

Society, Economics, and Politics in Contemporary Turkey

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# SOCIETY, ECONOMICS, AND POLITICS IN CONTEMPORARY TURKEY

By KEMAL H. KARPAT

## I

THE internal political life of Turkey since the revolution of 1960 has been beset by military coups and conflicts between political parties and social groups far more frequent and intensive than might normally be expected in a post-revolutionary period. This unrest contrasts sharply with the political stability which prevailed before 1960, and comes after a series of constitutional changes intended to establish a better system for orderly change and control of government.

The overthrow of Adnan Menderes's Democratic Party government on May 27, 1960, by a military group, brought to power the Committee of National Unity (CNU). But roughly six months after the revolution the actual control of the government was in the hands of a shadow council, composed of some 67 top army commanders who influenced considerably the policies of CNU, and later those of the civilian governments. In November 1961 the Committee of National Unity formally surrendered its powers of government to a civilian administration chosen one month earlier in national elections. However, this did not create stability. The government went through three successive coalitions, each headed by Ismet İnönü and his People's Republican Party, although this party did not have an absolute majority in the Parliament.

The military opposed any government headed by the Justice Party or the New Turkey Party—both of which were supported largely by ex-members of the ousted Democratic Party—as likely to succumb to the economic and social philosophy of their predecessor. The National Republican Peasant Party, which later split in two, was not considered strong enough to form a government. Instead, the majority of the military trusted the Republican Party, whose reformist etatist ideology and historical connections with the army, as well as its opposition to the Democrats, seemed to ensure them against any reprisals. But this arrangement did not please all the military. Colonel Talat Aydemir staged an unsuccessful putsch in 1962. He was pardoned, but attempted another coup on May 21, 1963. This time he was tried by a military tribunal and sentenced to death; the sentence has now been carried

out. A few other revolutionary organizations were discovered before they engaged in open action.

Intellectuals and even military leaders warned the people not to support any group associated with the old Democrats or those upholding their policies. Yet, the village and municipal elections held on November 17, 1963, gave the Justice Party, the heir to the Democrats' vote, the highest percentage of seats. The Turkish voter apparently followed his own political judgment and was not intimidated by the groups that had ruled him so long in the past. One may assume that this political tenacity had some deep social roots which help to explain not only the background of Turkey's recent agitated political life, but also subsequent developments.

## II

The political unrest in Turkey is caused on the one hand by the breakdown of narrow traditional forms of organization and values, and on the other hand by the pressing need to reorganize the society and its economy into modern, broader social and political units suitable to the requirements of a nation-state. This entails a process of social and political adaptation and integration, as well as a change of political philosophy. The government is compelled to come closer to and normalize its relations with the society and the individual, whereas local communities must accept broader political allegiances. In comparative terms, in the Middle East only Turkey has reached this stage of social transformation.

The modernization of Turkey during the first three decades after the establishment of the Republic in 1923 dealt primarily with the form of the political structure, the modern nation-state. Today the problem is to consolidate the internal structure and achieve a more natural relationship between various social groups and the government. This may result in a new internal balance and stability, more natural and more durable than in the past.

Previously, the political stability of Turkey was maintained by a power coalition of two groups. One, at the national level, controlled the government and had monopoly over all means of violence. The other, at the local and provincial levels, had no means of physical power but controlled the economic and social life of the various localities.

The first "modern" group consisted of "civilianized" military men, intellectuals, and professionals closely associated with the government. These accepted the supremacy of the state in the belief that the state embodied modern ideas and could spread them through reforms to the

entire population. The ruling groups regarded the nation as the proper basis of the state. However, there was as yet no Turkish nation in the modern sense of the word. The average individual felt allegiance either to his local community or to the universal state of Islam, and was indifferent to the exigencies of the nation-state. The problem faced by the central authority, therefore, was to broaden the communal allegiance, while at the same time limiting the loyalty felt toward the universal Islamic *umma* (community) and state. It wanted to create a modern, secular nation whose ideals were confined to the territorial limits of the state.

The second power group—the one at the local level—consisted of landlords, ex-officials of religious orders and government, some craft groups, and a variety of individuals who had leading religious or cultural positions in the traditionalist era.<sup>1</sup> These had been affected by the general process of social change and gradually acquired influential economic and social positions. The profound changes in land ownership in the nineteenth century, which resulted in the passage of *miri* or state lands into private hands, as well as the increase in trade and new occupational habits, had altered the social and economic roles of the old community leaders and transformed them into a special type of middle class. They were still conservative and committed to orthodox Islamic values, but in the Republic they no longer had the government's political support, since the latter accepted secularism and nationalism as its basic principles.

On balance, the economic and social interests of the countryside groups seem to have outweighed their cultural and religious loyalties, although at first sight the latter still appeared to be quite strong. This situation had vital importance, since it enabled these countryside groups eventually to compromise with a government and a regime that respected their economic and social position. Hence one can say that they could accept the concepts of nation-state and republicanism as long as the government was willing to respect their local supremacy.

The government's idea of establishing a modern secular Turkish nation, however, based on unity of language and culture, presented a number of difficulties. The local leaders had secured the allegiance of individuals in their communities as the representatives of religious and cultural values, most of which had stemmed from the universalist

<sup>1</sup> Occasionally tribal leaders were included in this group, but their power was limited. Possibly only six provinces of Turkey have felt their influence. In the Erzurum area, this writer investigated a tribal group—the heirs of Sheik Said, the instigator of a Kurdish revolt in 1925. It turned out that the party supported by the Sheik won the least votes in the district.

dogma of Islam. They spoke on behalf of the universal nation—the Muslim *umma* based on religious unity. To make language and territory the bases of nationhood violated the ancient concepts of social and political organization. As we have indicated, the local leaders were willing to integrate themselves into a new political organization—namely, the nation-state—if they were assured of retaining their positions. But to accept the modern concept of nation would have created new foci of loyalty, a new cultural orientation, and would have raised the prestige of linguists, artists, and scholars as the representatives of national values.

