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URBAN GUERRILLAS IN TURKEY: CAUSES
AND CONSEQUENCES

Donald E. Reilly

Army War College
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6 March 1972

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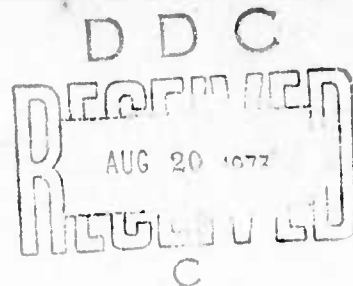
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URBAN GUERRILLAS IN TURKEY:
CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES,

A MONOGRAPH

by

Donald E. Reilly,
USIA



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The urban guerrilla movement in Turkey has been arrested by a military victory over the armed wing of the insurgents. But the ideological Left is not yet out of action. The government now rules with the backing of the Army. If this situation continues, the country will, in effect, become a military regime. If new elections are held, the ousted Justice Party (JP) is a sure bet to win. The Army has already indicated it will not support a JP government. And if the JP comes to power, the Left will probably reactivate its campaign.

Turkey anchors the southern flank of NATO and its strides in economic development have been a good example to Middle East countries. The Soviet Union depends on an uninterrupted access to the Bosphorus to maintain its Mediterranean fleet and supply lines to Egypt. A sympathetic Turkey or a country preoccupied with internal problems would probably serve Soviet interests better than a strong, developing Turkey.

The Turkish rebels apparently had outside assistance and there are some authors who specifically name the Soviet Union as a source of guns and ideology.

Research on this paper included a study of recent political developments in Turkey; an appraisal of the literature of guerrilla strategy; a review of the current operations in Turkey based on translations of primary source materials (radio and newspaper reports).

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"The Turkish nation hereby enacts and proclaims this Constitution . . . and entrusts it to the vigilance of her sons and daughters who are devoted to the concepts of freedom, justice and integrity, with the conviction that its basic guarantee lies in the hearts and minds of her citizens."

Preamble, Second Turkish Republic, July 9, 1961

"Article 124--In the event of war or a situation likely to lead to war or in case of a revolt or the emergence of definite indications of a serious and active uprising against the homeland and the Republic, the Council of Ministers may proclaim martial law . . ."

CHAPTER I

THE DILEMMA OF TURKISH DEMOCRACY

The Turkish Republic was founded in 1923 by the Army. Since then, the Army has vigilantly defended the Republic and the Constitution against foreign and domestic attempts to dismantle the state.

From 1923 to 1950 the country was ruled by the Republican People's Party (RPP) which was established by the great Turkish leader Mustafa Kemal, known as Ataturk. Politics was simple in those days. Most active politicians were compatriots of Ataturk and devoted followers of "Kemalism."

In 1946 the multiparty system was born and in 1950 the RPP lost its dominant role. Power shifted to the Democrat Party (DP), headed by Adnan Menderes.

The DP attempted to exploit the Constitution to perpetuate itself in power. But the Army stepped out of the wings to save the Republic from authoritarianism.

The reasons for the May 27, 1960 Army coup against the Menderes government were three-fold: the expanding role of religion in a secular state; an attempt to pass laws to curtail political freedom, silence the press and destroy opposition parties; an economic policy which left the country one billion dollars in debt.

Menderes was tried and hanged by the Army. Some say it was the only way out of the impasse. Had he lived, some argued, he would have retained support of the masses of the people and it would have been impossible to proceed with reorganizing the country.

For 17 months following the coup, the Turkish Army administered the country by direct rule. The results were not spectacular and the Army wanted to return the government to civilian control before its reputation became tarnished.

A Constitution which established the Second Turkish Republic was promulgated July 9, 1961. Keeping in mind the abuses of the Menderes regime, the new Constitution incorporated many articles guaranteeing political freedoms and insuring that religion remained a private matter in which the state had no role.

National Assembly elections were held in October, 1961, and the RPP managed to recover its sway over the country by aligning itself with smaller parties to form coalitions.

But in the 1965 election, a successor to the Democrat Party emerged. Called the Justice Party, its moderate platform appealed

to the same workers, farmers and businessmen who supported the DP. The Justice Party won an absolute majority in both houses in the 1965 election.

The JP was headed by Suleyman Demirel, a 48-year-old, peasant-born civil engineer, who was trained in Istanbul and the United States. Demirel had to walk a political tightrope which circumscribed the speed with which he could move the country forward. As an unofficial successor to the DP, his JP was suspect by the Army and intellectuals.

Ismet Giritli wrote,

In order for the Justice Party to assume power, it was necessary not only to win an election but also that it arrive at accommodation with Turkey's senior military officers, who feared that the Party would embark on a course of revenge for the 1960 coup.¹

Demirel successfully carried out his task of wooing the military. Michael P. Hyland praises Demirel's approach,

With unexpected but masterful finesse, Prime Minister Demirel maintained for the junta the fiction of success while he simultaneously kept the upper hand, tenuously but successfully, over the extremist JP members and those who urged him to use his 1965 election victory for revenge against the junta.²

Demirel also resisted pressures to suppress political opponents and curtail civil liberties. There was greater latitude and "tolerance for a much greater range of social and political views and organizations than at almost any other period in Turkish history."³

On the economic front, progress was not overwhelming but promising. Production rose during 1964-1968 at an annual rate of better than 9 percent. It reached as high as 11.1 percent in 1968 but has since slowed down.

Demirel also had difficulty holding down religious zealots as evidenced by the number of new mosques and religious schools built. It was obvious that Turkey was in for a long, slow uphill fight to modernize. It would need all the talent in the country working together for a long period of time. The Army seemed willing to accept this fact. The major political parties also seemed realistic on this score. And the peasants and average citizens had demonstrated time and time again that they, too, would go along with democracy as long as discernible progress continued.

But there was another political grouping on the horizon which threatened either to hurl Turkey into anarchy or back into the arms of the reluctant Army. These were the intellectuals and pundits, schooled in Europe, and intoxicated with the prospects of rapid social and economic reform. They originally grouped together under the banner of the Turkish Labor Party, a party which ironically did not have laborers in it.

Since communism was outlawed in Turkey by the Criminal Code, the TLP was obliged to campaign for social and economic reform rather than for class warfare--its real goal--as will be revealed later in its election rhetoric.

Analyzing the 1965 election results, the TLP concluded that it was useless to campaign primarily on domestic issues and dragged

foreign policy into its orbit. The TLP made the United States the butt of its campaign. Yet the majority of Turks were not anti-American, an opinion study showed. "Only a relatively tiny minority of Turkey's adult population is clearly opposed to the country's basic foreign policy, including her participation in the Western Alliance."⁴

The TLP said in 1967,

The second war for independence has started. The enemy is the United States. The passive resistance movement will be intensified. We will surround every American on duty in Turkey with a circle of hatred and vengeance. This circle will be closed in like a circle of fire around a Scorpion.⁵

With Demirel's freedom circumscribed by the necessity to reassure continually the military he was not reverting to DP tactics, the Left was free to pursue its dual goals: attacking the government through its relationship with the U.S. and attacking the state by its innuendoes that the country would proceed faster under socialism.

In the 1969 election Demirel's party again won a majority of assembly seats despite an eroding economic picture and organized terrorism.

The Left had turned to violence for several reasons: the 1969 election results proved that the TLP was totally ineffective as a political party; the Army supported the Constitution and the parties elected under it; other developing countries had demonstrated an ability to overthrow governments using revolutionary tactics; and the Soviet Union seemed willing to support extremists in Turkey.

Today the country is trying to retain its Constitutional form of government with the direct backing of the Army. The tactic looks good on the surface but it is not working. Already several members of a so-called "reform" cabinet have resigned.⁶ An armed threat to the country remains, according to the new Premier, Nihat Erim, who said,

There is a mysterious underground organization whose tentacles reach from Stockholm to Palestine. This organization trains men in guerrilla camps in Palestine and dispatches them to other countries.⁷

Given the political dynamics of Turkey, it is impossible to say what the future will bring. The mass of Turks are conservative and willing to make haste slowly. But twice in a decade the state has been threatened: once by greedy politicians and recently by outside-supported anarchists.

