

**THE ARMY MEMORANDUM OF
12 MARCH, 1971, IN TURKEY
AND ITS CONSEQUENCES**

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled
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in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
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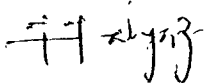
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CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

Theoretical Framework for Military Intervention

Military intervention in politics in the third world countries has become a common phenomenon. There are particular type of states, where civilian governments have been subjected to interference of the armed forces. These states are conspicuous for absence of an effective executive, and lack of political maturity, an outcome of a process of conflict between continuity and change. This phenomenon favours of development of the military as a core group and encourages it to dominate the civilian authority.

Military coups occur in a variety of situations. Where the intervention of army in civilian affairs indicates that civilian governments are not in a position to control corruption; that material improvement does not match ideological perspective; that traditional institutions are unable to bring about material improvements and that modernised elites are unable to establish healthy political institutions and strong structures to sustain the momentum of social mobilisation and modernisation.¹

Military intervention also occurs in a situation where the civilians have for long meddled with the military

1. Perlemutter Amos, Egypt, The Praetorian State (New Jersey, 1974), p.6.

organizations.²

In general, when the civilian political structures and institutions fail, factionalism develops; and constitutional means for the conduct of political actions are unavailable. In such a grave situation the civilian turn to the military either discrediting the military by engaging it in unpopular action to remedy a series of political mistakes or else the military's fear of excessive interference leading to the destruction of its potentiality to act in the future.³

In some countries, constitutional rulers had been imposed by external forces and, therefore, lacked traditional foundations. With the withdrawal of the external forces and the advent of a myriad of political problems, politicians corrupted the rules of the new political order. The absence of traditional loyalties either to the rules or to the politicians led to the atrophy of the strength of political organizations. As governmental structures became weaker, struggles for control of power intensified and any initial agreement on the rules failed. The situation was summarized by Hobbesian phrase - clubs become trump when no rule of

-
2. J.C. Hurewitz, Middle East Politics: Military Dimension (New York, 1969), in which he urged the entrenchment of the military in politics in the Middle East states because of its alliance and supportive role to one of the civilian groups and political organizations to help the latter grab power. And precisely this partnership of the army justifies their claim to rule, when the civilians fail to maintain political stability.
 3. W.R.Thompson, "Regime Vulnerability and Military Coups", Comparative Politics (New York), vol.7, no.4, 1975, p.482.

trump is established. As there is no other constitutional alternative forthcoming, the military enters the "political vacuum" in order to force a popularly desired change of government or to save a crisis-ridden political system.⁴

Eric Nordlinger has suggested three patterns of political involvement of the military.⁵ In the first of these, the military act as "moderators". He says that in this model, they do not overtly seize the reins of government but rather exercise "veto power" from behind the scenes. Only if the civilian authorities fail to comply with the desires of the military then they execute a "displacement coup" designed to bring a more malleable civilian group to power. The goals of military groups which fit this model are correspondingly limited in scope, namely to preserve status quo, maintaining the balance of power among contending groups, enforcing the political and constitutional ground rules, staving off practically any kind of important change in the distribution of economic rewards and ensuring political order and government stability.

A second type of military regime is referred to as a "guardian" regime. Military guardian are essentially similar

4. H. Daalder, The Role of the Military in the Emerging Countries (The Hague, 1962), p.15. See P.J. Vatikiotis, The Egyptian Army in Politics: Pattern for New Nations (Bloomington, 1961), pp.248-50.

5. quoted in Frank Tachau and Martin Heper, "The State, Politics and the Military in Turkey," Comparative Politics, vol.16, 1983, p.17.

to moderator except that they feel it necessary to displace the civilian governors, that is to assume control of government. Their goals include: "the removal of squabbling, corrupt and excessively partisan politicians, the revamping of the governmental and bureaucratic machinery to make for greater efficiency, and the redistribution of some power and economic rewards among civilian groups.... Basically, they intend to correct what are seen to be the malpractices and deficiencies of the previous government. They are "Iron Surgeons" ready to make some incision into the body politic, but doing little to replace what has been cut out or even to ensure that the surgical operation has lasting consequences after the praetorians⁶ discharge the patient."

Finally, the third type of military regime is the ruler type. This type is more ambitious and far-reaching than either of the two. Far from wishing to maintain the status quo, this type of regime has its goal not only to control but often to bring about basic changes in significant aspects of the political, economic and even social system.⁷

They invariably attempt "the root-and-branch destruction of monarchies, traditional oligarchies, and political parties...."

6. "Praetorianism is a word frequently used to characterize a situation where the military class in given society exercises independent political power within it by virtue of an actual or threatened use of force" - says Fredrick Mendell Watkin, The Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, vol.11, London, 1962, p.305.

7. Frank Tachau and Martin Heper, n.3, p.17.

Praetorian rulers... commonly believe that... high-powered investment and modernization programmes are required to bring about steady economic growth.... Repression is generally more extensive.... Polity, economy and society are to be penetrated from above."

Although virtually all military regimes promise to retire from power once their goals are achieved, the first and second types (moderators and guardians) are more likely to fulfil that promise relatively quickly, in accordance with their more conservative and modest goals. The ruler types, however, are likely to stay in power for a more extended period of time, perhaps indefinitely.⁸

The military have intervened in Turkish politics three times since the establishment of republic, in 1960, in 1971 and in 1980. Each intervention was justified as necessary to re-establish or safeguard democracy and the state. These interventions occurred in a polity which for much of its history since 1923, has been under the domination of a regime whose backbone has been the military.

Apart from above mentioned typology, there are many other factors which favour the military intervention:

8. Eric A. Nordlinger, Soldiers in Politics: Military Coups and Governments, (London, 1977), pp.26-27.

Weak and Ineffective Political Parties

Feeble and inefficient political parties are one of the key factors that encourages military action. In many developing countries, there are no strong political parties. Most of them represent particular interests and its leaders become less effective in promoting projects necessary for the economic growth and integration of their country as a whole.⁹ Moreover, the increase in the use of state power to suppress dissent and opposition, leads to chaos, violence and anarchy. Hence, the civilians lose the legitimacy. And consequently, when the military intervenes, the countervailing civilian forces becomes too weak to forestall the army takeover.¹⁰

Lower Levels of Industrialization Tend to be More Prone to Military Coups

It is argued that economic deterioration invites the military coup, that coups are less likely when economic conditions are improving. In a deteriorating situation, political leaders are likely to be blamed whether or not the circumstances are within the scope of governmental control. Obviously, in an improving situation leaders are equally apt to take credit.¹¹

9. Amos Perlemutter, The Military and Politics in Modern Times (New Haven, 1972), p.140.

10. S.E.Finer, among the general theories, the one that seems most explicit and systematic is his study on the question of the legitimacy of the civilian authority. See, S.E.Finer, The Men on Horse Back, The Role of Military in Politics (New York, 1962), pp.37-43.

11. Thompson, n.3, p.472.

Frequent Civilian Interference in the Army

It has been often observed that military intervention is not precipitated by the military groups themselves but by the civilian authority. It occurs following a period of internal unrest in which civilian authorities come to rely heavily on the armed forces to maintain themselves in power.¹² This tendency has been evident during the Democrat regime. The democrats used armed forces to remain in power.

The military's effective capacity to act in the political system is acquired from its advanced training and communication networks, its access to hierarchically disciplined manpower and its monopoly of arms. In addition to this, in a crisis situation, no other institution symbolises so much the national independence and sovereignty as the army. Invariably the announced national interest is coloured by the corporate self-interest of the army.¹³

The factors explained above would provide the rough tools for analysing a specific coup case, the army intervention in Turkey. The outlines surveyed would help to explain the various aspects of March 1971 coup in Turkey.

12. D.A.Rustow, "The Military in the Middle Eastern Society and Politics," in Jason L.Finkle and Richard W.Gablel (eds.), Political Development and Social Change (New York, 1966), p.391.

13. Ben-Dor Gabriel, "The Politics of Threat: Military Intervention in the Middle East" in Kaurvetaris, George A and Dabratz, Betty A (eds.), World Perspectives in the Sociology of the Military (New Jersey, 1977), p.168.

The Emergence of National Political System and Major Reforms

The war of independence was skilfully organized and courageously carried to successful conclusion by Mustafa Kamal Pasha. Thus, he freed the country from foreign domination and laid ^{the} foundation of a new independent and sovereign state. Finally he established the Turkish Republic in 1923. This may be considered as the first phase of the "Turkish Nationalist Revolution". The second phase was to bring about complete and rapid restructuring of society.

However, Mustafa Kemal did not attempt to dismantle the socio-economic edifice at one blow, but preferred to achieve modernization gradually through a series of careful changes, altering first the superstructure. In order to achieve these goals, he utilized the governmental system and structure of the defunct empire, enlisted the support of the traditionalist elite, bureaucracy, army, exhibited extreme care and prudence in directing the meagre resources of his country towards the twin objectives of national security and modernization.¹⁴

Authority Reform

To this end, the Sultanate was abolished, a new constitution was adopted which declared that the Grand National Assembly of Turkey was to be the sole representative of the

14. Metin Tamkoe, "Stable Instability of the Turkish Polity", Middle East Journal (Washington, D.C.), vol.27, 1973, p.323.

nation. These drastic changes were followed by steps in creating greater differentiation, functional, specificity and integration of all governmental institutions. In addition to the governmental agencies in the provinces and the military establishments, the Republican People's Party was given the task of disseminating its principles of nationalism, republicanism, reformism, estatism, populism and secularism so as to bring about greater public support for the central authority of the state.¹⁵

Social and Economic Reforms

It appears that the changes ~~were~~ introduced by the regime dealt a heavy blow only to the symbolic aspects of socio-economic life. For example, international calendar and system of time, international numbering system, the Latin alphabet and the decimal system of measurement were adopted between 1925 and 1931; a modern civil code was adopted in 1926; family names were ordered, adopted and all titles and hereditary positions were abolished in 1934; women were given equal rights in the same year.

