces occupied the forts on the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, and on November 10 the first British destroyer reached Constantinople. Three days later a large squadron of British, French, Italian, and Greek warships anchored off that place. Thus the Allies came into possession of the Straits between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, a highway which had been a source of international rivalry and warfare for centuries. Rounding out her spheres of influence in the Ottoman Empire, Great Britain now marched into the Mosul oil fields in northern Mesopotamia and, after the collapse of the Russians on the Caucasus frontier, into Baku, taking over the railroad from that place to Batum on the Black Sea. No immediate steps were taken to effect a military occupation of Anatolia, the only portion of the old Ottoman Empire left to the Turks.

The Allies also secured control of Russian ports on the northern shore of the Black Sea at the end of 1918. After fighting unsuccessfully on the side of the Allies, Russia had succumbed to an internal revolution which placed the Bolsheviki in power in November 1917. This government was not recognized by the Allies nor by the United States. They negotiated a separate treaty with the victorious Germans at Brest-Litovsk in March 1918 by which

Russia was deprived of Ukraine in South Russia and the Armenian provinces of Kars, Ardahan, and Batum in the Caucasus. Formerly Turkish, the Armenian provinces were occupied by the Turks but were lost in November 1918 to the British who moved out in the following year. The armistice of November 11, 1918 between the Allies and Germany provided for the withdrawal of German forces from all Black Sea ports. Following the occupation of Constantinople, the Allied fleet crossed the Black Sea and secured control of the Russian ports, which were used as bases of supply for Allied aid to the White Russian armies of Generals Denikin and Wrangel in their efforts to overthrow the Bolsheviks.

The Allies set themselves up in power at Constantinople to enforce the terms of the armistice and to win whatever economic advantages they could from their position. Vice Admiral A. S. Cough-Calthorpe, who as commander of the Allied fleet in the eastern Mediterranean had negotiated the armistice of Mudros, became the British High Commissioner, taking up his residence at the British Embassy. Vice Admiral Amet represented the French, and other High Commissioners were appointed by the Italians and Greeks. Together the Allied representatives formed the Allied High Commission, on which the United States had no member. Both the British and the French had assistant High Commissioners. British and French generals commanded the troops garrisoning the fortifications in the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus. Constantinople itself was occupied by military forces employed as embassy guards and as a depot for the Bosphorus garrisons. The old Turkish government remained in existence under the Sultan, but it took orders from the Allied High Commission, particularly from the British in regard to Constantinople and the Straits. In Asiatic Turkey, however, the voice of the Government had little effect and disorder became rampant. The sanitary administration of Constantinople was taken over by the Allied High Commission

which effected much improvement in conditions prior to its relinquishment of control to the Turkish National Government in November 1922.

After years of war the Near East was in a deplorable situation. Transportation and communication had broken down or practically broken down everywhere. Food and clothing were greatly in need in Turkey, Greece, and in South Russia. Black bread composed partly of sawdust and straw was being sold at exorbitant prices in Constantinople. Off in the interior the peasants had stores of wheat on hand, but they would not sell it because they could not get the clothing and equipment they needed. The armistice did not bring peace to this region, for fighting went on throughout most of the Near East between different factions or races or between the Allied forces and the people they were attempting to subdue. Conditions became worse before they got better. Yet the armistice was not long signed before Americans began trending into the Levant and South Russia.

The United States had no part in the defeat and occupation of Turkey, which was largely a British show, a fact which resulted in the British assuming the upper hand in the Allied occupation of Constantinople. Upon the outbreak of war between the United States and Germany in April 1917, Turkey under German pressure severed diplomatic relations with the United States, but war was not declared between the two countries. The considerable investment of Americans in missionary, educational, philanthropic, and commercial enterprises in Turkey apparently influenced the decision of the United States Government in this connection. The U. S. S. Scorpion, a converted yacht purchased for use during the Spanish War in 1898 which had been the American stationnaire at Constantinople for a number of years, was interned in 1917. On November 9, 1918 the Scorpion was permitted to raise its flag and began to receive military equipment which had been removed by the Turks. A relief crew arrived on board the U. S. S. Nahma

on December 16, and two days later Commander Elmer W. Tod relieved Lieut. Herbert S. Babbitt in command of the Scorpion.

The question of a United States representative at Constantinople was taken up in Washington after the armistice. It was decided not to reestablish diplomatic relations with Turkey immediately, so early in December Mr. Lewis Heck, the former Turkish Secretary of the American Embassy at Constantinople, was ordered to return there as United States Commissioner. The Swedish Legation was to continue to handle our diplomatic affairs. In practice Mr. Heck carried on much business by word of mouth, formal written communications being handled by the Swedish Legation. Agreeing to the desires of the State Department, the Secretary of the Navy directed Admiral William S. Benson, the Chief of Naval Operations, then in London to detail an officer of rank from personnel abroad to duty in Constantinople, where a station ship was to be maintained. Mr. Heck reached the city on the Golden Horn on December 27, 1918 and took up his quarters in the American Embassy. The naval officer selected for the post at Constantinople by Admiral Benson and Admiral William S. Sims, Force Commander of the U. S. Naval Forces Operating in European Waters, whose headquarters was at London, was Rear Admiral Mark Lambert Bristol, a veteran of thirty-six years' service in the Navy. During the war he had served on convoy duty in command of the U. S. S. North Carolina until placed in command of Naval Base 27 at Plymouth, England on October 24, 1918. He later had additional duty as U. S. representative on the Allied Commission in Belgium to enforce naval terms of the armistice with Germany. Pursuant to orders of December 30, 1918, he proceeded to London and received instructions from Admiral Sims. In Paris a few days later he conferred with the American officials assembled there for the peace conference, including Admiral Benson, Secretary of State Robert Lansing, Herbert Hoover of the Food

Administration, Edward M. Hurley of the U. S. Shipping Board, and President Wilson. He was told to represent the United States Government in looking after American interests and to do what was right. On January 8, 1919 he was assigned to duty as Senior U. S. Naval Officer, Turkey in command of the waters east of longitude 21⁰, which included all of Greece, except Corfu, and the region to the east. From Paris he travelled via Rome to Taranto, where he boarded the U. S. S. Schley on January 24 for the voyage to Constantinople.