Giritli concludes the future of Turkey will depend on its ability to "compromise between rural and urban interests, between a sophisticated intelligentsia and an uneducated rural population." And he is not sure the country can find a formula. "Whether the Second Turkish Republic and its leaders today can cope with this massive prescription remains to be seen."⁸

Hyland is encouraged by the 1969 election results which he optimistically claims demonstrated: "an immediate respite from much of the turmoil that has plagued Turkey during nine years of political dislocation; and, an improved opportunity to continue national development with better programs and greater justice than previously."⁹ While these are encouraging thoughts, they

do not take into consideration the level of organized violence resorted to by illegal political opposition.

While the scholars cited above ponder Turkey's future within the existing constitutional framework, there is a possibility that Turkey may be temperamentally and historically unable to function under a liberal Constitution. It must be remembered that the Constitution is a series of ideas and concepts imported from European countries. The Constitution did not evolve from the societal and ethical needs of the Turks themselves. It may be that Turkey will have to go through a series of crises until a formula emerges suitable to the genius of its people. Ferenc A. Vali addresses this possibility:

The Turkish state and nation, although heir to many problems that burdened the Ottoman Empire, is a new member of the family of nations and, due to the peculiarities of its location and of its national substance and character, is still engaged in a search to establish its real identity.¹⁰

Extremists thought that the "real identity" of Turkey could be fashioned from the barrel of a Sten gun. But they misjudged the "national substance and character" of the Turkish people.

CHAPTER I

FOOTNOTES

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CHAPTER II

THE ROOTS OF REVOLUTION

The concept of violent revolution to achieve political ends can be traced to England. In 1660 the "Rump Parliament" was forcibly overthrown and the monarchy restored. Violent revolution was used in the same way in 1688 when the Stuarts were ousted in favor of William and Mary. The event was called, "The Glorious Revolution," although it was thought of as a restoration rather than a revolution.¹

In looking for antecedents to the current vogue in revolutions, it is necessary to return to the French Revolution, the grandfather of all contemporary intellectual and politically-based revolutions.

In the French Revolution monarchy was deposed, economic classes turned upside down, and the role of social classes inverted.

Since nothing even remotely comparable in quality on the level of thought resulted from the course of the American Revolution, revolutions had definitely come under the sway of the French Revolution in general and under the predominance of the social questions in particular.²

The French Revolution taught Marx that poverty was a potent political force. He remembered Robespierre's Reign of Terror and the hunt for villains upon whose dead bodies a new society would rise. Thus,

It was for the sake of revolution that Marx introduced an element of politics into the new science of economics and thus made it what it pretended to be--political economy--an economy which rested on political power and hence could be overthrown by political organization and revolutionary means.³

Lenin saw revolution taking place in large, industrial cities, supported and led by an elite cadre of professional revolutionaries. While paying lip service to Marxist notions of a union of workers and peasants, Lenin was convinced that revolution was no job for an amateur. In a 1902 essay he said:

A worker-agitator who is at all gifted and 'promising' must not be left to work eleven hours a day in a factory. We must arrange that he be maintained by the party; that he may go underground in good time; that he may change the place of his activity; if he is to enlarge his experience, widen his outlook, and be able to hold out for at least a few years in the struggle against the gendarmes.⁴

The Bolsheviks under Lenin seized the cities and towns of Russia and used existing urban institutions and urban workers as the backbone of the revolution. Lenin did not rely on the peasants and in fact distrusted them.⁵

The Maoist view of revolution coincides more closely with Marxist theory of a union of workers and peasants. Mao fought and proselytized through the back alleys of China over a 22-year period until he arrived at his destination--Peking. Mao championed the village-to-city route as the key to successful revolution.

In sum, Lenin said revolution flowed down to the peasants; Mao proved revolution could spring up from the peasants.

Modern transport and communications and new theories of urban warfare have caused theorists to modify some of Mao's concepts. For example, his former chief confidant, Lin Piao, in 1965 revealed a new wrinkle. Lin said,

Taking the entire globe, if North America and Western Europe can be called the cities of the world, then Asia, Africa, and Latin America constitute the rural areas of the world. In a sense, the contemporary world revolution also presents a picture of the encirclement of cities by rural areas.⁶

This explanation reveals the adaptability of Mao's theories to contemporary revolution.

There is no doubt that Mao Tse Tung ranks as the greatest of revolutionary theoreticians.

Mao, like Clausewitz, in regular military theory, did not invent something new. His ability lies, rather, in pulling together a group of previously unrelated and unstructured techniques--shaping them into a simple operational pattern. He is the man who has written it down for others; the man who has presented the Communist revolutionary with the workable blueprint. As such it is a remarkable theoretical extrapolation from his own experiences with fixed politico-military conditions in China--hung loosely on a Marxist framework.⁷

Mao's theory depends on political indoctrination and patience and confidence in victory concurrent with successful military operations. Today's revolutionaries seem daring and confident enough, but few have the patience and political fortitude necessary to carry out a successful long-term revolution.

Among the most recent writings on guerrilla warfare is the "Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla," published in June, 1969 by Brazilian guerrilla Carlos Marighella. This manual of tactics appeared in a Cuban Communist publication, "Transcontinental," and has since been translated and distributed around the world. The Turkish People's Liberation Army's scenario follows the Minimanual like a textbook.

On strategy, Marighella says that the goal of the urban guerrilla is:

To distract, to wear out, to demoralize the militarists, the military dictatorship and its repressive forces, and also to attack and destroy the wealth and property of the North Americans, the foreign managers, and the Brazilian upper class. The urban guerrilla is not afraid of dismantling and destroying the present Brazilian economic, political and social system, for his aim is to help the rural guerrilla and to collaborate in the creation of a totally new and revolutionary social and political structure, with the armed people in power.⁸

Marighella's catalogue of tactics pose a difficult challenge to any government striving to meet rising expectations with limited resources. He says urban guerrillas should finance themselves. The Minimanual suggests bank robberies to obtain funds and police ambushes to obtain weapons. Terrorist acts against institutions and persons should be used to discredit the government. Marighella contends that as the government and institutions are sufficiently weakened, they will become more repressive, driving the rural masses to the banner of the revolutionaries.

James Eliot Cross, in his excellent study, "Conflict in the Shadows," comments on the dilemma urban guerrillas pose to government. He says:

It seems that every action the government takes to suppress the rebel disrupts normal life--the very thing the government wishes not to do. Curfews, travel restrictions, check points, spot searches of buildings and people may be necessary but work against the government. First they signal government's concern and thus indirectly acknowledge strength of the rebel

movement. Second, controls irritate people and restrict freedoms, giving rebel propagandists a field day.⁹

Cross notes that the urban guerrilla need not count on a large portion of the population to achieve success. "The active participation of a small number of people, and the general apathy of the majority often provides all the popular support necessary to make a successful revolution."¹⁰

This view differs radically from Mao and Vo Nguyen Giap, Commander in Chief of the North Vietnamese Army. Both these Asian revolutionaries place heavy emphasis on establishing control over the population--Mao through political persuasion and Giap through persuasion and terror.

Che Guevara, too, advocated establishing politically secure rural bases from which to operate. Although Che remains a "celebrated corpse," his theories are suspect because he violated some cardinal guerrilla rules. He warned repeatedly, "Popular support is indispensable . . . the guerrilla must have absolute cooperation from the people living in the area. . . ." Yet he ignored these tenets during his Bolivian adventure and paid with his life in October, 1967.

Richard H. Sanger, in his book, "Insurgent Era," implies the role of the urban guerrilla is misunderstood. He says that the armed role of urban guerrillas is a last resort should political attempts to seize power fail. The valuable role of an urban guerrilla is to undermine the government through political action.

