

APPENDIX A.

Declaration of the Congress of Straus September 9, 1919¹

In view of the exterior and interior perils which threaten our country, the national conscience has become awakened and gave birth to our congress, which has reached the following decision:

I. All of the Turkish territory within the frontier outlined 30 October, 1334 (1918), between the Ottoman Government and the Allies, and inhabited by a preponderate majority of Turk population, will form an undivided and inseparable whole. All the Mussulman elements living in said territories are filled with mutual sentiments of respect and devotion for the social conditions of the country and form a veritable fraternity.

II. In order to assure the integrity of our country and our national independence, as well as to assure the conservation of the Sultanate and supreme Khalifate, it is indispensable to place in action the national forces and the absolute will of the people.

III. Against all intermeddling or occupation of no matter what part of the Ottoman territory, and in particular against every movement tending toward the formation, at the expense of the mother country, of an independent Armenia and of an independent Greece on the Aidin, Magnesia, and Bulikhisar fronts, we are absolutely resolved to resist and to defend our rights.

IV. It is inadmissible that privileges be accorded all non-Mussulman elements who, for ages, have lived from the breast of the same country and who enjoy the same rights of equality; such privileges would tend to trouble our political government and break the social equilibrium.

V. All methods and all means are taken with a view to safeguard the Sultanate, the supreme Khalifate, and the integrity of the country in the case where the Turkish Government, under foreign pressure should be called upon to abandon no matter what part of our territory.

VI. We await a decision which will conform with right and with such justice as will annul the initiatives that are contrary to our historic, ethnic, and religious rights; a decision relative to the annulling of the project of the separation of our territory situated within the line of

¹ As given in Elliot Grinnel Mears, *Modern Turkey* (New York: MacMillan Co., 1924), pp. 627 - 628.

demarcation traced by the armistice treaty, 30 October, 1334, and inhabited by a preponderate majority of Mussulman population having an intellectual preponderance and economic superiority and forming an absolutely indivisible brotherhood which is inseparable of race and religion.

VII. Our people honor and respect humanitarian and contemporary purposes and take in consideration our scientific, industrial, and economic needs; in consequence whereof, on condition that the interior and exterior independence of our people and of our State, and on condition that the territorial integrity of our country shall be conserved intact, we will accept with pleasure the scientific, industrial, and economic assistance of every State which will not set forth imperialistic tendencies with respect to our country and which will respect the principles of nationality within the limits indicated under Article VI.

We await in the name of the preservation of humanity and universal peace the urgent signature of a peace based on the aforementioned equitable and humanitarian conditions which we consider to be our great national objective.

VIII. In the course of historic events which fix the destinies of nations, it is indispensable that our central Government shall submit itself to the national will, for the arbitrary decision, emanating from a government which treats lightly of the supreme will of the people not only causes that government not to be respected but, again, it could not be taken into consideration; the history of our past is proof. In consequence, it is absolutely urgent that before taking the means to remedy the anguish which exists within the very breast of the nation, our central Government shall proceed without delaying further to convoke the Nationalist Assembly and submit all the decisions to be taken with a view to safeguarding the interests of the nation.

IX. The sufferings and the calamities of the nations have given birth to a federal assembly called «the assembly to defend the rights and the interests of the provinces of Anatolia and of Rumaili.» That assembly abstracts all the tendencies of the political parties so that all our Mussulman compatriots as such can be considered as legitimate members of that assembly.

X. The congress of that assembly, named «the assembly to defend the rights and the interests of the provinces of Anatolia and of Rumaili,» which met at Sivas 4 September, 1335 (1919), has chosen a representative corps charged to push on the proposed sacred cause and to direct such similar organizations as well in the smaller communities as in the larger centers of the vilayets.