Consequently the local leaders fought vigorously to maintain the Islamic understanding of the nation by rejecting objective elements of nationhood and by stressing religious ties. This explains the bitter animosity shown by these groups toward the People's Houses established to create a national culture based on language, folklore, and the native way of life. Yet, the point remains that not only was a modern Turkish state successfully established, but the local groups were incorporated into it. The next problem is to determine how this was accomplished.

The new central Turkish government was certainly modern in intentions and form, but in spirit, attitudes, and especially philosophy of power it preserved much of the traditionalist approach. The ideas of Western writers affecting the Republican leaders' thinking were combined with traditional, moralistic concepts of social organization and authority. The government had maintained the idea of state supremacy and the immutability of the social structure. These had been the foundations of government and society in ancient Islam and were further consolidated by the Ottoman state, the predecessor of modern Turkey. The traditional understanding of the state was largely preserved in the first decades of the Republic. The state was the symbol of, and the means of fulfilling, the highest moral aspirations of the new nation, as decided by its leaders, who knew where its best interests lay and felt morally responsible to guide it by sheer force of intellect toward the supreme goal.

In the past, the supreme goal had been preservation of the integrity of the Muslim community and its defense against infidel invaders. Now the state's purpose was to preserve its national territorial integrity and to modernize the country. Modernization was supposed to enhance the welfare of the Turks, but in reality the state was far more interested in its own institutional interests than in the people as individuals. (This is a problem which cannot be fully explored in

this article, for it involves a separate critical analysis of the relations between the bureaucracy, as inherited from the Ottoman Empire, and the new elite groups that emerged in the Republic.)

Thus, if the groups in the countryside accepted the state's political authority, and if the state in turn recognized the economic and social supremacy of local groups, the coalition between them could become a fact. This indeed is what happened. The opposition of the Republican government to structural changes, incorporated in penal laws prohibiting any attempts to change the established social order, is one of the main evidences of this tacit agreement. Hence, by the late 1930's it was no rare sight to see as the leader of the Republican Party's provincial or district organization a bearded man with a shaven head and a rosary in his hand, who had been on pilgrimage to Mecca, and was an utter reactionary but spoke warmly of the great Turkish Republic and nation. This man would often be a landlord or the owner of a flourishing commercial enterprise.

However, this does not imply that the state and the local groups preserved their original positions intact. A series of influences forced changes on both of them, brought them into conflict, and opened the way to truly modern social developments that will be examined later in this article.

### III

The social structure of the countryside groups deserves further scrutiny. Family attachments provided internal solidarity, cohesion, and continuity in such groups. Consequently, they can be regarded more as an outgrowth and extension of the family than as a rationally conceived association for the defense of economic interests and of social positions. Yet, in due course family attachments and economic interests had become identified and indistinguishable from each other. Thus, the countryside groups appeared as the social, economic, and political expression of the family and assumed public roles by preserving their original family allegiances.

The groups appeared at first sight to be disorganized and loose, with individual families often in conflict with each other. But all these tensions were contained, harmonized, and stabilized in the family before they reached the breaking point. Similarities of attitude and philosophy of life engendered within the family seemed to prevail over differences arising from influences outside its sphere. The basic attitudes of individuals, their philosophy of life, expectations, and the

satisfaction of their intellectual needs, were all affected in one way or another by family relationships. In this context the family may be considered an integral primary unit with social, political, economic, and cultural functions, generating its own social and political ideology. Even the modern forms of alienation and intellectual expression preserved the family spirit.

This writer is convinced, on the basis of field investigation in the Middle East, that modernization and change, and hence politics, in this area cannot be properly assessed without understanding the family system, both as a nuclear unit of social organization and as a conditioning political and economic organization when it takes an extended form.

The extended family system in Turkey still constitutes the center of social, economic, and political life and particularly of political parties at the local level. At the national level, family influence is rather limited. In some cases, scions of a local family may acquire a position in the city, through the backing of their friends and relatives at home. But soon they become assimilated into the cosmopolitan life; normally the second generation is well assimilated. Indeed, at the national level a variety of influences—immigration, government service, contacts with foreigners—tend to break down the narrow circle of family attachments developed at the local level. However, at the provincial level such attachments are quite strong and play a significant part in politics.

Basically, in the Turkish family system, aside from some nomadic groups, blood relationship seems to have less importance than in Arab countries. In ordinary circumstances, a third generation may be estranged from its original group. Moreover, place of origin does not have a status-giving role, although occasionally it fosters group solidarity.

Family relations seem to acquire importance as a basis for status when members of a given family achieve prominence by acquiring wealth, political power, government position, or erudition. Government position and erudition (joining the *ulema* ranks), usually consolidated by wealth, had priority in the past, but in the past fifty years the chief emphasis came to be placed on economic power, which in turn led to social and political status. Thus, a family may originally acquire status by achievement, but later the status is passed on by ascription, and kinship acquires importance as an identifying factor and serves to maintain internal family cohesion. Even at this stage, devotion to a person—usually to the man who achieved fame or

leadership in the family—seems to be matched by a desire to preserve the family honor, power, and prestige.

Leading families in rural areas and small towns, even those residing in provincial capitals, still maintain almost absolute control over the economic, social, and political life of their respective communities. The totality of these families, ranging from a few in small places to several hundred in larger towns, cannot be described as a social class or a feudal group. They do not conform fully to Western criteria in this regard. They are special interest groups, rooted culturally in Islamic traditions of social organization and leadership, adapting themselves to new economic and political conditions in order to maintain their supremacy.

It would be difficult to envisage any major development in the towns of Turkey without the consent or participation of the dominating family groups. Even the central government, however progressive, could hardly cope with these family oligarchies without reaching some agreement with them. Consequently, all the governments in the past have been forced to work out a tacit agreement with these ruling families, as implied before, whereby the government's political authority is accepted in exchange for recognition of their social and economic supremacy. Each government in the last century—Abdulhamid (1876-1909), the Young Turks (1908-1918), and the Republic (1923-1946, 1946-1960)—created family groups of its own, superimposed on the existing social structure.