In the economic spheres a new commercial code was introduced in 1926; private enterprises were promised concessions and governmental support to encourage the growth of the private sector of the economy; a new law was incorporated into the constitution in 1935 to regulate working conditions.¹⁶

15. Ibid., p.325.

16. Ibid., p.328.

However, it may be noted that these steps have brought about appreciable changes in the outward manifestation of the socio-economic life but did not penetrate deeply into the traditional Turkish culture. The reason for the neglect of drastic and substantive cultural change seems to lie in the fact that Ataturk was pre-occupied with the question of national security, internal cohesion and stability. Social and economic questions seem to have attracted the attention of the leadership only to the extent that they have had direct bearing on the question of national Security.¹⁷

The Turkish Political Culture

Undoubtedly, sincere efforts were made to lay the democratic foundations in a still feudal Turkish society. Unfortunately there never evolved genuine democratic institutions chiefly because of the lack of popular participation in the democratic process.¹⁸ The political elite look upon themselves as having the right to lead the general masses, protect and preserve the republican regime, act as the guardian of the principle of Ataturkism. This feeling of superiority reinforces

17. D.A. Rustow, he writes: "Kemal indeed displayed little interest in social and economic change as these have to be understood, since the Mexican, Russian and anti-colonial revolution. For him, economic improvement and bridging of class differences were practical requirements of national solidarity and international stature, rather than deeply felt needs of human justice and dignity." See, Abadan Armagan, Ataturk as Founder of a State (Ankara, 1969), p.569.

18. Metin Tamkoe, n.14, p.329.

the belief that it is the elite in general and the governing elite in particular which is to bring Turkey to the level of contemporary civilization.¹⁹

Composition of Republican People's Party

Modern Turkey has emerged from historical circumstances. At that crucial juncture there was not much agreement among the forces on the character of the new regime. The coalition was composed of army officers, state officials, members of the new professions - lawyers, journalists and teachers - who formed an intelligentsia and, merchants and businessmen and the landlords and magnates in the countryside. This informal alliance founded the new state and the stability of the new state depended on its continuation.²⁰

In course of time the officers and members of the intelligentsia tended to be radical in their demand for changes and wanted the state to be radical in their programmes. However, the merchants and businessmen, the landowners, and the magnates

19. Kemal Karpuz, Political and Social Thought in the Contemporary Middle East (New York, 1968), p.344. Where he bemoans, "Bureaucracy and intelligentsia emerged as distinct social groups and viewed themselves as superior to other social groups, not through discussion, but through the force of state power. This situation is the greatest disaster that can befall a society". Of course, "state power" or "power" in general is a psychology relation between those who exercise it and those over whom it is exercised. And as such in "Western democracies" values are allocated by the way in which power is distributed and used. In these societies power in fact concentrated in the hands of the politico-economic elite.

20. F. Ahmad, Turkish Experiment in Democracy (1950-75) (London, 1977), p.7.

on the other hand distrusted state intervention in so far as it threatened their interests by holding out the possibility of land reform and of state monopolies in trade. Consequently, no serious attempt was made to alter the structure of rural Turkey, where 80 per cent population lived and worked.²¹

While the bureaucratic intellectual wing of the party strongly supported the land reform measures, the representatives of landed interests vehemently opposed it. Though only land reform attempt of the RPP ended in total failure, it cost the party some support among the large land owners.²² By 1945 the political alliance which had provided stability since 1923 had broken down and a new political power needed, which came in the shape of Democrat Party.

Multi-Party System

Perhaps the most momentous decision affecting Turkish domestic politics in the post-Ataturk era was to change Turkey's single party system to multi-party one. On 7 January 1946 the formation of the Democrat Party was officially announced and Turkey began its new experiment with democracy. The Democrats professed more liberal political and economic views than the Republican People's Party. They expressed a general attitude

21. Ibid., p.8.

22. K.H.Karpat, Turkey's Politics: The Transition to a Multi-Party System, (Princeton, NJ, 1959), p.125.

more sympathetic to private enterprise. They also indicated a more active interest in the rural population and its problems, promised to grant labour unions the right to strike and would be more tolerant in religious matters. The Democrats received the support of many groups, including liberals hoping for less authoritarian regime. The Turkish business community which had grown in size and strength during the war years also disliked the elitist policies of the Republican people's party.²³

The Democrat Party also benefited from the accumulated resentment of voters against the often arbitrary behaviour and abuses of power by bureaucrats, which they blamed on the RPP. Thus the multifarious grievances and discontents with the ruling RPP, subsequently got crystalized into a firm alliance among the businessmen and workers, landlords and landless peasants, clerics and professionals. And they gave resounding victory to newly established Democrat Party in 1950.²⁴

No doubt, the Democrat Party government got considerable success in the beginning. Yet in the long run they failed to arrest deteriorating economy on which the very success of the government was dependent. Despite its espousal of private

23. Edwin J.Cohn, Turkish Economic, Social and Political Change (New York, 1970), pp.16-17.

24. Ali Morayati, The Republic of Turkey in Middle East, Its Governments and Politics (California, 1972), p.291.

enterprises and condemnation of statism, the Democrat Party regime resorted increasingly to state investment and state management of the economy, including futile attempts to regulate prices and prevent profiteering and hoarding. The inflationary atmosphere and general instability distorted the investment pattern in favour of projects offering a quick profit and encouraged speculation, all of which gave business a bad name and intensified the anti-business bias of bureaucrats, officers and professors, because their relatively high standard of living was being badly eroded by inflation.

Opposition politicians, academicians, journalists and civil servants became increasingly critical of the regime's economic policies and of the resulting inflation. Instead of revising its policies or answering its critics, the regime resorted to repressive measures. The increasingly authoritarian measures disillusioned and alienated members of the intelligentsia, who had originally welcomed the Democrat Party because of its more liberal philosophy.²⁵

In brief, the introduction of the pluralist system, the process of political diversification and polarisation leading to multiplication of groups, conflictual relations among the elite, the rise of a new and articulate intermediary class in the wake of upward social mobility and the erosion of political

25. Edwin J.Cohn, n.23, p.23.

bases of the major political parties because of change in ideological orientation and their reliance in small groups finally resulted in the weakening^{of} the Kemalist unity and the resurrection of severe pre-Kemalist interests conflict which produced simultaneous stagnation and instability.²⁶

Role of Turkish Army

The role of the military in Turkish culture has traditionally been one of paramount importance. Turks first assumed prominence in Islam by virtue of their military prowess. They served as military retainers of reigning Muslim monarchs. With the decline in quality and power of these monarchs, Turkish military officers gradually assumed power in their own right. The Ottoman Turks incorporated yet another military tradition as they established their empire in Asia Minor, they emerged as a frontier principality defending and extending the realm of Islam against the Christian Byzantine Empire based in the imperial city of Constantinople (Istanbul). Ultimately, they established their own empire at the expense of other Turkish Muslim states to the east and the Byzantine Empire to the West. Thus the military played a key role in the establishment of the Ottoman Empire.²⁷

26. Ozbuddun, Ergun, "Established Revolution and Unfinished Revolution: Contrasting Patterns of Democratization in Turkey and Mexico", in S.P. Huntington and C.H. Moore (eds.), Authoritarian Politics in Modern Society: The Dynamics of Established One Party System (New York, 1970), p.373.

27. F.Tachau and Martin Heper, n.5, p.18.

The Ottoman army composed mainly of the jānissaries was of an extremely distinctive kind. It was dependent upon and subordinate to the authority of state as an instrument acting as "machine like fidelity".²⁸

During the period of the constitutional monarchy after the overthrow of the autocratic Abdul Hamid II, the victorious unionist officers remained within the army while manipulating the government from behind the screen. However, Kemal Ataturk was opposed to the 'barrack government'. He rather decided to continue his struggle for the liberation of the nation from the occupying forces in the heart of the nation as a liberator.²⁹

One of the important aspects of Kemalist regime was that Mustafa Kemal fought to exclude the military from politics. He took initiative in persuading the parliament to forbid military officers to stand for election unless they resigned their commissions. This shows his strong conviction in keeping away the army from political arena.

But the major factor in stable relations between the military and civilian leadership was the military back ground of Mustafa Kemal himself. In spite of the formal separation of army from civilian authority, Kemal was assured of military

28. Richard D. Robinson, The First Turkish Republic: A Case Study in National Development (Cambridge, Mass, 1963), p.234.
29. D.A. Rustow, "The Military in Turkey" in Robert Ward and D.A. Rustow, Political Modernization of Japan and Turkey (Princeton, 1964), p.380.

support for his far reaching reform programmes. By the same token, the military were assured of freedom from partisan political interference in their affairs as well as access to the highest authorities.³⁰ The armed forces, therefore, could not be out of politics in any larger sense. Mustafa Kemal's continued regard for and reliance on the military is well illustrated in his Konya speech of 22 February 1931. He declared "Whenever the Turkish nation has wanted to take a step up, it has always looked to the army... as the leader of movements to achieve lofty national ideals.... When speaking of the army, I am speaking of the intelligentsia of the Turkish nation who are the true owners of this country.... The Turkish nation... considers its army the guardian of its ideal."³¹

This apolitical army, totally subordinated to the civilian power, is at the same time entrusted with the mission of securing unconditional defence of the political institutions of the state against both external and internal danger.

The last three military interventions in a span of three decades since the introduction of the multiparty system, according to the military leaders, have been carried out in accordance

30. D.A.Rustow, "The Army and the Founding of the Turkish Republic", World Politics, vol.11, no.4, 1959, p.516.

31. Turk Inkilap Tarihi (ed.), Ataturkun Soyley ve Domecleri, vol.2 (Ankara, 1952), p.266, as quoted in G.S.Harris, "The Role of Military in Turkish Politics," Middle East Journal, vol.19, Spring 1965, p.56.

with the above provision. "So whenever, there is any political instability, the leaders of the Turkish army make the use of Konya speech as an order of the day.

