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# The Terrible Turk

My strategic position at the head of R5 could not last for ever. In making its recommendations on future staff policy, the Committee on SIS Reorganisation had decided in favour of versatility rather than specialisation. It laid down that, so far as possible, all officers should feel equally at home in offensive and defensive work, both at headquarters and in the field. Such a system might result in some loss of expertise as officers were periodically switched from pillar to post. But that loss, it was thought, would be outweighed by the greater flexibility offered by a staff made up of all-rounders. It is perhaps needless to remark that, when this staff policy was adopted, the three senior officers of the service, the Chief, Vice-Chief and Assistant-Chief, had no experience of counter-espionage and no practical knowledge of work in the field. But I was not senior enough to benefit from any such dispensation. As all my work for SIS

had been concerned with counter-espionage at headquarters, I was obviously due for an early change of scene.

It was therefore no surprise when General Sinclair summoned me towards the end of 1946, and told me that my turn had come for a tour of duty overseas. I had already decided that I could not reasonably resist a foreign posting without serious loss of standing in the service, and such loss of standing might well have prejudiced my access in the long run to the sort of intelligence I needed. When I heard from Sinclair that I had been chosen to take charge of the SIS station in Turkey, with headquarters in Istanbul, I felt that things might have been very much worse. Istanbul was then the main southern base for intelligence work directed against the Soviet Union and the socialist countries of the Balkans and Central Europe. Although I would no longer be right in the middle of my main field of interest, I would not be so far off-centre.

Sinclair told me that my successor at R5 would be that same Brigadier Roberts who had crossed my path briefly during the Volkov affair. He had relinquished his post as head of Security Intelligence Middle East [SIME], and was available for service at home. He took over from me in leisurely fashion, and questioned me more closely on the clubs of London than on the work of the section. His firmest claim to fame, as head of R5, was his success in persuading Maurice Oldfield, an officer of high quality from SIME, also to join SIS. Within a few weeks of his installation as Roberts'



deputy, Oldfield had earned the nickname, "Brig Brains."

In preparation for my overseas tour of duty. I wa attached to the training section for one of the officer courses. It was only the second or third course to b arranged under the aegis of the new Director o Training and Development, our old friend Joh Munn, and the syllabus has been drastically modifie since. The training staff consisted in the main o officers drawn from SOE, and their tuition was cor ditioned by their experience of SOE in wartime. Th course was of considerable interest, although I de rived litJlle immediate benefit from it. The condition of peacetime espionage in Istanbul were far remove from the hazards of wartime work for SOE in Occu pied Europe. I had personally drafted most of th lectures on the Soviet intelligence services, and wa sometimes in the embarrassing position of having t prompt the instructor from the floor of the lectur hall. It was frustrating to have to eliminate from m drafts all knowledge based on personal experience. A I had to spend half my time keeping an eye on R5 I missed the various tests and examinations to whic the other students were subjected. That was perhap fortunate. It would have been awkward if an officer o my seniority had regularly come bottom of the class

The training course and the hand-over to Robert were completed in January, 1947, and at the end of th month I found myself at the Airways Terminal drink ing what passed for coffee at a savage hour of th morning. There I stuck, off and on, for ten days

Snow and bitter cold gripped the country; the weather and mechanical trouble caused delay after delay. But I could call myself lucky. It was the period of the famous Dakota crashes, when every morning paper, it seemed, brought news of a fresh disaster. For several mornings, I shared the vigil with a group of nuns bound for Bulawayo. Their departure was finally announced one perishing morning—and perish they did, every one of them. I was a happy man when I felt the warm breath of the desert and Cairo airport under my feet.