The local families were often divided by a variety of internal factors, but could combine forces to oppose interference from outside or internal challenges from peasants, employees, and the like. The settlement of land disputes furnishes a good illustration of their method of operation. When a new family rose to prominence, it soon identified itself with the ruling ones rather than with the lower social group from which it emerged. Occasionally, a new rising family would use its mother group to dominate the elites among which it was accepted. The members of these local families often filled positions in institutions of learning and government, and imbued them with their parochial mentality.

The alliance between the government and family groups in the Republic, however, proved to be temporary. It was deprived of the commonly shared set of beliefs and values that had achieved the solidarity between state and society in the sultans' time. Secularism and



nationalism, and the slow but steady growth of new social groups such as labor, business, and intellectuals of lower social origin, diversified the social structure. These also corroded the traditional foundations of authority and created a secular social and political orientation. True, nationalism and the very idea of state and government had borrowed heavily from the traditional *umma* philosophy of organization and group solidarity. But this did not change the main trend of fragmentation and stratification, which eventually transformed the moral state into a power state and opened up the closed society of the towns.

Traditionalism and modernism had combined in some intricate and devious ways to prepare the transition of Turkish society from a universalist to a national state. The social and economic supremacy of family groups in the countryside was recognized, legalized, and protected through a series of modern laws within the framework of the nation-state. Thus, the reasons for opposition were eliminated and the successful establishment of a modern political structure was assured. It may be said that the legal reforms, especially those concerning trade, property relations, and contracts, prepared the legal bases for a sort of middle class rooted in economic occupations which finally emerged in the 1940's and 1950's. Henceforth this group was preoccupied with the question of how to protect its property and hence change the political order to this end. The state, on the other hand, was primarily concerned with creating wealth as a basis for its own power. The idea of creating wealth for the general welfare emerged much later.

The establishment of a national state, however, was the precondition of true modernization, and not the end-result, as both the government and the family groups seemed to believe. The next stage of development was a corollary to the establishment of a modern national state. It consisted of a transfer of power from the bureaucratic intelligentsia to the economic groups, and of the involvement of the lower social groups in the political process. The parochial, semi-feudalistic outlook of local communities was to be replaced gradually by a sense of civic responsibility and identity with larger social and political units.

#### IV

The political alliance of the family groups with the government had restrained the lower urban and rural groups and contributed to political

stability. But the introduction of a multiparty system in 1945-1946, and the subsequent acquisition of power by the Democratic Party in 1950, started an intensive upward mobility that shattered the previous power structure. There is no reason to believe that either the Republican Party or the Democratic Party, the main protagonists in this political struggle, had advisedly sought to release the lower social groups or wanted to change the elite organization and its philosophy. In fact, the opposite is true. The Republican Party believed that its strong organization in the countryside, supported by local "modernist" families, could successfully cope with any opposition group.

The Democratic Party leadership at the local level came from lower family groups in the towns, as well as from landowners who had been alarmed by a land reform law introduced by the Republican Party in 1945, largely on the initiative of İnönü and a socially minded bureaucratic group. (The law was drastically amended in 1950.) Thus, the leadership in both parties in the countryside was in the hands of family groups. The Democrats lacked a basic ideology or even an organization at the beginning. They were able, nevertheless, to mobilize large segments of the rural and lower urban groups and set them against the Republican Party, which had been in power for over two decades.<sup>2</sup>

The mobilization and political education of the masses occurred not as a result of a premeditated plan but as an accidental result of the need to secure votes and support at a popular level. Indeed, according to the new democratic ideas, the source of power did not reside in small elite groups but in the masses, hitherto ignored. The search for popular support forced both the Republicans and the Democrats to establish thousands of party organizations throughout the villages and towns of Turkey, which became centers of political education and social mobilization.

The main party organizations at the provincial and district levels were controlled by local families, but in small towns, neighborhoods, and villages the leaders came from less well-known families, closer in mentality and outlook to the factual, pragmatic, and materialistic view of the masses. Moreover, once they acquired power in 1950, the Democrats retained the lower groups' votes through a variety of incentives, ranging from welfare projects to cash in the form of credits. They abolished agricultural taxes, and were able to retain power in the elections of 1954 and 1957 through the popular vote. All these factors accentuated the pragmatic and materialistic tendencies, and also created a demo-

<sup>2</sup>I dealt extensively with this problem in an address to Chatham House, which appeared in *International Affairs*, xxxviii (July 1962), 304-23.

cratic understanding of government. This development becomes more relevant when it is contrasted with the previous traditional ascetic philosophy of life and the disinterest in government among the commoners.

The liberal economic policy initiated by the Democrats after 1950 resulted in the intensification of economic activities and an increase in private enterprise. It also led to the integration of villages and towns into larger economic units, and in the full emergence of a cash economy and production for market. As usual the economic activity revolved around family enterprises, although its effects were felt throughout all social layers.

Studies published after 1955, and especially after the revolution of 1960, denounced the Democrats' unplanned economic policy, the unbalanced distribution of income, the faulty tax policy, and their abuses in awarding contracts to their own followers. There is truth in all these accusations, particularly in the fact that the inflation hit the salary and wage earners hard. But economic policy of the Democrats also produced some other results which are largely ignored now. New jobs were provided for millions of people in transportation, machine maintenance, food processing, small industries, and other related fields. Land values increased, credit facilities expanded, and usury was considerably reduced. People were aroused from centuries of social and economic inertia and discovered new opportunities and goals in life. Certainly Turkey became incomparably more dynamic in the 1950's than in the 1930's and 1940's. One can readily perceive in any town in Anatolia the changes in living and mentality that have occurred in the past fifteen years.