The U. S. Naval Detachment in Turkish Waters came into existence on January 28 when Rear Admiral Bristol raised his flag on the Scorpion. During the first few days visits of ceremony were exchanged with the High Commissioners of Great Britain and France and the commanding naval officers of those countries and Italy and Greece. Bristol got the impression from Admiral Calthorpe that he considered himself in the position of chief authority in the occupying forces. Relations with the Allied officials and with those of Turkey were thereafter handled by Admiral Bristol as Senior Representative of the United States. The U. S. Commissioner, Mr. Heck, handled the ordinary diplomatic and consular matters. Cordial relations were immediately established between the two representatives, the Admiral being a much older man becoming the senior. Heck departed for the United States in April 1919 and was succeeded as Acting Commissioner by Gabriel Bie Ravndal who had recently resumed the post of Consul General which he held before the breaking of diplomatic relations with Turkey. Admiral Bristol concerned himself with matters pertaining to the armistice, military and naval affairs, relations between the United States and Turkey and with the representatives of all other countries.

The accommodations on board the Scorpion were quite inadequate for business and entertainment purposes so it was necessary to establish headquarters on

shore. On his own authority Admiral Bristol moved into the American Embassy, where the U. S. Commissioner was already located and which also provided office space for Howard Heinz, the representative of the U. S. Food Administration. As communication by cable was limited and expensive, a radio station was set up in the Embassy by means of which continuous and confidential communication was had with the naval vessels operating in the command and with Washington. The naval communication office served all American activities in the area, including relief organizations and business concerns. A newspaper containing intelligence received by radio was distributed in mimeographed form among American organizations and became so much in demand even among foreigners that the edition had to be enlarged.

Other naval activities at Constantinople were housed elsewhere. A naval supply base was established in a leased building on the water front. A dental office was housed in a small frame building constructed for its accommodation by the British naval authorities. The port office was located at first on board the Scorpion and later in a building occupied by other Allied port officers. A station ship, usually the Scorpion, was always kept in the Bosphorus moored to the quay and connected by telephone with the Embassy. A tank for fuel oil storage was rented from the Standard Oil Company. Good facilities were available in private shipyards for the repair and overhauling of the vessels in the detachment. The detachment, however, ran an engineering machine shop. A naval dispensary was operated to care for ships' crews on leave in Constantinople. Medical cases which could not be properly cared for on board ship were taken to the American Hospital, where special wards were attended by naval medical officers. Admiral Bristol was largely responsible for the establishment of this hospital.

To assist him in his varied activities, Admiral Bristol build up during his first year in Constantinople a staff of naval officers each of whom had definite duties to perform. He brought with him on the Schley Lieut. Comdr. Ernest V. Stebbins. Other officers who arrived during February and March included Lieut. Comdrs. George M. Tisdale, and Hamilton V. Bryan, Lt. (j. g.) Robert S. Dunn, Lt. William R. Stewart, and Ensigns Samuel J. Pattison, and Charles B. Carroll. But he found it difficult during 1919 to obtain all the help he needed; he worried along knowing that he was not doing the work as well as he should. At the beginning he used the officer material that was on hand; not long after his arrival he appointed the captain of the Scorpion, port officer because it was necessary to have this position filled immediately to handle the ships arriving from the United States with relief cargoes. Early in 1920 he described his staff as follows:

....

4. The offices of the Senior U. S. Naval Officer, Turkey are located in the American Embassy. This office contains the following officers and necessary men: Operations Officer; Flag Secretary; Flag Lieutenant; Communications; Intelligence service. Operations of force, policy of ship movements, general fuel situation with future needs are handled by Operations Officer. This same officer is United States representative on the Advisory Committee of the Associated Governments for the Regulation of Trade in Turkey and also assistant to the Senior U. S. Naval Officer, Turkey for Shipping Board and Merchant affairs. He is senior aide on the Staff. The Flag Secretary has charge of all general secretarial work both for Naval and for High Commissioner duties. He has charge of officer personnel and general supervision of the communication clerical record and distribution as well as Navy personnel in all offices at the Embassy.

The Flag Lieutenant has charge of transportation by automobiles, rail, steamer or other means; in charge of all Communication transmission and receiving systems; has charge of government automobiles; general Flag Lieutenant duties.

The Communication Office, as its name implies, has all outgoing and incoming communication work to handle. The Communication Officer with his commissioned and enlisted personnel handles all official work and also all Red Cross, Near East Relief, Food Administration and commercial work. Military occupation of the country has necessitated that messages be given an official stamp to "get through" and commercial work was practically stopped until we began handling it.

The Intelligence Service is self-explanatory. Its principal and most important work is that of watching, reporting and following the political doings of our Allies as well as the various other nations in the Near East. The Russian situation also holds this service owing to the necessity of forever watching the trend of Bolshevism with regard to its effect on the political and the economic conditions of this whole country.