Coup-de-tat of 27 May 1960

The coup ended a decade of Democrat Party rule that commenced auspiciously but ended in disaster. "A regime that had come to office by free elections in an outstanding example of the orderly transfer of power had lost its legitimacy in the eyes of at least the better informed and more articulate members of the Turkish community because of its repeated abuses of power and was toppled by extra-legal means in order to restore the badly eroded rule of law.³²

By 1958, the acute mismanagement of the economy, high inflation, heavy external debt and mislocation of resources brought Turkey to a state of bankruptcy. The cost of living rose by approximately 150 per cent between 1953 and 1958.³³ Opponents were quick to point out that Democrat Party cabinets had not planned the development of Turkey's economy seriously and had paid insufficient attention to its socio-cultural problems, notably education (during the 1950s, reportedly,

32. Edwin J.Cohn, n.23, p.24.

33. D.J.Simpson, "Development as a Process: The Mendres Phase in Turkey," Middle East Journal, vol.19, no.2, Spring 1965, pp.150-51.

more mosques were built than school).³⁴ In foreign affairs, the stalemate in Cyprus, under conditions which many saw as a Turkish political defeat, was also blamed on the Democrat Party leadership. The latter's reaction, natural perhaps but unwise, was to show increasing impatience with criticism, shut down newspapers, generally muzzled the press and intimidated the opposition.³⁵ The proportion of ex-military officers among the political elite (i.e. in parliament and cabinet) declined. The twin pillars of the Kemalist regime (the military and civil bureaucracy) receded in power and significance in the 1950s overshadowed by the commercial entrepreneurs and businessmen as well as segments of provincial and regional elites. These groups became the core of support for the Democrat Party. In addition, the expanded educational facilities of the Republican era opened up alternative career avenues for upward mobility, particularly in the professions. The inflation which developed under the Democrat's ambitious policies of rapid economic development, the civil servant and military bureaucrats suffered material and psychic losses because their salaries failed to keep up with rapidly rising costs. Thus the military felt ~~they~~

34. J.M. Landu, Radical Politics in Turkey (Jerusalem, 1974), p.4.

35. Bernard Lewis, "Democracy in Turkey", Middle Eastern Affairs, vol.10, no.2, February 1959, pp.55-72.

they had lost access not only to the pinnacle of power, but to social status and prestige as well.³⁶

The Democrat Party's use of the military against its political foes, instead of police was seen, in ordering the army to stop the train on which Inonu was travelling to deliver a speech in Kayseri in April 1960, to forcibly disperse anti-government demonstrations of students. The frequest use of army brought the army to such a crucial juncture that its established role of political neutrality was in peril. Now either it must become Menderes's tool for repressing all opposition, or it would have to intervene at its initiative to protect both Turkish democracy and its own position above parties. Nevertheless, the Democrat Party leadership was surprised when a group of thirty eight army officers struck²⁷ May 1960.³⁷ It is noteworthy to mention here that when General Gursel accomplished the bloodless coup, the jubilant crowd hung out flags and chanted "Hurriyet, Hurriyet" (Freedom, Freedom).

Outcome of 1960 Coup detat

Immediately after the coup the army generals addressed the nation. "The crisis into which our democracy has fallen, in view of the recent sad incidents and in order to avert

36. Ergun Ozbudun, The Role of the Military in Recent Turkish Politics (Harvard, 1966), p.28.

37. J.M. Lendu, n.34, pp.7-8.

fratricide, the Turkish armed forces have taken over the administration of the country. They also made clear that this initiative was not directed against any person or class. Our administration will not take any aggressive act against individuals, nor will it allow other to do so. All countrymen, irrespective of the parties to which they may belong would be treated in accordance with the laws.³⁸



The thirty eight revolutionary officers, who were the architect of the coup, grouped in a national unity committee, enhanced their popularity by proclaiming their desire to be political umpires rather than rulers. The National Unity Committee expressed desire to return the government to a civilian parliament, within three months, however, the transfer actually took nearly fifteen months.

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The National Unity Committee took drastic steps concerning Democratic Party members. More than four hundred ousted Democrat Party leaders were put on public trial, which ended with severe sentences on the accused. Menderes and his Ministers of Finances and Foreign Affairs, Hasan Polatkan and Fatin Rustu were executed, President Bayar's death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment on account of his advanced age. Many other Democrat Party members were jailed for various terms.³⁹

38. Firoz Ahmad, n.20, p.160.

39. G.Lewis, "Turkey: The Thorny Road to Democracy", The World Today, vol.18, no.5, May 1962, pp.187-88.



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An author sympathetic to the Democrat Party regime observed, the forcible overthrow of a legally elected government, however, corrupt, incompetent and tyrannical it had become, had the unfortunate effect of establishing a precedent for the seizure of power by the military in violation of the political norms.⁴⁰

Immediately after the coup the National Unity Committee commissioned several university professors to prepare a new constitution. After lengthy consultations, and some pressure from the political parties, the consultation was finally approved by a referendum on 9 July 1961.

The 1961 constitution contained much from that of 1924 constitution as well as number of concepts and ideas from the constitutions of several West European states.⁴¹ The new constitution assumed a social character in addition to a democratic and secularist character. It also incorporated brakes on the arbitrary behaviour of future governments, introduced the proportional voting system, encouraged the youths and labour participation through various associations, expressed need for rapid economic development and social justice within a democratic order.⁴²

40. Edwin J. Cohn, n.23, p.31.

41. Ismet Giritli, "Some Aspects of the New Turkish Constitution", Middle East Journal, (Washington, DC), vol.14, no.1, Winter 1962, pp.1-17.

42. J.M. Landu, n.34, p.10.

Among other concepts, the new constitution laid down that political parties are necessary in a democracy, hence may be formed freely and function unhindered, but made accountable for their incomes and expenditures. Parties, therefore, became institutionalized under the new constitution.⁴³ A constitutional court was established, in order to check and safeguard all freedoms. Further a senate was added to the former national assembly.

The second Republic put emphasis on social rather than "ism".⁴⁴ Thus the next decade witnessed further rise of political organizations of the intelligentsia on behalf of the socialist ideologies ranging from Fabianism to extreme Marxism.

43. Serif Mardin, "Opposition and Control in Turkey", Government and Opposition, London, April 1966, p.386.

44. Kemal Karpat, "Socialism and Labour Party of Turkey", Middle East Journal, Spring 1967, p.157.

CHAPTER - II

THE ARMY MEMORANDUM OF 12 MARCH 1971

The 1961 constitution guaranteed freedom of thought, expression, association and publication as well as other democratic liberties considered fundamental in Western democracies. In addition, it promised social and economic rights, with the provision for the right of state to plan economic development so as to achieve social justice, and the right of the individual to ownership and inheritance of property and freedom of work and enterprise.¹

In theory, the state was given the right to plan economic development so as to achieve social justice. However, in actual practice, the forces which controlled the state and whose interests it served obstructed any advance towards social justice. The new constitution did not make any fundamental change in the political and socio-economic structure. The Democrat Party was outlawed but nothing was done to prevent the return of neo-Democrats. Since the socio economic basis of power remained unaltered the old political forces were bound to come to front. This became the principle contradiction, because the neo-Democrats and conservative Republicans were determined to prevent its implementation.²

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1. J.M. Landu, Radical Politics in Modern Turkey (Jerusalem, 1974), p.10.
 2. Firoz Ahmad, The Turkish Experiment in Democracy (London, 1977), p.186.

As a result of the freedoms guaranteed by the constitution, intellectual societies with radical leftist tendencies were organized in the universities to debate and publicize Turkey's problems. The trade unions were given the right to strike, but within limits to be determined by legislation. The new constitution also established a constitutional court in order to prevent misuse of freedom and power. Nevertheless it proved ineffective to control extremism.³ Thus taking advantage of their freedom, extremists were able to defy constitution, and had created acute law and order problem. The situation was so much grave that the army intervened for the second time in 1971, in order to save the Turkish Republic.

With the provision of the new constitution, new parties began to emerge and took part in the elections which were held on 15 October 1961. The parties that ~~were~~ participated in the election, of these four were the most important; the Republican People's Party (RPP) led by Ismet Inonu, two new parties, the Justice Party (JP) and the New Turkey Party (NTP), both of which, particularly the JP drew their support from the members and followers of the old Democrat Party; and the Republican Peasants Party (RPNP) a reactionary organization led by ultra-nationalist elements.

3. Girit Ismet, "Some Aspects of the New Turkish Constitution", Middle East Journal (Washington, D.C.), vol. 16, no. 1, 1962, pp. 1-17.

The results of the election were inconclusive: the RPP received 36.7 per cent of the votes and 173 seats; the JP and the NIP received 34.8 per cent and 13.7 per cent of the votes and 158 and 65 seats respectively; and the RPNP got 14 per cent of the votes and won 54 seats.⁴

The inconclusive results of the election led the formation of three successive coalition governments in 1961-64, all under the premiership of Ismet Inonu. The military, after an initial attempt to nullify the election agreed to a civilian government under Ismet Inonu, provided that the laws passed by the revolutionary officers would not be annulled and that no vindictive action would be undertaken against them. General Gursel was elected President, while Ali F. Basgil, the candidate favoured by the Justice Party withdrew under pressure.⁵

The first coalition formed in collaboration with the Justice Party, despite great differences of opinion and personalities, represented a political compromise overshadowed by mutual fear. However, the economic liberalism and the proposal to liberate the jailed Democrats as put forth by the Justice Party conflicted with the Republicans statist views and irritated the military who were too sensitive to any action likely to impair the legitimacy of the revolution. The government

4. F. Ahmad, n.2, p.172.

5. K.H. Karpat, "Political Developments in Turkey (1950-70)", Middle Eastern Studies, (London), vol.8, no.3, 1972.

and the Parliament became impotently deadlocked over the implementation of the reforms promised by the new constitution. In the urban industrial areas workers began to agitate for implementation of the right of collective bargaining and the right to strike permitted under the new constitution. Workers' protests continued and reached a high point only a month after the new civilian government had been formed. Dissatisfaction with the regime grew among the wide sections of the population. The government's ability to deal with the nation's pressing social and economic problems was called into question. The general economic and socio-political situation reached crisis proportions by early 1962 and this led to the abortive coup of February 22 by Colonel Talat Aydemir, Commandant of the war college, who wanted radical change by capturing power.⁶

The deterioration of the general economic condition and the failure to obtain concession from the Justice Party on the main issue confronting the government led to Ismet Inonu's resignation in order to end the impasse and so the dissolution of the first coalition in May 1962.