He notes that an urban insurrection grows insidiously and could be underway for many months or years before authorities recognize it. Rebels would identify with popular unrest and exploit it and only if their goals are uncovered would they then resort to underground guerrilla tactics.

In fact, Sanger lists "armed action" last in his "Life Cycle of a Revolution," a scheme he has proposed to trace how rebels seek power. He says:

Idea men and popular leaders are the essential ingredients to revolution. These are followed by a need to identify with and exploit popular causes (nationalism, anti-imperialism, political injustice, economics and social imbalances); front organizations and penetration of government bureaus and institutions are next in importance. After these, the revolutionary task is to work toward undermining the government. If political tactics fail, then the rebels turn to military operations.¹¹

Sanger places heavy emphasis on the need for an insurgent group to have outside support. Yet as early as 1965 Lin Piao said that a successful war of liberation "is the business of the masses in that country and should be carried out primarily by their own efforts; there is no other way."¹²

Counterinsurgency aimed at both the urban and rural guerrilla is a fairly new art which has been well developed in the last decade. Unfortunately, it relies heavily on repression by military means and oftentimes the political cancers which gave birth to the revolution in the first place are neither treated nor cured. Yet experts in counterinsurgency insist that political redress is the only sure cure.

Cross says that " . . . it becomes evident that the only true solution to a government's problem in coping with popular unrest lies in the political field."¹³ This view is shared by LTC Herbert L. Frandsen. In his well-done case study on Che Guevara's activities in Bolivia, Frandsen said, "Internal reforms are vital to deprive malcontents of vulnerable platforms."¹⁴

Charles Maechling, Jr., writing in the "Foreign Service Journal," states categorically that "no insurgency can be permanently defeated as long as the underground base remains intact. The infrastructure can never be rooted out in an atmosphere of political chaos, economic disruption, and hostility to the central government."¹⁵

Neil Sheehan writes,

In examining the history of such wars over the past forty years or so, one discovers that virtually all of them have been civil conflicts that were ultimately decided by the interaction of indigenous political economic and social conditions; by the ability or inability of the local government to relate meaningfully to its own people.¹⁶

It takes years for the benefits of political reforms and economic infrastructure industry to produce visible results. It is during this gestation period that a government is most vulnerable to criticism, penetration and subversion. In order to assure the peaceful atmosphere in which orderly change can take place, the government has to know and contain the enemies of the state. Cross says, "Probably the most effective instrument that a government can bring to bear against a campaign of urban

violence is an efficient police intelligence service, or to use the less palatable term for it, a good secret police."¹⁷ Cross adds that the urban guerrilla is "painfully vulnerable to detection or exposure by traitors and spies . . ."¹⁸

Marighella warns, " . . . the danger of betrayal is present and the enemy encourages betrayal or infiltrates spies into the organization." His remedy for dealing with spies: "For their part the urban guerrilla must not evade the duty--once he knows who the spy or informer is--of wiping him out physically."¹⁹

The Irish Republican Army (IRA) was obsessed with the question of spies and infiltrators. Michael Collins, who reorganized the IRA in 1920 and was Director of Intelligence, formed a special unit called "The Squad," consisting of 12 men reporting directly to him. Its sole purpose was to deal with spies.

They carried out executions on all informers after investigations and were deadly gunmen, picked for their nerve and daring, who always carried two revolvers. Their card was a placard which they placed on the body. On it was printed 'spies and informers beware.'²⁰

Collins wrote in the daily newspaper, New York American, in 1922, "Without her spies, England was helpless. It was only by means of their accumulated and accumulating knowledge that the British machine could operate."²¹

In addition to good policework, a country threatened with insurrection can call on friends for help. But this must be done with circumspection to avoid giving an impression of weakness.

Cross says, "Governments hate to call on foreign friends and troops for help in putting down insurgents because a cry for outside help is tantamount to an admission of impotence."²² However, he adds, threatened governments will welcome material aid and diplomatic support. "It is critically important to demonstrate beyond a shadow of doubt that the Communist-inspired guerrilla risings threatening the weaker nations of the Free World are in fact, inspired, supported, and guided from the Communist powers."²³

LTC Frandsen concluded in his report on Bolivia that one of the reasons for government success against Che was that the government convinced the people that the rebellion was foreign. Frandsen also places emphasis on the fact that the "Bolivians did the job themselves." He said, "It is vital that the U.S. use restraint and provide only assistance to help the country do the job itself."²⁴

U.S. policy has shown keen sensitivity to the pitfalls of direct intervention, although some occasions require direct action, i.e. Lebanon, Dominican Republic and, of course, Vietnam. Former Undersecretary of State U. Alexis Johnson in 1962, articulated the policy that the U.S. prefers to assist foreign countries through "assistance programs designed to enable a threatened government to defend itself and its territories--but if necessary through direct military intervention."²⁵ Since this statement, President Nixon has emphasized the U.S. role in assisting foreign countries with materiel but not manpower. Cambodia is considered an example of the "Nixon Doctrine" in operation.

At Fort Bragg special warfare personnel are cautioned on the political implications of assisting foreign governments to counter insurgents. "The Internal Defense Development Planning Guide," issued by the Special Warfare School cautions, "The application of force by a foreign power, unless carefully applied through the medium of the local government, can have a debilitating effect on the government's power to control the affairs of its own nation."²⁶

Neil Sheehan warns against the pitfalls in a policy of "intervention." He wrote,

Those who wish to intervene on either side of these squabbles, however, would do well to remember that in much of Asia, Latin America, and Africa, where democratic processes are either nonexistent or a charade to mask authoritarian rule, civil wars have historically constituted a brutal kind of national election. And no foreign power--be it the United States, the Soviet Union, China or Cuba--has yet found a means to manipulate the mass will of another nation.²⁷

Technically Sheehan is correct but certainly the Soviets and China have learned how to exploit the mass will to create unrest.

Cross takes a mid-position between intervention and hands-off. He contends that America is capable of assisting a friendly nation without becoming overidentified or overcommitted. But he firmly believes that the U.S. must recognize its interests in the nation at stake and be prepared to tell the nation the facts as the U.S. sees them.

From the very start, the Ambassador has to realize that he is in reality a silent, limited partner in the activities of the government to which he is accredited and that in the last

analysis the leader of that government needs him and all that he can provide them far more than he or the U.S. government needs them or the integrity of their nation . . . traditional niceties cannot disguise or satisfy what is in many states a serious need for guidance and leadership.²⁸

Oftentimes the threatened government may have information that the Soviet Union or China is behind a rebel movement. But the government may be extremely reluctant to say so publicly for fear of rupturing diplomatic relations. Thus the threatened government is forced to fight the outside-supported rebels without revealing who they really are. In too many instances this lack of candor wins support for the rebels whose only overt identification is with popular issues.

In the Turkish experience there seemed no alternative but to let the revolution run its course hoping that the rebels would expose themselves as followers of another ideology. This is the policy the government pursued and it worked. When the army was finally called in, the government was made the scapegoat and resigned, but the Constitution and the state held firm.

The army, too, sensed there was no other way. The Turkish Army Chief of Staff, General Tagmac said,

We are entrusted with protecting the Republic and the state. Everything else is protected and decided upon by the Parliament. If we tell them what to do, then democracy no longer remains. A country ruled by the Armed Forces is not a state.²⁹

CHAPTER II

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CHAPTER III

THE TURKISH EXPERIENCE

Beneath the surface of routine political rhetoric expected in the 1969 election year, there were ominous stirrings from the extreme Left and Right.

These two fringe groups had deep-seated animosities that set them on a collision course which engulfed the entire nation and swept the U.S. into the maelstrom.

The extreme Right, allied with the traditional leaders of the Arab world, set itself up as defender of Turkey against the "godless" Left. The extreme Left, champion of secularism and socialism, made its goal an elitist government or dictatorship. Behind the internal struggle stood the great powers--the U.S. trying to maintain its rocky position in the Eastern Mediterranean and the USSR, flexing its newly-acquired Naval muscles and strengthening its foothold in the Mediterranean.