In addition, to handle supplies and provisions, as well as pay accounts, a supply office had to be established ashore. This office maintains provisions, clothing, M.S.A. stores and canteen supplies for the force. All Supply Officer work for ships without such officers is done by this office. For destroyers, submarines, Eagle boats and ships without supply officers, this office maintains a canteen, clothing and small store issue room. Public bills, fuel bills, fresh provision contracts, purchasing of foreign currency and such are handled by this office.

The stationship handles actual ship operations, berthing, keeps the station boats, is radio traffic ship, is in charge of enlisted personnel, handles all ship repairs and docking, furnishes extra help and mechanics when needed and, in general, is practically a tender to the other ships.

The U. S. Naval Port Officer, who is the Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. SCORPION, is the U. S. representative at the meetings of the Allied Port Officers—he is present in an advisory capacity and keeps the Senior U. S. Naval Officer, Turkey informed of the policy, orders and desires of the Allied Port Officials to permit our Navy to cooperate with them since we are not a party to the Armistice with Turkey. In connection with the Port Office is an officer known as Naval Transport Officer. This officer has to do with boarding United States merchant ships, arranging their clearance, berthing, aiding them in every possible manner towards expediting loading and unloading in conjunction with agents; following up work of various agents and, in fact, under guidance of Senior U. S. Naval Officer, Turkey he does everything possible to aid American Shipping and American Merchants in obtaining a fair deal in the Near East where graft, profiteering, discrimination and every known hindrance to trade is allowed to flourish unchecked.

The Staff Medical Officer attends all meetings of the Inter-Allied Sanitary Commission in an advisory capacity and cooperates with this Commission in every way possible. The Dental Surgeon for the force has an office on shore because there is no ship that has a proper place for his work; also, owing to small amount of time spent in this port by destroyers, the Dental Surgeon, with his portable outfit, makes trips on them to carry out dental work on them.

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An officer on Bristol's staff also supervised a permanent shore patrol, which was maintained in Constantinople to police the liberty men from American warships.

As Senior U. S. Representative in Turkey Admiral Bristol was the head of all the American agents in Constantinople and performed duties which were diplomatic in character. Agreeable working relations were established with Mr. Heck and Mr. Heinz, Admiral Bristol being constantly consulted in regard to their problems. Documents relating to American policy in the Near East were referred to him for his opinion. For a time, until the appointment of a director, Admiral Bristol represented the U. S. Shipping Board in connection with operations of its ships in the district, and afterwards he took up matters for it with the Allied authorities. To successfully combat the competition of the European nations, who had the advantage of being on the Allied High Commission, it was realized that a smoothly running machine was necessary.

The foremost task handled by the American officials in Constantinople in 1919-1920 was the administration of American relief. This had to be undertaken immediately, for naval cargo ships began arriving in February 1919. The American Committee for Relief in the Near East, more commonly known as the Near East Relief, originally organized in 1915 to alleviate the sufferings of the oppressed Armenians and Syrians, began pouring in supplies purchased from contributions taken up in the United States. Its managing director, Major

Davis G. Arnold, was located at Constantinople. An appropriation of \$100,000,000 was made by an act of Congress approved February 24, 1919 for the relief of the non-enemy countries of Europe but not excluding the Armenians, Syrians, Greeks, and other Christian and Jewish population of Asia Minor. Under the terms of this act the President appointed Herbert Hoover Director General of the American Relief Administration and authorized the employment of the Food Administration Grain Corporation to purchase, transport, and distribute foodstuffs and supplies to countries requiring relief. The Constantinople office under Reins controlled activities of the A. R. A. in Turkey, Roumania, Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, and the Caucasus. Hundreds of agents of these organizations began working throughout the Near East and South Russia. The American Red Cross, a branch of which had been established in Turkey in 1911, opened a headquarters for southeastern Europe in Constantinople in January 1920 and engaged in relief activities among Russian refugees in Constantinople, Greece, Bulgaria, and South Russia. Proti, an island of the Prinkipo group, was used by the Red Cross in the operations carried on at Constantinople. Large numbers of American missionaries who returned to the region after the war worked with these agencies, besides carrying on their missions and schools.

The Navy rendered various kinds of assistance to the relief agencies. Admiral Bristol made all necessary arrangements with the Allied authorities. He designated naval officers to serve as port officers at Smyrna, Constantinople, Derindje, and Constanza, Roumania to handle relief cargoes. As far as it was available, transportation was furnished to employees of the agencies to ports visited by naval vessels. The ships also carried mail for all American interests and supplied radio communication. \$5,000,000 in gold received from the government of Bulgaria for American flour supplied by the Grain Corporation

was deposited on board destroyers at Constantinople and in the fall of 1919 transported on board the U. S. S. Laub to New York.

The same assistance was given to American business concerns operating in the Near East. The most active of these was apparently the Standard Oil Company of New York, which had an office in Constantinople and branches in Turkey and the Balkan States. Numerous other companies established offices after the reopening of the region to commercial activity. A naval officer represented the United States on the Associated Governments' Advisory Trade Committee, seeking to promote fair competitive practices among businessmen. Gold used to pay for products exported to the United States, particularly tobacco, was transported in naval vessels, the commanders of which under the laws and regulations were entitled to collect a small commission for this service. Transportation was furnished to the employees of commercial companies at the small charge of \$1 a day.

The Navy Department received from both the relief agencies and the business concerns many letters of appreciation touching the services rendered by Admiral Bristol, his staff, and his destroyer commanders. The good will that was built up among and by Americans in the Near East was reflected in the attitude of the Turkish government towards the United States, which was usually more favorable than that exhibited towards the European countries.

