

he quoted before the Supreme Council both Greek and Turkish statistics so as to get at the truth by means of comparisons. He took the opportunity of laying before the conference the official Turkish statistics of 1902 as given in the "Salnamé" of Adrianople. He believed that, although these figures were more than twenty years old, they gave a true picture of the distribution of the various races. Indeed, the character of the population could only have changed in favour of the Greeks, since the Greek element increased more rapidly than the Turkish. Besides, the statistics for that period were much more reliable than those drawn up later.

Ismet Pasha had asserted that the territory claimed by Turkey had been Turkish since time immemorial. M. Veniselos did not wish to start a polemic on that theory of Greek history, which was quite new to him; as a democrat, he thought that historical arguments should not serve as grounds for territorial claims. What must be considered was the present; the present aspirations of the population must be satisfied first of all, and that was the line he had always taken in defending his own country's claims.

Ismet Pasha had stated that if Western Thrace remained Greek the incoming refugees would oblige the Turks who lived there to leave the country. This assertion was not correct. M. Veniselos wished to say, in all justice to the Turkish population in Greece, that it constituted a first-class element of the population when well administered. These people had, on their own initiative, consented to give up part of their houses to refugees, and also gave them the necessary means of subsistence for several days. He was happy to be able to make this declaration. To sum up, the question of Thrace did not arise, since it had already been settled by a treaty other than that of Sévres, which was the only one to be recast.

As for the statements attributed to General Mombelli and to Sir Charles Harington, they had made a certain impression, but they had never come to the knowledge of the Greek Government; what they knew was the Convention of Mudania, which was considered as the preliminaries of peace. But even if these statements had been made, they could not be quoted against Greece. Eastern Thrace, which Greece had been asked to cede, had been defined in the Mudania Convention as extending up to the line of the Maritza.

In connection with Ismet Pasha's statements about Kara-Agatch, M. Veniselos observed that Kara-Agatch was not a quarter but a suburb of Adrianople, situated on the other bank of the Maritza. There were other similar cases of towns divided by a river where two distinct administrations were possible; for example, Fiume and Sussak.

As regards Dedeagatch, its port could serve as the outlet both for Bulgaria and for Adrianople if Turkey wished it, although he thought that Adrianople's natural outlet was Constantinople. Greece was ready to entrust the railway and the port to an international administration which would give all necessary guarantees for the freedom of Bulgarian commerce.

Ismet Pasha had questioned the figures quoted by M. Veniselos in regard to refugees. Perhaps he (M. Veniselos) had made a mistake in speaking of Greek refugees only, since many of them were Armenians; but Greece did not consider she had the right to make any distinctions between the unfortunate peoples driven out of their homes who had taken refuge on her soil. Dr. Nansen, in a report of three weeks ago, estimated the number of refugees in Greece at 850,000. M. Veniselos hoped that the figure of 1,000,000 given by him would not be exceeded by several hundred thousand within a few weeks. Ismet Pasha had stated, on the other hand, that there were more than 1,000,000 dispossessed Turks now wandering on the tablelands of Anatolia. This figure was certainly much exaggerated. In the course of the Greek army's retreat, excesses had certainly been committed; but an army which was no longer willing to fight, even if it had set fire to the villages on its path, could not have gone out of its way to set fire to wide tracts of country to right and left; at the most it could only have set fire to what was on its line of retreat.

If it were assumed that there were about 200,000 homeless Turks in Asia Minor, there were, on the other hand, more than 700,000 Greeks who had left that country in addition to 250,000 who had left Eastern Thrace. All these refugees had left their houses intact. Thus there were many more untouched houses than was necessary to accommodate the Turks who had been left without shelter. In any case, he thought that the sufferings on one side could not be compared with those on the other.

ISMET PASHA reserved the right to reply later to the statements of M. Veniselos.

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