The leading Leftist ideological daily, Cumhuriyet, (circulation 100,000) fanned the hot winds of division early in the 1969 election year with a tactless and taunting article disparaging conservatives and the government. Said the paper,

It is time for him (Prime Minister Demirel) to realize that the groups whose voices make him nervous include the most knowledgeable people of our society. He should seek the truth not only through the majority which voted for him, but through these groups as well.¹

Prophetically, both Demirel and President Sunay addressed the issues destined to be major in the campaign and to affect the future stability of the Turkish Republic. Prime Minister Demirel warned, "There is no need to convert the wind blowing in the country into a storm."²

President Cevdet Sunay, in a New Year's Day message, tried to blunt criticism of the government with an encouraging economic report. He said, "The average growth rate in the last three years was 7.7 percent." To those who would have Turkey abandon representative government for socialism, he said, "Compared with other developing countries, the most outstanding feature of economic development in Turkey is that it is taking place under a free and democratic system of government."³

The people who would take part in the Turkish drama were a varied lot. The mass of conservative Muslim Anatolian peasants voted for the Justice Party of Demirel and accepted the secular Constitution. But in the marrow of many Anatolian bones was a longing to return to the days of the Caliphate when Turkey was the center of the Islamic world.

Conservatives were well represented in the National Assembly by several small, but articulate political parties who influenced legislation in the direction of more concessions to Islam--mosque schools, public observance of religious holidays, etc.

Conservative youths had a militant wing of "Commandos." The "Commandos" were trained by retired army officers and Turkish

wrestlers in guerrilla warfare. They were passionately anti-Communist and anti-Leftist.

Chairman Pasha Ismet Inonu of the Republican People's Party (RPP) warned that the Constitution prohibited parties from "education or training to prepare personnel for the military field or for defense and civil defense services." The 87-year-old chairman said, "It is reported that despite this ruling, Commando courses were organized for youth in various parts of Turkey at the beginning of the summer of 1968 in open contravention of this law." The statement criticized the government for not taking action, warning, "The emergence of fascist Commando measures and attacks in the new year will mean a serious increase in the movements--threatening tranquility, democracy and national unity--that first began gathering strength last year."⁴

While not officially documented, it was widely assumed that traditional Arab countries not only financed the Commando training but also subsidized conservative newspapers in Turkey. The pro-Justice Party newspaper, Son Havadis, (circulation 40,000) said of the Commandos, "Reports say that nationalist Commando units have been created against the Red gangs in the universities. If this is true, we welcome it."⁵

Leftists were also of many persuasions. Many who called themselves "socialists" were actually thriving Capitalists. Others were egoists or opportunists who wished to be associated with big-name writers and thinkers who espoused the socialist

cause. Others were simply good men who saw many ills in the society which the socialists promised to cure while retaining a secular and democratic government.

The Left was represented in the Parliament by the Turkish Labor Party (TLP) which had only 14 seats. The party was split between those who sought socialism by parliamentary means and those who wanted to join with all shades of Leftist opponents of the government in a "united front against fascist dictatorship."⁶

Son Havadis called the TLP a Communist front. It said in a commentary,

The TLP, although it does not call itself a Communist party, pursues a policy similar to and acts like the Communist parties. It sets up red cells in universities, it seduces professors, it conducts propaganda among workers and peasants and it is opposed to NATO.

The Left had its youth militant corps, too, which was just as passionate and dogmatic as the Right.

Leftist youth usually joined Dev Genc (Reform Youth Movement). The extreme wing of this group received guerrilla training in Syria under the guidance of the Soviets.⁸ The New York Times noted that the Left " . . . has been encouraged by Moscow which is anxious to reduce American influence in the Eastern Mediterranean."⁹

As in most revolutionary situations, the majority of the people were caught between opposing forces. In Turkey, most of the youth was progressive and thinking in terms of social and economic reforms which would benefit the country and not an exclusive group. But violence between the extreme Left and Right forced the moderates to the sidelines.

A 23-year-old Istanbul University journalism student articulated how the moderates felt. "When the protest started in June, 1968, and it was concentrated on university reforms," said Miss Gunay Ariturk, "all of us took part. When it turned into a fight between Right and Left, lots of us stopped demonstrating."¹⁰

Aside from the polarization between Left-and-Right-oriented youth, there were also minority groups nursing territorial claims from the days of the Ottoman Empire. Chief among these were the Kurds who harbored dreams of a homeland carved out of Turkey. They formed alliances with either side in pursuit of their own goals.

Talat Halman, a well-known Turkish intellectual, wrote in the independent Milliyet (circulation 180,000) on June 6, 1969 that 2.5 million Kurds living in Turkey were being ignored while their brothers were building a new nation in Iraq. Halman warned, "The Turkish-Kurdish abyss has grown wider with time. If Kurdish autonomy becomes a reality in Iraq . . . then signs of agitation may well be expected to manifest themselves in Turkey's southeastern region." He also pointed out, "Kurdish nationalism has expanded and has become better organized."¹¹

On August 22, 1969, Cumhuriyet alerted the public that the Kurdish Students Federation Council meeting in West Berlin had presented a map showing a "Kurdish Republic carved out of Turkey." The paper continued, "We would not be surprised if someday these imaginary maps are drawn up to include Ankara within the Kurdish Republic."¹²

"Our Radio," the voice of the Turkish Communist Party with transmitters in East Europe, included in its broadcasts references to Kurds among those fighting for "liberation" in Turkey. Commenting on a Justice Party proposal to beef up the riot police to combat increasing youth violence, "Our Radio" said, "They want to establish a reactionary police army in order to strangle the justified national liberation struggle of the revolutionary fighters and the Kurds and suppress any military revolutionary moves in our country."¹³

President Sunay was quoted by Radio Ankara as saying, ". . . there are certain actions both in our country and abroad designed to incite and exploit Turkish citizens in Eastern Anatolia."¹⁴ (The Government refers to Kurds as Turks of Eastern Anatolia.)

Added to the weight of Turkey's internal pressures was the burden of its friendship with the United States. During 1969, the United States played a major role in domestic Turkish events, providing a catalyst for pitched battles between Left and Right student extremists.

In the lame duck days of President Johnson's administration, Robert Komer was appointed ambassador to Turkey following a controversial and highly publicized assignment as head of Vietnam's pacification program.

A dynamic, intelligent, and personally courageous man, Komer was miscast for the delicate Turkish post. His approach was to tackle issues bluntly and often publicly, letting the chips fall

where they would. His "let's talk man-to-man" approach was gist for the Leftist propaganda machine. No matter how cogent, persuasive, or accurate his arguments, they invariably were twisted to the advantage of propagandists. His every appearance and utterance was cause for Leftist jubilation, presenting opportunities to burn effigies, American flags, and to call protest marches against the "butcher of Vietnam" and the "CIA agent."¹⁵

Komer visited the Middle East Technical University, a Leftist stronghold in Ankara, and his car was burned while he lunched with the Rector. He visited the Istanbul Technical University in Istanbul, another Leftist stronghold, and American flags were burned there. He visited the First Army headquarters and Leftists said he came to lecture the army. He seemed insensitive to the delicacy of the political situation in Turkey. His attitude helped resurrect the image of a Turkey dominated by the Americans--a major Leftist theme.

The second U.S. action which provided fodder for the Left during the 1969 election year was the insistence by the U.S. military that Sixth Fleet ships make periodic visits to Turkish ports, particularly Istanbul. The visits were necessary to replenish supplies and allow personnel shore leave, it was said, and to demonstrate that Turkey was an active and committed member of NATO.

There were warnings that fleet visits could be accomplished only at great psychological cost to the Turkish government, NATO, and U.S. prestige.

On February 5, 1969, "Our Radio" announced "growing advance reaction to news that the Sixth Fleet will visit Turkey soon."