This intense economic activity resulted largely from short-range projects. It attracted low-paid laborers from the villages, who flocked to the cities by the thousands without any guarantee of continuous employment. The urban population swelled from 18 per cent to more than 31 per cent in one decade. Today, all the major cities of Turkey are surrounded by slum belts in which new urban dwellers are exposed to modern standards of living. City districts with fashionable buildings house the new middle class of Turkey, created largely since 1950 through the Democrats' economic policies.

The majority of this class is formed no longer of intellectual, military, and bureaucratic groups as in the past, but of tradesmen, entrepreneurs, contractors, and a variety of other groups whose wealth was derived from some sort of economic occupation, including trade. The increase in the volume of internal and external trade provided a unique

possibility of enrichment. A simple importing license could net millions of lira a year, since the taxes paid amounted to a trifle of the profit.

## V

The rise of this new middle class was greatly enhanced by economic aid from the United States. A good part of the aid was diffused to the commercial groups, in the hope that this would stimulate the birth of a large middle class which would in turn provide a stable basis for Turkey's democratic regime, as in the West. This scheme overlooked the cultural and political orientation of Middle Eastern society, its patterns of social stratification, as well as the political attitudes of the emerging middle classes. In fact, all these differed considerably from their counterparts in the West.

The original "middle class" in Turkey that emerged at the end of the nineteenth century, and especially at the beginning of the twentieth, was comprised of the intelligentsia, bureaucracy, and military. The small entrepreneurs, businessmen, and service groups functioned in a subordinate position to them. True, the middle class formed in 1923-1940 included a large number of wealthy families enriched through association with the state, but their position was not challenged since they had accepted the supremacy of the bureaucracy and intelligentsia, temporarily at least. But during the Democrats' rule the lower economic groups acquired control of party organizations at the local level. They played vital roles in elections and were thus able to influence the government and consolidate their own position.

The political ascendancy of economically powerful groups relegated the intelligentsia and the military to a secondary position and oriented them toward a new social and economic philosophy that gave a "socialist" interpretation to etatism, and an economic-social meaning to the concept of class.

Etatism and social reforms turned into weapons directed against the economic groups, whereas the latter, understandably enough, opposed state intervention and welfare measures as instruments of bureaucratic domination and dictatorship. At present the intelligentsia refers to the new wealthy groups as a "class" and accuses them of having destroyed the old "classless" social arrangement that functioned smoothly under its own direction. (For thirty years the official line was that Turkey had no social classes.) The "new bourgeoisie" in turn vehemently denies being a class and condemns all such notions as undermining the unity of the nation, for in its view a nation is an amorphous group.

Furthermore, the middle class supports the democratic parliamentary system in its present form and ultimately may not be averse to a strong government, be it civilian or military, as long as it respects its own political and economic supremacy. The bureaucratic groups also favor a "true" democracy, provided that it levels off differences of wealth and functions under their own leadership. In both cases, elitist views dominate; the intelligentsia demands leadership on the basis of erudition, while the economic groups relying on popular support claim power as the "representatives of the nation."

The rise of a labor force, however, has placed both the struggle between the bureaucratic and economic middle-class groups and the question of economic development in a new perspective. Up to the present time, all major political and economic decisions were made with little, if any, consultation with labor, as one might expect in an elitist society. But there is a growing labor force (of 12.5 million workers in 1961, 78 per cent were in agriculture, 9.5 per cent in industry, and 12.5 per cent in services). This force is being increasingly organized in trade unions (about 400,000 members) as the modern type of economic enterprise replaces the traditional crafts, and a politically minded labor substitutes for the apolitical, mystically minded journeymen of the old guilds. But private entrepreneurs, with some notable exceptions, still regard labor as a servant class. They expect labor to consider their own family enterprises as national institutions and to strive for success with the abnegation and humility of docile servants.

The situation is not better in the state enterprises, which opposed trade unionism and the right to strike in the past. So far these have operated inefficiently and only recently raised wages to about \$1.20 a day, while wages in private enterprises have almost doubled in the last ten years, following the market demand for manpower. Thus, the inefficiency of state enterprises, and their reliance on government power to silence workers' demands in the past, have led labor to adopt a rather favorable attitude toward private entrepreneurship. This may not last long, however, if private enterprise abuses it.

## VI

We have attempted to analyze in the preceding pages some of the main political and economic developments during the Democrats' rule in order to place in better perspective the social and political changes which have taken place since the revolution of 1960. But, before proceeding further, it is essential to point out that all the developments

in 1946-1960, which were fundamental indeed, took place without major political disturbance. Both the Republicans and the Democrats had undertaken far-reaching measures with the assumption that they had a legitimate possession of power, and that the traditional loyalty to the state and respect for government authority would prevent major opposition and violence. Throughout Turkish political history, governments have strived to preserve an appearance of formal legitimacy, a mental attitude inspired by Islamic practice, and were thus able to muster popular obedience. It is in this sense that Turks in general have developed a sophisticated and civilized understanding of authority and power.

The peaceful transfer of power to the Democratic Party in 1950, through elections, preserved this tradition of legitimacy by replacing its Islamic moral aspect with the modern idea of government by popular will. But the traditional obedience to government, while contributing to the maintenance of order and stability in the past, also helped to perpetuate conservative concepts of authority and social organization, though dressed in modern garb. The revolution of 1960, and the forceful assumption of power by the military, divested the concept of authority of its moralistic, traditionalist cloak and plunged Turkey into the age of group conflicts and power politics. The problem henceforth was to regularize and humanize the use of power through secular moral and political principles, to the extent that it was possible to do so.

The military intervention was precipitated by the dictatorial measures undertaken by the Democrats in 1959-1960. Its express goal was to establish a sounder democratic regime than the previous one. Basically, however, the revolution was the reaction of a power group—that is, the military—which had been associated with government for centuries, to another group—the Democrats and their supporters—who had recently acquired power.

The group motivation of the revolution, despite official pronouncements rejecting it, is revealed by the repressive measures taken against the Democrats and the new wealthy groups they had created. It is also evident in a series of measures which restored the military, the intelligentsia, and the bureaucracy to power and status. But this policy aimed at restoring the *status quo* resulted in tensions, unrest, and economic stagnation. The social structure had changed. The new middle class was too strong to allow the old ruling bureaucratic groups to revive the power arrangement prevailing from 1920 to 1946, even though the possibility of coalition between the old and the new groups was not excluded.