Since joining the service over six years earlier, I had taken perhaps ten days' leave. With the pressure of work momentarily lessened, I decided to fly down, en route for Istanbul, to visit my father in Saudi Arabia. He met me in Jidda and took me briefly to Riyadh and AI Kharj. It was my first acquaintance with the country to which he had devoted the greater part of his life. Neither then nor thereafter did I feel the slightest temptation to follow his example. The limitless space, the clear night skies and the rest of the gobbledygook are all right in small doses. But I would find a lifetime in a landscape with majesty but no charm, among a people with neither majesty nor charm, quite unacceptable. Ignorance and arrogance make a bad combination, and the Saudi Arabians have both in generous measure. When an outward show of austerity is thrown in as well, the mixture is intolerable.

I have indulged in this digression to answer certain writers who have attributed the unusual course of my



life to the influence of my father. It is possible that his eccentricities enabled me, in early youth, to resist some of the more outrageous prejudices of the English public-school system of forty years ago. But very little research would show that at all the decisive turning-points of my life, he was thousands of miles out of reach. If he had lived a little longer to learn the truth, he would have been thunderstruck, but by no means disapproving. I was perhaps the only member of his wide acquaintance to whom he was never rude, and to whose opinions he invariably listened with respect—even on his own precious Arab world. I never tooWthis uncritically as a compliment. I have heard it said, possibly wrongly, that Winston Churchill gave weight to the opinions of his own son, Randolph.

It was with no pain at all that I left the useless desert for the riotous wonder of Istanbul. My colleagues were scattered around the dreary apartment blocks of Pera, but I had no intention of following their lead. Within a few days I had found a delightful villa in Beylerbey, on the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus, a place of such loveliness that I agreed without demur to pay an exorbitant rent. It was next door to the landing-stage, and for three years I was to commute daily between Asia and Europe by ferry-boat, through the everchanging pattern of gulls and shearwaters, mists, currents, and eddies. The old Turkey hands, of course, were aghast. But it is a good working rule, wherever you are, to ignore the old hands; their mentalities grow inward like toenails. I had no cause to regret the choice of my remote Asian hide-out.

Indeed, my example was soon followed by some of the more imaginative spirits.

I was disguised as a First Secretary of the Embassy, and here I should indulge in a short digression. I have already mentioned that the cover of Passport Control Officer for SIS officers had become widely known before and during the war, and one of the recommendations of the Committee on SIS Reorganisation had been that we should move awav from it. Since that time, the great majority of SIS officers abroad have been posted as First, Second, or Third Secretaries, according to seniority. (Since my time, one or two of the more important posts, such as Paris and Washington, have been dignified with Counsellor rank.) A few have been stashed away as simple attaches or as junior Information Officers. Meanwhile, most of the tainted Passport Control Officers working in the legitimate line of visa duty have been rechristened visa officers. Most of them are now formally free of intelligence duties, though in fact working links between the visa officers and SIS personnel are still maintained.

The change of disguise was accompanied by a change in the system of symbols designating overseas personnel. Until the reorganisation, all countries had borne a two-digit number: for example, Germany was 12-land, Spain, 23-land. The representatives in those countries bore the corresponding five-digit symbol: the head representative in Germany was 12.000, in Spain, 23.000, while their subordinate officers and agents would have other five-digit symbols in the 12.000 and 23.000 brackets. This system, it was be-



lieved, had become as compromised as the Passport Control cover. There is the well-known legend that Abwehr officers in Istanbul had been heard singing: "Zwolfland, Zwolfland iiber alles."

Be that as it may, the system was completely overhauled. Each country was now given a symbol consisting of three letters of the alphabet, the first of which (for reasons unknown to me) was invariably B. Thus the United States was BEE-land, Turkey, BFX-land. The head representative in each country was distinguished by the addition of the figures 51, and his subordinates by other two-digit symbols, e.g., 01, (ft, etc. Thus, as head of the SIS station in Turkey, I found myself wearing, with an odd sense of discomfort, the designation BFX/51. Whichever way you looked at it, *in* long hand or typescript, it seemed horribly ungainly.