In June, President Gursel asked Ismet Inonu to form a new coalition. After considerable difficulty the second coalition was formed on 25 June 1962. It consisted of the RPP, the RPNP, the NTP and independents. The protocol they signed

6. Berch Berbergglu, Turkey in Crisis (London, 1982), p.90.

made it manifestly clear that Ismet Inonu had agreed to compromise on their social and economic programme and to accept private enterprise as an equal partner. The Chairman of the New Turkey Party Ekram Alican, an ardent defender of private enterprise was made Deputy Premier in charge of economic affairs, including the state planning organization.⁷ These moves undermined the chance of a successful implementation of the reforms called for in the 1961 constitution (e.g. state planning, tax reform and land distribution), this caused dissension within the RPP, leading to the call for Inonu's resignation. Nevertheless Inonu stayed on despite his criticism. Shortly after wards, the principle technical advisers at the state planning organization (SPO) resigned collectively because the government had diluted the plan, so as to make it ineffective.⁸

Throughout this period the intellectuals and others with the Yon group,⁹ viewed themselves as the true representatives of the Kemalist cause - anti-imperialism, nationalism and state directed social and economic developments. On the labour front, the new constitution had permitted the formation

7. Kemal Karpat, "The Turkish Left", Journal of Contemporary History, vol.1, no.2, 1966, p.183.

8. F.Ahmad, n.2, p.217.

9. The weekly (Yon, "Direction") appeared in Ankara, comprised 24 pages and later 16, in a large format. Its first issue appeared on 20 December 1961 and Yon continued to be published up to 30 June 1967. The editor of this popular weekly was Dogan Aveloglu.

of a legally constituted socialist party and in February 1961, a number of trade unionists founded Workers Party of Turkey (WPT). Within a year under the leadership of Mehmet Ali Hyber, the party began to attract numerous intellectuals and students. The Workers Party of Turkey was instrumental in advancing the interests of the working class and promoting democratic rights and freedom. As the strength of the party grew, so did official repression against it. Nevertheless with the growing struggles of workers in the factories, mines and industry in general on the one hand, organization and agitation on the other, coupled with disillusion among the intelligentsia. Turkey entered a period of wider political crisis. Although the labour movement and the forces on the left in general were not strong enough to pose any immediate threat to the government, they were nonetheless, steadily gaining momentum.¹⁰ In this atmosphere the assembly set up an all party commission to combat Communism on 11 January 1963.

It was in this situation that on 20 May 1963, the government defeated a second attempt by Colonel Aydemir to overthrow the government. This time government took a bold measure, Colonel Aydemir and his chief lieutenant Gurcen were tried and executed.¹¹ The events of May 1963 and the general unrest

10. Berch Berbergglu, n.6, p.91.

11. F.Ahmad, n.2, pp.219-20.

among the wide section of the population led to the imposition of martial law in Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir. It remained in effect until the middle of the following year.

The results of the local and municipal elections of 17 November 1963 were disappointing to the RPP's coalition partners, the NTP and the RPNP, while the JP did better than expected. Following their electoral set back, the two minor parties decided to withdraw from the coalition. This led to the resignation of Inonu as Prime Minister in early December and the second coalition came to an abrupt end. In view of the realistic approach the RPP thought better the party stay out of any future coalition and leave the task of government to the JP.

President Gursel this time asked Ragip Gumuspala, Chairman of the Justice Party to form a government. Interestingly enough the minor parties were unwilling to go into a coalition with the JP, precisely because they were afraid of being swallowed up and losing their identity and independence. Consequently, Gumuspala failed to form a coalition for which he was given an opportunity. The task as usual was given to Ismet Inonu and he unexpectedly formed a cabinet with the support of Independents.¹²

It was a tough time for the government. She was occupied with Cyprus problems throughout 1964, which distracted it from such vital tasks as reforming the economy. The JP's

12. Berch Berbergglu, n.6, p.92.

hostile attitude always stood as an impediment in the reformation. Not only this, on 9 February the JP declared that it regarded land reform as a violation of the property rights guaranteed by the constitution.¹³

By May 1964, a new factor had emerged, which embittered the already tense relations between the government and opposition, especially the JP. The Justice Party blamed Inonu for his feeble foreign policy and for America's unfortunate stand towards Turkey in the Cyprus-crisis. By this time JP became more aggressive in its call for an early election when the budget was defeated. Inonu resigned as Prime Minister for the last time.¹⁴ The new coalition was formed under the premiership Suat Hayri Urguplu, elected as an independent. The new coalition was based on the JP and the New Turkey Party and two other minor parties.¹⁵ The main purpose of this coalition was not to carry out reform but to act as night watchman and lead the country into a general election, which was going to be held in October 1965.

Rise of Justice Party

The appeal of Justice Party is not ideological but is rooted in the social structure of Turkey. The party's greatest

13. G.Lewis, Modern Turkey (Oxford, 1974), p.171.

14. Karpaz, K.H., "Political Development in Turkey", Middle Eastern Studies, vol.8, no.3, 1972, p.364.

15. Ibid.

support comes from the small holder peasants, who were emerging from poverty and subsistence way of life. They are allied with expanding, but still small, commercial, industrial, urban labour groups and newly wealthy farmers. These groups represent the familiar sociological phenomenon of rising social groups in competition with an older elite.¹⁶

The RPP is the party of the older elite, representing those classes that came to dominate the later days of the Ottoman Empire as well as the first twenty five years of the republic i.e., bureaucrats, city intellectuals, military officers and the traditional class of "nobles" in the countryside including many large landowners.¹⁷

Demirel's party refused to commit itself ideologically. We are against all "ism" including liberalism and capitalism, announced Demirel to the press. We are not for any diēhard ideology or system. We establish our economic view in accordance with the condition of the day. He further clarified that we are not a party dependent on any class. We are nation with its peasants, farmers, workers, artisans and merchants. As the Justice Party we shall defend the rights of all these classes. The principle appeal was the countryside where 75 per cent of population lived. In fact, the promise of everything to everybody was the JP's golden prescription for electoral success.¹⁸

16. Ismet Giritli, "Turkey Since the 1965 Elections", Middle East Journal, vol.23, 1969, p.353.

17. Karpat, n.14, p.364.

18. F.Ahmad, n.2, p.236.

Justice Party in Power

The 1965 parliamentary election was a triumph for the JP. It polled 52.9 per cent of the vote and won 240 seats; whereas the RPP polled only 28.7 per cent of the vote and secured 134 seats and the smaller rightist party (the RPNP, the NP and the NTP) together received 12.2 per cent of the vote and 61 seats.¹⁹

With an overall majority the Demiret government was able to push ahead to fulfil its programmes in a way that Inonu, now in opposition, never had been able to do with coalition regimes. Its policy was determined by its desire to promote economic development and achieve social justice, not only in reaction to the constitution and the insistence of the army but also to the increasingly strident demands of the more radical left wing groups.²⁰

The economic policy followed generally the constitutional principle of a mixed economy, that is the joint use of the economic means in the hands of the government and individuals to promote general welfare and social justice through plans provided by the state planning organization. The leftist organizations which now came to include most university teachers, students and many professionals, became more and more adamant in criticising the government for not going much faster.²¹

19. Edwin J.Cohn, Turkish Economic, Social and Political Change (New York, 1970), p.36.

20. Shaw, Stanford and E.K.Shaw, History of Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey, vol.II, (Cambridge 1977), p.426.

21. Karpat, n.14, p.365.

From early 1968 onwards Demirel's government was facing innumerable problems. Disorders in the Universities and clashes between political extremists of the right and the left took increasingly violent form. Students staged anti-American riots and in June 1968 troops had to be called into prevent extremists disrupting examinations. Parliamentary politics also became confused. There was a split in justice party and the dissidents soon formed the Democratic Party. A new party with theocratic flavour was founded in 1970 by Professor Necmettin Erbakan.²²

Throughout 1970 and the early 1971, political and social unrest continued with outbreaks of violence among students, in the trade unions and by Kurdish separatist groups. Factional bickering and mutual jealousies prevented the government from taking effective actions and the army intervention became inevitable.²³

Factors Responsible for 1971 Coup

Turkish Youth and Radical Activities

During the Ataturk period, and until the end of the single party era in Republican Turkey, students were relatively little involved in direct political activity.²⁴ The increase

22. G.Lewis, n.13, p.181.

23. The Middle East and North Africa

24. J.S.Szyliowiez, "Students and Politics in Turkey", Middle Eastern Studies, vol.2, no. , May 1970, p.152.

in the political involvement of the Turkish youth and more particularly students was, the slowly but steadily growing number of those registered in the universities.²⁵

Increasing numbers come from out of town and feel alienated in their new environment. It should be noted that the relatively limited opportunities of accepting students in the sciences induced many to study in fields promoting a comparatively great interest in politics, such as political science, sociology, economics and public administration.²⁶

Another result of the increase in the number of Lycee graduates desirous of enrolling in universities was a two-way disappointment. First, the majority of applicants were not admitted, owing to less number of universities. In 1969, 64,183 Lycee graduates applied for admission to Turkey's seven universities and sat for objective entrance tests, but only about 13,000 or a fifth were admitted.²⁷ The frustration of

25. Number of University Students from 1960-61 to 1970-71:

1960-61	44,461	1964-65	52,768	1968-69	67,769
1961-62	45,002	1965-66	55,583	1969-70	75,522
1962-63	46,561	1966-67	60,023	1970-71	73,228
1963-64	48,654	1967-68	63,235		

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Turkey, 1968, p.117.

26. Nermin Abadan, "Values and Political Behaviour of Turkish Youth," The Turkish Year of International Relations (Ankara, 1963), p.102.

27. J.M. Landau, n.1, p.32.

those rejected is natural. Secondly, even those admitted, they have to attend long classes, lack of tutorials, inadequate library facilities and crowded dormitories as well as lack of financial assistance from the government further disgusted them.

With the very real grievances, educational and financial, university students have naturally taken to protest. The students did not simply emphasize their personal grievances but also demanded sweeping university reform. At the same time they expressed their great concern over international issues like anti-imperialism, anti-Americanism, foreign capital and the Vietnam war.²⁸

Rightist Menace

For centuries, Islam has been a powerful force in Turkey. When Kemal came into power he made his tireless effort for secularization, but his venture bore less success - particularly in Turkey's rural areas - than was generally assumed at the time.²⁹ The abolition of the Sultanate, the Caliphate, the office of Religious Affairs and Pious Foundations, the closing down of the Islamic law court and religious colleges, the introduction of secular, instead of religious and the definition of the Turkish Republic in an amendment to the constitution as "secular" were indeed national measures,³⁰ but it influenced the

28. Ibid., p.33.

29. Bernard Lewis, The Emergence of Modern Turkey (London, 1961), p.410.

30. Uriel Heyd, Revival of Islam in Modern Turkey (Jerusalem, 1968), p.11.

countryside only to a limited degree. The more remote a village from the capital were hardly aware of the secularization laws and the more liable to ignore them rather than resist them.³¹ Indeed, the government in Ataturk's time and subsequent years left religious practice to the conscience of the individual consequently, it brought secularization, more to the towns and cities than to the countryside.