The acceptance of the legitimacy of economic motivation was another major consequence of the revolution. In fact, economic matters acquired top priority and resulted in freedom for occupational groups to organize themselves and seek economic and social advantages. Possibly this is a long-range gain of the revolution, since it implies acceptance of a pluralist social order. Consequently, the trade unions were freed of police controls and, guided by capable leaders who had risen from the rank and file, shortly became one of the most powerful forces in Turkey. The service groups further consolidated their existing organizations and became a sort of interest group. The Chambers of Trade and Industry, spurred by this movement among employees, articulated their views and began to display a new dynamism and initiative by taking a firm stand on economic and social policies. For the first time in the Middle East, economic groups dared to stand by their economic convictions, irrespective of the government's attitude. Several leading businessmen and bankers publicly stated their views on political and economic matters.

The revolution did not affect directly the organization or the conservative mentality of Turkey's political parties. To the contrary, it enhanced the power of the leading family groups in the countryside by abolishing all the party precincts in village and town neighborhoods. These were the only organizations through which the lower groups could make themselves heard. The military's justification was that political discussions in party precincts caused friction and dissension among the population.

The proportional representation adopted in the election of the lower house may eventually facilitate the emergence of ideological parties, but for the time being Parliament is in the hands of conservative forces. The use of progressive terminology on their part does not prevent the existing party organizations at the local level from confining themselves to the narrow ideology of their sustaining social basis, the family.

The Republican Party, leaning heavily on its statist doctrine, had shifted toward the left immediately after 1960, under the influence of a social-minded bureaucratic group. This group was supported by some urban intellectuals, village teachers, and government officials who demanded social and economic development, mainly through state action, but their power is now on the decline.

The die-hards of the days of the single party, who were on the rise when the multiparty experiment shattered their expectations, have made a comeback since the revolution and are gaining power once more. The Republican Party harbors other intellectuals, mostly pro-

professionals who have become identified with the economic groups and in fact depend on them for a living and often voice their viewpoint in the press and Parliament, but do not possess much power in the party. İnönü, the party's leader, seems to understand the military and the bureaucracy better and prefers to deal with them. Each of the groups is struggling for influence, but as long as İnönü is at the helm, the chances for spectacular power shifts among them, although not excluded, are somewhat limited. Should he retire, the fermenting intraparty struggle may burst into the open. Some groups may court military support and establish closer relations with the family groups, both within their own ranks and in other parties. This may lead to the establishment of an all-encompassing political organization, outwardly modern and economic-minded, but politically elitist and conservative.

The Justice Party, on the other hand, is dominated largely by new economic groups and their families, and includes a substantial part of the professional intelligentsia in the countryside. In matters of economic policy it is arch-liberal, which dilutes somewhat its traditionalist, conservative, and anti-intellectual attitude toward social and political problems.

The difference of views on economic policy—that is to say, liberalism versus etatism—is the dividing line between the Republican and the Justice parties. This was the main cause of the breakup of their coalition government in 1962. The Republicans, impressed by the outcry for social justice and economic development, seemed determined to carry out the recommendations of the State Planning Organization that was established shortly after the revolution. But the imposition of high taxes on agriculture and real estate, the increased state intervention, and a tendency to grant extensive powers to the Organization after 1960 created conflicts in the coalition. Finally the Justice Party broke away, under the politically expedient pretext that the Republicans refused to grant full amnesty to the jailed Democrats. In reality the Republicans had agreed to most of the amnesty conditions, despite strong opposition from the army and intellectual groups, but refused to change their views on economic policy.

The second coalition government included the New Turkey Party and the National Republican Peasant Party. It was formed only after the Republicans agreed to adopt a more liberal economic policy; Ekrem Alican of the New Turkey Party became Deputy Prime Minister and assumed direction of economic affairs. The Planning Organization was placed under stricter parliamentary controls. Soon this coalition faced the same dilemma—that economic liberalism and etatism could



not be implemented by the same government, and that one had to give way to the other. The coalition was a political anomaly which survived through artificial combinations that produced stagnation and mistrust and prepared the way for extremist currents. Since the Republican Party held the main power, the public regarded it as responsible for any evil that befell Turkey. The other parties in the coalition were accused of supporting the Republicans' policies. The election for municipal and village aldermen on November 17, 1963, showed that the population did not trust even the small parties in the coalition. Consequently, the two minor parties withdrew and the coalition collapsed. The third coalition, again headed by İnönü's Republicans, is composed of independents and a scion of the National Party. It has stayed in power chiefly because of the Cyprus dispute; otherwise it would topple and the road would open to new elections.

## VII

The political stalemate, coupled with growing demands by lower-income groups for economic benefits and the continuing domination of family groups in the countryside, has created a favorable condition for the development of socialism. The junta members declared in 1960 that socialism was not to be condemned but regarded as a possible solution to Turkey's problems. Socialism at that stage was associated, at most, with legitimate social democratic demands. But once the taboo on the concept was removed, the idea caught on fast and spread to other groups.

One socialist group includes teachers, some government officials, and intellectuals who demand equality of wealth, speedy cultural reforms, wider literacy, and secularism, much in the spirit of earlier days of the Republic. (The majority of these intellectuals supported the Republican Party in 1950-1962 but, seemingly disillusioned by its social conservatism, are now abandoning it; this has compelled the Republican Party to stress its etatism to win them back.) This brand of socialism, although partly affected by Marxist views, is basically rooted in the traditional philosophy that regards the government as a sort of moral institution administered by intellectual groups.