The radio told its followers: "Be prepared to oppose it."¹⁶

In another broadcast "Our Radio" openly incited patriots to resist the Sixth Fleet visit for the following reasons:

This visit has special significance in that 1969 is an election year. The U.S. imperialists want us to know that if the Demirelists are overthrown, the Sixth Fleet will immediately oppose us. The date February 10 will be one of struggle against the imperialists, collaborationists, NATO, CENTO, bilateral agreements and NATO bases on our territory.¹⁷

This listing of grievances was a catalogue of Leftist anti-American and anti-Western propaganda themes.

Leftist students met at the Istanbul Technical University, Yildiz Engineering and Architectural Academy and Macka Technical School to map strategy against the Sixth Fleet visit. Details of their plans were fully reported in the extreme Left paper Aksam (circulation 40,000).¹⁸ So complete was Aksam's reporting that any student unable to attend the planning sessions was fully educated in his demonstration role.

Indirectly supporting student marches against the Sixth Fleet, Cumhuriyet advised Leftist youths not to use force "because it would detract from the target of the demonstrations--the Sixth Fleet."¹⁹

A news agency monitored in Istanbul reported that 300 Leftist Turkish students "took a dockside oath that U.S. sailors would not

get ashore." The agency added that Rightwing students would counter the Left with pro-American demonstrations.²⁰

The fleet came in February 10--a carrier and four destroyers-- and Istanbul witnessed some of the bloodiest fighting the city had seen for a long time. More than 20,000 Leftists and Rightists crowded into Taksim Square, just above the area where the ships were docked, and had a real slugfest. There were two deaths and 39 persons were hospitalized. The Left took the worst of the beating, partially because the police seemed reluctant to protect them from knife-wielding Rightists who had been imported from outside Istanbul.

The citizens of Istanbul were stunned and confused. The pent-up rage unleashed by the rioters frightened the average citizen and for the first time physical insecurity was felt in the city. People also began to question a foreign policy which had to be carried out at the cost of the blood of Turkish youth.

The government tried to explain its use of force against the demonstrators. Demirel said, "We cannot abandon our foreign policy for the sake of street mobs."²¹ The Governor of Istanbul said, "The open provocation of certain organizations, the communiques they issued and the publications of some newspapers are to be blamed greatly for the increased terror."²²

Paradoxically, the State Department put out the word that the visit had been a "success."²³

The February 16th Sixth Fleet "Bloody Sunday," as it was immediately dubbed by the Left, marked a new plateau in the ascending Turkish drama. Life Senator Akmet Yildiz called for the resignation of the Demirel government.²⁴ The small, conservative Unity Party also said Demirel should resign.²⁵ Cumhuriyet ~~also~~ also suggested Demirel step down.²⁶

Milliyet saw in the demonstrations an effort to tear Turkey away from its close relations with the U.S. and called for action to stop the deterioration. In a commentary, the paper sadly concluded:

The recent relationship with the U.S. is at a point of diminishing returns and a new basis for relations is needed. Until obstacles are overcome, every American warship arriving in the Bosphorus will provoke hostile feelings which some people will want to exploit.²⁷

The Leftist attacks on the Sixth Fleet visit and Ambassador Komer bore fruit. On February 27, 1969, Foreign Minister Ihsan Sabri Caglayangil announced on Radio Ankara that a Sixth Fleet visit scheduled for March had been cancelled.²⁸ Turk and American officials quietly agreed that future Sixth Fleet visits would be unpublicized, one-vessel affairs to smaller ports where the likelihood of disturbances would be less.

Two months after the cancellation of Sixth Fleet visits to Istanbul, the White House sent word that Komer would be replaced. Komer's departure came just six months after his whirlwind attempt to straighten out the Turks. Komer's recall was accepted reluctantly by the New York Times which cautioned it would be interpreted

as a victory for the Left. On the other hand, the Times conceded that "Komer was vulnerable to Leftist attack because of his Vietnam duty."²⁹

Commenting on the significance of the claimed victory by the Left over U.S. "imperialism," the New York Times wrote:

Having already damaged Turk-U.S. relations, the student protesters, it is argued, may yet succeed in provoking a Constitution crisis. . . . Experts in Ankara and Istanbul agree that the real agitators are only a tiny fraction of the university level students. Apathetic moderates have given the extremists a free hand and Mr. Demierl--who believes democracy can tolerate a certain level of disorder--has been reluctant to crack down.³⁰

The Left was doing something right and "Our Radio" called for more of the same. "It is essential to draw the necessary conclusions by scrutinizing how the successes in the past were achieved," lectured "Our Radio." The broadcast continued, "Because it is only through the more extensive implementation of these conditions and traditions that the first great goal, that of vanquishing the imperialists and the collaborationists and of having a national democratic government, can be achieved."³¹

Following the advice of the Turkish Communist Party, the Left increased the tempo of its campaign of violence against Right-wing students. In the spring and summer preceding the election campaign nearly every institution of higher learning in Turkey was closed at one time or another because of campus violence.

The New York Times in a June 15, 1969 dispatch reported:

Increased rioting . . . students battling each other and police with stones and gasoline bombs paralyzing Turkey's higher education. Istanbul University closed following two days of bloody clashes . . . thirty police and 75 students injured. Ankara University open but plagued with boycotts. METU closed.

And so it went through a long hot summer.

The RPP severely criticized the Demirel government, hinting that it tolerated the violence in order to capitalize on it at the polls. "Both the continued indifference of the Demirel administration concerning university problems and the attitude it adopted during the boycott and occupation (of universities) have clearly exposed the fact that the JP expects various benefits," the RPP said.³²

Demirel told the New York Times: "The extreme Right is not particularly important, the dangerous group is among the extreme Leftists."³³

Reemphasizing this view in a press conference held for Turkish journalists, Demirel said,

We hardly need to overemphasize the destructive effect on ~~the~~ order of the country of those who have ushered in Leftist provocations in Turkey under the slogan 'Left of Center' and those who preach that land is just as much a gift of God as water and air and those who do not possess land should grab some from those who do possess it. Moreover, those who preach nationalization within the framework of Marxist-Leninism are actually hoping to create unrest in the country.³⁴

In this atmosphere of hostility, the election campaign opened in August. Demirel ran on a platform of continued economic progress under a democratic regime. The chief opposition, the RPP, headed

by Ismet Inonu, former Premier and confidant of Ataturk, campaigned for law and order. The RPP charged Demirel with supporting the Rightists and leading the country back to Islam, and complained of mounting international debts. Only the TLP favored complete withdrawal from NATO. But all parties recognized that Turkey's "special relationship" with the U.S. should be renegotiated. Virtual U.S. autonomy over bases on Turkish soil and the presence of 20,000 U.S. servicemen exempt from Turkish law and living lavishly by Turkish standards were particularly irritating.

Despite a year filled with student unrest, the campaign progressed without much outward violence, partially because schools were closed. Demirel rolled up his sleeves and went to the villages of Anatolia to reap a surprising election victory. Of the 450 seats in the National Assembly, the Justice Party captured 256 seats and 56.9% of the vote compared with 143 seats and 31.8% of the vote for the RPP.

Analyzing the election, Milliyet commented:

The debates that intellectual circles held on theories, tactics, and principles mean nothing to the 'man on the street' and 'the citizen in the village'. . . . Piped water, central electricity, and access roads after years of neglect, such services are what count. The JP economic policy . . . impressed rural and urban citizens more than abstract debates and doubtful promises. In our view this accounted for the JP victory.³⁵

The New York Times commented favorably on the election outcome.

It was a campaign in which the two main parties concentrated on home-front problems and generally resisted the temptation to exploit emotional foreign issues such as Cyprus or the continuing presence in Turkey of 20,000 Americans. After the army coup of 1960, the Turks took less than 14 months to adopt a new Constitution, less than 17 to hold an election.³⁶

For the Left, the election results were a disaster. Their policy of violence designed to discredit the government failed. The voters overwhelmingly rejected socialism. The Turkish Labor Party's miniscule representation dropped from 14 to 2 seats. The TLP won just 3% of the votes cast.