During Democrat regime religious people got considerable concessions but they were not directly involved in politics. But in the late 1960s, the involvement of Islamic circles in politics became increasingly evident. The right wing youth organized themselves, typically called "commandos". They began to make their presence felt in public life only in 1969, although they probably started training in the summer of 1968.³³ The three main training camps were organized in Istanbul, Izmir and Ankara. Newspaper accounts claim^{at} that they^{ways} planning to establish a total of thirty four camps to train 100,000 people.³⁴ However, estimates of the actual number of the commandos in 1969 and 1970 varied from a few hundreds to five thousand.³⁵ They demonstrated in the streets, their first

31. J.M. Landau, n.1, p.171.

32. D.A. Rustow, "Politics and Islam in Turkey (1920-1955)," in R.N.Frye (ed.), Islam and the West (Hague, 1957), pp.82-86.

33. Sam Cohn, "Right Wing Turks Go Militant", The Guardian, 3 February 1969.

34. Peter Flinn, "Turning Point for Turkey" (35 Camps), The New Middle East, 1969, p.224.

35. Sam Cohn, "Turkish Commandos with Nazi Ideas", The Guardian, 19 August 1969, estimated at 4,000-5,000.

violent action occurred on 31 December 1968, when they broke into the quarters of leftist students at Ankara university faculty of political science. Since then, they broke up leftist meetings, smashed windows of bookshops selling leftist literature. They were even reported to have disrupted a world Health Organization seminar on birth control.³⁶

The real aims of these youths were to revive and re-establish Turkish-Islamic civilization and to assist the rightist party in defending Turkey from communism.³⁷ Demonstration of these commandos continued, even after the 12 March 1971 military intervention.

Leftist Threat

In the 1960s, with the newly guaranteed freedom of the press,³⁸ leftist magazines began to appear. Many writers translated Marxist literature in Turkish language.³⁹ Among them most prolific and influential socialist writers were Hilmi Ozgen, Cetin Ozek, Cemil Sait and Fethi Naci. Although varying in their interpretation of Marxism and its applicability, they openly called for resistance to the government and for revolution.

36. The Times (London) and The Daily Telegraph, both of 8 April 1969.

37. The Guardian, 3 February 1969.

38. Girit Ismet, n.3, pp.1-17.

39. Karpas, K.H., "Socialism and Labour Party of Turkey", Middle East Journal, vol.21, no.2, 1967, pp.157-60.

Impressed with Marxist idea several students decided to associate in a political youth organization and founded "the Federation of the Revolutionary Youth of Turkey" or briefly Dev-Gene. It mainly comprised university students, it also sought connections with working and peasant youth. In addition, to the goal of introducing a socialist consciousness, in place of bourgeoisie, it also aimed at revolutionary struggle against imperialism. Dev-Gene, in Ankara frequently called on all Turkish workers, intellectuals, patriotic soldiers, officers, all progressive and all patriots to rise and join the struggle against the regime.⁴⁰

One of the most noteworthy radical groups was the Sosyalist Aydinlik ("Socialist Enlightenment") circle, so called after its monthly, which was published in Ankara from 1968. Regular contributors have included well-known leftist thinkers like Mihri Belli and Muzaffar Erdost. It aimed at achieving Marxism, Leninism in collaboration with other forces, preferably the radical military rather than the proletariat.⁴¹

Two other extremist groups also deserve mention, one was the Türk Halk Kurtulus Ordusu (The Turkish People's Liberation Army) sometimes called "guerrilla". This organization had initially been founded by leftist students at the

40. J.M.Landau, n.1, p.39.

41. Ibid., p.41.

Middle East Technical University in Ankara, with the aim of cleansing it, from American influence. Their next goal was to struggle for Turkey's complete independence from American imperialism. To achieve this goal they even justified armed robbery and violence. Some of their members were trained in the camps of "the Palestine Arab Guerrilla Movement", popularly known as Al-Fatah.⁴²

The other group was "the Turkish Peoples Liberation Front", connected with Turkish People's Liberation Party. Its members were reportedly trained in Syria then smuggled into Turkey. They called for mutual support between workers and peasants and appealed to revolutionaries to assist them against the landowners, attack imperialism and the United States. Very little was known about these groups until they started terrorist activities.⁴³ This was the situation prior to the 1969 general election.

The 1969 Elections

All general elections in Turkey since 1950 have been important but 12 October 1969 elections were particularly crucial.⁴⁴ The small parties put even greater efforts into the

42. Robert W. Olson, "Al-Fatah in Turkey: Its Influence on the March 12 Coup," Middle Eastern Studies, vol.9, no.2, May 1973, pp.198-200.

43. J.M. Landau, n.1, p.42.

44. Michael P. Hyland, "Crisis at the Polls: Turkey's 1969 Elections", Middle East Journal, 1970, vol.42, p.1.

battle because of the severe handicap created by the 1968 amendment to the electoral law.⁴⁵ The two larger parties, however, felt that for them the forthcoming election is equally crucial. The Justice Party headed by Suleman Demirel felt that it had to increase party representation in the National Assembly above the bare majority and strive for a two-thirds majority.⁴⁶

Bulent Ecevit, also felt that the party had to increase its contingent in the National Assembly, to compensate for recent desertions by a number of members and to prevent a more extremist group from asserting itself. Therefore, Bulent Ecevit initiated a mild and sometimes confusing mix of populism and socialism, including a three fold scheme of land reform. While this new reformist ideology conflicted with vested social and economic interests of many local notables, Ecevit hoped it would bring more farmers and labourers into the RPP camp by election time. Thus doctrinally, the RPP was trapped on both sides: on the far left by the Marxist-oriented Workers Party (TIP) and on the moderate right by the RPP splinter group which formed the Reliance Party in 1967.⁴⁷

45. W.F.Weilker, "Turkey's Election May Bode Ill", Mid East (Washington), vol.9, no.6, 1969, pp.10-13.

46. W.M. Hale, "Aspects of the Turkish General Election of 1969", Middle Eastern Studies, vol.8, no.3, October 1972, pp.393-404.

47. Michael P.Hyland, n.44, p.2.

The results of the 1969 election of the National Assembly were not unexpected: although votes for the two larger parties declined, yet they gained deputies at the expense of the smaller parties. The RPP's support in the country remained virtually static, dropping from 28.7 per cent of the votes in 1967 to 27.4 per cent, while the Justice Party vote dropped from 52.9 to 46.2 per cent.⁴⁸

The poor performance of the Republicans and of the Workers Party alienated a large section of the intelligentsia - especially the radicals and the left - from the system. They had hoped that a change of government might lead to implementation of reforms promised in the constitution. Demirel, now weaker than ever in the party and faced with a split, was unlikely to take any risks with an unpopular policy. As the social, economic and political situation continued to deteriorate the army intervention became not unthinkable.⁴⁹

Workers Struggle

Workers struggle grew and intensified in the latter half of the 1960s as the level of organization and consciousness of the working class reached new heights. It was, however, the new labour law of 1963 which gave the trade unions a considerably

48. Kemal H. Karpat, n.14, p.373.

49. Firoz Ahmad, n.2, p.201.

increased scope of action. Social benefits were guaranteed, the rights of collective bargaining and of striking were also given. At the same time, employers were allowed to lockout their workers.⁵⁰

Before the foundation of the Disk ("The Turkish Federation of Revolutionary Trade Unions") in 1967, the Turkish workers were led by Turk İ̇s (another federation of Turkish labour). Turk İ̇s's moderate in its demands was not liked by its own more impatient members. And after the foundation of Disk in 1967 and its radical demands attracted much more members to join it. Thus it became the sole spokesman of workers cause. Its demands included the nationalization of all foreign trade, private banking and the insurance business; a complete redistribution of land, and the planning of the economy, with the aim of improving the workers lot.⁵¹

Following the founding of Disk, workers militance increased to a point where massive strike, demonstrations and factory occupations became common. Occurance by the end of the decade. In 1968, 1800 workers at the rubber factory carried out the first factory occupation in Turkey. Strike activity intensified between 1968 and 1970 and the number of industrial strikes increased from 54 in 1968 to 81 in 1969

50. K.H.Karpat, n.39, p.158.

51. J.M. Landau, n.39, p.93.

and to 112 in 1970.⁵² In 1969 and 1970 such strikes became increasingly common, with alarming effect on production as well as created great law and order problem.

Immediate Causes of the Coup

After the 1969 election Turkey was led by a weak government under siege from every side. The majority party was divided by internal factionalism and its leader discredited. The opposition parties, disillusioned with the system in which they performed so badly, were in no mood to compromise with the government - an attitude that aggravated the instability. The general economic situation continued to decline rapidly. The universities were paralysed by student agitation and violence and the factories by worker military^c and strikes. Even the traditionally apathetic peasant stirred himself and occupied land legally not his own. The media, especially the influential Turkish Radio and Television, constantly highlighted the shortcomings of the government and the ruling party. On 11 February 1970, within months of his electoral triumph, Demirel was forced to resign when JP dissidents voted against the budget and in so doing brought the government down. However, Sunay reappointed him Prime Minister but he was never able to recover from this set-back.⁵³

52. International Labour Organization, Year of Labour Statistics 1971 (Geneva, 1977), p.850.

53. A good account of the internal dissension in the JP in 1970 is given in Milliyet (Ankara), 1970, pp.30-48.

In the beginning of 1971 law and order declined dramatically, almost inviting military counter-measures. Urban guerrilla activity in the form of bank robberies and kidnappings, followed by the government's measures against the universities where the guerrilla were reported to be operating, increased the tension. Kidnapping of four US airmen by the Turkish People liberation Army (TPLA), the abductor demanded a ransom of 400,000 thousands dollars for the release of the airmen. Apart from this one of the chief reasons of the coup was the discovery by high ranking officers that a group of low ranking officers had planned a direct military seizure of power. In order to prevent the low ranking officers from staging a direct army take over, the commanders of the armed forces declared a coup of their own, but stated that they wanted to keep a civilian government.