So I was First Secretary of the Embassy, with no known Embassy duties, alias BFX/51. In all, we were five officers, with the appropriate secretarial staff. In addition to a capable and companionable deputy and a sturdily enthusiastic junior (Second and Third Secretaries respectively), there was an ebullient White Russian of boundless charm and appalling energy (Attache). Finally, there was the Passport Control Officer, who was responsible directly to Maurice Jeffcs in London for visa affairs, but to me for his intelligence duties. So far as I was concerned, he acted as liaison officer with the Turkish sendees. He was an old Turkey hand, bearing the honoured name of Whittall; he spoke fluent Turkish; but he was far too nice to liaise with the Turks. Short mention should

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also be made of WhittaU's secretary, who had a passion for cats and a highly personal filing system. When I asked her for a paper, she would say mildly: "I *think* it is under the white cat," and, by God, it would be.

The Turkish services were known as the Security Inspectorate, and our relations with them conditioned almost all our intelligence activity in Turkey. They knew of us, and tolerated our activity, on the understanding that it was directed solely against the Soviet Union and the Balkans, not against Turkey. As will be seen, this undertaking was often honoured in the breach. In order to ensure the benevolence of the Inspectorate, we paid its Istanbul office a monthly subsidy, camouflaged as payment for the enquiries carried out by the Inspectorate on our behalf. Since we got precious little return for it in terms of intelligence, it is fairly obvious that our subvention merely inflated the salaries of the senior Inspectors in Istanbul. It was worth it, if only as hush-money.

The headquarters of the Inspectorate were at Ankara, presided over at that time by a bulging, toad-like bureaucrat whom we referred to as Uncle Ned. It was my misfortune to visit him on duty about once a month. Our meetings soon took on a regular pattern of mutual frustration. I would start by requesting facilities for this or that operation, for passing an agent, for example, from Eastern Turkey into Soviet Armenia. He would clear his throat, whisper to his interpreter, shift his buttocks and call for coffee. He would then propose that I should give him the



agent and the money. He would carry out the operation and give us the results. As simple as that. When I came to know enough Turkish to realise what was going on, these interviews usually ended in my having a row with my interpreter, whom nothing would induce to be sufficiently rude. He had some excuse. He was not on the diplomatic list, and had reason to fear Uncle Ned s ill will.

The head of the Istanbul office of the Security Inspectorate was known to us as Aunt Jane. He was a person of considerable interest to me, as it was in his area that most of my clandestine activity would have to ttke place. But he never succeeded in filling me with excessive alarm. He was an easy-going, rather shop-soiled roue, interested above all in his gall bladder and, of course, money. After a few weeks, I was content to leave the routine contact with Aunt Jane to Whittall, intervening myself only on special occasions. About twice a year, I arranged a party for him, and he proved to be the ideal guest. He would arrive in a police launch half an hour before the appointed time, down two or three quick whiskies and vanish on a plea of urgent work while the other guests were arriving.

My contacts with Uncle Ned, Aunt Jane, and their colleagues confirmed a suspicion I had already formed, namely, that the security services of the minor powers lack the resources and experience for effective action. Even Tefik Bey of Erzurum, probably the best of the Security Inspectorate officers, made a sorry mess of the only operation I ever en-

trusted to him. Yet the Turks were supposed to have one of the better services. I have even read recently, in John Bulloch's *Akin to Treason,*[1] that Lebanese security is "very efficient"—a misuse of language by any standard. If they were really efficient, they would start by stamping out the trade in forged documents that flourishes under their noses in Beirut.

Aunt Jane's office had certain supervisory functions over the Inspectorate office in Adrianople, which produced a trickle of low-grade information from Bulgaria, largely the product of tolerated smugglers and the odd refugee. But its importance was due principally to the fact that Istanbul was an active transit area. A large proportion of the refugees from the revolutions in the Balkans and Central Europe found their way eventually to Istanbul, where it was the responsibility of Aunt Jane and his officers to screen them and pump them for any information they might possess. Some of the reports derived from these sources were passed on to us by the Turks, but their quality was uniformly disappointing. This was partly due to the ignorance of the refugees themselves, partly to the inexperience of the interrogators who failed to ask the significant questions. Repeated efforts to get official access to these refugees ourselves, before they dispersed to their various destinations, were frustrated by Turkish lethargy. We were driven to hunt them down on our own—a process which, quite unnecessarily, wasted an immense amount of time.