Another socialist trend of thought, discernible among the trade unions, takes the form of demands for social legislation and higher wages to be brought about by parliamentary action and collective bargaining. Unlike the first group of socialists, labor still favors parliamentary institutions, primarily because the etatism enforced in 1930-1947, as men-

tioned before, worked to its detriment. Some labor leaders believed that a party of their own would enhance their political influence in the Parliament, but an attempt made in 1962 to establish a *Çalışanlar Partisi* (Workingmen's Party) failed, largely because of opposition from rank-and-file labor leaders. The involvement of some "socialist-etatist" intellectuals in this project, and the affiliation of some labor leaders with the Republican Party, seem to have caused considerable suspicion that the proposed party was a scheme by the old ruling groups to capture control of labor.

Finally, a third socialist group is represented by the *Türkiye İşçi Partisi* (Labor Party of Turkey), headed by Mehmet Ali Aybar, a former professor at the University of Istanbul. Aybar, who has a Marxist background, regards socialism not as a technique of power but as a way of life based on a total social and economic reorganization. He nevertheless accepts the parliamentary system. The party has about 10,000 members among the trade unions, extending over 7 provinces and 12 district seats, mainly in southeastern Turkey. Here trade unionism appears as the best means to break the power of the traditionalist family groups in control of the economy. At the beginning, the Labor Party did not attract many intellectuals. Then, for a while, it appeared to gain power, but in the municipal elections it received a total of only about 35,000 votes. The situation may change in the general elections of 1965.

All these socialist groups seem to agree that a change in the social structure is a basic condition for the achievement of modernization. They demand the elimination of family rule in the countryside, which is indeed a continuous threat to real progress in all fields of endeavor.

The military stands in the middle of these developments, torn between an impelling desire to return to political neutrality and regain the traditional popular confidence in its impartiality, and a fear of civilian reaction. It suspects the Justice Party of intentions to amend the laws passed by the junta after the "revolution of 27 May," and initiate reprisals against the military. Recently the Parliament, acting under heavy pressure from the Justice Party, refused to lift the parliamentary immunity of a deputy who in a public speech urged the population to oppose by force any new military takeover. He was held liable for insulting the army, a mortal sin, but has remained unpunished so far, thus precipitating the abortive putsch of Colonel Aydemir in May 1963.

Social, economic, and political developments in the past fifteen years in Turkey have changed considerably the traditional functions of the military and their symbolic place in society, and have opened the way

to a new type of military-civilian relationship. The revolution in turn projected the military onto the national scene as an interest group. It no longer appeared as the sole representative of the highest national virtues and ideals, but as a group bound to coexist with other social groups and accept them as equals. Traditional concepts of a "Praetorian Guard" or a "people permanently in arms," as well as popular beliefs about the army's place in national life, were considerably amended. Individualistic symbols of solidarity, deriving from a new organic understanding of nation and state, replaced much of the ancient national collective myths. Traditional power conceptions still survive among the elder officers who control the high command positions, but the younger officers seem to be more impressed by current social and economic trends. The military, like all other social groups, faces the difficult task of adapting itself mentally and functionally to the new social structure and its pluralist philosophy.

The political future of Turkey depends largely upon the power alignment of the various social groups. The present fear of socialism may induce some officers, professional groups, and old-time etatists to form a rightist social coalition. This in turn will push labor definitely to the left and away from its current social democratic stand. Today, only labor displays class characteristics and has inherent power, but so far it appears willing to collaborate with management and share in increased production. If it is allowed to organize further and its collective bargaining rights are respected (a law granting the right to strike was enacted recently), there are definite indications that this may compel the family groups that control the private sector of the economy to adopt a rational economic outlook. The latter groups may in fact become a modern type of middle class with a social consciousness of their own. Some recent publications and speeches by spokesmen for these groups point to the fact that their narrow family orientation is being replaced by a middle-class philosophy.

Parliamentary democracy is discredited among the intellectuals and there is mounting public demand for political stability at all costs. Yet, there is no general consensus that dictatorship is the ultimate salvation for Turkey. Even the most extreme socialist groups believe that conditions are not yet ripe for a social revolution. Furthermore, these socialists believe that the revolution of 1960, and especially the subsequent political developments which reestablished the elite rule, have somewhat alienated the peasantry from the family groups in the countryside, and thus paved the way for the long-awaited turn to the left. They are hopeful that the political stalemate, and especially eco-

conomic stagnation, will discredit all the traditional power groups and prove that a middle class cannot advance social welfare, thus causing the establishment of a socialist order to appear as an inevitable course.

### VIII

There is a general consensus in Turkey, fully shared by this writer, that the ultimate outcome of the nation's political life depends on its economic policy and rate of development. In fact, the current political malaise, as implied before, is the result of a malfunctioning traditionalist economy geared to serve a few upper groups or the government. The mentality and methods, both of the private and state sectors, are obsolete, bureaucratic, and uneconomic. The State Planning Organization has improved the situation somewhat but has not yet attacked its real cause. The truth is that this so-called "mixed" type of economy is traditionalist, conservative, and elitist in spirit. The state and private enterprises have failed to accept the ideas of growth from below or production for mass use. Their use of modern terminology is deceptive. The private sector does not conform to the standards of modern capitalism, or the state enterprise to those of true socialism, but reflect conditions specific to Turkey's social and economic history. The understanding of "capitalism" and "socialism" is primitive and highly oversimplified. The government interferes in economic life through a series of regulations and controls which create waste, delays, and irritation, but also provide jobs for a bureaucracy overly eager to invent new regulations.

Theoretically, an unequivocal acceptance and enforcement either of modern economic policies prevailing in the West or of socialist principles, but not both of them at the same time with the same priority, could bring the Turkish economy fully into the present era.

Present conditions, if considered objectively, seem to favor the adoption of Western economic principles. The recent acceptance of Turkey into the Common Market as an associate member may in fact expedite the transition to a modern Western-style economy. Should this transition be obstructed by insufficient investment, political strife, or growing social tension in the next five years, no conceivable power could prevent Turkey from going to some extreme. Thus, an accelerated economic development in the right direction and the maintenance of political freedom are two major conditions to bring Turkey out of its impasse. Political freedom is necessary to achieve a natural balance among the various social groups.