During the first part of 1919 the naval detachment comprised three converted yachts, the Scorpion, the Noma, and the Nahma, and subchasers nos. 82, 128, 129, and 215. The subchasers were active in the beginning in Grecian waters in connection with relief operations, particularly at Piraeus, the port of Athens. After the arrival of four destroyers in May the operations of the detachment were more extensive. Their arrival was soon followed by the detachment of the

Nona and the Nahma and some of the subchasers.

Concern felt by the Navy Department as to Bristol's status in Constantinople led to an improvement in his position. At the time of his appointment there was doubt as to the advisability of the designation of a flag officer, but Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels overruled Benson on this point. There was also a question as to what the Admiral's relation to the State Department representative, Mr. Heck, would be. The exact capacity of the latter was communicated to him by the State Department on January 21, 1919 in a telegram which directed that he was to have no diplomatic relations with the Turkish government, that he should maintain friendly relations with the Allied representatives and cooperate with them, that his chief mission was to keep the State Department informed about conditions in Turkey, and that Admiral Bristol on his arrival was to take precedence over him. Admiral Benson continued to feel that two representatives were unnecessary and recommended in February that Admiral Bristol be detached. Early in the following month Secretary Daniels, after a consultation with Acting Secretary of State Frank L. Polk, decided that Bristol should remain in Constantinople. Mr. Heck returned to the United States in April because of ill health and was replaced a month later by an acting commissioner, Mr. G. Bie Ravndal, the consul general.

Further clarification of the situation followed. In dealing with the representatives of the Allies in Constantinople Bristol found that he was placed at a disadvantage because his position as Senior U. S. Representative was not as exalted as that of High Commissioner which was held by them. Through persistence Admiral Bristol succeeded in largely overcoming this hindrance, but in July he finally communicated the difficulty to Admiral Benson and Admiral Harry S. Knapp, who had succeeded Admiral Sims as Force Commander, U. S. Naval

Forces Operating in European Waters, expressing the opinion that if the State Department had done the right thing by him he could have accomplished more. Both of these officers agreed that his position ought to be clarified. It also became apparent in Washington that friction had developed between Bristol and Ravndal because of their ill-defined relations. Benson was in communication with the State Department in August, and on the 12th a commission as High Commissioner signed by the President was issued to Bristol. In communicating this action to the Admiral, Secretary of State Lansing stated that Mr. Ravndal and other consular representatives of the United States would be directed to report to him and place themselves under his direction. As High Commissioner, Bristol was responsible to the State Department and was to receive instructions from it which were to be communicated through the Department in order to keep it properly advised. As Senior U. S. Naval Officer Present, Turkey he continued, under the Force Commander of the U. S. Naval Forces Operating in European Waters, who was to be the medium of communication between Bristol and the Navy Department and between the American Peace Commission at Paris, to run the naval detachment.

Although he had been performing the duties before, the official bestowal upon Bristol of the rank of High Commissioner enabled him in conjunction with his naval command to function more effectively. Receipt of the commission was followed by an announcement to the effect that it had been received. At this time the connection of the Swedish Legation with American affairs ceased. The appointment concentrated in the Admiral full responsibility for safeguarding all American interests. Since he had control of the warships of the United States in those waters, his knowledge of the political conditions enabled him to employ them to the best advantage and to have them in the right place at



the right time. Through the American consuls at Smyrna, Bagdad, Beirut, Jerusalem, Damascus, Aleppo, and Samsun, who were designated by the State Department as the delegates of the High Commissioner, and through other Americans - official and unofficial - stationed in or travelling in the region, Admiral Bristol was able to keep well informed of occurrences in the interior - probably better informed than the other foreign representatives who had less extensive means of communication. Americans passing through Constantinople were always welcomed at the Embassy, where the Admiral made himself accessible, although it increased the problems on his hands. Subsequently a delegate was also stationed at Angora (Ankara) which became the new capital of Turkey under the Nationalists.

After his appointment as High Commissioner, Admiral Bristol maintained both a diplomatic and a naval staff in the American Embassy. To the former several secretaries, a commercial attache, and a military attache were attached. A counsellor was later added to this staff. Separate files were kept for the two staffs, so that in case the Admiral should be relieved of his diplomatic post no difficulty would be experienced and the Embassy files could be left intact. In 1920 the consular section of the High Commission was removed from the Embassy, much to the relief of the remainder of the staff which had become crowded.

The investment in Admiral Bristol of a dual responsibility increased his work and caused him to request in the spring of 1920 authority to designate one of the officers operating under his command as chief of staff to handle the details of administering the naval vessels. This request was denied in that year, but on April 15, 1921 Capt. Lyman A. Cotten reported for duty as chief of staff. Somewhat less than a year afterwards he was succeeded by

Capt. Arthur J. Hepburn, who retained the post until it was discontinued in the spring of 1924. The chief of staff took over the duties of planning the use of destroyers and issuing movement orders; inspecting and relieving them; adjusting difficulties into which sailors got which usually caused controversy with foreign representatives and which required an officer of rank to straighten out; and handling correspondence concerning routine matters with the Navy Department.

The settlement with Turkey was taken up by the Allied peace conference at Paris in 1919-1920, but it got nowhere because of events in Turkey, which were partly the result of the action of the conference. Secret agreements made during the war among the Allies provided for the partitioning of the domains of the old Ottoman Empire. During a temporary withdrawal of the Italians from the peace conference the Greeks pressed a claim to Asia Minor, and with the authorization of the Allied Supreme Council they prepared to occupy Smyrna. Forces from British, French, Italian, and Greek warships occupied the harbor forts on May 14; these were later turned over to the Greeks, who occupied the city on the following day. By order of President Wilson, who was a member of the Allied Supreme Council, the United States battleship Arizona, Capt. J. H. Dayton commanding, and the destroyers Dyer, Gregory, Luce, and Manley reached Smyrna on May 11. Rear Admiral Bristol had reached there the day before on the return from a trip to Beirut in the Nahma. The captain and the admiral conferred, and on the 12th, pursuant to orders from Vice Admiral Knapp, Bristol steamed away for Constantinople accompanied by the Luce, the Gregory and the Stribling which had been at Smyrna on special duty. At the time of the occupation of Smyrna the Arizona landed a legion guard of twenty men which remained on shore until May 28.

