

meetings and making propaganda in the vilayets. The Greek Red Cross and the official Emigrants Commission supported the work of the "Mawrimira." The formation of Boy Scouts in the Greek schools directed by the "Mawrimira" were reinforced by the admission even of young men over twenty years of age.

The Armenian Patriarch, Zaven Efendi, also worked in connection with the "Mawrimira." The preparations made by the Armenians progressed side by side with those made by the Greeks.

A society called the "Pontus" at Trabzon, Samsun and other places along the whole of the Black Sea coast, having their headquarters in İstanbul, worked openly and successfully. (Document 2.)

On account of the appalling seriousness of the situation which was apparent everywhere, particularly in all the vilayets, certain prominent personalities had begun to develop countermeasures to improve the situation. This resulted in new organisations being started. Thus, for instance, there were unions or societies at Edirne and surrounding districts called "Trakya - Paşaeli". In the east (Document 3), at Erzurum and Elâzığ (Document 4), the "Union of Defence of the National Rights of the Eastern Provinces" had been formed, also with their headquarters in İstanbul. Again, in Trabzon there was a society called the "Defence of Rights" and in İstanbul a "League for the Separation of Trabzon and its District." Through the exertions of the members of this league (Document 5 - 6), sub-committees had been established at Of and in the district of Lazistan.

Some of the young patriots at İzmir, who since the 13th May had noticed distinct indications of the approaching occupation of the town, had held meetings about the distressing condition of affairs during the night of the 14th, and in principle had agreed to oppose the occupation by the Greeks, which at that time was considered to be practically an accomplished fact, designed to end in annexation, and resisted it on the principle of "no annexation." During the same night, those of the inhabitants who were able to meet at the Jewish cemetery at İzmir drew up a protest and spread it broadcast. But as the Greek troops actually landed on the following morning this attempt failed to achieve the desired result.

I would like to give you a short account of the object and political aims of these organisations.

I had already had a conversation in İstanbul with some of the leaders of the "Trakya - Paşaeli" Society. They considered that the breakdown of the Ottoman Empire was extremely probable. In face of the threatened

danger of the dismemberment of their country, their first thought was to save Eastern Trakya and later on if possible, to form a Turco-Mohamedan community that would include Western Trakya. The only way by which they thought they could realize this aim was to put their trust in England or, if this was not possible, in France. With this object they tried to get into touch with certain political personalities belonging to foreign countries. It was believed that their intention was to establish a Trakya Republic.

The object of the "Defence of the National Rights of the Eastern Provinces Union," on the other hand (Art. 2 of their regulations), was to use all lawful means to ensure the free exercise and development of their religious and political rights for all elements inhabiting these provinces; to defend, if it should become necessary, the historical and national rights of the Mohamedan population of these provinces; to institute an impartial inquiry for the purpose of discovering the motives, the instigators and agitators implicated in the extortions and cruelties committed in the Eastern Provinces, so that the guilty ones might be punished without delay; to do their utmost to remove the misunderstandings that existed between the different elements in the country, and to restore the good relations that had formerly existed between them; and, finally, to appeal to the Government to alleviate as far as it lay in their power the misery resulting from the war.

Acting on these principles that emanated from the Central Committee in İstanbul, the Erzurum Branch decided to undertake, in defence of the rights of the Turks, to inform the civilised world by means of convincing documents that since the deportation the people had been taking no part whatever in the excesses. Further, that the property of Armenians had been protected up to the time when the country was invaded by the Russians. On the other hand, that the Mohamedans had been compelled to suffer from the cruelest acts of violence and that some Armenians who had been saved from deportation had, in disobedience of orders, attacked their own protectors. The Branch were doing their very best to resist any attempt to annex the Eastern Provinces. (Proclamation by the Erzurum Branch.)

The members of the Erzurum Branch of the "Defence of the National Rights of the Eastern Provinces" resolved, as stated in their printed report, after having studied the propaganda circulated in these provinces as well the Turkish, Kurdish and Armenian questions, from the scientific and historical point of view, to concentrate their further efforts on the following points:

1. On no account to emigrate;
2. Forthwith to form scientific, economic and religious organisations;