Turkish economic development, according to some reports, has kept a steady pace at about 5 or 6 per cent in the last year and a half. Inflation has been checked, but without producing any widespread relief for the growing unemployed population. (The manpower force increases by about 400,000 per year.) Internally there seem to be adequate amounts of capital accumulated in private hands. If the economy were to acquire some vitality and the political situation some stability, a larger proportion of this capital might be invested. The private sector has usually invested the share stipulated by the State Planning Organization. The state sector has failed to raise enough capital. Recently the government tried to increase taxes, since some sectors, agriculture in particular, are undertaxed.

Economic development depends vitally on outside assistance at a mean rate of \$350 million a year, or \$1.8 billion in the next five years, as estimated by the Planning Organization. (The total investment for 1965 is \$1,250 million.) But economic aid from abroad during 1962 and 1963 averaged about \$290 million a year, or just about \$150 million more than the amount Turkey returns annually to the West to repay debts and interest. (The total aid received by Turkey from the West since 1948 is a little over \$3.5 billion, mostly supplied by the United States. Of this total, about two-thirds was used for military aid and the remaining for economic development.) Meanwhile, Turkey's foreign trade, as usual, is in heavy deficit: \$640 million in imports and \$370 million in exports in 1962. The small but vociferous group of importers and the monopolistic exporters' unions—there is a plan to disband them—have continued to net handsome profits, a good part of which, according to reliable reports, are safely deposited in foreign banks.

Turkish economic thinking is stricken with a chronic illness; the bureaucracy and intelligentsia envisage economic life as being totally subordinated to social and cultural goals, whereas the promoters of private enterprise ignore the social and human aspects of economic problems. Practically all economic thinking revolves around these two ideas in a vicious circle that can be broken only by initiating a growth from below, involving the masses in the economic process and giving them a sense of participation by actual sharing in benefits. The government's recent campaign to stimulate popular interest in economic development and to induce the individual citizen to participate in it has met with remarkable success.

A substantial increase in economic assistance from abroad can intensify the rate of industrialization and lead to a new, sound agricul-

tural policy, and create enough self-perpetuating economic movement. But the basic economic thinking must be revitalized and modernized. The traditional Islamic ideas of private enterprise, and especially the medieval elite concept of etatism, must be abandoned. Without a bold application of new ideas of business administration and management, all the economic aid from the West will only increase the tensions and confusion and create greater demands. True, measures to modernize the economy have been initiated in every field, but not thoroughly enough to have widespread effects. Yet the Turkish economy is closer to the "takeoff" point than one is led to believe. Conferences of experts held in 1962 and 1963 found that Turkey possessed all the basic conditions for a sound economic development. The impediments resulted from lack of precision in objectives and psychological, social causes.

## IX

Economic development in Turkey obviously will considerably affect her internal politics, and ultimately her foreign policy. And, needless to say, Turkey's present economic and political situation is in some measure the consequence of her foreign policy. The internal developments during the past three years in Turkey therefore must also be appraised in relation to her foreign policy.

Turkey joined the Western bloc after the Second World War as a direct consequence of Soviet policy. Some available evidence supports the view that Turkey had visualized relations with the Soviets in the postwar period as remaining in line with the basic policy established by Lenin and Atatürk. A strict adherence to this policy, and the interest in the new nations shown during Atatürk's lifetime, might possibly have led Turkey to a sort of neutralist stand. But the Soviets' demands in 1945-1946 for bases on the Straits and for territory in northern Turkey and their rejection of previous agreements wiped out in one stroke the basic foundations of earlier Soviet-Turkish relations: mutual respect for each other's national independence, integrity, and regime. Furthermore, the Soviet Union's might and the prestige it had acquired in the war magnified the threat and forced Turkey to seek avidly any kind of alliance with the West; such alliance in fact became her foreign policy under the Truman Doctrine in 1947. Turkey joined NATO in 1952, became a member of CENTO and of European regional organizations, and was thus securely attached to the West. Neutralism was rejected and full alignment was described as the only possible course suitable to Turkey's national interests. The Soviets' unfriendly attitude toward Tur-

key had an additional internal impact in providing a good excuse for the government to control unwelcome social movements as potentially subversive and to back rightist conservative groups.

The association with the West, particularly with the United States, produced profound repercussions in every field of activity and substantially altered the overall orientation of Turkey. The emphasis in 1923-1947 was placed on principles, institutions, and intellectual supremacy, whereas after 1947 pragmatism, individualism, and an increase in upward mobility prevailed. The democratic ideas preached in the previous decades materialized now in the form of concrete policies.

Throughout 1945-1960, all major political parties jointly supported the government's pro-Western policy, while the intellectuals tried to emulate the West in cultural and artistic fields, with greater freedom of choice and taste. Yet, by 1959 some minor, but highly significant, nationalist opinions began to be heard which indicated that new thoughts on foreign policy were being born. The Middle East Technical University and especially Robert College in Istanbul, which used English in their curricula, were criticized as violating the cultural and linguistic integrity of Turkey. The German, Italian, and French high schools (whose prewar European middle-class philosophy superimposed on conservative Islamic foundations did more harm than good to Turkey) were partly excluded from criticism. These were lower-level schools and had also some intellectual affinity with the critics of Anglo-Saxon schools. The French-inspired Anglo-Saxon phobia was brought to Turkey by a small group of pseudo-intellectuals who had studied in France in 1946-1955. Left Bank imports reached the Bosphorus shores.

The immediate cause of this anti-Western, and especially anti-American, feeling was the economic assistance Turkey was receiving, which supposedly enabled the Democrats, according to the opposition, to perpetuate themselves in power. This assistance also enhanced the power of the new middle class, as mentioned before, and brought about the eclipse of the former ruling bureaucratic-intellectual groups. Anti-Western feelings were expressed through the old familiar claim that foreigners were taking over the country and running it.

