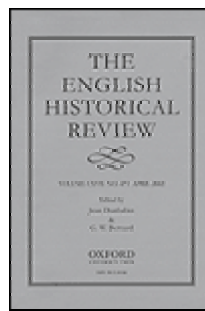


The Fall of Circassia: A Study in Private Diplomacy

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*The Fall of Circassia: A Study in Private Diplomacy*¹

During the last few years considerable interest has been shown by Soviet historians in the British attitude towards the Russian conquest of north Caucasia which, beginning in the early years of the nineteenth century, was finally completed in 1864.² Until recently Soviet historians had ascribed a democratic and progressive character to the resistance carried on over many decades by the tribesmen of the area. This resistance was represented as the heroic struggle of peoples fighting for their national independence against the encroachments of Tsarist imperialism.³

In 1950, however, a sudden and complete reversal of this viewpoint took place. Such a position, declared an article in *Pravda* on 14 May 1950, 'is anti-Marxist, opposed to the facts of history and, finally, it distorts the proper significance of this movement, which was reactionary, nationalistic and worked in the service of English capitalism and the Turkish Sultan'. Since then the leaders of the struggle for independence in Daghestan, Chechnia, and Circassia have been pictured as Mohammedan fanatics, chauvinists who, as representatives of the feudal ruling class, had nothing in common with the interests of the masses.⁴ Their aim, it was now asserted, was 'the creation of reactionary theocratic statelets under the aegis of Turkey and England'. Through conquest by Russia the north Caucasian tribesmen, though suffering from Tsarist oppression like the rest of the inhabitants of the empire, were in fact saved from joining 'the ranks of the

¹ I would like to thank Mr. W. E. D. Allen and General M. Kukiel for reading this paper and for their valuable suggestions and comments.

² See E. Adamov and L. Kutakov, 'Iz istorii proiskov inostrannoy agentury vo vremya kavkazskikh voyn', *Voprosy Istorii* (Moscow, 1950), no. 11, 101-25; A. Fadeev, 'Myuridizm kak orudie agressivnoy politiki Turtsii i Anglii na severo-zapadnom Kavkaze v XIX veka i dvizhenie myuridizma', *Istoricheskie Zapiski*, xlii (Moscow, 1953), 202-37.

³ See, for instance, M. N. Pokrovsky's article on the Caucasian Wars in *Bol'shaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya*, xxx (Moscow, 1937), 483-505. Cf. Adam and Kutakov, *op. cit.* p. 102

⁴ See M. D. Bagirov, 'K voprosu o kharaktere dvizheniya myuridizma i Shamilya', *Bol'shevik* (Moscow, 1950), no. 13, 21-37.

colonial peoples governed by English capital'.¹ Indeed, the unveiling of the activities in these parts of British agents a century ago was now regarded as particularly opportune, 'when the Anglo-American imperialists and their Turkish yes-men (*podgoloski*) are attempting to use obsolete Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turanian slogans as an ideological preparation for a war against the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies'.²

This recent Soviet interpretation of Anglo-Caucasian relations during the period of the Caucasian wars, though by no means without foundation, is framed in much too sweeping terms to be acceptable as it stands. The far-reaching and prolonged conflict of interests in the Near and Middle East between Tsarist Russia and England was due, indeed, to the clash of two rival imperialisms seeking new fields of political and economic expansion. Private capitalists in England were interested in opening up the area to British trade. But, in general, in regard to Anglo-Caucasian relations recent Soviet studies appear, in the first place, to over-emphasize the role of foreign agents in the resistance of the mountaineers. Secondly, they fail to distinguish between, on the one hand, the policy and actions of the British Government and of the official Opposition, whose active interest in the area changed from decade to decade, and, on the other, of various private groups and individual capitalists, who worked independently of—and often contrary to the wishes of—both Government and Opposition.

The object of this paper is to examine in detail, on the basis of the material available, one chapter in the history of Anglo-Caucasian relations during the nineteenth century: the important and hitherto almost completely neglected period between 1860 and 1864 when, after surrender of Shamil in 1859, the centre of north Caucasian resistance shifted from the central and eastern regions to Circassia in the north west.³ In particular, the paper will attempt to discover if the continued resistance of the Circassians (Cherkesses)⁴ was in fact linked up with efforts on the part of the British Government to obtain a masked control of the area or whether, on the other hand, British action in Circassia was not undertaken by a private group functioning in complete independence both of the Liberal Government and of the Conservative Opposition. It will also enquire how far the resistance of the Circassians during this period was due to outside intervention.

¹ Markova, *op. cit.* p. 237. See also the article on the Caucasian wars in the new edition of the B.S.E. xix (1953), 268-70.

² Fadeev, *op. cit.* p. 96

³ For the Caucasian wars in general, see W. E. D. Allen and Paul Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields: A History of the Wars on the Turco-Caucasian Border, 1828-1921* (Cambridge, 1953). The book contains a most valuable bibliography covering other aspects besides the purely military.

⁴ See *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, i (Leyden-London, 1913), 834-36.

From the early 1830's until the end of north Caucasian resistance in 1864 British connexions with the area were associated, above all, with the name of David Urquhart (1805-77).¹ It was Urquhart who, during this period, was mainly responsible for bringing the cause of the Caucasian tribesmen, and to a lesser degree that of the mountaineers of the central and eastern regions, before the British public, as well as for various schemes to bring assistance to these tribesmen from the West.

Since he was a young man, hatred of Russia had been the overmastering passion of Urquhart's life, which gradually took on the character of a mania bordering on insanity. Everywhere he came to see Russian intrigues: everyone who failed to share his fantasies —Bakunin, Kossuth, Mazzini or, above all, his arch-enemy, Lord Palmerston² —became in his eyes a Russian agent, a paid hireling of the Tsar. With his undoubted intelligence and his amazing energy, his extraordinary powers of gaining the lifelong allegiance of men and women in all ranks of society and of differing political viewpoints, and despite the fact that, a strange blend of high tory and social radical, he was in many of his ideas and projects far in advance of his own generation, Urquhart nevertheless remained a fanatic, a crank who exerted little positive influence on the political life of his time.

Urquhart spent the greater part of the period from 1827 to 1837 in the Near East. Already an ardent Turcophil, in the early 1830's he visited Circassia for the first time and immediately fell in love with the land, with its exotic highland scenery, with its attractive inhabitants and their romantic medieval customs and manners.³

The Circassians, who inhabited the mountainous east coast of the Black Sea, were divided at that time into four main tribes, Shapsugh, Natukhai, Abadzekhs, and Ubykhs, nominally Mohammedan but in fact largely pagan and preserving their primitive way of life comparatively unspoiled by the vices of civilization. Despite their love of independence and a highly developed clan culture, the tribesmen, however, were torn by fratricidal wars amongst themselves. Until the Treaty of Adrianople in 1829 Turkey had claimed a vague suzerainty over the

¹ See Gertrude Robinson, *David Urquhart: Some Chapters in the Life of a Victorian Knight-Errant of Justice and Liberty* (Oxford, 1920); *Dictionary of National Biography*, xx (Oxford, 1921-22), 43-5. While no attention hitherto has been given to Urquhart's later Circassian schemes, his activities in the 1830's have been the object of detailed study by English and American historians. See G. H. Bolsover, 'David Urquhart and the Eastern Question, 1833-7: A Study in Publicity and Diplomacy', *Journal of Modern History*, viii, 444-67; Sir Charles Webster, 'Urquhart, Ponsonby and Palmerston', *ante*, lxii, 327-51; John Howes Gleason, *The Genesis of Russophobia in Great Britain* (Cambridge, Mass. 1950), pp.153-7, 173-84, 190-204, 257-66.

² For a penetrating analysis of Urquhart's delusions in regard to Palmerston, see R. W. Seton-Watson, *Britain in Europe, 1789-1914* (Cambridge, 1938), pp. 255-7.

³ See, for example, *The Flag of Circassia: Speech of Mr. Urquhart, Glasgow, May 23, 1838* (London, 1863), a single sided leaflet in the British Museum, 1882 d. I (135).

area inhabited by the Circassians, actual occupation being confined to a few coastal forts which she made over to Russia in the treaty. Strong ties between the mountaineers and Turkey continued, however; and, in addition to wax and honey, the dispatch of slave-girls for the harems of İstanbul proved the most lucrative export of the land, bringing in return industrial products, arms, ammunition and salt. While many exaggerated reports were spread abroad by pro-Circassian publicists like Urquhart, the total number of independent Circassians has been estimated at roughly half a million.¹

In 1835, after several semi-official missions in the Near East, Urquhart was appointed secretary of the British embassy in Constantinople; his tenure of Office, however, was brief and stormy. He soon quarrelled violently with the ambassador, Ponsonby, who had at first been his enthusiastic sponsor. While, by the dispatch in 1836, on his own initiative, of a British schooner, the *Vixen*, loaded with arms and ammunition, in an attempt to run the Russian blockade of the Circassian coast-line and thereby either to involve England in a war with Russia or nullify Russian claims to sovereignty over that area, he caused an international incident and brought down on himself the wrath of the Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston, who dismissed him from government service in the following year.² Henceforth, as a private citizen, Urquhart was to devote his time and fortune to the task of building up a small, but faithful band of followers devoted to the propagation of his own somewhat eccentric views on national and, more especially, international affairs, in which opposition to Russia was always to provide the connecting link.

It was in the mid 1830's, too, that Urquhart first came into contact with the Polish *émigrés* who had left their country in 1831 after the final defeat of the November insurrection; and warm ties of friendship were to unite him with the leaders of the aristocratic monarchist party among the Poles, headed by the veteran Prince Adam Czartoryski.³ Both the Poles and Urquhart were at one in

¹ Ludwik Widerszal, *Sprawy kaukaskie w polityce europejskiej w latach 1831-1864* (Warsaw, 1934), p. 28. Urquhart in his Glasgow speech in 1838 gave the fantastic figure of between 3 and 4 millions.