In a statement on 30 April 1971 Ismet Aren, the new minister of Interior declared that there were four dangers to the Republic of Turkey which had made the 12 March coup necessary. These were the extreme leftists and urban guerrilla, the extreme rightists and those who wanted a dictatorship. The fourth danger was the activities of pro-Kurdish organizations trying to divide a national territory.⁵⁴ The extreme rightists' and leftists' activities, violence, and clashes had brought the nation on the brink of civil war.⁵⁵

54. Robert W. Olson, n.42, pp.198-99.

55. Nihat Erim, "The Turkish Experience in the Light of Recent Development", Middle East Journal, vol.25, Summer 1973, p.248.

The 12 March Memorandum

The memorandum presented by four generals, Faruk Gurler, Memduh Tagmac, Celal Eyieoglu and Muhsin Batur on March 12, to the president of the Republic, to the parliament and the government, drew attention to the dangerous situation.⁵⁶ The memorandum called for an end to anarchy and strife and the implementation of reforms. It read as follows:

(1) "The Parliament and the government, through their sustained policies, views and actions, have driven our country into anarchy, fratricidal strife and social and economic unrest. They have caused the public to lose all hope of rising to the level of contemporary civilization which was set for us by Ataturk as a goal and have failed to realize the reforms stipulated by the constitution. The future of the Turkish Republic is therefore seriously threatened.

(2) The assessment by the parliament, in a spirit above partisan considerations, of the solutions needed to eliminate the concern and disillusionment of the Turkish Armed Forces, which have sprung from the bosom of the Turkish nation, over this grave situation, and the formation, within the context of democratic principles, of a strong and credible government, which will neutralise the current anarchical situation and which inspired by Ataturk's views, will implement the reformist laws envisaged by the constitution, are considered essential.

56. Nihat Erim, "The Role of the Army", Middle East Journal, 1972, vol.26, p.249.

(3) Unless this is done quickly, the Turkish armed forces are determined to take over the administration of the state in accordance with the powers vested in them by the laws to protect and preserve the Turkish Republic."⁵⁷

Responsibility for the prevalent situation had been placed squarely on the shoulders of Parliament and the government. The commanders demanded that if reforms were not carried out quickly, they would takeover.⁵⁸

Suleyman Demirel resigned with mild protest. On 19 March 1971 Nihat Erim was called by the president of the Republic to form the new government. The members of the cabinet were drawn from the three leading parties and also included technocrats from outside the parliament. Although these governments cannot be termed coalition governments in the normal sense of the term, nevertheless, Nihat Erim depended on the support and consensus of the major political parties.⁵⁹

Now the question arises how far the army intervention is justified? To justify intervention the army quoted the Konya speech delivered by Mustafa Kemal in 1931.⁶⁰ However, it appears that when Mustafa Kemal delivered his speech at Konya, the situation was quite different. Then the Turkish Republic was in

57. F. Ahmad, n.2, p.289.

58. G. Lewis, n.13, p.186.

59. Nihal Erim, n.55, p.249.

60. G.S. Harris, "The Role of Military in Turkish Politics," Middle East Journal, vol.19, Spring 1965, p.56.

its infancy and was not fully secure from internal disturbances and external danger. However in 1971, Turkish Republic acquired maturity and healthy parliamentary form of government. In this regard Ismet Inonu's views are worth noting. He remarked that "if high ranking military commanders are to decide when a government is to be changed and what the short and long term tasks of newly formed governments are and particularly if they put forward suggestions and insist on their implementation as unavoidable measures, then we cannot imagine that parliamentary life can be feasible. Parliament represents constitutional order. It is the place where the procedures for censuring, overthrowing or forming governments are decided.... We believe in a democratic regime. We came to parliament with the intention of implementing reforms, but there are others who came with other intentions. If we have faith in democracy we must accept that a democratically formed government will carry out these reforms in proportion to its powers.⁶¹

There are reports that one of the chief reasons for the coup was the discovery by high ranking officers of a group of low ranking officers which planned a direct military seizure of power. In order to prevent the low-ranking officers from staging a direct army takeover, the commanders of the armed

61. Ankara Radio, 15 March 1971, in Summary of World Broadcasts, British Broadcasting Corporation, Reading (1950-71).

forces declared a coup of their own but stated that they wanted to keep a civilian government.⁶² This gives the impression that apart from the unrest and upheaval, the army had its own reasons to intervene.

62. cf. Robert W. Olson, n.42, p.198.

CHAPTER - III

EMERGENCE OF POLITICAL PARTIES

The post-1970 period in Turkey witnessed a major change in the old political parties and the emergence of new ones. Once again Turkey seemed destined to live through a period of unstable and precarious governments.

The decade 1970-80 like the preceding one went through the experience of a series of coalition governments, ideological differences, galloping inflation, rise in unemployment, fascist menace, Communist threat and Kurdish secessionist movement which brought the nation to a pandemonium. And finally the army, the umpire of the nation, after several warnings intervened for the third time on 12 September 1980 in order to save the nation from rupture and crumbling.¹

Defeat of Ismet Inonu

Initially, the response to the challenge from the left came from within the Republican People's Party (RPP). In 1965 the party had adopted the left of centre slogan and policy, but these had proved insufficient to rejuvenate and revive the old Republican People's Party. Under the normal circumstances it is doubtful whether the party, with its entrenched leadership would have been willing for the transformation. However, the

1. Andrew Mango, "Turkey: Democracy Under Military Tutelage", The World Today, vol.39, November 1983.

political crisis created by the memorandum of 12 March 1971, provided the foresighted Republicans with the opportunity to change their leaders and give the party a new character and outlook.

This golden opportunity was provided by Ismet Inonu, when he supported the Erim government which was instituted at the instance of the army. Bulent Ecevit who had a different opinion of the army intervention and had his own political calculation resigned as Secretary General of the party. He thought that it undermined the democratic process and the voters' serious doubt about the RPP's genuine sincerity. He refused to view the military intervention as an act against the Demirel government, which had already been on the path of tottering. He rather visualised it as a blow against their own party which was capable of coming to power if the healthy democratic process was not undermined by the army.

The most unprecedented development was the historic personality and the party chairman Mr. Ismet Inonu's defeat, and on 14 May 1972, the young and energetic Bulent Ecevit, who was opposed to any cooperation with army was elected the Chairman.²

2. Inonu's support for Erim raised the spectre of collaboration between the RPP and army as many cynics believed in the equation RPP + Army = Power. On the contrary Ecevit categorically spelt out his ideas in his statement. I cannot agree to the RPP's coming to power or seeming to come to power by means other than people's will."

Under his dynamic leadership the historic party, the RPP, which once enjoyed undisputed popularity underwent a radical transformation in so far as its ideology was concerned. Ecevit now wished to purge the party of its elitist image and to create a popular one. The lesson of the Democrat and Justice Parties had not been lost on him. He recognised that the voters had supported those parties because they brought benefits and not simply exploit the ignorance and emotions, as Republicans were fond of claiming. Now it became a Social-Democratic Populist Party with a new slogan "land for the tillers and water for the people". He also turned down the ultra-secular tradition of the party by calling the earlier confrontation with pious religious opinion a historic mistake.³ It was these changes brought by Ecevit that led the party to improve its electoral support in October 1973 general elections.

Parties of the Right

The memorandum of 12 March also brought about change in the rightist parties. Despite Demirel's humiliation on 12 March, he was capable to retain his grip over the party. His dissidents had already repudiated the JP and formed a party of their own, the Democratic Party.

2. F.Ahmad, Turkish Experiment in Democracy (London, 1977), p.313.

3. K.H. Karpel, A Structural Historic Analysis (London, 1973), p.66.

The memorandum also sealed the fate of the National Order Party but had little effect on the future of other parties of the Right Turkey's National Action Party, never influential, was virtually in eclipse. Though Turhan Feyzioglu's National Reliance Party provided the Defence Minister for the two cabinets and the Prime Minister for the third, nevertheless it could not supply an alternative to the JP.

Necmettin Erbakan's National Order Party suffered the fate of the workers party; it was dissolved on 20 May 1971 after a life of fifteen months. The constitutional court had found the leaders guilty of violating the constitution, related to the secular character of the state.⁴ But luckily enough the leaders were not penalized.

However shortly after in its place a new party, the National Salvation Party was founded in late 1972 under the leadership of Erbakan. Within a short period this party emerged as a prominent party and played an active role in formation of the coalition government.⁵

National Salvation Party's Approach

Generally the Turkish intelligentsia viewed it as the party of obscurantists determined to take Turkey back into its

4. Cumhuriyat, 22 and 23 May 1971 quoted in Feroz Ahmad, n.2, p.317.

5. Binnaz Topak, Islam and Political Development in Turkey (E.J.Brill, 1981), p.99.

glorious Islamic past. However, only a few really realized that the programmes of NSP was more than that of merely to confine within the four walls of religion.

It would be imperative to delineate here the issues raised by the party leadership during the election campaign. The major issue that the party leadership sought to politicize was the question of how and why, what was once a powerful empire now ranked among the less developed countries of the world. According to Erbakan and a number of other leaders of the NSP, the answer to that question lay in understanding the relationship between Turkey and the west. The Turks had lost their power and influence for they had alienated themselves from their own cultural heritage, while at the same time they had failed to industrialize. They took from the west what they needed least, namely western culture, which is inferior to the Turkish. And they failed to borrow what they needed most namely western technology.

The NSP emphasized the rapid industrialization and related it to the party's general view of Turkish history: the Turkish nation has failed to industrialize and, therefore, has lost its place in history. Thus the NSP's motto "A Grand Turkey Once Again", implies the regaining of grandeur through industrialization. The NSP's vision of a powerful Turkey similarly incorporates its leadership's promise of a factory for each city.

6. Ibid., p.102.

Apart from industrialization a major issue of concern for the NSP is social justice. The party leaders have repeatedly criticized the JP government's indifference to the plight of the poor and the under privileged. It has been quite vocal in its criticism of rising prices, unemployment rates, lack of adequate social security and medical insurance programmes. In addition, the NSP has argued in favour of more balanced regional development programmes which would give priority to the least developed areas of the country.

A final issue which completes the world view of the party is the importance given to education. For the NSP, a major reason behind Turkey's underdevelopment is the inadequate education policy of the governments, which has been geared to the imitation of both western culture and technology. If Turkey is to modernize, Turkish governments will have to guarantee universal higher education which emphasizes national historical traditions, which is creative rather imitative and which offers competence in technical fields.

If we carefully analyse the above summary of the NSP's views, it becomes obvious that little attention was given to explicit discussion of secularism or of religion in the manifesto. In general, the party confines to specific administrative problem and the type of education which they receive.