The Arizona escorted by the Barney and the Hazelwood left Smyrna on June 9 for Constantinople, where it remained only a short time before returning to the United States. Admiral Bristol regarded the Greek occupation as impolitic and unnecessary and reported that American participation, limited though it was, had a damaging effect on our influence with the Turks. Less willingly the Allies finally consented in March 1920 to the Greek occupation of eastern Thrace. The harsh methods employed by the Greeks led to the appointment in August 1919 of an International Commission of Inquiry into the Greek Occupation of Smyrna of which Admiral Bristol was United States member and president, but nothing was done with its report. In dispatches to the United States the Admiral advised against the dismemberment of Turkey as this would create a new Balkan situation; instead he believed the solution of the Near East problem lay in the development of good government for all races, freedom of religion, and universal education. He was friendly to the Nationalists because he believed they would provide these things. The withdrawal of the United States from the peace conference, in which President Wilson had succeeded in getting recognition of the mandate principle, was the signal for the European countries to attempt the execution of their secret agreements. Accordingly French forces replaced the British in Syria and northwest thereof in Cilicia in the fall of 1919. The Treaty of Sevres of August 10, 1920 reduced Turkey to the limits of Anatolia.

While the Allies were disposing of the affairs of Turkey at Paris, the Turks were effectuating their own plans. Led by an army officer, Mustapha Kemal, the nationalists held meetings at Erzerum and Sivas in the summer of 1919 and secured control of the Parliament which met at Constantinople in the winter of 1919-1920. The Parliament adopted a national pact declaring for

the independence and sovereignty of Turkey. The answer of the Allies to this was to cause the Sultan to dissolve the Parliament, to occupy Constantinople with military forces on March 15, 1920, and to arrest as many Nationalist leaders as could be found. This opportunity was seized by the Nationalists to set up their own government under Mustapha Kemal at Angora in Anatolia. By early summer Nationalist armies were in the field to drive the Greeks from Smyrna, the French from Cilicia, and the British from Ismid. The national pact and the Treaty of Sevres were quite opposed in terms. The Turks chose war to submission.

A further problem in the Near Eastern situation was the question of Armenia, whose people had been oppressed by the Turks for many years. There was considerable sentiment in the United States for the establishment of an independent Armenia. Admiral Bristol returned from a trip to the Caucasus early in the summer of 1919 strongly convinced that the republics which had been set up there during the war should remain part of Turkey and that from the national point of view there was no such thing as Armenia. An American army officer, Colonel Haskell, was appointed Allied High Commissioner to Armenia that summer. This was an entering wedge, believed the Admiral, for an American mandate over Armenia, which would get the United States involved politically in the situation in the Near East. To keep open communication with Colonel Haskell, a radio traffic ship was stationed at Batum on the eastern coast of the Black Sea. The advance of the Bolsheviks forced the evacuation of the personnel of the High Commission and the Near East Relief from Armenia and the Caucasus in May 1920. This was effected by the U. S. S. Pittsburgh, flagship of Vice Admiral Harry S. Knapp, then on a cruise in the Black Sea, and the destroyer Cole. Following an agreement with the Bolsheviks,

the Turks in the fall of 1920 reoccupied Armenia.

On the northern shore of the Black Sea the struggle between the White Russians and the Bolsheviks went on until the end of 1920. After the defeat of the former under General Denikin at the end of 1919 and his flight to Constantinople, the command was taken over by General Wrangel. Apparently at the suggestion of Admiral Bristol, Rear Admiral Newton A. McCully, U. S. N. and a party of officers and enlisted men of the U. S. Navy, including Lt. Comdr. H. W. Koshler, were sent into South Russia early in 1920 on a special mission for the State Department for the purpose of keeping the government informed of developments in that region. Transportation was furnished the mission by vessels of Bristol's detachment, and a destroyer was stationed on the coast of South Russia to assist it. Mail and radio communication was continuously maintained with Admiral McCully. Lt. Comdr. Hamilton V. Bryan was detached by Admiral Bristol to serve as McCully's agent at Odessa; he was also to keep Bristol informed of happenings. When General Wrangel's defeat threatened in the Crimea in November 1920, the U. S. S. Overton was at Sevastopol. Upon receiving a message from McCully, Admiral Bristol sent the destroyers John D. Edwards, Humphreys, Fox, and Whipple from other places in the Black Sea to the Crimea for possible use in evacuation. These vessels and the St. Louis and the Long, which were sent upon receiving news of the continued advance of the Bolsheviks, took part with the American steamships Faraby and Navahoe in the evacuation of all Americans authorized by McCully. From Odessa, Sevastopol, and Novorossiisk were evacuated, besides McCully's party, the American consuls, and their archives; representatives of the American Red Cross and the Y. M. C. A.; relief workers; American citizens; and Russian refugees. Large numbers of Russian soldiers and civilian refugees, who could expect no mercy

from the Bolsheviks, were moved out on Russian warships and merchant ships. Following the evacuation, the U. S. Navy under the immediate supervision of Lt. Comdr. Bryan assisted in caring for over 100,000 Russian refugees on board eighty Russian ships in the harbor at Constantinople. By the end of the year many of these pitiable people had been transported to the warmer climate of Bizerte, Tunis, where the warships which were part of the old imperial Russian Navy were laid up for years.