² See Sir Charles Webster, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston, 1830-1841*, ii (London, 1951), 570-6.

³ Widerszal, *op. cit.* chap. ii, contains valuable information concerning Urquhart's relations with the Poles at this period. (Widerszal's book was based on Polish archives now destroyed or virtually inaccessible, which have not been used by English historians.) It was the Poles, too—and in particular Czartoryski's nephew, Count Wladyslaw Zamoyski, who acted as his agent in England—who supplied Urquhart with the documentary material from the Russian archives in Warsaw published in his *Portfolio* in 1835/36. See also Marcell Handelman, *Adam Czartoryski*, ii (Warsaw, 1949), 76; *Jeneral Zamoyski, 1803-1868*, iii (Poznan, 1914), 363. This last work in six volumes consists mainly of extensive extracts from the private papers of Count Zamoyski and his family. For Czartoryski and Circassia, see M. Kukiel, *Czartoryski and European Unity 1770-1861* (Princeton, 1955), pp. 235-8, 240, 248, 284, 296.

their belief that Russia could only be effectively checked, and thereby Poland's independence and Turkey's future secured, if the Circassians were successful in their resistance in the Caucasus. Here, too, in Urquhart's opinion, was the key to the fate of Persia and India, which would otherwise eventually succumb to the Russians. For Urquhart the Circassians were 'the defenders of your Indian Empire . . . the doorkeepers of Asia, and the champions of Europe'. 'The secret of Russia was to be read in the Caucasus.'¹

The Poles' interest in Circassia, however, unlike Urquhart's, did not derive either from a romantic enthusiasm for the cause of an independent people fighting for its liberty or from a special interest in the fate of the British empire. The Hôtel Lambert, as Czartoryski's party among the Polish *émigrés* was known from the Prince's head-quarters in Paris, saw in the tribesmen of north Caucasia the one people within the Russian empire, apart from its own countrymen, who were carrying on a prolonged resistance to Russian aims. The fact, too, that many Poles had been sent to serve with the Russian armies in the Caucasus—though Polish deserters were often illtreated by the tribesmen—was an added reason for pursuing an active policy in this area.

From the early 1830's onwards, therefore, Czartoryski had dispatched a series of agents to the mountaineers with the object of confirming them in their resistance. Though until the 1860's it was the tribesmen of Daghestan and Chechnia who bore the main brunt of the Russian attack, the efforts of the Poles—as of Urquhart—were throughout directed primarily towards the more accessible Circassians. The chief task of Czartoryski's agents was to attempt to bring some kind of unity among the warring tribes and personal factions. Whenever funds allowed, help in arms and ammunition was also sent. From 1841 the centre of all such activities was the Polish Agency in Constantinople headed by a series of talented agents. Turkey itself harboured a number of Polish exiles, enthusiastic Turcophiles who had usually adopted oriental manners and dress; and from their midst the raw material for an expedition to the Caucasus could be recruited. Turkey, therefore, which had never recognized the partitions of Poland, and where during this period a small group of the Polish *émigrés* were to enjoy power and influence at the Porte, acted as a base for the Hôtel Lambert's Caucasian policy.²

¹ *The Flag of Circassia, loc. cit.* For the strong pro-Circassian sentiments, which Urquhart succeeded in arousing among many British publicists of the period, see Widerszal, *op. cit.* pp. 220-9. Such writings were marked by the current romantic nostalgia for the primitive, as well as by Russophobic and Polonophil feeling and concern for British trading interests in the Caucasus area.

² For Urquhart's views on Turco-Polish relations, see his *England and Russia* (London, 1835), p. 4. Cf. Prince Adam Czartoryski to Urquhart, 17 June 1836, Urquhart Bequest, Balliol College, Oxford (cited below as U.B), I.B. I: 'Vous avez démontré l'union intime qui lie sa cause [*i.e.* Turkey's] à celle de ma Patrie.'

With the compromise solution which, in 1837, Palmerston succeeded in devising in connexion with the *Vixen* affair to meet both the Russian claims to sovereignty over the Circassian coast-line and hinterland and the British Government's interest in free trade throughout the Black Sea area, official circles in England began to lose interest for the time being in the Circassians. Widerszal, therefore, has called the years from 1841-52 'the period of independent Polish action' in the Caucasus, when the Hôtel Lambert was alone concerned in establishing effective contact with the Circassian tribesmen.¹

It was only with the outbreak of the Crimean war in 1853-4 that the British Government's interest in the area revived: both the British and, though to a lesser degree, the French concocted schemes to create a diversion on Russia's left flank by an invasion of the Caucasus in collaboration with the independent mountaineers. But the war ended before any concrete steps were taken in this direction. During the peace negotiations in Paris in 1856 the opposition of Napoleon III effectively prevented the realization of British schemes to create at least a Circassian buffer state between Russia and Turkey.² Despite Palmerston's efforts, therefore, as well as the endeavours of such pro-Circassian publicists as Urquhart, who had recently acquired the Sheffield *Free Press* to serve as the mouth-piece of his political views,³ the Treaty of Paris (30 March 1856) contained no mention of Circassian independence. In Asia the *status quo* was maintained between Russia and Turkey; and the neutralization of the Black Sea and the freedom of trade along its coasts were, from the British point of view, the only positive results of the war in this area.⁴

After the Crimean war the military position of the Circassians grew steadily more unfavourable. In February 1857 an armed expedition, led by a Polish adventurer, Colonel Teofil Lapinski, and manned almost exclusively by Polish *émigrés*, succeeded in reaching the Circassians and was able to hold out until the beginning of 1860. But it failed to achieve a lasting change in their fortunes.⁵ In 1859, with the surrender of their leader Shamył, the Circassians' neighbours, the tribesmen of central and eastern Caucasia, ceased the resistance which they had been carrying on for many decades with little material assistance from outside.

¹ Widerszal, *op. cit.* p. 91. See also his article 'The British Policy in the Western Caucasus 1833-1842', *La Pologne au VII-e Congrès International des Sciences Historiques*, i (Warsaw, 1933), 205-20.

² Harold Temperley, 'The Treaty of Paris and its Execution' *Journal of Modern History*, iv, 396, 397.

³ See W. H. G. Armytage, 'Sheffield and the Crimean War: Politics and Industry, 1852-1857', *History Today* (London, 1955), no. 7, 474-8.

⁴ See articles XI-XIII, XXX (*The Map of Europe by Treaty*, ed. Edward Hertslet, ii (London, 1875), 1256, 1262).

⁵ See Widerszal, *op. cit.* chap. v; Adam Lewak, *Dzieje emigracji polskiej w Turcji, 1831-1878* (Warsaw, 1935), pp. 153-5.

The Russians were now free to deploy all their forces against the Circassians and thus complete their conquest of the Caucasus. Henceforth, active resistance was confined solely to the North-west region inhabited by the Circassian tribes. It was on the latter, therefore, that all the hopes of Russia's opponents were now fixed.¹

In the following year the Russians initiated their policy of either forcibly resettling in the lowlands along the Kuban those Circassians who had come under their rule, or compelling them to emigrate to Turkey. At the beginning of the new decade the independent Circassians, having concluded a temporary truce with the Russians, began to incline towards total surrender on the best terms available. In this final phase of the war, therefore, continued hope of effective help from outside, of support in particular from France and England, was an important factor in holding the tribesmen back from such a step. These hopes had been carefully fostered by, if they did not largely originate with, the Hôtel Lambert's followers among the Polish *émigrés* in the Near East, headed by its semi-official agent in Constantinople. They were shared to the full, too, by Urquhart in England. The early 1860's, therefore, were to see a close alliance between the Hôtel Lambert and Urquhart with the object of rallying support among the British public for a united Circassian-Polish crusade, which would effect the liberation of the two peoples from the Russian yoke.

The revolutionary outbreaks in the Congress Kingdom of Poland, which commenced in 1861, and the general feeling there that big changes were afoot, induced optimism among the Poles and their sympathizers in western Europe. Count Zamoyski, who had numerous connexions in English high society, made several prolonged visits to England during 1861 and 1862 in an effort to influence the Government and public opinion in favour of his countrymen. In his campaign to win popular support his main backing came from Urquhart and his followers: chiefly working men, but also including several wealthy industrialists and businessmen. Urquhart had organized up and down the country a number of Foreign Affairs Committees, the first of which had been founded in 1854 at the beginning of the Crimean war. The main object of these committees, which were to be found mostly in the industrial midlands and north, was to further among working men the study of foreign affairs on the basis of Urquhartite principles. During the early sixties the efforts of the committees were directed almost exclusively to propaganda on behalf of Polish and Circassian claims.

¹ For the military side of the last period of the Caucasian wars (1861-4), see Allen and Muratoff, *op. cit.* pp. 107, 108, 537, where extensive bibliographical data may be found. Shamil was an ardent follower of Muridism, the Mohammedan dervish order of Nakhshbandiya, whose doctrines had been carried by his emissaries to Circassia in the early forties. Muridism tended to favour the more democratic elements against the tribal chieftains and semi-feudal landowners.

Urquhart wrote: 'All these years since Poland fell have passed without a chance of useful effort. It has come now'.¹

Zamoyski, indeed, was an old friend of Urquhart's of nearly thirty years' standing. The count respected the selflessness with which the latter had devoted himself to such causes as that of Poland: he regarded his committees as a useful foundation on which to base his own activities in England; he was even to some extent under the spell of Urquhart's forceful personality. But serious differences of opinion as to aims and methods existed between the two men. First, Zamoyski did not share Urquhart's fanatical hatred of Palmerston, which also extended to the other members of the Cabinet. He was always extremely careful 'lest he should be brought in to attack Ld. Palmerston'.² He was anxious to do all he could to persuade the prime minister and his Foreign Secretary, Earl Russell, to take a more decided stand on Polish affairs; and he was unwilling, therefore, to offend them unduly. Naturally such an attitude was anathema to Urquhart.