Ignoring that a coalition of the "masses"--workers, peasants and moderate city dwellers--had restored Demirel's government to office, "Our Radio" said, "Our national problems will not be solved until the working masses take over power, expel the imperialists from the country and terminate the domination of big capital."³⁷

This slightly veiled call to revolution cued the Left to abandon all pretense of assuming power by parliamentary means. A strategy of revolutionary attack began to emerge. It consisted of a vigorous distortion and exploitation of popular grievances; stepped-up infiltration by Leftist sympathizers into government organizations; and an accelerating anti-imperialist (anti-American) campaign in the press. The chief targets of Leftist propaganda were:

- Turkish-U.S. relations
- the economic system
- the educational system

The unstated, long-range goal, of course, was either to overthrow violently the government with Leftist military support or to bring about a collapse of Constitutional government in Turkey.

American institutions and foreign businesses were prime terrorist targets aimed at driving out the Americans and loosening Turkey's ties with NATO and the West in general.

Later events showed the rebels were spectacularly successful in infiltrating government and private institutions and winning well-meaning but duped converts to their side. The state-owned TV-radio complex, TRT, was charged by the government with broadcasting rebel propaganda; the judicial system was packed with Leftist judges who either handed down "not guilty" decisions on "patriots" or simply dismissed charges; the government telephone complex was monitored by girls blackmailed into cooperation; army cadets and mid-grade officers were courted by big name socialists and many officers aligned themselves with "reform" movements.

The press carried on an incessant campaign of distortion against the United States which affected the judgment of otherwise sensible people. When the foreign editor of Cumhuriyet was criticized for playing down the dramatic murder of a Rightist student, he said angrily, "We are a socialist newspaper. The death of a Rightist is worth one column and the death of a Leftist is worth eight columns."³⁸

Even the arts had a role to play. During the same season in Istanbul four theater companies, including a municipal government group, were producing anti-American or "anti-imperialist" plays. Among them were "Havana Diary" and "The Rosenbergs Shall Not Die." When the Rosenberg play started losing money, a new group of Leftist actors pooled resources to keep it on the boards.

Activities at the United States Information Service were boycotted and American officials were warned not to put on "cultural imperialist" performances. Students who attended USIS functions were advised they risked being labelled "American running dogs."

Foreign professors teaching at Turkish universities were either harrassed off campuses or discreetly advised their safety could not be assured. A group of American medical doctors invited to the Istanbul University School of Medicine was pelted with rotten eggs to the great embarrassment of the authorities. The universities became hostile islands inhabited by revolutionaries.

Leftist support for educational reform appealed greatly to students and younger professors whose careers were controlled by outdated rules enforced by established professors. Unfortunately the government has not yet faced the critical problem of university reform, an emotional subject responsible for many moderates lending support to Leftist causes.

The Left consolidated its hold on the media, the arts, educational institutions, many government organizations, and some

elements within the Armed Forces. The ferocity and frequency of Leftist terrorist attacks, street demonstrations, and propaganda barrages drove the Right to the sidelines and had state security forces off balance.

In June, 1970, a Leftist labor union struck a series of industrial concerns along a highway about 25 miles east of Istanbul on the main road to Ankara. Extremists infiltrated the strikers and started to destroy factories. They called for a takeover of the industries by workers. Vital traffic on the main artery was backed up for miles on either side of the strike site.

When the strike lost its economic character and turned political, martial law was declared. Tanks cleared the main roads. Ferry boats plying between the Asian and European sides of Istanbul were halted and draw bridges raised to prevent demonstrations from spreading to European Istanbul. But the European side of the Bosphorus contains the universities and from them issued Leftist students "to support the workers." To get maximum media exposure, demonstrators paraded past Press Row making it convenient for the journalists.

After the army stepped in order was restored and workers returned to their jobs. The reputation of the Leftist labor union, which had justifiable grievances, was tarnished. A leader of the Reformist Trade Union Conference (DISC) was quoted on Radio Ankara June 17 as saying, "We absolutely disapproved of the (student-incited) incidents."³⁹ Two workers died in the strike and about 50 were hospitalized.

Martial law was a blow to constitutional democracy but the average citizen was so tired of terror and insecurity he welcomed the peace the army insured.

The military was in a dilemma. It could not sit idly by and watch the country dissolve. But neither did it want to compromise Constitutional democracy and direct the government. In a plea for solutions to the country's ills, Air Force Commander General Muhsin Batur warned President Sunay that the country had to overcome "the current crisis of authority." The general's message to the President leaked and was published by the independent daily Yeni Gazette (circulation 10,000). General Batur said:

The economic situation is steadily deteriorating. It is claimed that TRT (Turkish state-owned radio and television) has become a state within a state. This constitutional institution should urgently be put in order without repressing it. Occasionally certain newspapers act irresponsibly. The Kurdish nationalist movement, the Shiite movement and the movement for the revival of the Caliphate are assuming dangerous proportions. Extreme Left-wing publications are noticeably increasing. The extreme Right-wing is arming itself. It will pose a great threat to the country when it completes this. The intellectuals and thinkers want urgent implementation of land reform and nationalization of foreign trade for establishment of social justice and peace in the country. It seems that the main concern of the political parties is to win votes. Consequently, they compete with one another on the question of the extremist groups. We preserve the belief that the country should be urgently freed from the current crisis of authority.⁴⁰

The general's criticism of Demirel's government was mild compared to the contempt the Left heaped on him. In an arrogant and distasteful commentary, Aksam wrote:

Thank God that Demirel has lost control. It is highly advantageous, therefore, that he should stay in power longer so as to drag the class and order he represents into a total impasse. We are glad to observe that the longer Demirel stays in power, the more difficult it becomes to defend the present system. For the time being we are content to watch chaos turn into complete impasse.⁴¹

"Our Radio" disagreed that Demirel should remain in power. It felt the time was now right to intensify the action. In a broadcast, the outlawed Turkish Communist Party asked, ". . . whether in the present state of affairs in Turkey it is possible for reformist forces to start a city guerrilla movement and guide it to positive results?"⁴²

The New York Times believed guerrilla warfare was well underway. The Times reported from Turkey, "The country has seen an urban guerrilla movement expand in the last six months, led by Leftists with an increasing hatred of America."⁴³

"Hatred" of Americans burst on the public consciousness in a dramatic and fearful way on March 4, 1971 when four U.S. airmen were kidnapped and held for \$400,000 ransom by a newly proclaimed Turkish People's Liberation Army.

The TPLA in its ransom note and first public disclosure of its existence said, ". . . the independence of the country will be gained through an armed struggle." The note claimed credit for shooting two policemen on duty at the U.S. Embassy; the death of several other policemen; a series of armed bank robberies; the bombing of an American boat in Istanbul; the capture and later release of a U.S. airman apprehended during a TPLA arms search

of an American depot; and a series of terror bombings aimed at foreign businesses and American citizens.⁴⁴

Until TPLA took credit for these terrorist activities, they had been widely attributed to the Reformist Student Union (Dev Genc). It was later learned that many TPLA members were members of Dev Genc.

The ransom note was signed by Deniz Gezmis, self-proclaimed TPLA leader. Gezmis, a 24-year-old former law college student, first came to public notice in a Radio Ankara broadcast September 22, 1969. He had made a speech at an Ankara University ceremony honoring Ho Chi Minh and the speech was dutifully reported by Radio Ankara. Gezmis had been chairman of Dev Genc at that time.⁴⁵

Gezmis was jailed in 1969 for invading the office of the dean of the Ankara University Law Faculty. He was detained for some time and shifted from jail to jail. He was quietly released and disappeared from public view to resurface as the young leader of a revolutionary army.

In a massive search for the four kidnapped airmen, Ankara police immediately sealed off the city, especially the university campuses. During the search police uncovered large caches of arms and ammunition, radio transmitters and receivers, and uniforms of Turkish officers.⁴⁶

While the police interrogated suspects, U.S. Ambassador William J. Handley conducted a brilliant public relations campaign to dissuade the kidnapers from killing the airmen. Politicians of every

persuasion went on the radio and to the newspapers to condemn the outrage against Turkish pride. Even Cumhuriyet could not condone kidnapping. "It is wrong to kidnap innocent youngsters," the paper said. The country's largest daily, Hurriyet (circulation 500,000) said, "The Turkish people hate kidnapping bandits whether they seize Americans or anyone else."⁴⁷ Milliyet said, "If the kidnapers kill the Americans they are no better than those who shot innocent people whose hands were tied in Vietnam."