7. Ibid., p.103.

This clearly postulates that the NSP bases its appeal not on religion alone but on a well-defined political philosophy.⁸

The 1973 Presidential Election

The 1973 presidential election was the most critical political event to occur in Turkey since the 1960 military coup. It was a test of the strength of Turkey's civilian institutions and constitutional procedures as well as a test of the military's patience with civilian politicians and compromise politics.

Constitutionally, the position of president in Turkey is more ceremonial than substantive. The president was meant to play the role of a non-political chief of state rather than of a chief executive. Yet, since the 1960 coup and the subsequent politicization of the armed forces, the president has come to play an important extra-constitutional role as mediator between the armed forces and the political parties. Four of Turkey's first five presidents had been military officers. Since membership in the Grand National Assembly is necessary for presidential eligibility. Sunay had resigned from the top military post and had been appointed by the acting president

8. See Serif Mardin, "Religion and the Turkish Social Transformation", paper presented at the Conference in the Republic of Turkey, 1923-1973: Studies in 20th Century nation Building held at the University of Chicago, December 1973.

to fill a vacancy in the Senate. Unexpectedly, this time the whole procedure was questioned in the 1973 election.⁹

The commanders attempted to have their candidate, General Gurler, elected president. He resigned his post as Chief of the General Staff and was appointed Senator on the presidential quota, so that his candidature could be put forward. But in spite of all the pressures, the politicians though divided, stood firm and refused to elect Gurler. Demirel and Ecevit, though agreed on not electing a general for the third time, could not agree on a civilian candidate as an alternative. Humiliated by the rejection of their candidate, the commanders proposed amending the constitution so as to extend Sunny's term. The Assembly rejected this proposal too. Now the generals were left with no choice but to intervene or draw back. They reluctantly decided to draw back and asked the Assembly to choose its own candidate, with the sole condition that he be acceptable to the armed forces.¹⁰

Thus the war of ascendancy and ego between the army and the civilians ended in victory for the civilians when the Grand National Assembly elected a retired admiral, Fahri Koruturk,

9. Roger P. Nye, "Civil Military Confrontation in Turkey: The 1973 Presidential Election," International Journal of Middle East Studies, vol. 28, no. 4, April 1977, p. 211.

10. F. Ahmed, n. 2, p. 309.

as president of the Republic. Fahri was known as a Senator who respected the political system. The commanders acquiesced because he had been one of them and could be relied upon to remain independent of the politicians. In this way Turkey had democratically chosen her sixth president.¹¹

The Indecisive Election of 1973

For the Justice Party the 1973 election proved to be a major set-back whereas Ecevit's tireless effort bore fruit and his share of poll increased from 27 per cent in 1969 to 33 per cent in 1973.¹² Despite the considerable increase in the electoral support for the RPP, it was never in a position to form the government all alone. After a long consultation, Ecevit agreed to form coalition with NSP and became the Prime Minister. The coalition government was termed by the opposition leader Demirel as the first Turkish leftist government.¹³

If the Republicans and the Salvationists had something in common, their differences were equally great and perhaps fundamental. Thus the fate of the government was predictable. Ideologically the NSP was committed to restore the shattered image of Islam¹⁴ and basically represented the lower middle

11. G. Lewis, Modern Turkey, (London, 1974), p.192.

12. RPP acquired 185 seats out of 450 seats in the National Assembly and NSP got 49 seats.

13. New York Times, 14 June 1974, an article by David Tonge "Possibility to Tilt to Left in Turkey".

14. Dogu Ergil, "Electoral Issues: Turkey in Electoral Politics in Middle East," M. Jacob and Frank Tachi (eds.),

class, whereas the Republicans prescription was an up-dated Kemalist nationalism in which social welfare became a powerful ingredient.

However, Ecevit's political acumen and his handling of Cyprus crisis in 1974 in proper direction gave him tremendous prestige and unlimited popularity.¹⁵ The deputy Premier Erbakan, realizing that all the prestige and glory was going to Ecerit had begun to act independently of his partner. While Ecevit wanted to offer higher interest rates in order to encourage and increase bank deposits, Erbakan began speaking of establishing an interest free economic system, in keeping with Islamic principles. Erbakan's statements in Cyprus were more aggressive and expansionist proposing partition. While Ecevit maintained that partition had not been considered. With the coalition partners pulling in different direction, the partnership was not expected to last long. And finally Erbakan left the coalition and joined the Front set up by the JP and the NAP of Turkes.

With the defection of the NSP and formation of the National Front government there ended the 231 days of ministerial crisis, the longest in the Turkish political history.¹⁶ The Front under Demiret's leadership destroyed the

15. A western reporter from Ankara wrote, "Ecerit has acquired like President Sadat of Egypt, charisma from military and political success which will see him through difficulties and snag descend on Ankara in the autumn. Anthony Madermett, "Ecerit Gains Charisma", Guardian (London), 19 August 1974.

16. The National Front was comprised of JP, RRP, NSP, NAP and splinter group of DP headed by Demirel.

momentum that Ecevit's charisma had built up during the Cyprus crisis. And Demirel deliberately procrastinated the election which would have given him a popular mandate. By and large he pursued the same policies adopted by Ecevit. Although Demirel was successful in outplaying Ecevit politically, yet he failed to maintain the political balance and stability.

Towards the end of 1974, already the die was cast. The clock and dagger intrigue in the Turkish politics was fast overtaken by a spate of sporadic violence unleashed by the political parties to settle political scores. The political issues were no longer decided within the four walls of the National Assembly. They were rather brought to the streets with battons and bullets as the final arbitrators.

An ugly incident took place in the National Assembly when a lunatic made a futile attempt to assassinate the Prime Minister Demirel. Naturally, this sinister act provoked the JP's supporters. There was a strong feeling that Ecevit had a hand in the attempt on the life of his opponent. However, the Nationalist front's strategy of bullying the RPP and maligning Ecevit proved less effective. The massive Istanbul rally signalled the popular support the RPP enjoyed.¹⁷

17. On 28 June 1975 a massive crowd estimated around 200,000 assembled in Taskin Square to hear him. Sunday Telegraph, 30 June 1975.

The peripheral political groups like National Action Party precipitated a vicious crusade against the Turkish left, the Dev-Geni Dev Al, Dev Yol (Revolutionary Road), the Disk (Confederation of Revolutionary Workers Unions) and the PKK (Kurdish Workers Party). By this time violence began to play an active role in deciding political disputes.¹⁸ In the beginning it was NAP but from 1977 onwards a number of other right wing organizations competed with each other. Deaths from political violence mounted; 35 deaths in 1975, 40 in 1976, 200 in 1977 and finally 3500 in 1980, before military takeover.¹⁹

Amidst the political strife general election was held in June 1977. But the election outcome only served to make the matters worse. Although the RPP enhanced its electoral performance in securing 42 per cent of votes in 1977, it had to bank on few defectors from JP to form the ministry in January 1978. As the violence continued unabatedly, Ecerit government's inefficiency to deal with it effectively, aggravated the already festering situation. In the Kurdish issue, a number of RPP Deputies resigned that brought down his majority. In the economic sphere his ill-prepared social

18. By all accounts the violence was organised against Ecerit by the parties of the Nationalist Front by inciting the people against the "irreligious Republicans". See, Feroz Ahmad, n.2, p.352.

19. Keissing's Archives, 1981, p.3104. There were also attempts on Ecerit's life in Geride in the RPP political functions by the NAP and JP supporters on 21 June 1975.

experiments and wrong inflationary policies drew Turkey to the verge of bankruptcy. Unable to tackle the situation Ecevit had no option but to resign which he did unwillingly on 16 October in great disgust. Demirel availed this opportunity offered by Ecevit by forming a minority government, with the political backing of the NSP and NAP. Demirel further added fuel to the fire by giving free hand to his coalition partners to involve in political murders that soon dragged the country into a state of political seige.

Against this background of a confused political scene escalating violence of political nature and a continuing economic crisis "the season for speculation an army intervention into government in Turkey has started."²⁰

Another political analyst speculated "Barring, therefore any dramatic upheaval as in Iran, the likelist prospect for Turkey is the continuation of one or another political pattern of its recent past. For instance, a military intervention of the 1960 or 1971 type though unlikely cannot be ruled out."²¹ If military coups were cyclical "commented the Times, just few days before the General takeover" Turkey would be for one any time now.

20. Metin Munir, "Army Intervention Threat Looms Larger in Turkey", Financial Times (London), 12 October 1979.

21. Rustow, Turkey's Travails, p.99.

Since the defective electoral system of proportional representation introduced by the second Republic never allowed the main parties to acquire comfortable majority, they had to rely upon those small groups to form the ministry. Thus the main parties the RPP and JP caught up in this process which weakened their positions.²² Besides the level of political differentiation was so much that there was hardly any compromise reached, which was injurious to political health. For example, both the parties squandered precious time in trading the Prime Ministership back and forth five times in six years.

Towards the close of the 1970s, the political factions raised their ugly head. The Rightists and the ultra-nationalists like national Action Party led by Alparslan Turkes and NSP of Erbakan demanded concessions to the religious groups in defiance of the basic philosophy of the constitution. Erbakan, the leader of the NSP carried out the movement against the socialist and the communists, which resulted in unprecedented bloodshed and the killing of innocent civilians.

On the extreme right the NAP leader Turkes forcefully advocated Pan-Turkism, political unification, of Turkey with Turkic-speaking people in Iran and Soviet Union.²³ He also

22. Kara Kartal Benar, "Turkey: The Army as the Guardian of the Political Order" in Christopher and George Philip (eds.), The Political Dilemma of Military Regimes (London, 1985), p.53.

23. In the words of Turkes, the new age is the age of the nationalist action. In this age, the principle 'Everything for the Turk, According to the Turk, see, Ergil Dagu, Electoral Issue, Turkey, p.26.

urged uncompromising hostility towards communism. His appeal to nationalism gained him supporters all over the country and particularly in areas where Turks lived with other ethnic groups like the Kurds.