There existed, secondly, a certain feeling of disdain in the Polish aristocrat for the humble status of the majority of Urquhart's following and a justifiable suspicion, too, that the cause of Poland was only a secondary issue for them, a means to other ends unconnected with his country's cause. Though in the course of his campaign he was to speak 'most warmly of their exertions', and of how he had been delighted by the deputations he had received of working men and afterwards by meeting them on his tour,³ Zamoyski continued to feel most at home among the aristocratic whig politicians and their well-to-do middle-class allies. Nevertheless, Urquhart and Zamoyski were able to work together in comparative harmony and were successful in awakening renewed interest and sympathy for the Polish cause among all classes of the population.⁴

Zamoyski, too, had always been particularly interested in Circassian affairs; and it was largely through his influence that in 1858 Prince Adam Czartoryski had appointed Colonel Wladyslaw Jordan to the important post of chief agent of the Hôtel Lambert at Constantinople. Jordan had had experience of campaigning in Asia Minor and was intimately acquainted with the area;⁵ and in his new position he was to do much to forward the Circassian policy of the Hôtel Lambert.

In the spring of 1861, as a reaction to the Russians' plans to resettle the Circassians under their rule, a close alliance had been formed between the Shapsugh, Abadzekhs, and Ubykhs.

¹ Urquhart to Zamoyski, 27 July 1861, U.B., I.J.4.

² Majot Roland to Urquhart, 9 July 1861, U.B., I.J.4. Cf. Jeneral Zamoyski, vi (1930), 390, 391.

³ George Crawsbay to Mrs. Urquhart, 27 April 1862, U.B., I.J. 4.

⁴ *Jeneral Zamoyski*, VI, 377-9; Robinson, *op. cit.* pp. 42, 43.

⁵ Lewak, *op. cit.* p. 148.

Though the Natukhai had given up the struggle in the previous year and the Abadzekhs were in favour of accepting the terms offered by Alexander II, the Shapsugh and Ubykhs were successful for a time in establishing jointly a central authority in the shape of a *Meclis* or grand assembly in Sochi.¹ Through the intermediacy of Jordan in Constantinople and the Hôtel Lambert, petitions asking for aid in their struggle were now dispatched from the *Meclis* to Queen Victoria and Napoleon III. As with similar petitions sent a few years earlier, in 1856 and 1857, the Circassians once again met with a refusal from the western Powers. Undaunted by this rebuff Jordan in the following summer decided to sponsor the visit to western Europe of two from among a number of Circassian and Daghestan chieftains, who had arrived in Constantinople as deputies of the *Meclis* with the usual pleas for assistance for their tribes. The two selected for this mission were Hazi Haydar Hasan and Kustaroğlu Ismail. After a short stay in Paris, Prince Wladyslaw Czartoryski, second son of Prince Adam and leader of the conservative Polish *émigrés* since his father's death in 1861,² realizing the uselessness of attempting to influence Napoleon III, already drawing closer in his foreign policy to Russia, sent the Circassian delegates on to London towards the end of August.³ Here they were immediately taken under the wing of Urquhart and Zamoyski who, with the object of putting pressure on the Government to change its previous negative attitude, jointly arranged for them a programme of public meetings and private audiences with well-known figures in political life.⁴

It appears, however, that Urquhart was not entirely satisfied with their appearance. First, the invitation had not come from himself and this fact irritated his vanity. With his romantic admiration of the primitive and his antipathy to western civilization Urquhart, secondly, was fearful lest the innocent Circassians might become corrupted by their brief contact with western customs and manners. Thirdly, he was suspicious of Zamoyski's intimacy with members of the Cabinet, suspecting that the Circassians might be deluded by the false promises of the politicians and put off with their fair words. 'Your arrival fills me with horror', was how he greeted the astonished delegates.

¹ Allen and Muratoff, *op. cit.* p. 108; Fadeev, *op. cit.* p. 96.

² For Prince Wladyslaw, see *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, iv (Cracow, 1938), 300-3. The Circassian chieftains are said to have once sent a petition to old Prince Adam Czartoryski, asking him to give them one of his sons to be their sultan. See V. I. Kel'siev, 'Pol'skie agenty w Tsargrad', *Rusky Vestnik*, Ixii. 541.

³ Widderszal, *op. cit.* pp. 170, 194, 197. The object of their visit was, in the words of Urquhart's *Free Press* (3 September 1862), 'to claim the execution of the Treaty of Paris'.

⁴ But Urquhart and Poles like Zamoyski approached the problem of backward peoples like the Circassians from fundamentally different viewpoints. See the discussion in John Buxton to Urquhart, 16 December 1861, u.b., i.g. 24.

He then went on to admonish them to ‘stand on their own feet; if they sought aid from the English Government this would only lead to disappointment and disaster, since they will thus be betrayed into the hands of people working for Russia’. He was jealous, too, of the influence of the Circassians’ interpreter, the Pole Colonel Lapinski, who had led the expedition to Circassia in 1857. As usual, Urquhart was accusing him before long of being a Russian agent.¹

The arrival in England of the two deputies, the first time a delegation of such a nature had been seen in this country, created, indeed, something of a sensation. Throughout their tour of the midlands and North, which took them also into Scotland, they addressed, with the help of their interpreter, large and enthusiastic audiences attracted in large measure by the exotic figures of the two Circassians. The *Dundee Advertiser* (24 October 1862), for instance, described them in the following words: ‘The Chiefs are two remarkable-looking men. Their imposing bearing, their romantic dress, their dark solemn eyes, and yet keen as the eyes of hawks, their eagle-like expression of countenance, and their natural dignity of mien, stamp them as very superior men.’ A Circassian Committee was set up under the chairmanship of Edmond Beales,² a Radical lawyer well-known for his anti-Russian and pro-Polish sympathies. Both Zamoyski, who as a foreigner was always careful not to appear to be interfering in British politics, and Urquhart, whose name was so closely linked with a controversial political policy, kept in the background in order that the committee’s publications, and the nature of the demands put forward, it is clear from what quarter it drew its inspiration. Its main object, it was stated, would be to test the reality of the freedom of ‘trade with Circassia across the Black Sea’, which had been guaranteed in the Treaty of Paris, by chartering ‘an English vessel to convey the Circassian Deputies back from Constantinople to their homes without danger from the Russian cruisers’. The deputies would be landed at some spot on the Circassian coast between the five stations at Anape, Sukhum, Redutkalé, Poti, and St. Nicholas, through which the Russians required all commerce with the Circassian hinterland to pass.³ Should they succeed in reaching their destination untouched by the Russians, then Russian claims to sovereignty over the area, it was maintained, would be thereby disproved.

¹*The Expedition of the Chesapeake to Circassia* (London, 1864), pp. 7, 9, 10. (This anonymous pamphlet reprints articles, mainly from Urquhart’s pen, previously published in his *Free Press*). Urquhart succeeded in implanting his suspicions of Lapinski in at least one of the Circassian deputies, Ismail. See U.B., I.I. 9, November 1862. For Lapinski’s tragi-comic expedition to the Baltic in 1863 in the *Ward Jackson*, which was organized in conjunction with Bakunin and the Polish democrats, see E. H. Carr, *The Romantic Exiles* (London, 1933), chap. xi.

² For Beales, see D.N.B. ii (1908), 9.

³ Russia based her right to issue such regulations on Article XII of the Treaty of Paris. This interpretation was contested by the British Government, though it was unwilling to make it a matter of principle, see *Accounts and Papers* (47), Ixxv (1863), 351-4, 360, 361.

If, on the other hand, the deputies were seized and the ship impounded, a demand for compensation would be put forward by its owners. The British Government would either be forced by the pressure of public opinion to brand its seizure as an act of piracy—and thereby the hoped-for collision with Russia would be inevitable—or to accept a national humiliation. In the latter instance, it was argued, the overthrow of the discredited Cabinet would be easy to accomplish.¹

It was thus to be in fact, as the committee itself admitted, ‘a repetition of the affair of the *Vixen*’.² By the late fifties British trading interests in Circassia were increasing and were of considerably greater magnitude than at the time of the *Vixen* incident. After the Crimean war, too, the British Government was definitely interested in maintaining freedom of trade in this area.³ The chances, therefore, of obtaining some advantage for the Circassians out of a similar venture, though still doubtful, appeared to be more favourable.

As the owners of the *Vixen*, George and James Bell, had done sixteen years before,⁴ the Circassian Committee now entered into correspondence with the Government to try to force them to admit the illegality of the Russian blockade of the Circassian coast. A protracted Exchange of letters ensued between the Circassian Committee and its supporters, among whom members of Urquhart’s Foreign Affairs Office, on the other. Commencing early in September 1862, this correspondence was to continue until the spring of the following year.⁵

Throughout, Russell’s attitude to the petitions addressed by the Circassian deputies to the queen and to the supporting letters of their English friends addressed to the Government, asking for England’s intervention and assistance, was evasive and sometimes frankly negative. He wrote:

The Treaty of Adrianople transferred to Russia all the rights which Turkey had to the Circassian coast. . . . But H.M.G. have never admitted that Turkey was in possession of the whole of the Circassian coast of the Black Sea, or had any right to claim that possession.

¹ [Urquhart], *The Secret of Russia in the Caspian and Euxine: or the Circassian War as affecting Poland, Georgia and Turkey*, Free Press Supplements, no. 16 (London, 1863), pp. 2, 4, 21, 22, 24, 25.

² *Ibid.*, p. 22.

³ *Accounts and Papers*, lxxv. 347-70. See also Widerszal, *op. cit.* pp. 171-3. During the peace negotiations in 1856 Palmerston had made use of the argument that Circassia should in fact be considered an independent country; see Temperley, *op. cit.* p. 396.