[1] John Bulloch, *Akin to Treason* (London, Arthur Barker Ltd.,), 1966.



For much of our intelligence on the Balkan states, we had to rely on nationals of those states resident in Istanbul. A surprising number of Bulgarians, Jugoslavs and Rumanians claimed to have established espionage organisations in their own countries before passing into exile themselves. They were more than willing to put such networks at our disposal, provided we put up the necessary funds for activating them. The war, of course, had shown all Europe that there was money in espionage, and during the 40's an unwary purchaser could have spent millions in Istanbul on intelligence fabricated within the city limits. The Ameridans had been largely responsible for pushing up the price of forgery, but by 1947 SIS's appetite for faked intelligence had become jaded. Much of our time was spent in devising means of smoking such operators into the open, so that we could judge what sort of price to put on their work. We rarely succeeded, and I am pretty sure that, in spite of the care we took, several of the exiles made regular monkeys of us.

I had been told in London not to concentrate too much attention on the Balkans. My first priority was the Soviet Union. I played with several ideas for getting tip-and-run agents into the Russian Black Sea ports by means of merchantmen calling at Odessa, Nikolaev, Novorossisk and elsewhere. But the main assault, I decided, would have to be on the Eastern frontier, which offered the possibility of infiltrating agents into the Soviet Union along a wide front. Most of the summer of 1947, therefore, was devoted to a personal reconnaissance of the frontier regions, with a

view to discovering what sort of help the Turks could offer us and what sort of obstacles we would have to meet. Such a reconnaissance also served a secondary purpose: a topographical survey of the frontier marches of Turkey for which the armed services were clamouring. This was before the Americans took over Turkey and, among other things, carried out an aerial survey of the whole country. We were still pretty ignorant of the state of communications in the extensive region east of the Euphrates.

The topographical survey was of interest to SIS for different reasons. Our War Planning Directorate, thinking in terms of global war against the Soviet Union, was busy with projects for setting up centres of resistance in regions which the Red Army was expected by them to overrun and occupy in the early stages of war. Turkey was one of the first countries to be considered in this respect. The mountains of Anatolia are broken up by a series of level plains, lozenge-shaped and generally running along an east-west axis, ideal stepping-stones for a Soviet invader's airborne troops. The prospects of successful resistance anywhere east of Ankara were rated very low. The best we could hope for in Turkey, therefore, was the establishment of guerrilla bases from which Soviet communications, running through the plains, could be harried. Our planners needed far more detailed information than was available on the nature of the terrain in Eastern Turkey: how broken was it? how much forest cover? what water and food resources?

An enquiry of this nature raised delicate problems. It implied an Anglo-American intention to abandon



Turkey to its fate as soon as war broke out. However relentless the logic of such military thinking, it would hardly have appealed to the Turks. Indeed, it was believed that, if they had got any inkling that such plans were in existence, the resulting storm would blow away their illusions about the West and force them to come to terms with the Soviet Union. This part of the survey, therefore, had to be carried out with almost crippling discretion. Fortunately, the Turks remained unaware of my activity in this respect. If they had shown interest, it seems doubtful whether they would have believed my only possible liner|Of defence, namely, that I was interested solely in the communications of an Allied army advancing into Georgia.