Leftist intellectuals also deserted the TPLA. The President of the Turkish Law Association, Leftist professor Muammer Aksoy said, "Getting angry with the master and killing his slaves is not an act befitting a revolutionary."⁴⁸

President Nixon won unanimous approval from the Turkish people with a press conference comment on the kidnapping. Asked if he thought Turkey should pay the ransom and what the U.S. should do, the President replied, "I would not suggest that the Turkish government negotiate on this matter because I believe that's a decision that government must make, having in mind its own internal situation."⁴⁹

The President's reasoned response dashed hopes the kidnapers had that an aroused American opinion would hold the Turkish government responsible for the kidnappings and demand action, thus demonstrating that Turkey was an American vassal.

The condemnation of the kidnapping, especially in the Leftist press, and the relentlessness of the police manhunt forced the

kidnappers to flee their mid-Ankara hideout, abandoning four bewildered but free U.S. airmen.

The kidnapping brought down the Demirel government. On March 12* the army explained to the President that a new government was necessary if Constitutional democracy was to be preserved in Turkey. Demirel resigned the next day.

Reporting Demirel's resignation, the New York Times said, "Mr. Demirel also could say in truth that he had been circumscribed in curbing terrorists by the democratic safeguards written into the 1961 Constitution on army insistence to prevent the excesses of the kind resorted to by (former Premier) Menderes."⁵⁰

President Sunay appointed Nihat Erim, a moderate from the RPP, as Premier-designate. His assignment: to form a cabinet of "technocrats" from all parties and outside government to propose and implement reform legislation.

Premier Erim set about his task with an air of urgency and impending crisis. A National Security Council meeting concluded that the nation faced a grave threat and declared martial law. The NSC said, "There is a strong, active uprising against the motherland and the republic."⁵¹

*While the Turkish army was explaining the gravity of the urban guerrilla movement to President Sunay, half-way around the world on the same day, the Mexican intelligence service was briefing President Luis Echeverria on a "KGB plot conceived in Moscow to plunge Mexico into an urban guerrilla civil war and destroy its government by armed force." (Quoted in the November, 1971 issue of Reader's Digest, p. 229. From the condensation of the John Barron book, "The Plot to Destroy Mexico," 1972.)

The New York Times told the world that the reasons for martial law were: a threatened revolt by separatist Kurds; a threat by the Right-wing to hold a one-night holy war against Leftists; a threat from the extreme Left who had been trained in Syria by Palestine guerrillas."⁵²

On March 17, the TPLA leader, Deniz Gezmis, was captured in Gemerek, about 250 miles east of Ankara. He was trying to load a motorcycle in the back of a stolen truck when a village night-watchman apprehended him. Several of his "soldiers" also were quickly rounded up.

Gezmis told the police he had been trained in Syria by Palestine guerrillas. He said, "I crossed into Syria in October, 1968 and joined the Palestine People's Liberation Army." He reentered Turkey in late 1969, he said, and made headquarters in the American-financed Middle East Technical University.⁵³

The Arab terrorist Lyla Khalid reportedly said she knew Gezmis and other Turkish revolutionaries and trained with them in Syria.⁵⁴

The TPLA organization did not fall apart after Gezmis' capture. Indeed, the wave of terrorist bombings continued and Dev Genc warned it would kidnap a foreign ambassador to bargain for the return of its leader.⁵⁵

True to its word the TPLA committed its most heinous crime. On May 18, Ephraim Elrom, 58, the Israeli Consul General to Istanbul was attacked, subdued and abducted as he entered his downtown Istanbul apartment to have lunch with his family.

Elrom was not an ordinary diplomat. In fact, Istanbul was his first diplomatic post. He was a special police officer and had been the chief interrogator of Eichmann before his trial in Israel. Elrom's son had been killed in an airplane crash and the Istanbul assignment was to be a respite for one of Israel's top police servants.

While in Istanbul, Elrom kept the Turkish government informed of youths moving in and out of Arab countries and receiving guerrilla training.⁵⁶ There is speculation Elrom was on an assassination list as a result of this activity. There is also speculation that Arab elements wanted to embroil Turkey in the Mid-East crisis and used Elrom as a vehicle.

The Turkish government declared a 15-hour weekend curfew to search Istanbul for the missing diplomat. The public remained indoors. All public and private transportation stopped. The three million inhabitants of Istanbul were glued to their radios, hoping for news the Israeli diplomat would be found unharmed. Outside the normal street noises disappeared and only the whine of an army Jeep siren or the thumping of hobbled military boots on centuries-old cobblestone streets broke the unnatural silence.

The search was in vain. Elrom was found in an Istanbul apartment May 23, shot to death with his hands tied behind his back.

The people of Turkey went about with bowed heads and cursed softly at the ignominy the TPLA had brought to their country.

Pictures of suspected kidnapers were circulated and citizens became instant policemen in search of the murderers.

In the Maltepe suburb of Istanbul in late May a "bekci" or nightwatchman kept the home of a Leftist professor under particularly careful scrutiny. He noted the family had visitors who kept looking out from behind the window drapes. The watchman called the local police and together they watched the house and the policeman concluded the behavior of the visitors was strange-- and went for reinforcements, leaving the watchman behind. When the policeman left, two young men bolted from the house with guns blazing. The elderly watchman was killed instantly and a woman passerby seriously wounded. Residents rushed from their homes and pursued the youths who fired as they ran. One of them dropped an attaché case. It contained an identity card in the name of Elrom, a Sten gun, rounds of ammunition, and a large sum of Turkish currency.

The two youths sought refuge in the ground floor of an apartment building only to see an angry crowd descending on them. The commotion brought residents of the three-story apartment to stairwells to see what was happening. The family of Major Dincer Erkan peered over the third floor balcony as two young men rushed from a ground floor apartment and scampered up the stairs, brushing past the surprised Erkans and into their apartment, bolting the door behind them. Locked in with them was the major's 14-year-old daughter, Sebil.

The army cordoned off the area to keep crowds from storming the apartment building. At one point, an officer told the two youths that if they didn't surrender, he would promise them a death worse than hanging--he would turn them over to the mob.

The youths brought Sebil to the front window and using her as a shield demanded passports and transport to a safe country--Algeria or Cuba.

After a 36-hour wait the Army decided to raid the apartment, fearing the desperate youths would kill their hostage if they were isolated much longer. The top marksman of the Turkish Navy was given permission to attempt to shoot the kidnappers if one of them presented a target.

The kidnappers had drawn the drapes and the only target would be a silhouette on the drape. The marksman waited nearly five hours for an opportunity. Then a shadow crossed the window and he fired, shattering the chin of one of the kidnappers. The shot signaled police stationed on the roof of the building to swing into the apartment windows on ropes and rope ladders. Police stationed at the front door burst into the apartment at the sound of the marksman's rifle.

The wounded youth was the first one out the door as the police came in. He rushed past the first line of policemen and came face-to-face with a plainclothesman and they exchanged gunfire at point blank range. The policeman's bulletproof vest absorbed five shots. The kidnapper's body took 18 bullets before he collapsed.

The second kidnapper somehow eluded police and got out the front door of the apartment building. He rushed toward the crowds, hoping to lose himself among the people. But suddenly he stopped, stared into the sea of hate-filled eyes in front of him, threw his Sten gun to the ground and ran pell mell back into the arms of policemen for protection from the masses his ideology was designed to save.

Sebil was found unhurt in the apartment. She had been dressed in men's clothing and was to be used as a human shield in a getaway attempt.

Morale in the country went up tremendously after the safe release of Sebil and the prestige of the army and police force got a much needed boost.