⁴ Gleason, *op. cit.* p. 193.

⁵ For this correspondence, see Public Record Office, Foreign Office Papers (cited below as F.O.), 65/621 and 65/652. In January 1863 the Circassian Committee published a small part of it, with some additional material, in a pamphlet entitled *Visit of the Circassian Deputies to England*.

But it is clear that any attempt on the part of British vessels to make for any point on the Eastern coast of Circassia between the ports which have been opened by Russia to foreign commerce would bring about complications with the Russian Government, and expose the persons engaged in that enterprise to loss.¹

When the 'Vixen' was captured by the Russians the Queen's Advocate General advised that the Law of Nations would now justify their Majesty's Government in asking for the restoration of that Vessel. H.M.'s Government do not interfere in the hostilities now carried on, and do not intend to give any aid to either party.²

His Ldp. [Russell] must decline to give information which might influence parties in undertaking or refraining from any commercial enterprise, or to say beforehand what course H.M. Govt. Would adopt if parties engaged in any such enterprise should meet with hindrance or loss.³

While maintaining the official British attitude of non-recognition of Russian sovereignty over the whole area inhabited by the Circassian tribes, and not committing himself in advance to any fixed line of action, Russell at the same time had clearly intimated that any new venture after the model of the *Vixen* was likely to meet with the same fate as its ill-starred predecessor. The British Government in fact was now more ready than before to take a strong line with Russia on this issue.

However, on the basis of a rather strained interpretation of the previous correspondence with the Foreign Office, as well as that with the Privy Council and with Lloyd's, the Circassian Committee felt able to claim 'that there is no legal obstruction to commercial intercourse with the ports on the eastern coast of the Black Sea in the possession of the independent tribes of Circassia'.⁴ Early in 1863, therefore, the two Circassian delegates returned to Constantinople with the promise from Beales's committee of a commercial vessel to be fitted out for the Circassian coast.

¹ Note by Russell on letter from Lord Robert Montague, 2 November 1862, F.O. 65/621. Cf. E. Hammond (permanent under-secretary of state for Foreign Affairs) to T. W. Fenton (an Urquhartite), 16 October 1862: 'Lord Russell is of opinion that British vessels would not be secure from interference on the part of Russian cruisers if they made for any point of the eastern coast of Circassia between the ports which have been opened by Russia to foreign commerce' (quoted in *Visit of the Circassian Deputies to England*, p.7).

² Russell to Beales (draft not sent), 22 January 1863, F.O. 65/652. On 18 November in 1862 Russell had noted: 'There appear to be hostilities going on between the Russian Govt. and the Circassian Tribes. H.M.G. cannot apply to a state of war the articles of Treaty of Paris which allude to peaceful trade' (F.O. 65/621). Cf. *Accounts and Papers*, lxxv. 349, 350, 360, 361, 368. The Urquhartite contention here was that recognition of a state of war entitled the Circassians belligerent rights.

³ Hammond to Beales (draft by Russell), 22 January 1863, F.O. 65/652.

⁴ Beales to Russell, 26 December 1862, *Visit of the Circassian Deputies to England*, p.8. See also *The Secret of Russia in the Caspian and Euxine*, p. 22.

Meanwhile, on 22 January 1863, the long-awaited Polish insurrection broke out in Warsaw; and a far-reaching transformation of the international situation ensued. For some months ahead the Polish question occupied the main attention of the diplomats of Europe¹ Among the Polish nationalists, in addition to differences on social questions within the country, there was also a serious division of opinion concerning the 'foreign policy' to be pursued by the insurrectionary Government. The 'Whites', the conservative land owners working in collaboration with the Hôtel Lambert abroad, based their hopes in the international field on winning the active intervention of England, France and even Austria; while, on the other hand, the 'Reds', who represented mainly the radically-minded middle classes and whose leaders controlled the insurrection during the early months, aimed at an alliance with the revolutionary movements of Europe.²

It was primarily as an instrument to bring about the intervention of the western Powers, and of England in particular, that the Circassian question was viewed by the 'Whites' and the Hôtel Lambert. For them it was the most likely means of involving England in a dispute with Russia, which would serve in turn to make the restoration of Polish independence a live issue for the diplomats of Europe. It was to be, according to Lewak, 'the starting point of a whole plan for the political transformation of Europe'.³ Even before the outbreak of the insurrection, Wladyslaw Jordan, the Hôtel Lambert's chief agent in Constantinople, working in close contact with his mentor, Count Zamoyski, in England, had thrown all his

¹ For the British attitude to the uprising, see H. Wereszycki, 'Great Britain and the Polish Question in 1863', *ante*, I, 78-108, which summarizes the main contents of his book *Anglia a Polska w latach 1860-1865* (Lwów, 1934). See also W. E. Mosse, 'England and the Polish Insurrection of 1863', *ante*, Ixxi, 28-55.

² For Polish diplomatic activities during the insurrection, see the introduction to *Polska działalność dyplomatyczna w 1863-1864 r.: Zbiór dokumentów*, ed A. Lewak, i (Warsaw, 1937) cited below as P.D.D.). This introduction was originally published separately as an article in *Przegląd Współczesny*, xvi (Warsaw, 1937), 18-40. The documents which follow in the book edition, printed mainly from the Rapperswil Collection destroyed during the last war and from Czartoryski Museum in Cracow, contain the instructions, manifestos and treaties of the National Government in Warsaw, and the correspondence of the Department of Foreign Affairs with its chief diplomatic plenipotentiary abroad, Prince Wladyslaw Czartoryski in Paris. But only one volume in this series was in fact published; and I have not had access to the documents surviving in the Czartoryski Museum. Prince Wladyslaw's official appointment, though made public only in July, dated from 15 May 1863. On 29 June Jordan became the insurrectionary Government's official representative in Constantinople, though, as elsewhere, the agents whom the 'Reds' had appointed earlier still retained something of their official status: a source later of confusion and conflict. See P.D.D. pp. 112, 113, 136, 137.

³ Lewak, *Dzieje emigracji polskiej w Turcji*, p. 156. Cf Wereszycki, *Anglia a Polska*, p. 180.

energy into preparing the ground for an armed expedition to the Caucasus¹ In the summer of 1862, in connexion with the arrival in Constantinople of the delegation of Caucasian chieftains, Jordan had already sent his agent, Lieutenant Kozieradski, to Circassia; and in Constantinople itself he busied himself with obtaining promises of help from influential Turks.²

Meanwhile, in February 1863, soon after his return from England, Hasan, one of the two Circassian deputies, had reported to Urquhart that he had ‘ seen the English ambassador here [i.e. Bulwer, an intimate friend of Palmerston’s] and his Private Secretary and they look favourably on our enterprise ’. He had also visited ‘ the Grand Vizier and the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the . . . Commander in Chief and many other persons whom it was advantageous to see: . . . the ship which is to be sent will be left alone [i.e. by the Turks] on its arrival ’. A commission consisting of eleven persons and headed by a rich Circassian Merchant had been formed ‘ to raise Money ’ for the venture.³

In England, however, the results of the campaign to obtain funds for the Circassians had proved a disappointment since, apart from that Urquhartite stronghold, Sheffield, scarcely any Money was forthcoming. In March, therefore, Urquhart dispatched to Constantinople his faithful friend and disciple, Major Rolland, to consult on his behalf with the Poles and Circassians there as to how certain sums subscribed by private individuals for the Circassian venture might now best be used.

According to Major Rolland’s account, it was from the Circassian side that a new proposal arose to fill the vessel, which was to be fitted out, with arms, instead of sending a more innocuous cargo. If their request were complied with, the Circassians ‘ undertook . . .

¹ Jordan’s aim, wrote a former friend, was to involve Russia ‘in unpleasantness with England, calculating that England would not fail to occupy the mountains . . . and begin war ’. (Kel’siev, ‘Isposed’, *Arkhiv russkoy revoliutsii*, ed. I. V. Gessen, xi (Berlin, 1923), 258.) This ‘ confession ’ has also been reprinted in *Literaturnoe Nasledstvo*, xl/xli 253-470. For the curious influence exercised on Jordan for a time by the young Russian, Kel’siev, see Kel’siev, ‘Isposed’, pp. 175, 251, 254, 258, 259; *Russky Vestnik*, lxxxi. 541-4; lxxxiii. 290-6, 299. Kel’siev arrived in Constantinople in October 1862 as the personal representative of Alexander Herzen, the great Russian revolutionary leader, who was already in contact with the Hôtel Lambert. The object of his mission was, in Kel’siev’s words, ‘to unite all the anti-government elements [i.e. within the Russian Empire]: sectaries, Circassians, Poles, etc.’. According to his own account he seems to have obtained an ascendancy over the somewhat naive Circassian delegates soon after their return from the west, implanting doubts in their minds concerning the promises they had obtained from unofficial sources of British assistance. For Kel’siev, see *Russky Biografichesky Slovar’*, viii (St. Petersburg, 1897), 609-11; Alexander Herzen, ‘Byloe i Dumy’, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii i pisem*, ed. M. K. Lemke, xiv (St. Petersburg, 1920), 400 ff.

² Widerszal, *op. cit.* pp 197-200.

³ Hasan to Urquhart, Constantinople, February 1863 (translation), U.B., I.I. 9. Cf. Lewak, *op. cit.* p. 162. But such close contact with the diplomatic world on the part of his Circassian *protegé* at once aroused Urquhart’s ire. See Urquhart to the Circassian Commission in Constantinople [undated, probably early March 1863], U.B., I.I.9.

to make such a united attack upon Russia as would be an important diversion in favour of Poland'. Even if it had not actually originated with Urquhart, as was most probable, such a scheme fitted in perfectly with his ideas as well as with those of the Poles. Urquhart, therefore, readily agreed to be responsible for the organization from the English end. The Circassian Committee was to be kept in the dark: the preparations were to be carried out in the strictest secrecy. Above all, all knowledge was to be kept from the British Government.¹ While the Circassian Committee was asking the manufacturers of Sheffield to donate 'goods . . . of a good and useful character—assortments of saws, files, edge tools, cutlery and hardware of every description' for what was described as a 'simple operation of lawful trade and commerce',² Urquhart and his associates were now planning to send a cargo of arms in its place.

