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HUNGARY

FOREIGN RELATIONS /1500/  
Relations with other Countries /1505/

TURKS COOL TO HUNGARIAN BID.

SOURCE ISTANBUL: Local press and own reporter.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: April 1956.

EVALUATION COMMENT: None.

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The news broadcast over Radio BUDAPEST announcing that a Turkish Parliamentary delegation had been invited to Hungary was received in Turkey with utmost indifference.

The speech of Sándor RONAI, President of the Hungarian National Assembly, in which he disclosed the hopes that a Turkish parliamentary visit to Hungary would "revive and develop traditional ties" between Hungary and Turkey, was reproduced in only one Turkish newspaper. Other ISTANBUL dailies simply announced the news on their second or third pages.

"Cumhuriyet" announced that the Hungarian invitation was the first one ever sent to Turkey by a Satellite Communist government. None of the Turkish papers commented upon the Hungarian invitation, and no official Turkish reaction followed RONAI's announcement.

Turkish political circles find the Hungarian move to be in line with general Soviet policy aimed at separating

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Turkey from her Western allies. One usually well informed Turkish politician stated that Russia had made a number of ouvertures with regard to Turkey during recent weeks and that the Hungarian rapprochement attempt was further indication to the fact that the Communist bloc was really interested in winning the sympathy of Turkey.

Coming as it did from Hungary, the invitation was well planned. Hungarian and Turkish relations in the past have always been good and the Turks generally consider the Hungarians to be their blood-brothers. A similar invitation on the part of the Soviets or any of her other Satellites might have brought forth a directly negative reaction.

The Turkish Foreign Ministry had no comment to make "at this time" concerning the Hungarian invitation. It is generally believed, however, that RONAI would not have made his announcement over the Hungarian State radio network unless he had been previously assured of Turkey's accepting the invitation.

In "Cumhuriyet" of April 3, an article published in the BUDAPEST paper "Esti Budapest," organ of the BUDAPEST HWP Committee, is reproduced. The article entitled "Solidarity between the Turkish and Hungarian Peoples" stressed traditional political friendship between Turkey and Hungary and then outlined that Turkish-Hungarian trade was on the increase. Hungary's trade with Turkey had increased by 60 per cent over the 1954 figure. This article drew absolutely no comments from Turkish political or economical circles.

Foreign political circles in the Turkish capital show great interest toward the latest Soviet bloc attempts to strengthen friendship ties with Turkey. So far reactions to MOSCOW's ouvertures at rapprochement were very limited. In a speech delivered last month at KARACHI, Pakistan, Turkish Premier MENDERES clearly stated that his country stood firmly with the West. Coming as it was three days after "Pravda" and "Izvestia" published articles calling for reestablishment of Turkish-Soviet friendship relations, this was considered as the official Turkish answer to the Soviet suggestions. Now the Soviets seem to use Hungary as a stepping-stone in their campaign to befriend Turkey, a partner in NATO, the Balkan Pact, and a corner-stone of the BAGHDAD Treaty Alliance.