

184  
LIGUE NATIONALE  
DU  
PONT  
(EUXIN)  
28, RUE SERPENTE  
(HOTEL DES SOCIÉTÉS SAVANTES)  
PARIS (V)

C-101  
W. H. Westermann  
Paris, le May 14th 1919  
Seen by W.H.W.



Your Excellency,

We have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of  
the memorandum we submit to the Peace Conference.

We take the liberty of drawing respectfully the  
attention of Your Excellency on this memorandum and are con-  
vinced that our requests will have the support of the great  
American Democracy.

We be to remain, Sir,

Your obedient servants.

Congrès des Originaires du Pont-Euxin.  
Le Président,



LE PRÉSIDENT

To His Excellency Mr. Robert LANSING  
Foreign Secretary of the United States  
American Commission to Negotiate Peace

P a r i s

To the Members of the Peace Conference,

Your Excellencies,

Several Memorials have been presented to the Peace Conference on the question of the Euxine Pontus. May I be permitted, however, to add the following, which is based upon incontestable facts and documents that may enlighten the judgment of those whose duty it will be to take the serious decisions in connection with the settlement of the world's peace.

The region of Pontus comprises the Vilayet of Trebizonde, a portion of the vilayet of Sivas (the Sandjaks of Karahissar and Amassia), and a small portion of the Vilayet of Kastamouni (the Sandjak of Sinope). It is inhabited by a population of more than 600,000 Greeks, to which must be added the 250,000 Greeks who have taken refuge in the Caucasus and in Southern Russia, to which they have emigrated since 1880, as refugees from the bad administration of the Turks. This quarter of a million Greeks are anxiously awaiting the liberation of their country in order to be able to return to their homes.

This estimate of the Greek population in Pontus is based upon the following facts : -

The "Saalnameh," or official annual for the Vilayet of Trebizonde for the year 1908, returned the Greek population at 500,000 for the Vilayet of Trebizonde alone. In 1912 the Liberal Government of Kiamil Pasha, in official agreement with the Patriarchate, awarded seven electoral seats to the Greeks of Pontus, of which three were allotted to the district of Trebizonde.

two to Samsoun, and one each to Karahissar and Sinope. Thus the Government of Kiamil Pasha officially recognised that there were 700,000 Greeks in the region of Pontus, in view of the fact that under Turkish electoral law one deputy to the Turkish Parliament was allotted to every 100,000 inhabitants. The young Turk Government itself was compelled to give four electoral seats to the Greek of Pontus (two to Trebizonde and one each to Karahissar and Samsoun) thereby recognising volens volens the numerical importance of the Pontian Greeks.

Basing on these different factors, the Greeks of the Euxine Pontus may therefore be estimated at 600,000 at the lowest computation. This figure corresponds very nearly to the statistics drawn up by the OEcumenical Patriarchate, which are based on the number of children in the schools, and which give 550,000 Greeks for the region of Pontus, exclusive of Sinope and Lazistan.

The total Greek population of Pontus, therefore, amounts to 850,000, of whom 250,000 are at present in the Caucasus and Southern Russia.

The Mussulman population of the same region is estimated at 1,058,000 of whom some 232,000 inhabit the province of Lazistan, leaving for the region comprising Pontus proper 836,000 Moslems.

In other words, the Greek and Musulman elements are very nearly equal in numbers.

The Musulmans of Pontus are of various races. Of the total number, about 340,000 are true Turks, 200,000 are Surzenites, 50,000 Circassians, 200,000 Ofllis and 5,000 Stavriotes.

The Stavriotes are Christians whom the Turkish Government, in spite of their protests, have compelled to remain attached to Islamism. The Ofllis and the Tonialis have never forgotten their

Greek origin. The Ollis were converted to Islamism about 180 years ago. They still preserve certain Christian practices. They keep the Gospels as precious relics, and their women know nothing but Greek, to the exclusion of all other languages. During the Russian occupation they asked, through the medium of a deputation, to be allowed to return to the bosom of the Orthodox Church; but it was not deemed advisable to accede to this request, in view of the fact that, as I had, at their request, taken them under my protection, it might have been suggested that I had done this with an aim to proselytism.

As compared with these populations there are, in the Pontus region, 78,000 Armenians, of whom 50,000 are in the Vilayet of Trebizonde, and the remainder in the Sandjaks of Karahissar and Amassia (Vilayet of Sivas).

The Greek character of the Pontus country has been officially recognised during the course of the war both by the Turks and the Russians, as well as by the Entente Powers. The documentary evidence which forms the Appendices to this Memorial bears ample witness to this fact.