Towards the end of April, after the conclusion of his mission, Major Rolland returned to England with promises 'to carry out your [i.e. Urquhart's] instructions scrupulously to the very letter' from the Circassians, as well as from the chiefs of Daghestan, between whom there was now harmony of action.³ Urquhart thereupon went ahead with the new and more ambitious scheme to dispatch to the Circassian coast a vessel laden with arms and ammunition in place of more ordinary merchandise.

For this fresh turn of events Urquhart himself had thus been very largely responsible. 'The ship is undoubtedly your deed', wrote Countess Zamoyska to his wife.⁴ Not only did Urquhart sell his family silver to help meet the increased expenses; ⁵ he also canvassed his wealthy friends and supporters for further contributions. Major Rolland and two others gave Urquhart sums of five hundred pounds each.⁶ Prince Wladyslaw Czartoryski and Count Zamoyski, 'persuaded that this plan, being for the strengthening of Circassia, was for the benefit of Poland', also contributed smaller amounts on the understanding that Urquhart would be in charge of the arrangements. Preparations now went ahead; and a vessel, the *Chesapeak*, was purchased in Newcastle, where Urquhart had many

¹ *The Expedition of the Chesapeak*, pp.9-12.

² Leaflet entitled *Circassia*, dated 26 March 1863 and reprinted from the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, in F.O. 65/652.

³ *The Expedition of the Chesapeak*, pp. 12, 15. Unity of action between the Circassian chiefs and those of Daghestan was due to himself, Urquhart claimed, and not to the influence of the Poles. Besides sending either a Merchant ship or a vessel with arms, it seems that a third alternative was also mooted: the dispatch of an armed man-of-war flying the Circassian flag as a demonstration of Circassian independence. See Widerszal, *op. cit.* p. 198.

⁴ Countess Zamoyska to Mrs. Urquhart, 20 July 1863, U.B., I.J. 4.

⁵ Widerszal, *op. cit.* p. 199.

⁶ Mrs. Urquhart to Countess Zamoyska, 19 July 1863, U.B., I.J. 4.

influential supporters among the manufacturers and shipowners.¹ In the house of commons, on 15 May, Palmerston was questioned by Viscount Raynham, obviously acting in conjunction with the Urquhartites, as to his Government's attitude to trade with Circassia across the Black Sea; but the prime minister's reply was non-commercial.²

Within a few weeks of Major Rolland's return Urquhart had sent off another emissary to Constantinople to act as his permanent agent on the Bosphorus. The person chosen was Konstanty Lekawski, the son of a Ruthenian Uniate priest but himself an ardent Polish patriot who had lived in Turkey for several years. The details of Lekawski's mission are, indeed, among the most elusive in a complicated story. It is understandable that, with the increased scope of the undertaking, Urquhart should wish to have someone at the centre of affairs to watch over his interests and to guide matters according to his wishes. His choice of a representative is, however, curious.

Lekawski's political sympathies were very clearly with the democratic camp in the Polish Emigration, to which Urquhart himself was most strongly opposed. 'Every means must be taken to separate Poland from the Revolutionary movements of Europe', the latter wrote in February 1863: the main object of the Polish democrats, on the other hand, was to link their cause with European revolution. Like the Poles of the Hôtel Lambert, Urquhart regarded Circassia—'a Poland with a seaboard which you can reach', he called it—as the key to the liberation of Poland.³ The Polish democrats, however, considered any Circassian commitments as a harmful diversion of men and money from the main centre of action in Poland itself. For the Polish democrats, too, Austria was equally an enemy along with Russia and Prussia; Urquhart and the Polish conservatives, on the other hand, believed every effort should be made to win her support.⁴ But the clue to this enigma lies in Lekawski's close association over the last twelve years with young Joseph Cowen, the son of a wealthy Newcastle manufacturer, whose ardent political radicalism—like that of Karl Marx, another of Urquhart's curious political friendships of these years—was combined with an equally fervent hatred

¹ *The Expedition of the Chesapeake*, p. 12. According to Prince WI. Czartoryski, P.D.D. p. 367, the total cost of the expedition amounted to 125,000 francs, of which only 15,000 came from Polish sources. This latter sum, he writes, was 'handed over immediately to encourage the English'.

² *Hansard*, 3rd ser. clxx, cols. 1773, 1774. As the result of an address in the house of commons on 17 February 1863, extracts were published from official correspondence since 1856 'respecting the Regulations issued by the Russian Government in regard to Trade on the Eastern Coast of the Black Sea'. (*Accounts and Papers* (47), lxxv, 349.)

³ See *The Expedition of the Chesapeake*, p.10: 'There was absolutely nothing else in the world for the Poles to do save to aid the Circassians, and thus to obtain for themselves a diversion, by enabling the Circassian flag to float on the Black Sea.'

⁴ *The Free Press*, 4 March, 1 April 1863, Cf. *The Expedition of the Chesapeake*, p. 7.

both of Lord Palmerston and of Tsarist Russia, which served as a common bond with Urquhart.¹ It appears from Urquhart's correspondence that Cowen was privy to the scheme to send arms to Circassia and that he had, indeed, contributed very handsomely to the expenses of the expedition. It was undoubtedly on Cowen's recommendation, therefore, that Urquhart entrusted Lekawski with this mission.²

Lekawski left London for Constantinople on 19 May. He wrote to his former employer just before his departure: 'We intend to hoist a Polish flag in the Black Sea. This Project I communicate to you confidentially because your assistance will be required to assist Mr. Rogerson [a prominent Tyneside shipowner and industrialist] in providin us with [an] Alabama like Captain and Boat.'³ On arrival Lekawski soon fell foul of the influential Colonel Jordan, who was acting as intermediary with the Circassians;⁴ and continued misunderstandings between the two Poles were to have serious consequences for the success of the Circassian scheme.

In addition, the long delay in the arrival from England of the promised vessel with its cargo of arms had begun to lower the prestige of Urquhart and his friends in the eyes of the waiting Circassians.⁵ The situation, too, among the Polish *émigrés* in Turkey, torn by factions and disputes and personal rivalries, was most obscure. Urquhart, therefore, decided for the third time that year to send a personal representative to Constantinople to try to straighten matters our before the expedition got under way. Again, as with Lekawski, his choice seems peculiarly inept. Major Poore,⁶ the new emissary, had, as a Hussars officer, had experience of life in India, but he was quite out of his depth in Constantinople amid the deep waters of Turkish and Polish plotting. He was devoted to Urquhart's ideas and interests, thoroughly honest and without guile, but totally incapable of unravelling the tangle of oriental intrigue which had grown up around the proposed Circassian expedition.

¹ See my article 'Joseph Cowen and the Polish Exiles', *Slavonic and East European Review*, xxxii. 52-69. For Marx and Urquhart, see Wiktor Weintraub, 'Marx, Palmerston i sprawa polska', *Kultura* (Paris, 1950), no. 12/38, 51-69.

² This seems clearly to be the correct interpretation of a letter from Mrs. Urquhart to Countess Zamoyska, 19 July 1863, U.B., I.I. 4. In Constantinople Lekawski appears stil to have kept up a vague connexion with Coven's firm (Lekawski to Urquhart, 9 July 1863, U.B., I.J. 9).

³ Lekawski to Cowen, 18 May 1863, Cowen Collection, Newcastle-upon-Tyne Central Reference Library, A. 715. Lekawski appears first to have become involved in preparations for the expedition during the first half of May, see A. 713, 714.

⁴ Lekawski to Urquhart, 8 June 1863, U.B., I.J. 9. On 29 October 1863 Lekawski wrote to Cowen that with Jordan and the supporters of the Hôtel Lambert in Turkey 'I had either to co-operate or to fight. I preferred the last. And all my time was spent in fighting' (Cowen Collection, A. 717).

⁵ Lekawski to Urquhart, U.B., *ibid.*; Lekawski to Cowen, 11 June 1863, Cowen Collection, A. 716. Widerszal, *op. cit.* p. 203, states that at this period some of the Circassians would point significantly with their fingers at their foreheads on mention of Urquhart's name. Unfortunately he does not give his authority for this story.

⁶ See M. C. Bishop, *Memoir of Mrs. Urquhart* (London, 1897), p. 189.