In any case, I decided that my beginnings should be modest. After a first summer of reconnaissance, I would be better equipped for a more ambitious programme in 1948. The first hurdle was jumped when Uncle Ned, after a characteristic show of reluctance, gave me permission to visit Erzurum, from which Tefik Bey directed operations of the Security Inspectorate throughout the eastern region. The requirements of the topographical survey dictated travel by road; fortunately, my transport park in Istanbul included a heavy Dodge truck which looked as if it could withstand the shocks of a primitive road-and-track system which was all that existed east of Ankara in those days. After a courtesy farewell call on Uncle Ned in the capital, I struck out due east instead of taking the main road which runs through Kayseri to Sivas. My road took me through Boghaz Koy, thus

lending the trip a little cultural uplift. It also enabled me to take a look at the unfrequented country between Yozgat and Sivas.

The notebooks which I filled during those journeys would have made nice material for one of Rose Macaulay's "Turkey books." Turkey east of the Euphrates had scarcely moved out of the nineteenth century. The Armenians, it is true, had been obliterated, and many of the Kurds as well. But you could still stand on the foothills of Palandoken and look across Erzurum towards the Camel's Neck and the Georgian Throat, and almost hear the thunder of Paskevich's guns forcing the eastern defiles. All that was about to be swept away. The Americans, with their missile-launching pads and U2's, were poised to move in.

My first call in Erzurum was at Tefik Bey's office. He was a pleasant enough colleague with a more lively interest in his work than either Uncle Ned or Aunt Jane. But our discussions gave me little ground for hope about our prospects of infiltrating agents over the Soviet border into Georgia or Armenia. Like his opposite number in Adrianople, Tefik relied on the occasional tip-and-run agent, the occasional refugee, and professional smugglers. He spoke gloomily of the thoroughness with which the Russians had protected their frontier, of the numerous watch-towers and of the continuous ploughed strip on which illicit frontier-crossers must leave tracks. His own intelligence maps showed the poverty of his resources. A few Soviet units in the immediate vicinity of the frontier had been identified, most of them tentatively.



Penetration in depth had not even been attempted, let alone achieved. The *tabula* was depressingly *rasa.*

The talks with Tefik yielded one strong negative conclusion. To achieve penetration in depth, by which I meant the establishment of resident agents in Erivan,[2] Tiflis, and the eastern ports of the Black Sea, it was useless to look for agent-material locally. The population on the Turkish side of the border was just too backward to serve our purposes. Besides, Tefik had combed the area for years, and it was silly to think that I could find material of promise where he had failed. We would clearly have to concentrate on, say, Georgian and Armenian emigre communities to find agents of sufficient ability to be trained in our requirements. My first recommendation to headquarters was that our stations in Paris, Beirut, Washington, and other centres where refugees tended to congregate be instructed to institute a search.

Another hint of Tefik's gave me an idea in a different direction. He spoke of the magnificent views of Erivan to be obtained from the Turkish frontier. It occurred to me that if the armed services in London were so interested in a topographical survey of Turkey, they might also take kindly to a long-range photographic reconnaissance of the Soviet frontier area. Before I left Erzurum, I had begun to rough out a memorandum outlining the general idea of an operation on such lines. I called it Operation Spyglass. There was little doubt in my mind that it would be

[2] Erivan, now called Yerevan, the capital of Armenia; Tiflis, now called Tpilisa, the capital of Georgia.—*Eds.*

approved, if only because it would give our technical people a chance of trying out some of their latest equipment in the camera line.

I returned to Istanbul reasonably well content with the results of my trip. Very little had been achieved towards penetrating the Soviet Union, but at least I had some ideas on the subject to keep headquarters quiet for a time. The real gain was Spyglass. I strongly doubted whether it would contribute much to the benefit of the armed service. But it would give me a cast-iron pretext for a long, hard look at the Turkish frontier region.