The new government began to release more information about the TPLA. Justice Minister Arar told the National Assembly, "Their aim was to establish a Marxist-Leninism-Maoist regime."⁵⁷ Premier Erim told a French TV reporter on May 29, "Most of the terrorists have been trained at Palestine guerrilla camps. It has been definitely ascertained that most of those already captured visited a Middle East country at least once for training in guerrilla warfare."⁵⁸

Revelations on TPLA foreign support come from John Barron. In his forthcoming book, KGB, Barron reports that in Turkey,

Police ascertained that some of the students behind the terrorist acts had undergone clandestine training in neighboring Syria.

Further investigation established that the training had been arranged by a Soviet 'diplomat' in Damascus, Vladimir Shatrov and his Russian 'chauffeur' Nikolai Charenkov. 59

The Turkish drama is not yet over. The makeshift government of Premier Erim is having difficulty holding a cabinet together. The purge to cleanse the Army and civil service of pro-revolutionaries continues. The students are restless. The promised reforms are still on the drawing boards. Analyzing Turkey, Hanson Baldwin concludes, ". . . the Turkish political scene is highly volatile and the dissenters and the Leftists represent a well-organized vocal minority who will not disappear."⁶⁰

Half a century ago Ataturk saved Turkey from dismemberment by foreigners. Today his descendents are again challenged and so far have been equal to the task of preserving the integrity of the country and the freedom of its citizens.



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CHAPTER III

FOOTNOTES

(N.B.) A primary source for this section has been radio broadcasts monitored by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS). All Turkish language translations are in the "L" section of the Mid-East-Africa series of FBIS. Wherever possible footnotes contain the date a broadcast or newspaper article was aired or printed and the date and numbered FBIS reference in which it can be located.

1. Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Middle East-Africa Series, Vol. 5, Section "L" Turkey, No 77, (22 April 1969), Cumhuriyet (11 April 1969).
2. Ibid., No. 11, (16 January 1969), Radio Ankara (16 January 1969).
3. Ibid., No. 1, (1 January 1969), Radio Ankara (1 January 1969).
4. Ibid., No. 6, (8 January 1969), Radio Ankara (2 January 1969).
5. Ibid., No. 19, (29 January 1969), Son Havadis (11 January 1969).
6. Ibid., No. 46, (10 March 1969), Daily News (6 March 1969).
7. Ibid., No. 19, (29 January 1969), Son Havadis (11 January 1969).
8. John Barron, "The Soviet Plot to Destroy Mexico," Reader's Digest (November 1971), pp. 227-268.
9. "Anti-Americanism in Turkey," New York Times (18 February 1969), p. 40.
10. "Rioters Paralyze Turkish Colleges," New York Times (15 June 1969), p. 9.
11. FBIS, Middle East and Africa Series, Section "L," Turkey, No. 118, (19 June 1969), Milliyet (6 June 1969).

12. Ibid., No. 172, (5 September 1969), Cumhuriyet (27 August 1969).

13. Ibid., No. 43, (4 March 1970), Our Radio (27 February 1970). ("Our Radio" is the voice of the Turkish Communist Party. Its director is Yakup Demir, first secretary of the outlawed TCP, who left Turkey in 1963 to direct "Our Radio." Demir was trained in Moscow between 1926 and 1930. The pro-Justice Party paper, Son Havadis, reported on May 27, 1970, on the "23 hours and 55 minutes of propaganda emanating from Moscow and East Europe." The paper said, "They also issue instructions in their radio broadcasts to their local agents--to their red offspring in Turkey.") Source: FBIS, No. 153, (7 August 1970) and No. 119, (21 June 1971).

14. FBIS, Middle East and Africa Series, Section "L," Turkey, No. 121, (23 June 1970).

15. Ibid., No. 10, (15 January 1969), Our Radio (14 January 1969).

16. Ibid., No. 24, (5 February 1969), Our Radio (4 February 1969).

17. Ibid., No. 20, (11 February 1969), Our Radio (10 February 1969).

18. Ibid., No. 26, (7 February 1969), Aksam (3 February 1969).

19. Ibid., No. 26, (7 February 1969), Cumhuriyet (3 February 1969).

20. Ibid., No. 27, (10 February 1969).

21. Ibid., No. 31, (14 February 1969), Aksam (10 February 1969).

22. Ibid., No. 33 (18 February 1969).

23. Ibid., No. 35, (20 February 1969), Cumhuriyet (13 February 1969).

24. Ibid., No. 34, (19 February 1969), Radio Ankara (18 February 1969).

25. Ibid., No. 34, (19 February 1969), Radio Ankara (18 February 1969).

26. Ibid., No. 35, (20 February 1969), Cumhuriyet (13 February 1969).

27. Ibid., No. 35, (20 February 1969).
28. Ibid., No. 40, (28 February 1969), Radio Ankara (27 February 1969).
29. "Anti-Americanism in Turkey," New York Times (18 February 1969), p. 40.
30. "Rioters Paralyze Turkish Colleges," New York Times (15 June 1970), p. 9.
31. FBIS, Middle East and Africa Series, Section "L," Turkey, No. 70, (11 April 1969).
32. Ibid., No. 136, (16 July 1969).
33. "Tough New Turkish Laws Aimed at Curbing Violence by Students," New York Times (11 February 1971), p. 5.
34. FBIS, Middle East and Africa Series, Section "L," Turkey, No. 130, (8 July 1969), Radio Ankara (5 July 1969).
35. Ibid., No. 216, (6 November 1969), Milliyet (15 October 1969).
36. "Turkey Sets an Example," New York Times (19 October 1969), Section 4, p. 14.
37. FBIS, Middle East and Africa Series, Section "L," Turkey, No. 199, (14 October 1969), Our Radio (13 October 1969).
38. Conversation between Mehmet Barlas and the author (24 November 1970), at residence of British Press Attaché, Istanbul.)
39. FBIS, Middle East and Africa Series, Section "L," Turkey, No. 117, (17 June 1970).
40. Ibid., No. 125, (29 June 1970), Yeni Gazete (23 June 1970).
41. Ibid., No. 154, (10 August 1970), Aksam (3 August 1970).
42. Ibid., No. 63, (1 April 1970), Our Radio (25 March 1970).
43. "Turkish Students Battle Police 5 Hours," New York Times (21 February 1971), p. 14.
44. FBIS, Middle East and Africa Series, Section "L," Turkey, No. 44, (5 March 1971).
45. Ibid., No. 183, (22 September 1969).

46. Ibid., No. 44, (5 March 1971).
47. "Turkey Continues Hunt for Airmen; Rioting Subsides," New York Times (7 March 1971), pp. 1 and 9.
48. "Planes Join Hunt for 4 in Turkey," New York Times (7 March 1971), p. 7.
49. White House, Compilation of Presidential Documents, Vol. 7, No. 10, (8 March 1971), p. 428. (Report of Presidential Press Conference, 4 March 1971.)
50. "Self-Deception in Turkey," New York Times (13 March 1971), p. 28.
51. "Turkey Imposes Martial Law in 11 Area," New York Times (27 April 1971), p. 12.
52. "Turkey: To Combat a Multiple Threat," New York Times (2 May 1971), Section 4, p. 4.
53. FBIS, Middle East and Africa Series, Section "L," Turkey, No. 54, (19 March 1971), Radio Ankara (18 March 1971).
54. Ibid., No. 106, (2 June 1971), Hurriyet (26 May 1971).
55. Ibid., No. 59, (26 March 1971).
56. Milliyet's correspondent, Mehmet Ali Birand, interviewed a spokesman for the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, an extreme left offshoot of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, who reportedly said, "Elrom disclosed to Turkey names of terrorists who had received training in guerrilla camps." Milliyet (3 June 1971), quoted in FBIS No. 110, (10 June 1971).
57. Ibid., No. 102, (26 May 1971).
58. Ibid., No. 105, (1 June 1971).
59. Barron, p. 268.
60. Hanson Baldwin, Strategy for Tomorrow (1970), p. 173.

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