The revolution of 1960 brought closer to the surface current feelings on foreign policy. Some junta members went so far as to declare publicly that Turkey "could not make a move without the approval of Americans" and that a neutralist course would be more advantageous to Turkey's interests. The Algerian revolution was hailed as a great movement of national liberation, and some Turkish units in Korea were withdrawn. However, some vague friendly overtures toward the

Arabs remained without effect, when the latter reiterated Syria's claim to the province of Hatay (Alexandretta), ceded by France to Turkey in 1938-1939.

Some junta members and intellectuals privately contended that the assistance given to Turkey by the West served primarily military purposes and consequently had limited impact on economic development. They believed that Turkey could achieve economic development even without assistance from abroad, as in the early days of the Republic, provided the nation's internal economic and social life was reorganized properly. Some civilians, on the other hand, resenting the military's involvement in politics, contended that the commitment of Turkey to the cold war had unduly increased the army's importance and supported its claim to high status and a position of leadership in society. Others maintained that the development of new weapons had changed old strategic concepts, that the thaw in international relations would inevitably diminish the strategic importance of Turkey, weaken her position among the Western powers, and eventually isolate her, since Turkey's foreign policy was based on the assumption of a continuous cold war. All these factors, it was said, would lead to the total curtailment or sharp reduction of the economic aid on which Turkey's development depended. Furthermore, these critics of foreign policy claimed that a total commitment to the West had limited Turkey's influence among the newly rising nations and estranged her from all her neighbors except Iran. Finally, they contended that the Democratic Party's tendency to exploit the tensions between East and West for the sake of its economic ambitions had hurt Turkey's prestige at home and abroad.

The government and the Parliament, on the other hand, have firmly stood by the alliance with the West in NATO, CENTO, or the European regional organizations. Nevertheless, criticism of the West, and particularly of the United States, has continued to increase among some of the socialist groups, nationalists, etatists, and even conservatives. The socialists have insisted that historically the association with the West had been detrimental to Turkey's long-range interests, and that the record of modernization was better when Turkey acted on her own. The conservatives, on the other hand, have claimed that the Western views on freedom, popular participation in government, intensive social mobility, etc., contradicted the native understanding of government, although they did not hesitate to use these concepts when suitable to their own purposes. Possibly all that has been said above could be accepted as normal in a free society, except that in Turkey public utter-



ances on foreign policy are rare and, when they occur, they usually forecast a change of thought. This debate has been further intensified by the ambivalent attitude of the United States toward the developing crisis in Cyprus. It has also been affected by France's subtle attempts to resuscitate interest in France as the symbol of true Western culture.

The relations of Turkey with the Soviet Union and East European countries have been affected but not substantially altered by the revolution of 1960. Russian sources (Russian studies on all aspects of Turkish life are very numerous) indicate that the Soviets have followed social and economic developments in Turkey very closely, presumably with the expectation that they would affect the public's attitudes toward socialism in general and the Soviet Union in particular. The Soviets have also kept a close watch on the nationalist movements in Turkey, lest a revival of Pan-Turanism (although officially condemned by the government) resuscitate some nationalist feeling among the 34 million persons belonging to the Turkic groups in the Soviet Union. The Soviets are also keenly aware that the course taken by Turkey's internal regime could have profound repercussions in other Muslim countries. It is difficult to estimate whether the Soviets have grasped the true nature of the social change in Turkey, but as early as 1955 they seem to have decided that a friendly attitude would yield better results than a show of animosity. The Soviets denounced their own claims of 1946 to bases on the Straits as stemming from Stalin's power ambitions. They declared themselves ready to return to the policy of Lenin and Atatürk, and even offered economic assistance at low interest rates. (Just before his overthrow, Adnan Menderes had accepted an invitation to visit Moscow.)

After the revolution of 1960, the Soviet Union, wisely enough, did not make any attempt to take advantage of the existing confusion but contented itself with denouncing Menderes's regime, and renewed its offers of economic assistance and friendly relations. Premier Khrushchev declared that these offers were not necessarily contingent on Turkey's immediate withdrawal from NATO or CENTO. Later, when the junta's socialist tendencies did not materialize, the Soviets still preserved their conciliatory attitude and expressed their disappointment by reproducing articles from Western newspapers critical of Turkey's internal politics. The Chinese, on the other hand, devoted special attention to the Turkish revolution, in line with their growing interest in the Middle East. They hailed it enthusiastically as an anti-Western action, but later charged it with having degenerated into a bourgeois revolution of the leading cadres. Recently, a Turkish parliamentary

mission, the first in several decades, visited the Soviet Union and was received by Premier Khrushchev, who repeated the earlier promises of aid and good neighborliness.

The Balkan countries with which Turkey had intensive political, cultural, and economic relations in the past have followed the Soviets' policy. The resulting increase in visits, sports meetings, and even trade must be regarded not as a change of policy, but rather as a normalization of relations. The Black Sea basin has been Turkey's normal trading sphere and sizable Turkish minorities with relatives in Turkey live in these neighboring countries. Internal developments in Turkey and the conciliatory attitude of the Soviets, coupled with the emergence of socialist groups, have tended to lessen the previous suspicion of the Soviet Union, or at least to rationalize it.

Today, there is no question of imminent changes of Turkish foreign policy, or mass antipathy toward the West. However, if economic development continues at a slow pace, social reforms are delayed, and power remains in the hands of a few privileged groups, the regime will be further discredited and, along with it, the West that served as its model. But nothing could discredit the present regime more than a rightist bureaucratic order. This would quell the social fears of a few rightist groups, but would alienate the larger groups of intellectuals, workers, and peasants.

Turkey is an important country and deserves closer attention than it has been accorded so far. It is a key country in the Middle East and is pregnant with crucial events which may indicate the possible course of social and political development in the emerging nations. Further change in Turkey is inevitable to bring her more fully into the modern age. Orderly change, within the limits of democratic ideas, is both preferable and possible. It will ultimately benefit the country more than an order imposed by force. And this should be achieved now, when there is still time.