From its base in Constantinople the vessels of the detachment were dispatched throughout the station to cope with the conditions which developed following the armistice and the occupation of Turkey. After June 1919, when the detachment had been increased to a strength which permitted the establishment of regular patrolling, destroyers were distributed on the coasts of Syria and Palestine (Lersina and Beirut), South Russia (Sevastopol), Caucasus (Batumi), the north coast of Asia Minor (Samsun), while sub-chasers covered the Gulf of Ismid and the south coast of the Sea of Marmora (Istanbul). Another destroyer was maintained at Constanza or Varna on the western coast of the Black Sea as a radio relay ship to communicate with Europe and the United States and with the vessels operating in the Black Sea. These vessels were relieved periodically by the different ships changing stations, a practice which gave the men an opportunity to visit new places and thus kept up their morale. A reinforcement consisting of the destroyers Dupont, Tattnall, Cole, and Biddle reached Constantinople in August 1919. The vessels assigned to the detachment remained with it only a few months when they were ordered to some other station according to the system then followed by the Navy Department. In the summer of 1920 the naval force in the Near East was increased to a total of twelve destroyers. Present in October were the Chattanooga, Scorpion,

nine destroyers, and two sub-chasers, while the St. Louis and three more destroyers were on the way to Constantinople. The St. Louis arrived on October 19 and served with the detachment for almost a year, nearly half of the period under the command of Capt. William D. Leahy. Early in 1921 after the Bolsheviks had successfully liquidated the White Russians from South Russia the Navy Department wanted to reduce the naval force in the Near East, but the State Department did not feel it was the psychological moment for a reduction since conditions there were still confused and the Supreme Council of the Allies was about to meet.

In the fall of 1921 vessels of the detachment resumed visits to Russian Black Sea ports when the American Relief Administration again went to the assistance of starving Russians. A severe drought ruined the crops in the Volga region and in the districts to the east, causing a disastrous famine which finally forced the Soviet to appeal for help from Europe and the United States. According to an agreement of August 20, 1921 between the Soviet government and the American Relief Administration, the distribution of the foodstuffs and other relief supplies was to be handled by the A. R. A., so 200 Americans were placed in charge of districts into which the famine zone was divided. Colonel William N. Haskell was placed at the head of the organization which distributed in all \$63,000,000 worth of relief supplies. As in the period immediately following the war, the assistance of vessels of the detachment operating under Admiral Bristol was afforded for transportation, mail, and communication purposes. Because the United States had not recognized the Soviet government, the State Department opined that as a general rule American naval vessels should not appear in Soviet ports, but suggested that in cases of extraordinary emergency relief workers could be transported in

naval vessels. In September the U. S. S. Gilmer carried A. R. A. workers to Novorossisk to investigate facilities there for handling relief supplies, and similar investigations were made at Odessa, Theodosia, and Sevastopol. The subsequent arrival of the first relief cargo was received by the Soviets with cordiality. Relief shipments began late in 1921, reached a peak in July 1922 and gradually declined thereafter. Throughout this period destroyers of the detachment made regular tours of the Black Sea, touching at Varna, Constanza, Odessa, Theodosia, Novorossisk, Batum, Trebizond, and Samsun. In the early part of the year the vessels engaged on this duty included the Childs, Fox, Overton, Sturtevant, and Williamson, and after July the Bulmer, Goff, King, Lawrence, Litchfield, Parrott, and Simpson. In the Caucasus the supplies were distributed by the Near East Relief which was still active in that region. The A. R. A. ceased its operations in September and in consequence the visits by naval vessels were discontinued in November. Not until 1933 did the United States assume relations with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, following the inauguration of the first Democratic President since the World War.

The Greek occupation of Smyrna resulted in a full scale war between Greece and Turkey in which the former succeeded during 1920-1921 in conquering a considerable part of Anatolia. Failing in their attempt to capture Angora in the summer of 1921, the Greeks were thereafter forced to retreat gradually to the coast. Not long afterwards the French, weary of waging a difficult war and jealous of the British, made a separate peace treaty with the Turks, withdrew from Cilicia and changed the northern border of Syria in favor of Turkey. In August 1922 the Turks undertook an offensive against the Greeks, routed them, drove many into the sea, and captured the rest.

The destroyers serving under Admiral Bristol were kept so occupied during much of 1922 in connection with Russian relief activities that visits could be made only at irregular intervals to Mediterranean ports. Through contacts at Mersina and Beirut and from other sources the Admiral kept informed of the progress of the Greco-Turkish war. American warships were not visiting Greek ports any more since the United States had not recognized the return of King Constantine to the throne of Greece. Destroyer Division 39, comprising the Bulmer, Edsall, Lawrence, Litchfield, McLeish, Parrott, and Simpson, reached the station at the end of June, permitting the return to the United States in July of the Childs, Fox, McFarland, Overton, Reuben James, Sands, Sturtevant, and Williamson.

Apprised of the likelihood of a serious situation developing at Smyrna towards which Greek soldiers and refugees were fleeing, Admiral Bristol ordered the Litchfield and the Simpson to that port early in September 1922 and shortly afterwards the Lawrence with relief workers, supplies, and his chief of staff, Captain Hepburn, on board. Through the Admiral's efforts a disaster relief committee was formed by American relief and benevolent institutions in Constantinople, and a representative with a medical unit was sent to Smyrna. American sailors were landed at Smyrna on September 6 to protect American lives and property. The Turkish army entered the city on the 9th, and through what Bristol regarded as insufficient policing allowed a disastrous fire to begin on September 13. Under the command of Captain Hepburn the evacuation of Americans from the stricken city was undertaken by the naval forces. They were removed to Athens on board the Simpson and a Shipping Board vessel.