Amid this political chaos, constitutional deadlock, administrative paralysis, fascist threat, economic bankruptcy and above all the supine attitude to tackle the situation, after several admonition, the Turkish Army finally made the public declaration that it had a duty to step in to stem the rot. For the third time since the inception of the Turkey Republic the army intervened on 12 September 1980. Thus the Turkish army as the last resort carried out its duty, entrusted to them by Ataturk's legacy.²⁴

24. Kemal Ahmet, "Military Rule: The Future of Democracy in Turkey", MERIP Report, March-April 1984, p.24.

CHAPTER-IV

CONCLUSION

Since the introduction of a multi-party system in Turkey in 1945, the Turkish army has intervened thrice in politics and violated the principle of civilian supremacy. This has led many political observers and analysts to believe that the Turkish army is an integral part of Turkish political system without which Turkish democracy would not survive. They ascribe the recurring phenomenon of military intervention in Turkey to the combination of a variety of structural, historical and circumstantial variables.

The Turkish armed forces are different in composition, spirit and orientation from the armed forces of other countries. The Turks first got prominence in Islam by virtue of their military prowess. They served as military retainers of reigning Muslim monarchs. The Ottoman Empire owed a good deal to the army for its survival for centuries. In particular the elite Janissary corps occupied an important political position in the imperial structure. Describing the historical role of the Turkish army historian Lybyer wrote, "the Ottoman Government had been an army before it was anything else... in fact, Army and Government were one. War was the external purpose, Government the internal purpose, of one institution, composed of one body of men." In the same fashion an American expert on military politics while analysing the role of army

in republican Turkey has described the Turkish army as "the deurex machine of Turkish politics and the veritable talisman against evil eye of political chaos." He further says that "it could be always counted on to save Republic from internal disruption".

Traditionally the army officers have been leaders in the struggle for progress and democracy. Most of the young Turks were army officers and so were the founders of the Turkish Republic. Who subsequently resigned from their military posts and played leading roles in politics and civilian administration. The Turkish armed forces take great pride in the historic role they played in saving their country from dismemberment and rupture as well as from foreign domination. They also feel that they have a special responsibility for defending the secular state and preserving the Kemalist reforms.

The justification for army intervention in Turkey is often sought in Ataturk's legacy. It is said that inspite of the apparent separation of military from civil authority Kemal was assured of military support for his far reaching reform programmes. By the same token, the military were assured of freedom from partisan political interferences in their affairs as well as access to the highest authorities of the state. There is also feeling among the political observers that the army intervention in Turkey was not seen against resentment of people.

However, one finds enough historical evidences contrary to the above observation. The characterization of the phenomenon of army intervention as historical or cultural or Kemalist legacy may be misleading. There is no denying fact that Mustafa Kemal was successful in defeating the forces of occupation and dismantling the Ottoman Empire mainly because of his association with the armed forces. But this is a fact that as early as 1909 he had stoutly opposed the young Turks practice of continuing the membership of the party to be combined with the membership of the army. Kemal declared "As long as officers remain in the party, we shall neither build a strong party nor a strong army". He later, on another occasion commented publicly "To be victorious in the internal affairs of a country is due less to an army than to the successful offices of a government". Kemal himself repudiated the union and progress and thus a political career. Moreover his own official portrait was taken in white tie and tails, rather than military regalia.

This clearly explains his faith that military and political function could not be combined legitimately in one person. Therefore he preferred to a purely political career and supremacy of the civil power. The abolition of the caliphate is an eloquent example of his commitment to popular sovereignty and his vision of a new political order.

To sum up, the commitment to civil political supremacy not to the military overlordship essentially constitutes the national cultural tradition of Turkey. Although historically the army had occupied an important position in the Turkish political life, the remarkable transition from soldiering to politics, by Mustafa Kemal made a distinct break with this tradition.

Many scholars had the impression that the army intervention in Turkey enjoys popular support. However, their impression does not conform to the facts. Of course in all three cases (1960, 1971 and 1980) the people initially welcomed army's quick response and appreciated its operation. Nonetheless on no occasion, there was any popular support to the army to perpetuate its rule for ever. This is very much evident from the results of the general elections held each time after the military withdrawal.

In each time the supporters of the army suffered considerably. Ismet Inonu the leader of the Republican Peoples Party's support to the army in 1960 and 1971 cost him dearly. In the 1961 election despite the army's tacit support, he failed to secure majority votes and after 1971 had to give up the leadership of the party too. Whereas Bulent Ecevit who was against the army intervention improved his position in the general elections as well as the image of his party before the masses.

In this connection, the example of the general elections of 1983 would be interesting. The Motherland Party of Mr. Turgut Ozal which was opposed by the army got sweeping victory. On the other hand Bulent Ulusu's National Democratic Party (NDP) having considerable backing of the army was pushed to the third position with merely 21 seats.

This is one of the fundamental reasons that coup leaders have failed to institutionalize a military regime in Turkey. For the institutionalization it is indispensable that civilians must accept subordination to military leadership. It was not possible as a permanent feature, though the civilians appreciated intervention for the time being. Moreover, even when Democrats were deprived of power, the army sought allies among the Republicans, in order to secure legitimacy. Likewise in 1971, when the soldiers struck they cooperated with the liberal politicians. Yet both the times, the army backed political allies were rejected by the majority in the elections.

The army intervention of 1960 was essentially a coup against a majority party which had entrenched itself in power with rural support and in broad terms, was neglecting reforms and consequently modernization. When the Democrats came to power, they pursued a policy which appeared against the spirit of Ataturk. First, the Democrat Party limited the Republican Peoples Party's earlier economic estatism (which had imposed and maintained strict state monopolies in many fields) and

encouraged private enterprise at its expense. Secondly, it took a less view of secularism, allowing, even encouraging an Islamic revival in Turkey, restoring the use of Arabic for the call to prayer and publication of Arabic books. As a result, Islamic groups increased their political activity.

Initially after attaining power, the Democrat enjoyed great popularity in Turkey among the businessmen, who benefited from the move away from estatism; among religious Turks who could again practice their faith in public; and above all among the peasants who had good harvests in the early 1950s due to the government's rural development plans.

However, the economic boom was deceptive and partly dependent on unusually good harvests. From the middle 1950s crops were less successful, imports greatly exceeded exports and inflationary trends were very much in evidence. The cost of living rose by approximately 150 per cent between 1953 and 1958. The galloping inflation affected every sections of people. At the same time, the Democrats further relaxed the restrictions on religious practices, causing an upsurge of superstition and even open attack on Ataturk by religious fanatics. In their quest for votes, the Democrat leaders offered special treatment to minority groups in ways that appeared to threaten national unity.

On the other hand, the military has been the most active modernizing force in Turkey. Moreover, during the 1950s, a new spirit was rapidly pervading the officer corps. Since 1948 United States military aid both in modern weapons and in training was dramatically changing the Turkish military establishment. Thousands of young officers were sent abroad for training, not only to the United States but to European countries as well. A Turkish regiment fought in Korea; Turkish officers were assigned to NATO commands and engaged in multinational military manouvres.

This experience on the one hand reinforced their impression that Turkey lagged behind in social and economic development, and could catch up with the West only through radical social and economic reform. At the same time, it prompted some of the officers who had been exposed to the sophisticated techniques of war to have no respect for their more traditionally minded superiors. Thus the hopes of young officers were fast vanishing, when they found that the Democrats were not only neglecting modernization but also pursuing a policy which was against the spirit of Ataturk. Consequently they had no option but to intervene.

However, the political scenario after the May 27, 1960 coup changed rapidly from the earlier decade. The new constitution that was drafted after the coup made a great change in

the former constitution. Briefly constitution guaranteed the Turks individual liberties considered fundamental in West European democracies. The new constitution laid down that political parties were necessary in a democracy, hence may be formed freely and function unhindered. Parties, therefore, became institutionalized under the new constitution. In addition, it promised social and economic rights, with provision for the right of the state to plan economic development so as to achieve social justice and the right of the individual to the ownership and inheritance of property and the freedom of work and enterprise.

In theory the state was given the right to plan economic development so as to achieve social justice. On the other hand the new constitution did not make any substantial change in the old political and socio-economic set up. Consequently the socio-economic basis of power remained unaltered and the old political forces were bound to come to forefront. This became the principle contradiction, because the neo-Democrats and Conservative Republicans were determined to prevent its implementation in order to protect their own interests.

According to the provisions of the new constitution, new political parties were formed and each party started propagating its own programme. Taking full advantage of the liberal constitution each party tried to establish its own form of government.

The Rightists formed right wing youth organization called "commandos". They demonstrated in the streets; their first violent action occurred on 31 December 1968, when they broke into the quarters of Leftist Students. Since then, they broke up leftist meetings, smashed windows of bookshops sold leftist literature. The aim of these youths was to revive and re-establish Islamic civilization and to assist the rightist party in defending Turkey from Communism.

On the other hand the leftists were equally active to bring about Communist revolution in Turkey. They formed many radical organizations, and called for mutual support between workers and peasants, and appealed to revolutionaries to assist them against the landowners, attack imperialism and the United States. From 1968 onwards disorders in the universities and clashes between political extremists of the right and the left took unprecedented violent form. These activities dragged the country to the brink of civil war.

This was the situation on the eve of the second army intervention. The army presented a memorandum on 12 March 1971 and demanded a strong and credible government to end the anarchic situation and fratricidal strife as well as social and economic disorder.

Responsibility for this situation had been placed squarely on the shoulders of parliament and the government. The commanders gave ultimatum that if reforms were not carried out quickly, they would take over and finally they stepped into do so.

Whatever may be the situation, we cannot justify the army intervention to violate the principle of civilian supremacy in order to save the essence of civilian supremacy. Indirectly the army itself is responsible for this anarchy. Because the constitution of 1961 was army sponsored constitution and it was drafted under their supervision. It was this constitution which gave unlimited freedom without proper check, of which extremist rightists and leftists took full advantage. Secondly the constitution did not make any substantial change in political, socio-economic condition, which obstructed in the implementation of the new provision guaranteed in the Constitution. Thirdly the provision of proportionate electorate system weakened the majority party to implement programmes effectively. Moreover, the army's justification for intervention by citing the Kenya Speech delivered by Mustafa in 1931 that Turkish army was totally subordinate to the civilian power and entrusted with the mission of securing unconditional defence of the Turkish Republic against both external and internal danger, could be questioned.

If the political culture of a nation is the sum total of its orientation at a given moment in history, then Mustafa Kemal's assertion regarding army's role was relevant at the time, when Turkish Republic was in its infancy and not free from internal as well as external dangers, and not now, when Turkish republic has acquired political maturity and healthy democracy.

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