The reception of my proposals at headquarters was wholly favourable. I had learnt long before, while working for *The Times,* some of the tricks of dressing implausible thoughts in language that appealed to the more sober elements in the Athenaeum.[3] An emissary was sent from London to Paris to discuss the problem with Jordania, sometime head of the independent Republic of Georgia that came into fleeting existence in the confusion following the great October Revolution. Jordania was the most widely acknowledged leader of the Georgian emigration, and it would have been very difficult for us to recruit Georgian volunteers without his blessing. Our request, of course, put him in a very awkward position. He had claimed so often that his people, with a few minor exceptions like Stalin and Ordzhonikidze, were whole-heartedly anti-Soviet that he could scarcely express doubts on the nature of the welcome they would receive in their

[3] A London club.—*Eds.*



native country. It was no business of ours to discourage him, and we gratefully accepted his promise to furnish suitable men. But our emissary obviously had his misgivings. In a telegram which he sent me describing the results of his mission, he dismissed the Elder Statesman succinctly as a "silly old goat."

We were indeed to have our troubles with Jordania. By now, I had a reasonably clear vision of our future proceedings. We would start with a few tip-and-run raids, lasting a few days or perhaps weeks. Their object would be to explore the possibilities of conspiratorial existence in Georgia. Could safe houses be found? ^Vas it possible to obtain a legal identity by purchase or otherwise? Could reliable courier lines be established? If these preliminary sallies went well, a start could be made with setting up, by gradual stages, a resident network, its shape and style to be dictated by the results of the early reconnaissances. What Jordania had in mind it was not easy to discover. We suspected that he wanted to burden his men from the beginning with bundles of stirring leaflets at which the Foreign Office might have looked very askance indeed. So it became a sort of Chinese tea party. We had to be polite to Jordania because he was in a position to deny us recruits. On the other hand, without our help he would not get any of his people into Georgia at all. Our emissary soon came to know the London-Paris air schedules by heart, and to confess to a dawning dislike of the very sight of Paris. Thus, with deep mutual suspicion, the venture was launched.

My Spyglass proposals were described as "extraor-

dinarily interesting." This was very gratifying. It meant that I should spend most of the following summer, when the diplomatic corps came down to Istanbul from Ankara, at the opposite end of Turkey. Sir David Kelly, the Ambassador, was a shy man with an acute and sensitive mind. But his wife was an appalling female, the reverse of shy, distinguished by a mind both pretentious and pedestrian. I disliked her quite as heartily as any other member of the Embassy staff disliked her; and that was saying a great deal.

It also meant that I could ask for almost any amount of equipment with reasonable assurance of getting it. The main item was, of course, the camera. Having no technical knowledge of photography, I could not specify the make; I simply described what I wanted it to do and left the rest to headquarters. In addition, I put in for two jeeps, lightweight tents, miscellaneous camping equipment, compasses and whatnot. Our technical people, always inclined to think that their ingenuity was insufficiently exploited, went to work with a will, and even sent a lot of stuff which I had not asked for, "to be tried out." Throughout the winter an imposing number of packing-cases were hacked apart in our store-room. The show-piece was the camera. I had imagined some small and highly sophisticated instrument which might, with luck, be invisible from the Soviet watch-towers at a distance of a hundred yards or so. When I first clapped eyes on it, it looked as big as a tram. My reaction was a quick decision that I was not personally going to hump such a monster over the blazing foothills of Ararat and Aladag. My tough young junior was clearly the



very man to come with me and do the heavy work

Meanwhile, during the winter and spring, I wa cast back on the meagre sources of intelligence availa- ble in Istanbul itself. Following standard procedure I began by sounding members of the resident Britisl community. It was rough going. There are, of course British residents abroad, businessmen, journalists anc so on, who are prepared to stick their necks out. There w^g a Swinburne and a Wynne. But these are usually the lesser fry and their potentialities are limited. The big men, with their big potentialities, arc usually un- helpful. They have too much to lose; they have duties to themselves, to their families; they even have duties to their damned shareholders. They would usually agree to pass on anything that "came their way"— invariably valueless gossip. But patriotism was not enough to induce them to take the risks involved in the systematic search for intelligence; and I could not offer them anything like the inducements they re- ceived from, say, the oil companies or civil engineer- ing firms. My patience would be tried by requests from headquarters for information about Turkish harbours which had actually been built by British concerns.