There remained the tremendous job of evacuating 250,000 Greek refugees, who during the course of the fire were herded onto the quay by American sailors. These people could not be left there, for their homes had been destroyed by retreating Greek soldiers and the Turks wanted them out. After conferences by Allied naval officers present, initiated by Captain Hepburn, it was decided that the only solution was evacuation. Through negotiations by Captain Hepburn, who as an American naval officer was less unpopular with the Turks than the naval officers of the European powers who were also on hand to remove their nationals, arrangements were made with Turkish authorities for the evacuation of the refugees, and permission was obtained for using Greek vessels which were available at nearby island ports for this purpose. These were operated under the direction of American naval officers, senior of whom after September 16 was Comdr. Halsey Powell of the Edsall. In addition ✓ to the destroyers already mentioned, the Edsall, Parrott, and McLeish shared the task of evacuation, guarding American institutions, and maintaining a shore patrol. Their activities extended to other ports of Asia Minor in which refugees were also crowded and continued for weeks. The migration of the Greeks and Armenians from Asia Minor was one of the greatest folk movements in the world's history. The sustenance of several hundred thousand people while crowded in ports awaiting transportation to Greece and thereafter until they could be absorbed into the life of that country presented a relief problem which was participated in by the Near East Relief, the American Relief Administration, the American Red Cross, and the U. S. Navy.

Spurred by their victories, the Turks marched on Constantinople with the object of recovering eastern Thrace from the Greeks. Despite the fact that they were now standing alone, the British brought in large reinforcements and

announced their intention to defend the Straits, which had been declared a neutral zone in the Allied proclamation of neutrality of May 1921. Peaceful methods prevailed, however, and an armistice was signed at Mudania on October 11, 1922, following which Thrace was restored to the Turks as far as the Maritza River, and a call was issued for a conference to be held at Lausanne to establish peace with Turkey. Refet Pasha, the Turkish general designated to take over Thrace, stopped in Constantinople on the way, remained a month, and took over its government from the Allies. The Sultan was immediately deposed, and a year later Turkey became a republic with Mustapha Kemal as the first president.

After the fall of Smyrna the American naval detachment in Turkish waters was greatly strengthened; Admiral Bristol had some fear that a similar catastrophe might happen at Constantinople, and recommended reinforcements. Destroyer Division 40, consisting of the Bainbridge, Fox, Gilmer, Hatfield, Hopkins, and Kane, and Division 41, consisting of the Barry, Goff, King, McFarland, Overton, and Sturtevant, left Hampton Roads on October 2 and reached Constantinople on the 22nd. Two destroyer tenders, the Bridge and the Densholt, followed. With twenty destroyers in the detachment Admiral Bristol was able to keep an adequate reserve at Constantinople and to have regular visits made at the Mediterranean ports of Anatolia, Syria, and Palestine, the Turkish Black Sea ports, and Piraeus, Greece.

At the suggestion of the State Department Admiral Bristol attended the first session of the Lausanne conference from November 26, 1922 to February 4, 1923; his colleagues were Richard W. Child, Ambassador to Italy, and Joseph C. Grew, Minister to Switzerland. Although they were only "observers," they took a prominent part in the proceedings. During the Admiral's absence from

Constantinople, Frederic R. Dolbeare, first secretary of the American Embassy at Berlin, acted as High Commissioner, while Captain Hepburn took command of the naval detachment. Vice Admiral Andrew T. Long, who had become commander of the U. S. Naval Forces, Europe in August, arrived at Constantinople on the Pittsburgh before Bristol's departure and remained stationed at that place until May 1923. All the destroyers then under his command were serving in the Near East. Numerous foreign warships were also moored in the Bosphorus, for the situation was still tense. Admiral Long issued orders in December for the evacuation of Americans and American forces from Constantinople in case of an emergency. Together with Captain Hepburn he was consulted by Dolbeare concerning matters affecting American interests.

The Treaty of Lausanne of July 24, 1923 and supplementary conventions at last effected a peace settlement with Turkey. Territorially she fared somewhat better than in the Treaty of Sevres, securing eastern Thrace and a confirmation of the Syrian frontier agreed upon with France in 1921. Mesopotamia (Iraq), Arabia, Syria, and Palestine were recognized as independent of Turkey, while Libya, Egypt, the Sudan, and Cyprus were renounced. An exchange of populations was agreed upon between Greece and Turkey by which the subjects of the one in the other were to be removed. The United States was not a party to this treaty because it had not been at war with Turkey, but after its negotiation it could do nothing except make a treaty on the same terms. Fulfilling instructions from Secretary of State Hughes, who believed it best for our relations with Turkey to be regularized, Joseph C. Grew signed the Turco-American treaty of Lausanne on August 6, 1923.

Throughout most of the negotiations at Lausanne the force of twenty American destroyers was maintained in Turkish waters, although, as the

Chief of Naval Operations pointed out, the maintenance of so many there was a serious strain on the resources of the home fleet. Nevertheless, the discretion of the officer in command of the station and the opinion of the State Department was allowed to govern the size of the force, as in previous years. Admiral Long reported the situation still delicate at the end of November 1922 and likely to become serious if a break should occur in the conference at Lausanne. The conference did break up at the beginning of February, and Admiral Bristol returned to Constantinople, but negotiations were resumed at Lausanne in April, the Admiral not returning. With the approval of the State Department six destroyers including the Bainbridge, Hopkins, Kane, McFarland, Overton, and Sturtevant were sent home in May, and another group of six comprising the Barry, Fox, Gilmer, Goff, Hatfield, and King departed in July. In the former month the Pittsburgh also left to visit other European ports. Remaining thereafter were eight destroyers, the Scorpion, the Bridge, and the Densbola. Since the Turco-American treaty was still being negotiated and since the Allies had not yet evacuated Constantinople, these vessels were maintained on the station for a while longer.

