**Committee:** JCC: Greco-Turkish War 1919

**Position:** Mehmet Salih Bey (Omurtak)

**Delegate:** Utku Katırcı, Boğaziçi College

The British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, has promised Greece territorial gains at the expense of the Ottoman Empire. Thus the armed conflict started when the Greek forces landed in Smyrna (now İzmir), on 15 May 1919. They advanced inland and took control of the western and northwestern part of Anatolia. Their advance was halted by Turkish forces at the Battle of the Sakarya on August 23, 1921. For the Turkish troops, this was the turning point in the war that would unfold in a series of important military conflicts against the Greeks and drive the invaders out of Asia Minor. The Greek front collapsed with the Turkish Great Offensive on 26 August 1922 and the war effectively ended.

As a former War Ministry Deputy Aide, I witnessed the slow fall of the Ottoman Empire. Seeing Mustafa Kemal Pasha doing everything he could to get out of this situation we were in, I decided to walk the path he took. Thus, I started to provide communication between the supporters of Mustafa Kemal Pasha in Istanbul between Ankara. Sultan Vahdettin and the Istanbul Government, who were disturbed by the meeting in Ankara, sent a Delegation of Advice (Heyet-i Nasiha) to Ankara, on March 23, 1920. I went with the Delegation of Advice. Contrary to the wishes of the Istanbul Government, the Delegation of Advice members, who realized that they could not do anything from Istanbul, joined the Turkish National Movement. I looked at the military affairs of the Representative Committee (Heyet-i Temsiliye) in Ankara. Ismet Pasha appointed me as the commander of the 61st Division on October 2, 1921. As the commander of the 61st Division, I participated in the Great Offensive.

It is not an easy task to establish a new state while fighting not only Greeks but also the Armenians, British and French around us. But I believe that under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Pasha, we can take the lands that belong to us and establish a civilized state. I know that although this war is difficult, it will be won thanks to our talented and experienced commanders.

My comrades and I will have many issues to deal with soon, especially about the country’s future path. I believe we must do all that we can to ensure the success of the Turkish Government.