At the time of the advance of the Russian armies on Trebizonde, Djemal Azmi Bey, the Turkish Governor-General of the Vilayet, two days before they entered the city, addressed a letter to me, conferring full powers on myself and a council of three Greek residents, Messrs. George Postiropoule, Paraskeva Grammaticopoule and George Congalides, who were to sit under my presidency (See Appendix No. I.) In conferring these powers on me the Vali said: "It was from the Greeks that we took this country; it is to them that we hand it over to-day. We deliver up to you also the churches which we have transformed into mosques. Transform them back to churches again, if you think fit." With

a view to the appeasement of passion, however, I deemed it best not to act upon this suggestion.

At the moment, of the negotiations for the surrender of the city of Trebizonde to the Russian armies, I appealed for the aid of Mr. Heizer, the United States consul, who undertook, in the name of the Provisional Government of the province, in company with a delegate representing that Government, the negotiations for the surrender of the district of Trebizonde to the Russians.

General Wladimir Liakhof, the commander of the Russian armies, confirmed me in my functions as Governor. With the assent of the General, I took the necessary steps for the carrying out of municipal elections, which resulted in the advent of a municipal council on which there was a substantial majority of Greeks.

Throughout the whole of the Russian occupation, no measure affecting the local population was taken by the military authorities without my having been, by order of the Russian Government, officially consulted. When the Russians degenerated into Bolchevicks, they continued to recognise my authority and to display their confidence in the Greek element. They earnestly besought me to take my place in the Soviet, where I sat constantly, in the endeavour, through the medium of a moderating policy, to save the region from Bolchevist excesses.

During the same period Colonel Chardigny wrote to me, on behalf of the Allied Governments, asking me to organise a regiment of Pontians, thereby recognising the influence and the importance of the Greek element in Pontus. (See Appendix No.2).

Throughout the whole of the Russian occupation, as well as during those periods when the region remained without any army of occupation, the various populations, without exception, never ceased to recognise myself and my collaborators as the legally constituted authorities of the district, and to display

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towards us the most absolute confidence (See appendix N°3).

The Greek of Pontus proved themselves worthy of this confidence. They were able to assure the life and property of all the inhabitants, both Christian and Mussulman. In spite of differences of religion and the exceptional difficulties of the situation, there were neither disturbances nor outrages. The letter which I received from Vehib Pasha, the Commander of the 3rd. Turkish Army, bears witness to this (See Appendix N°4).

These facts demonstrate : -

(1) - That the Greek population of Pontus, after the return of the refugees from the Caucasus and Southern Russia, will be as large as the Mussulman population.

(2) - That of this Mussulman population a large proportion is Greek by origin and has never forgotten either this origin or the Greek language which it continues to speak.

(3) - That there is only a very weak Armenian minority in the region of Pontus.

(4) - That the Turks recognised that the Greek were their only possible successors and the only element capable of governing the country, once Turkish authority was abolished, and that it was to the Greeks the Turks handed over the government before their departure.

(5) - That the Russians, as well as the representatives of the other Powers, tacitly recognised the local Greek Government of Pontus, and that, in any case, they recognised the preponderating influence of the Greek element.

(6) - That the native population of the region not only submitted to this local Greek Government, but displayed the most absolute confidence in it.

(7) - That under the most difficult circumstances the local Greek Government and the Greek population were able to assure perfect order.

In these circumstances, it is just and right that the region of Pontus should constitute an autonomous Greek State, in accordance with the unshakeable will of its population, who are determined to endure no foreign domination. The near neighbourhood of the future Armenian State and the commercial relations

and common sufferings of the two peoples constitute bonds between them that we would gladly bind still closer. For these reasons we are ready to welcome the creation of bonds of close co-operation between the two States, but on the express condition that each autonomous State shall possess absolute independence.

Thanking you in anticipation I beg to present to your Excellencies, the assurance of my highest consideration.

Paris, May 2nd, 1919.

*Chrysanthos, notarius de Trebizonde et  
delegue des Grecs en Russie*

Appendix N°I

COPY of Letter from IJEMAL AZMI BEY, Governor-General of the  
Vilayet of Trebizonde, to Monseigneur CHRYSSANTHOS, Metropolitan of  
Trebizonde, on the occasion of the retreat of the Turkish Armies:

(Translated from the Turkish).

VILAYET OF TREBIZONDE  
Chief Secretary's  
Office.

We are on the eve of the fall of Trebizonde. After my departure a Provisional Government, will be formed, consisting of the commander of the gendarmery, the directors of the Police, the Metropolitan and Messrs. George Postropoulos, Paraskevas Gramaticopoulos, which will undertake on its own responsibility the administration and the security of the city.