Our lack of success in Istanbul threw into higher relief the importance of our plans for Georgia. Here at least there was some progress to record. Jordania, rather to my surprise, made good his promise of fur- nishing men, and I was informed in due course that two recruits were undergoing training in London. My task was to clear matters with the Turks, and after several discussions with Uncle Ned, arrangements

were made for the reception of the agents in Istanbul and their onward journey to Erzurum. But on one crucial point Uncle Ned proved immoveable. Tefik Bey would take control of the operation in Erzurum and himself make all arrangements for infiltrating them over the frontier. Uncle Ned insisted that I should not accompany them on the grounds that my *own* safety might be endangered. As he had given me permission to travel the whole frontier area in connection with Spyglass, the pretext was absurd. His obvious purpose was to get the agents to himself for the last forty-eight hours in pursuance of some scheme of his own. Thus, the luckless Georgians would cross the frontier with one assignment from Jordania, another from ourselves and yet another from the Turks. Everyone was conspiring to weight the scales heavily against them. I gave way with very bad grace just as I thought that Uncle Ned was getting ready to threaten cancellation of the whole business.

In due course, we foregathered in Erzurum: Tefik Bey, myself, and the two Georgians. The latter were alert and intelligent enough, but their backgrounds inspired little confidence. They were both in their twenties and had been born in Paris. They knew Georgia only by hearsay, and shared the myths of the emigration about conditions in their country. One of them was notably subdued. Tefik Bey explained with maps that he proposed to infiltrate them in the neighbourhood of Pozof, a Turkish village facing the Soviet garrison town of Akhaltsikhe. We discussed the time of crossing with reference to the moon. We examined the arms and equipment with which the Georgians



had been furnished in London. I wondered who woul first lay hands on the little bags of sovereigns an napoleons—the Russians or the Turks. When I go Tefik alone, I questioned the wisdom of putting the over the frontier directly opposite a garrison tow but he countered with the observation that the te rain in that sector was ideal. Just because it wa ideal, I asked, would it not be more heavily patrolled He shrugged his shoulders. I was in a very weak posi tion to argue as I had no personal knowledge of th frontier in that sector. For all I knew, Tefik might b right. Anyway, it was essential that I should be soo doing everything possible to ensure the success of th operation.

So the two Georgians went off under the escort of Turkish officer to Ardahan and points north. All could do was bite my nails in Erzurum. One of Tefik' men was put to following me at a respectful distanc of some fifty yards, so I amused myself by walkin briskly about the countryside during the hottest par of the day, watching him take off first his hat, the his tie and finally his coat. I happened to be wit Tefik when the expected telegram came from Arda han. The two agents had been put across at such-and such a time. So many minutes later, there had been burst of fire, and one of the men had fallen—th other was last seen striding through a sparse woo away from the Turkish frontier. He was never hear of again.

By contrast, the Spyglass venture was wholly en joyable. Under the escort of Major Fevzi, one o Tefik's officers, we started at the extreme eastern en

of the line, where the frontiers of the Soviet Union, Turkey and Iran meet, and worked our way gradually westward. Our technique was simple. We pinpointed our position on the map every few miles and swung the camera in a wide arc across Soviet territory. For the first day or two, I was expecting a burst of machine-gun fire at any moment. The Soviet frontier guards might have been excused for mistaking our instrument for a light mortar. As far as Tuzluca, we followed the course of the Aras with its teeming population of marshbirds with Ararat on our left and Alagoz on our right. Then we worked up the valley of the Arpa Cay, past the ancient Armenian capital of Ani, as far as Digor, opposite Leninakan. At this point, I decided that I had already taken too long a busman's holiday, and that the western half of the frontier should wait until the following year when I would again need an excuse for avoiding Lady Kelly. We drove back to Erzurum with a night-stop at Kars, where Fevzi startled me by suggesting a visit to a brothel.