Major Poore arrived in Constantinople on 16 June. He at once got into touch with Jordan who, he wrote to Urquhart, 'impresses one favourably'. Jordan complained to him of Lekawski's conduct,¹ and went on to suggest that someone with intimate knowledge of the situation—like Urquhart's first emissary, Major Rolland—should come out, since this would also help to put an end to the constant quarrels between the Circassian chieftains. Unity of action among them was the paramount need of the moment.²

But unity of action was just what was lacking from the side of the organizers of the expedition. Influenced partly perhaps by Lekawski's reports, and even more by the fact that in Jordan he saw a dangerous rival to his own undisputed control of affairs, Urquhart now began to have serious misgivings about the Polish agent. There were, indeed, apart from a markedly different outlook on international affairs, at least three underlying causes of dissension between Urquhart and Jordan. In the first place, there existed a struggle between the two for influence over the impressionable Circassians;³ next came the Pole's resentment at the greater financial resources at the Englishman's disposal, which the latter's agent, Lekawski, did his best to rub in;⁴ and, finally, each side strongly disapproved of the contacts which the other had made with its enemies. In addition to his anger at Lekawski's action in delivering over part of the Circassian arms to the Polish democrats, Jordan was also irritated by Urquhart's negotiations with the Turcophil Michal Czajkowski (Sadyk Pasha), one of his predecessors as Polish agent in

¹ Among Jordan's main charges against Lekawski was his close contact with two old friends, Franciszek Sokulski and Zygmunt Milkowski (famous in Polish literature under the pseudonym T. T. Jez), who, as the representatives in Turkey of the Polish Democratic Society, were deadly enemies of Jordan and the Hôtel Lambert. Acting entirely on his own initiative, Lekawski had given these friends permission to remove some rifles destined for Circassia and in part brought from England, which were being stored temporarily in the Government arsenal in Constantinople, and to transport them to Tulcea for use in the expedition the Polish democrats were planning to launch against Russia from the Danubian Principalities. (For the so-called Moldavian expedition of July 1863, see Lewak, *op. cit.* pp. 166-73). In extenuation of his action Lekawski later claimed 'that small arms are not wanted by the Cs.' But this was contested by the Circassians themselves, while Jordan was naturally furious over Lekawski's conduct. See Major Poore to Mrs. Urquhart, 3 July 1863, U.B., I.J. 9; *Wydawnictwo materiałów do historii powstania 1863-1864*, v (Lwów, 1894), 246; Jez-Milkowski, *Od kolebki przez zycia: Wspomnienia*, ed. A. Lewak, iii (Cracow, 1937), 48; F. Sokulski, *W kraju i nad Bosforem (1830-1881): Fragmenty zycia i listy*, ed. Marian Tyrowicz (Wrocław, 1951), p. 96. 'It does not sound like a good cheme' was Major Poore's comment when he heard of Lekawski's action, which was also condemned in even stronger language by Prince Wl. Czartoryski in a telegram to the Polish National Government in Warsaw, 14 July 1863, *P.D.D.* p. 296.

² Poore to Mrs. Urquhart, 18 June 1863, U.B., I.J. 9.

³ Poore to Mrs. Urquhart, 2 July 1863, U.B., I.J. 9; Widerszal, *op. cit.* p. 203.

⁴ Lekawski to Urquhart, 9 July 1863, U.B., I.J. 9. Cf. Wl. Czartoryski to Polish National Government (telegram), 14 July 1863, *P.D.D.* p. 296.

Constantinople and since the Crimean war a bitter antagonist.¹ Urquhart, on the other hand, was furious with Jordan for the support which he was giving to one of the Circassian leaders, Mohammed Amin, whom Urquhart regarded—as usual quite unjustly—as a Russian spy.²

Nevertheless, after much effort, an agreed plan of action in regard to Circassia was at last threshed out at a meeting on 22 July between Major Poore and J. M. Millingen, the Sultan's court physician,³ representing Urquhart, and Jordan and Prince Witold Czartoryski, who had arrived in Constantinople in June,⁴ from the Polish side. It was decided that:

the arms . . . are to be used for the common good and not for one particular sect, that for the furtherance of this all the deputies should go with the arms; and as it is all important that a strong government be formed, and in furtherance of that that a Pole and Englishman should also go with them to see that they keep together and to enforce the unity of purpose.⁵

But the compromise reached in Constantinople was to be rudely upset almost as soon as it had been reached. In London, Count Zamoyski had received a letter from Prince Witold containing the cryptic phrase: ' Bulwer knows all '. On learning the letter's contents from the count, Urquhart's fury knew no bounds. He hated Bulwer for his close association with Palmerston, and he feared that, as a result of the leakage, the vessel which was at last on its way from England might be stopped at Constantinople.

¹ Widerszal, *op. cit.* p. 204, ' I liked what I saw of him ', Poore wrote to Urquhart after a lengthy talk with Czajkowski, 3 July 1863, U.B., I.J. 9. For Czajkowski, see *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, iv. 155-9; also see Kel'siev, *Russky Vestnik*, Ixxxi. 538-41, for his close and friendly relations with the Circassians. At that time Czajkowski advocated a grand alliance of Poles, Ukrainians and Don Cossacks with the nations of Caucasia.

² For Mohammed Amin, see *Kavkazsky Kalendar'*, xvi (1861), 86 (quoted in Allen and Muratoff, *op. cit.* p. 68) He was a Chechen by birth and, as Shamil's emissary (*naib*), he had succeeded during the 1850's in bringing about a certain amount of order and central government among the Circassian tribes. See also Widerszal, *op. cit.* pp. 112, 113, 204, 213. (*Cf. The Expedition of the Chesapeake*, pp. 11-14.) Fearing that a civil war might result among the Circassians, since the semi-feudal, semi-patriarchal structure of Circassian society did not fit in easily with the Muridist theocratic democracy of Mohammed Amin, Jordan did not in fact make use of his services, even though he was probably the most capable of the Circassian leaders and the one most feared by the Russians.

³ For Millingen, see *D.N.B.* xiii (1909), 439, 440. Millingen, throughout, was in Urquhart's confidence. His influence was especially useful in winning the support of prominent Turks.

⁴ For Prince Witold, see *P.S.B.* iv. 229, 230. Though older than Prince Wladyslaw, he loyally accepted his father's wish for the younger son to succeed him as head of the Polish conservatives. Intelligent but lacking in will-power, Prince Witold was under the influence of Jordan's more powerful personality. He was, too, on friendly terms with Sir Henry Bulwer, the British ambassador at the Porte.

⁵ Poore to Mrs. Urquhart, 22 July 1863, U.B., I.J. 9.

It was ‘ a case of betrayal ’, he said, from one who had sworn to his friend, Major Rolland, to keep the secret of the expedition from the British and French embassies. On further reflection Zamoyski, who at first shared Urquhart’s alarm, thought that perhaps Jordan ‘ may have spoken only of what he and Prince Witold Cz. Have been doing in Circassia for many years past, sending there men, arms and money, and trying to obtain help for them from the Turkish Government and the Foreign Embassies.’ Zamoyski wrote at once to Jordan to require him not to act against Urquhart in regard to the expedition to Circassia; but, the latter was warned, the final decision lay with Prince Wladyslaw, who had already requested that Urquhart’s agent, Lekawski, should put himself under Jordan’s orders.

Urquhart’s wrath against Jordan, however, was not so easily placated.¹ There soon ensued a complete breach between Urquhart and Jordan—‘ the agent of Sir Henry Bulwer ’, ‘ Bulwer’s spy ’, as the former called him—and further accusations from Urquhart that Jordan had also divulged the secret of the expedition to the press only increased the bitterness between the two men. Urquhart had at first wanted ‘ to telegraph to Constantinople to stop the vessel ’; but he was restrained from this by the other backers of the venture. Instead, however, he proceeded to put forward a series of preposterous demands as conditions of his continued association with the scheme: ‘ that no Pole should be sent with the expedition, . . . that Colonel Jordan should be removed from Constantinople ’ at once, and that his post as chief Polish agent should be left vacant. He informed the Hôtel Lambert: ‘ I now no longer fear the non-arrival of the vessel in Circassia. What I fear is its arrival, as it has by your act been converted into a Russian project. ’² His relations, too, with Prince Wladyslaw Czartoryski, who continued to give Jordan his confidence, grew decidedly cooler;³ and from now on he severed all connexion with the expedition.

While Urquhart quarrelled at a distance with Jordan and the Hôtel Lambert and Zamoyski attempted to keep the peace between the two sides,⁴ the *Chesapeake*, with ‘ a cargo . . . of six guns [and] a number of muskets with ammunition ’, after leaving Newcastle at the end of June, was making its way very slowly, by way of Lisbon, Gibraltar, Algiers, Malta and Greece, to

¹ Mrs. Urquhart to Major Poore, 19 July 1863; Mrs. Urquhart to Countess Zamoyska, 19 and 20 July 1863; Countess Zamoyska to Mrs. Urquhart, 20 July 1863, U.B., I.J. 9. The absence of any reference in the Foreign Office papers would seem to confirm Zamoyski’s explanation that Jordan in fact knew less about its details than Urquhart and Zamoyski imagined.

² *The Expedition of the Chesapeake*, pp. 7-14.

³ Poore to Mrs. Urquhart, 11 August 1863; Poore to Urquhart, 14 August 1863, U.B., I.J. 9.

⁴ Jan Mohl to Zamoyski, 21 August 1863, *Jeneral Zamoyski*, vi. 446.

Constantinople, where it finally arrived over two months later at the end of August.¹

Once again the plan of the expedition was to undergo a change. Control now passed out of the hands of its English backers, with whom the initiative had lain till then, into those of the Poles of the Hôtel Lambert. Instead of merely loading the *Chesapeak* with further supplies of arms and ammunition for the Circassians when the ship reached Constantinople, as Urquhart had planned, Jordan and Prince Witold now arranged for the embarkation of a small force of Poles, whose special mission on arrival in Circassia was to be the formation of a Polish Legion from Polish prisoners already in Circassian hands as well as from future deserters from the Russian armies.² Colonel Klemens Przewlocki, a *protégé* of Jordan's who had been responsible during the Crimean war for the organization of a Cossack regiment on Turkish soil, was appointed to lead the expedition. On 31 August a party of seventeen men—Przewlocki and six other Poles, two French officers, four Turks and four Circassians—boarded the *Chesapeak*; and, with the arms and ammunition sent from England by Urquhart and a complete outfit—uniforms and arms—for 150 men, provided out of his own pocket by Prince Witold for use by members of a future Polish Legion, the vessel set sail for Circassia.³

Preparations for the expedition were well known among Polish *émigré* circles in Turkey. The Turks themselves, though unwilling to risk an open breach with Russia without material backing from the western Powers, had, however, turned a blind eye to the activities of the Poles and Circassians.⁴

¹ Stevens (British Consult at Trebizond) to Russell, 7 September 1863, F.O. 78/1775; Stevens to Bulwer, 25 September 1863, no. 13, F.O. 195/762; WI. Czartoryski to Polish National Government, 7 October 1863, *P.D.D.* p. 367, where Liverpool is named as the port of departure. But Stevens, who had seen the ship's papers, is more likely to be accurate. Ignacy Plichta to Polish National Government, 27 October 1863, *P.D.D.* p. 372, states that the delay in the ship's arrival was 'due to the dilatoriness of the English captain'. Captain Campbell was apparently a drunkard (Lekawski to Cowen, 29 October 1863, Cowen Collection, A. 717).