The officers, police agents and men under the orders of the Chief of Police and the Commandant of Gendarmery, assisted by the other members of the Provisional Government, until the moment the enemy enters the city, will ensure security, tranquillity and real amity between Mussulmans and Christians, after which in withdrawing to the westward, they will transmit their powers, so far as the order and security of the city are concerned, to the Provisional Government, who will carry out this duty in co-operation with all trustworthy and honourable persons.

All persons attacking the honour, the life or the property of the inhabitants will be immediately shot.

In view of the fact that everything which concerns the population and the official departments has been left in good order its preservation must be carefully watched over.

The aforesaid provisions are to be carried into execution until the moment when the enemy shall himself assume the duty of assuring public order.

(Signed and sealed) :

IJEMAL AZMI.

3 Shaban 1332  
(April 3, 1916).

P.S. - This order will be put into force after my withdrawal from Trebizonde.



Appendix No. 2.

COPY of letter from Colonel CHARDIGNY, of the French Army, to His Emirence, Monseigneur CHRYSANTHOS, Metropolitan of TREBIZONTE.

TIFLIS

II/24 Xbre 1917.

Monseigneur,

In the critical hours that we are now passing through the situation can only be saved by the common efforts of all men of good will.

In the Caucasus National Armenian and Georgian army corps are being formed. The Allied Governments are ready to forward this movement by every means in their power.

The Greek nation, to-day our ally, as you anticipated, has not been overlooked. On our demand the Government of the Caucasus has authorized the formation of a Greek Division, of which the elements will be united at Kars, at Tiflis, and, I hope at Batoum and at Trebizonde. The general who is to command this division, and whom I know personally, has been nominated. He is General Ananik, who is of Greek origin, and who speaks Greek.

At Trebizonde, Monseigneur, the success of the formation of a regiment of Greek Volunteers rests with yourself. This regiment is necessary, in the first place, to maintain order in the city, and later for the purpose of co-operating with the regiments of Russian volunteers and the National Armenian and Georgian regiments, in the defense of the country against the Turks.

I am writing to you, Monseigneur, to ask you, in the name of my own Government and in complete agreement with my British and American colleagues, to place your great influence at the service of our common cause and to assist General Kolosovski in the formation of the Greek Regiment of Trebizonde. I expect some French officers in a few days, and I will send one to Trebizonde specially for the Greek Regiment. You may tell this on my behalf to General Kolosovski, who has already nominated the Russian officers who are to join the regiment.

In case of need you may communicate directly with me by telegraph, as has latterly done Mr. Jenkins, the American Consul, who will give you all information on this subject.

I do not ignore the difficulties of this fresh task. They

are great, from all points of view, especially at Trebizonde, where the situation has always been so delicate; but I am sure, Monseigneur, that you will overcome them all.

Will you be good enough, Monseigneur, to accept the tribute of my deep respect and my entire devotion, and permit me to say that France and all the Allies will be grateful for all that you have already done and for all that you can do for the future triumph of our common cause.

(Signed) : Colonel CHARDIGNY.

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Appendix W-8.

Translation from the Turkish of a Letter addressed to  
Monseigneur CHRYSANTHOS Metropolitan of TREBIZONTE, by  
HADJI MEHMET, the Mufti, or Religious Chief of the Mussulmans  
of Trebizonde.

Your Eminence,

As you are aware, since the moment when the Ottoman troops  
left Trebizonde, the Mussulman inhabitants who have remained in  
the city have recognised you as their protector, and have looked  
to your benevolence for all ~~measures~~ for all measures concern-  
ing their protection and their security. You are also aware that  
owing to the discords and divisions that prevail among the Mussul-  
mans who remain in the city, a conflict has broken out among them  
and they have been struggling to tear each other in pieces.

As a consequence, for the past two months I have suffered  
imprisonment, together with other persons. Our wives and famil-  
ies, on the one hand; and we ourselves here, on the other, are in  
the greatest distress. We beseech you to come to our aid and de-  
liver us. Have pity on our lamentable condition.

The zeal which you have already displayed has proved of  
such benefit to our comrades that we are compelled to conclude  
that there must be some special reason why Zikse Zade Abdullah  
Effendi and myself are still kept in prison.

I am sure that, whatever the reason may be, you will help  
us to obtain our deliverance. In any case we are anxiously look-  
ing forward to your efficacious intervention in our present dif-  
ficulty. As you well know, Jesus-Christ loved to help those who  
were suffering, and you, who are His representative, like Him, will  
also come to their help.