Constantinople was to be restored to Turkey, the Straits were to be demilitarized and opened to all nations, according to the Lausanne conventions. The evacuation of Constantinople began on August 4, 1923, the day following the receipt of the news of the ratification of the Treaty of Lausanne by the Turkish Grand National Assembly at Angora, and was completed without disturbance on October 2 upon the departure of General Harrington, the Allied commander-in-chief, and the last of the Allied troops. Before the completion of the Allied withdrawal, Dr. Adnan Bey, the representative

in Constantinople of the Turkish minister of foreign affairs, indicated to Admiral Bristol that it was expected that the American naval vessels would be sent away. At the end of the Allied occupation only the Scorpion, Danebola, the Litchfield, and Lawrence were at Constantinople, the other destroyers having been sent cruising in the Aegean in order to avoid any embarrassment their presence might have caused. On October 4, two days before the Turks were to enter the city, the last of the vessels were ordered away, the two destroyers being sent to report to the Commander, Naval Forces, Europe.

Thereafter, out of respect for the feelings of the Turks, our naval activities at Constantinople were greatly reduced. Following a recommendation communicated by Admiral Bristol towards the end of October that the use of the naval base at Constantinople be discontinued, a conference occurred between representatives of the Navy Department and the State Department in which it was decided that a detachment of six destroyers, a subchaser, and the Scorpion would be continued in the region as the U. S. Naval Detachment, Eastern Mediterranean, and that the situation would be reviewed in six months. In desiring the continuance of naval vessels in the eastern Mediterranean the State Department was influenced by conditions in Greece, Egypt, and the mandated territories. The U. S. Naval Detachment, Eastern Mediterranean was established as such on November 6. The naval supply base at Constantinople was discontinued, the surplus stores being transported to the United States on the Bridge and the Danebola. The building was retained, however, for storing spare parts belonging to the Scorpion, which was to be retained for the use of the Admiral, for garage purposes, for the Detachment post office, and for office supplies. By the spring of 1924 political conditions in the

Near East had quieted down, and on the recommendation of the detachment commander, the remaining destroyers, consisting of the Bulmer, Edsall, McLeish, McCormick, Parrott, and Simpson, were transferred to the Commander, Naval Forces, Europe on May 6. Admiral Bristol's naval staff was reduced before long to three aides. Captain Hepburn had recently been detached as the chief of staff, and the assistant chief of staff, Lt. Comdr. Thomas C. Kinkaid, continued only until the summer.

For over three years longer Admiral Bristol remained at Constantinople as U. S. High Commissioner, performing diplomatic duties. Had the treaty with Turkey of 1923 been ratified, he would have been replaced by an ambassador. In December 1923 the Admiral negotiated an agreement with Turkey for the settlement of claims. In 1925 the State Department was willing to part with his services, but President Coolidge requested him to continue, believing that his influence and experience would be helpful to American interests. Later that year he made his only visit to the United States while serving it in Constantinople. Vice Admiral Roger Welles during a visit to that place in 1926 found Admiral Bristol to be popular among both the foreign representatives and the Turkish officials and exercising among the latter an influence second to none. In August 1926 Lt. Comdr. Webb Tremell, who had been an aide to the Admiral for two years, was assigned to his diplomatic staff as naval attache to Turkey, Bulgaria, and Roumania. Under instructions from the State Department Admiral Bristol arranged in February 1927 for the exchange of notes providing for the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. At last he was relieved from his post at Constantinople in the following month and allowed to complete his naval career in an appropriate manner. The assignment which he had expected to

endure for only a few months had been lengthened by conditions in the Near East to a period of over eight years. His successor in Turkey was Ambassador Joseph C. Grew.

Bristol's subsequent career in the Navy included two important assignments. From 1927 to 1929 he was commander-in-chief of the U. S. Asiatic Fleet with the rank of admiral and the Pittsburgh as flagship. For the next three years he dealt with higher naval problems as a member and chairman of the General Board. After his retirement in 1932 he engaged in private business in Washington until his death in 1939.

Of Admiral Bristol's services Secretary of State, Charles Evans Hughes, wrote: "The success and achievements of Admiral Bristol in representing American interests in Turkey through a long and difficult period have been signal and it is a pleasure for me to confirm what must already be well known to your Department, namely that the distinguished naval officer has served as a diplomat with equal distinction."

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Heck, Lewis. June 9, 1943. Mr. Heck was Turkish Secretary at the American Embassy in Constantinople before the war, remained there during the war until January 1, 1918, and served as U. S. Commissioner from Dec. 1918 to April 1919. During 1920-1923 he travelled much in the Near East, partly on American destroyers, representing an American business concern, and from 1923-1933 was engaged in business in Turkey. He is now employed by the Coast and Geodetic Survey. Mr. Heck read the manuscript.

Leavitt, Arthur H. June 7 and 9, 1943. Mr. Leavitt was Assistant Turkish Secretary at Constantinople prior to the war and afterwards was engaged in business with a British concern there. He is now Chief of the Division of Commerce Department Archives, the National Archives. Mr. Leavitt read the manuscript.

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