² WI. Czartoryski to Polish National Government, 7 October 1863, *P.D.D.* p. 368. *Cf.* Sokulski, *op. cit.* p. 116; Lekawski to Cowen, 29 October 1863, Cowen Collection A. 717. Some 35-40,000 men of the Russian armies of the Caucasus appear to have been raised within the pre-1772 Polish boundaries. See Kel'siev, 'Ispoved', p. 261; Stevens to Russell, 10 October 1863, no. 29, F.O. 78/1775.

³ *P.D.D. loc. cit.* Przewlocki was provisionally appointed leader of the expedition some weeks before it actually set sail, see WI. Czartoryski to Polish National Government (telegram), 13 August 1863, *P.D.D.* p. 334. The ship was cleared from Constantinople for Galatz, but instead, as Novikov, the Russian chargé d'affaires, complained, she made at once for Trebizond (Bulwer to Stevens, 18 September 1863, no. 3, F.O. 78/1738).

⁴ According to letters from Bulwer to Russell, Russell Papers, Public Record Office, 30/22.92 (quoted in part in Widerszal, *op. cit.* pp. 208, 209): 'The idea of relieving Circassia would be a great inducement [i.e. to Turkey to enter if war broke out against Russia], and domestically speaking every Turk who has a Circassian wife would gain considerably in his household comfort by taking part in the conflict which has so long been raging [*i.e.* in Circassia]' (23 July 1863). 'The [Turkish] Cabinet is rather divided; a portion being for neutrality—but the temptation of delivering Circassia would not eventually be resisted. . . . I have little doubt that the result of that war would be the independence of Poland and Circassia but there would be precautions to take against aggrandizement of France' (6 August 1863), *Cf.* Prince Witold Czartoryski to Prince WI. Czartoryski, 17 September 1863, *Wydawnictwo materiałów do historii powstania 1863-1864*, v. 323. See also Lekawski to Cowen, 11 June 1863, Cowen Collection, A. 716.

News, too, of the preparations soon reached the Russians, who reinforced their naval patrols around the Circassian coasts with twelve corvettes with six guns each.¹ Shadowed by the Russians, therefore, the *Chesapeake*, still flying the British flag, reached Trebizond on 5 September.² Here the Poles had stationed their own agent, Podhajski, whose task was to expedite supplies for the Circassians; and here, too, some pro-Circassian Turks had ‘ a depot of powder . . . for transfer to Circassia ’.³ The Russian consul, Machenine, forewarned of the *Chesapeake*’s arrival, had at once requested the British consul Stevens’s assistance ‘ pour empêcher un commerce interlope aussi nuisible aux intérêts de l’Angleterre qu’à ceux de la Russie ’. Stevens, who seems to have looked with a fairly friendly eye on the whole enterprise, was able to refuse on the grounds that the ship had already departed from Trebizond without any communication with the consulate.⁴ Two days later, however, on 7 September, the *Chesapeake* returned; and Stevens then gave its captain some friendly advice concerning the risks he was running in the affair, advice which fell indeed upon willing ears, since Captain Campbell was

¹ Lekawski to Coven, 29 October 1863, Cowen Collection, A. 717.

² Stevens to Russell (confidential), 6 September 1863, F.O. 78/1775.

³ Widerszal, *op. cit.* p. 205; Poore to Mrs. Urquhart, 26 July 1863, U.B., I.J. 9.

⁴ Machenine to Stevens and Stevens to Machenine (copies), 5 September 1863, F.O. 78/1775.

Since there was a likelihood of a similar situation arising in the near future Stevens wrote to Bulwer on 10 September, no. 9, F.O. 195/762, to ask what should be his line of conduct in future in such a case. While approving his action over the *Chesapeake*, Bulwer, who had already received complaints about Stevens’s conduct from Novikov, the Russian chargé d’affaires at Constantinople, replied: ‘We should not be justified in refusing to allow a British Vessel to be searched or, if necessary, detained [i.e. on a formal requisition being made by the Turkish authorities], since our refusal might involve the Turkish Empire in serious discussions with a neighbouring state without any fault or connivance on the part of the Ottoman Authorities ’. (Bulwer to Russell, 18 September 1863, no. 421; Bulwer to Stevens (copy) 18 September 1863, no. 3, F.O. 78/1738.) Stevens, however, continued to have certain reservations about such a policy. He wrote: ‘ I myself think that neither the local Authorities nor any one else has a right to interfere with a vessel’s cargo as one in transit for another country and might have a right to place guards on board to watch that nothing is landed on the Turkish Territory, leaving the Russians to watch their own waters. ’ (Stevens to E. M. Erskine, chargé d’affaires at Constantinople, 10 October 1863, F.O. 195/762.) Later Stevens’s conduct over the *Chesapeake* and Bulwer’s instructions were confirmed by the Foreign Secretary, who added: ‘ It is desirable however . . . to act with very great caution and discretion, even in the exceptional cases in which his [*i.e.* Stevens’s] assistance is invoked by the proper territorial authority.’’ (Russell to Bulwer, 14 October 1863, no. 457, F.O. 195/748.) But if a British ship ‘ carried munitions of war to Circassians, Russia might seize her on high seas ’, was the Foreign Office’s comment on Stevens’s letter to Russell, 10 September 1863, F.O. 78/1775. For the documents on the British attitude to ‘Trade on coast of Circassia ’ from 1864-63, see F.O. 65/654, 97/344, 97/350.

apparently already anxious to escape Russian surveillance by severing his connexions with the Poles.¹ In the meantime the Russian consul had in fact been unable to persuade the Turkish authorities to take steps to confiscate the arms. On the following day, Stevens reported: ‘ The *Chesapeak* was discovered at anchor in the Bay of Coveta, five miles to the East of Trebizond; there I learn she discharged three guns and some gun carriages and other articles into a native coasting lighter, and . . . towed it out to sea some six or eight miles and there casting her off returned to this port. ’²

With the friendly neutrality of the British consul and with the connivance of his colleague, the French consul, and of the Turkish authorities, and despite the faint heartedness of Captain Campbell, the Poles were able to continue on their way to Circassia unimpeded. The party succeeded once again in evading the Russian patrols and safely reached the Circassian coast at Vardan around the middle of the month. Here they were met by Ubykh tribesmen who, however, suffering by this time from hunger and demoralization, had expected the arrival of a whole army and were consequently bitterly disappointed at the very meagre proportions of the expedition.³

Meanwhile Prince Witold, having obtained considerable funds from a semi-official source in France, and wishing further to implement his ambitious Circassian plans, had bought ‘ a British Steam Tug called the *Samson*, to be used . . . on some similar errand ’ to that of the *Chesapeak*. A Captain Mangan, a French adventurer sent out to Constantinople by Prince Wladyslaw Czartoryski to help organize communications with Circassia, had, Bulwer reported, ‘ paid nearly twice as much as she is worth ’ for the ship.⁴ On news

¹ Stevens to Russell (confidential), 7 September 1863, FO. 78/1775.

² Stevens to Russell (confidential), 10 September 1863, FO. 78/1775. From Stevens’s letter of 7 September it would seem as if part of the *Chesapeak*’s cargo had already been transferred to the lighter on 5 September. This lighter had been purchased by the Poles.

³ Stevens to Russell, 25 September 1863, FO. 78/1775. For the party’s journey from Constantinople to Circassia, see also Lewak, *op. cit.* pp. 163, 164, 176-9.

⁴ Bulwer to Russell, 18 September 1863, no. 421, FO. 78/1738; WI. Czartoryski to Polish National Government, 7 October 1863, no. 421, F.O. 78/1738; WI. Czartoryski to Polish National Government, 7 October 1863, *P.D.D.* p. 368; Plichta to National Government, 27 October 1863, *P.D.D.* p. 372. See also Widerszal, *op. cit.* pp. 206, 210. 50,000 francs was paid down at once towards the ship’s total cost. French generosity in providing such lavish funds was due to the fact that the Poles’ Circassian plans (see Widerszal, *op. cit.* pp. 208, 209; Lewak, *op. cit.* p. 177) fitted in with Napoleon III’s projected transfer of territory from Turkey to Austria, and Turkey’s compensation at Russia’s expense in the Caucasus, in exchange for the establishment of a Polish State to include Galicia. The scheme, however, had to be dropped owing to the opposition of England, Prussia and Austria, as well as of the Turks and the South Slavs, who were most concerned. For a similar proposal put forward by Palmerston in 1854, see A. J. P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918* (Oxford, 1953, p. 67.

of Captain Campbell's turning round at Trebizond and returning to Constantinople the *Samson* set sail for Trebizond, where it arrived on 25 September.¹ Here, however, the crew heard that Przewlocki's party had reached the Circassia coast safely: the *Samson*, therefore, turned back to Constantinople.