Hoping in conclusion, that you are well,

(signed :) HADJI MEHMET  
Mufti of Trebizonde.

4 Haziran 133  
(June 4, 1917).

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Appendix N\*4.

Translation of a Letter written in Greek and addressed by the Turkish General VEHIB PASHA to His Eminence Monseigneur CHRYSSANTHOS, Metropolitan of Trebizonde.

General Staff of the  
3rd IMPERIAL OTTOMAN  
ARMY.

Sou-Chehir, January 31, 1912.

To His Eminence Monseigneur CHRYSSANTHOS,  
Metropolitan of Trebizonde, etc. etc..

Monseigneur,

We cannot forget the noble and paternal protection that your Eminence was good enough to extend to the Turkish element of the population at the time of the retirement of the Imperial Turkish armies and the entrance of the Russian troops into Trebizonde.

It is not less well known to us that, between the moment of the withdrawal of the Imperial troops and the occupation of the country by the Russians, the protection and the safeguarding of the Ottoman element of the population, as well as the entire absence of all disorder, were due to your Eminence's wise and considerate policy.

From the entry of the enemy into Trebizonde down to the present day, you have been able to govern the country with skill and wisdom, and we have pleasure in rendering you homage, while expressing to you at the same time our sincere admiration and our sincerest thanks.

We know from positive information that in the neighbourhood of Trebizonde bands of Turkish brigands are disturbing and maltreating the peaceable inhabitants of the Greek villages. This has filled us with real indignation. As you are aware, Monseigneur, I have placed all the races living in Turkey on the same equality and have made no distinction whatever between them, in either race or religion, in carrying out my duty as Governor, both as regards punishments or rewards. The conduct of these bands of brigands is not in accordance with our principles of governing, and can therefore be only of a purely local character. The doers of this misdeeds will be punished in due course, as they deserve.

On the other hand I learn with regret, Monseigneur, that certain young people in Trebizonde have armed themselves, at the instigation of the Armenians, and that they are disturbing the order which you have established in the country. May these people repair their faults as soon as possible, in order that their repentance does not come too late.

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I beg of your Eminence to show in the present circumstances as in the past - as I am profoundly convinced in advance you will do - the same balanced and considerate policy, for it is very possible that, while the enemy is retreating and before our troops can again enter Trebizonde, public order may be troubled and the lives of the population placed at peril.

Your work, of which I confess myself to be an admirer, will be thus crowned with success, in making all danger disappear during this transition period. The mufti of Trebizonde has already been made acquainted with the situation, and I shall be glad if you will place yourself in relation with him.

I shall be greatly obliged if you send three persons to the villages of Zygha, Ardassa and Gummeh-Hané (Argyroupolis), in order to recommend to the inhabitants to give a good reception to our troops, and to supply them with supplies, the cost of which will be paid to them, in accordance with my orders.

Once more expressing to you my warmest thanks, I beg your Eminence to accept the expression of my highest consideration.

(Signed in Greek) :

VEHIB  
Commander of the 3rd Army.

Appendix N°5.

Letter of General KIAZIM, To Mgr. CHRYSSANTHOS, on the eve of the re-occupation of the City by the Turkish Troops. (Translated from the Turkish).

TO THE INHABITANTS OF TREBIZONDE.

Through the Intermediary of His Eminence the Metropolitan.

We are compelled to occupy the city, in order to ensure order and tranquillity in Trebizonde itself, as well as at Rizeh and Surmena.

In order that this occupation may be effected within a given period, we have requested the Russian commander to withdraw as soon as possible and to evacuate the district and hand over the city to us. This he has agreed to do.

The Ottoman armies will consequently occupy Trebizonde in the course of February 23, 1334 (10/23 February 1915). The Russians and the Georgians are our friends. Our effort in the direction of the occupation of the city constitutes no act of hostility. We shall not fire on anybody.

We shall repatriate the Russians and the Georgians in accordance with the amount of shipping available. I have asked the Russian commander to regard our operations with calm and sang-froid. No action of any kind, therefore, must be taken against those of our troops who will proceed to the re-occupation of Trebizonde.

All persons guilty of contraventions of this order will be shot. Instigators will be similarly held responsible.

You are requested to bring to the knowledge of the inhabitants as quickly as possible that their tranquillity will be assured during the occupation, and that they should remain withing doors and await the end of the occupation with calmness and sang-froid.

It is formally prohibited to fire on any person whatever and for any reason whatever. Any person infriging this order will be punished with the pain of death.

By the use of your influence on the population, endeavour to ensure a satisfactory result.

With my respectful greetings,

(signed:) KIAZIM.