In the calculations of the Hôtel Lambert, however, the vessel was destined to form a base upon which a Polish fleet might be built up in the Black Sea from captured Russian vessels. But as a beginning, at least 300,000 francs was needed.² This clearly was not forthcoming. The insurrectionary Government in Poland was already exhausted by the unequal struggle; within a few weeks Napoleon III was to show clearly that France no longer seriously considered the establishment of an independent Poland; the Turks, disturbed after the Trebizond episode at the possibility of complications with Russia, could not be budged from their neutrality; support from private individuals in England was greatly hampered by the breach between Urquhart and the Hôtel Lambert;³ even Captain Magnan, in whom so much hope had been placed, proved a sorry failure and succeeded only in involving the Poles in unnecessary expense and unpleasantness; and, finally, the departure of Prince Witold from Turkey on account of sickness, and the increasingly bitter quarrels of Jordan with the other Polish *émigrés* in Turkey, leading to his replacement in November 1863 by Oksza-Orzechowski, who was less interested in Circassian affairs, meant the removal of the two persons most intimately connected with the Circassian schemes. Towards the end of the year the Polish insurrectionary Government, losing all hope of intervention on the part of France, England or Austria, reversed its previous course, which had had the strong backing of the Hôtel Lambert, and began to veer towards the policy, advocated throughout by the Polish democrats, of alliances with the Hungarian and Italian revolutionaries, which were in fact concluded in March and June 1864. The influence of the Hôtel Lambert on Polish diplomatic action abroad began to decline, and its Circassian schemes receded into the background.

Nevertheless, the *Samson* having been sold, the Hôtel Lambert had proceeded to acquire another vessel in England. But the whole affair ended in a fiasco; *en route* for the east, the ship was confiscated in February 1864 by the Spanish authorities at the request of the Russian embassy.⁴ The Hôtel Lambert's dream of regaining Polish independence by way of the Caucasus was finally shattered.

¹ *P.D.D.* p. 368; Stevens to Russell, 26 September 1863, no. 25, F.O. 78/1775. The *Samson*, which had originated from South Shields, was commanded by a Mr. F. W. Cumming. 'I have every reason to believe the *Samson* is employed in the Service of Poland like the *Chesapeake*', the British consul in Trebizond reported.

² *P.D.D.* p. 368, 369, 373.

³ *Cf. The Free Press*, 3 February 1864.

⁴ See my article in *Slavonic and East European Review*, loc. cit. pp. 65-7. The name of the ship is given variously as *Princesse*, *Kościuszko*, and *Kiliński*.

In the following month Przewlocki's expedition, after hanging on in Circassia for six months, had at last to leave the country. Epidemics and famine among the Circassians, the meagreness of the reinforcements and supplies brought, which served to heighten the tribesmen's suspicions already aroused through repeated disappointments over promised aid from Turkey and the west, and a smaller number than had been expected of Polish prisoners of war and deserters, on whom so much reliance had been placed by Jordan and the Hôtel Lambert, all these things resulted in the failure of the expedition. It had arrived in fact several months—if not several years—too late to alter the outcome of the Russian campaign.

In August 1863 the Abadzekhs had had to come to terms with the Russians and, henceforth, the whole weight of resistance rested on the Shapsugh and Ubykhs alone. In November, however, the Poles in conjunction with the tribesmen had managed to defeat the Russians in battle. But the reinforcements, which the Circassians in Constantinople had been begging for throughout the winter, were not forthcoming. In the spring of 1864, therefore, while the Polish party succeeded in evading the Russians and making its escape from the country, those Circassians who still remained independent finally surrendered.¹ The capture by the Russians of the Circassian stronghold of Kbaada on 21 May 1864 marked the end of the Caucasian Wars.²

The fall of Circassia, the abandonment of the struggle by the tribesmen of the area and the consequent loss of their independence, resulted in a tragic exodus of tens of thousands from their native mountains. The Circassians, rendered desperate by attempts to re-settle them in other areas and fiercely jealous of their independence, preferred to emigrate in large numbers to Turkey rather than to remain under Russian rule. It has been estimated that, altogether, some 400,000 Circassians emigrated to Turkey during the 1860's and 1870's. The countryside became deserted and the life of the tribesmen abruptly broken up.³ The

¹ Widerszal, *op. cit.* pp. 214-18; Lewak, *op. cit.* pp. 176-81. Cf. Kel'siev, *Russky Vestnik*, Ixxxiv. 152. For the conflict which appears to have arisen between the Polish Agency in Constantinople and the insurrectionary Government's Department for the Ruthenian Territories (*Wydział Wykonawczy Ziem Ruskich*), both of which claimed authority over Przewlocki's expedition in the Caucasus, see *P.D.D.* pp. 180, 378.

² *Bol'shaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya*, xix (1953), 270.

³ M. N. Pokrovsky, *Diplomatiya i voiny tsarskoy Rossii v XIX stoletii* (Moscow, 1923), p. 229; *Istoriya SSSR*, ed. M. V. Nichkina, ii (Moscow, 1949), 281. Only a small number of the Circassians chose resettlement on the Kuban. According to Fadeev, *op. cit.* p. 96, the English urged the Circassians to emigrate in order 'to use them at a future date in the struggle against Russia'. For British interest in the fate of the refugees, see *The Times*, 27 May and 8 July 1864; *Hansard*, 3rd ser. clxxv, col. 1047; clxxvi, cols. 2081, 2082; *Free Press*, 1 June 1864; Widerszal, *op. cit.* p. 174.

Circassians ceased to be a nation before they had achieved statehood and, henceforth, the importance of Circassia as a factor in international politics belonged to the past.¹

The protagonists of the Circassian cause in the west—Urquhart and his school, on the one hand, and the Poles of the Hôtel Lambert, on the other—had urged, first, that the tribesmen formed the last barrier in the way of a Russian advance towards Persia and India. They were, secondly, a freedom-loving people fighting for their liberties against imperialist aggression. In the third place, their struggle was thought to provide an unequalled opportunity for a united effort with the Poles, the only other people within the Russian empire still actively resisting incorporation.

Formidable objections, however, could be raised to such arguments. The Urquhartites, who tended to paint an idealized picture of the Circassians divorced from reality, at the same time exaggerated the importance of their struggle in holding up a Russian advance towards India. Anti-imperialists, too, might well argue that the colonial policies of England and France in Africa and Asia were as morally reprehensible as the methods used by the Russians to subdue the wild Circassian tribesmen. Finally, as the Polish democrats for instance claimed, Caucasian ventures, on which the Hôtel Lambert put so much weight, might rightly be considered, at least for the Poles themselves, an unjustifiable diversion of resources from the struggle in Poland and unlikely to yield results commensurate with the effort expended. Expectations of mass desertions of Poles from the Russian armies in the Caucasus were not in fact fulfilled.

The attempt made in the early sixties to prolong Circassian resistance by bringing help from the west had clearly been from the British side, both in its inception and execution, the work of private individuals like Urquhart, supported by a small number of wealthy backers in such centres of industry as Newcastle or Sheffield, and not the result of Government action. Undoubtedly the hope of obtaining material assistance from England was an important factor in persuading the Circassians to continue their resistance. But in fact, even from private sources in the west, help was meagre and slow to arrive. From the British Government the tribesmen obtained no aid at all; the Turks merely preserved a friendly neutrality, fear of Russia preventing them from doing more than turn a blind eye to the activities of Polish *émigrés* and Circassian deputies on their soil; while Napoleon III and Drouyn de Lhuys, though more favourable to Circassian ventures than Palmerston or Russell, were likewise unprepared to make definite commitments.

¹ Circassians played a minor part in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877. But, as a result of emigration and resettlement, no rising was possible such as then took place in Daghestan and Chechnia. See Allen and Muratoff, *op. cit. passim*.

The British Government, indeed, had not given its approval to the attempt to bring about complications with Russia through a revival of the Circassian question. While it refrained from officially recognizing claims to Circassia on the part of Russia, whose difficulties there may not have been entirely unwelcome, it was at the same time unwilling to pursue an active policy in the area such as Urquhart and his friends advocated, unless a general alteration in the *status quo* should first occur either as a result of a European war or by peaceful change. Support and encouragement for the Circassians during the final years of their struggle against Russia was the result of co-operation between Urquhart and his followers in England, the Poles of the Hôtel Lambert, and the Circassian deputies. It had been entirely the outcome of what may be termed private diplomacy.

PETER BROCK.

After this article was already set up in type, a reversion seems to have taken place in Russia to the position occupied by Soviet historians prior to 1950 (see *supra* p. 401). ‘ In elucidating the history of the nations of the Caucasus in the nineteenth century,’ writes A. M. Pikman, (‘ O bor’be kavkazskikh gortsev s tsarskimi kolonizatorami ’, *Voprosy Istorii*, 1956, no. 3, 75-84), ‘ a deviation from the Marxist-Leninist conception of such questions has occurred in a number of instances during recent years ’. Marx and Engels had taken a diametrically opposite view on the subject to these writers. ‘ Attacking Tsarist Russia, Marx came forward in defence of the Caucasian mountaineers.’ He attacked the British and Turkish Governments not at all for intervening on their behalf but, on the contrary, for not doing so effectively enough. ‘ Marx and Engels were well aware of the connexions between the mountaineers and England and Turkey. But they never condemned them on this account.’ Anyhow, why should not a small people fighting for their freedom seek aid wherever they can find it ? ‘ In reality, though, there was much more talk of assistance than actual help from the side of England and Turkey.’ Criticizing a recent article by A. V. Fadeed, ‘ O vnutrenney sotsial’noy baze myuridistskogo dvizheniya na Kavkaze v xix veke ’, *ibid.* 1955, no. 6, 67-77, which still on the whole maintains the thesis of the reactionary and foreign-inspired nature of Muridism under the leadership of Shamil, Pikman calls such a wholesale condemnation ‘contrary to the fact ’. ‘ Such assertion ’, he concludes, ‘ are the expression of an imperialist Outlook (*velikoderzhavnye ustanovki*), and do not contribute to strengthening friendship between the peoples. Let us have done with the falsification of the history of the [independence] movement of the Caucasian mountaineers.’ An editorial note inserted at the end of the article, while maintaining the beneficial results of the incorporation of the Caucasian nationalities into the Russian Empire, condemns recent views as to the reactionary character of their struggle against Tsardom as erroneous, and it calls for a fuller discussion of the whole question in future issues of the journal.