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Ordunun Siyaset Üzerindeki Gölgesi ve "Parti Üstü" Hükümetler (1971-1973)

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Behçet Kemal Yeşilbursa*

Öz

1971, pek çok ciddi iç sorunun çözülmeden kaldığı çalkantılı bir yıldır. Hükümete olan güven kaybı ve özellikle üniversitelerde kamu güvenliği kısmen çökmüştü. Silahlı kuvvetler Demirel'in istifasını istedi ve aldı. Yerine Nihat Erim ve radikal, solcu reformlar programıyla Parlamento dışından teknokratların çoğunlukta olduğu bir "parti-üstü" Hükümet geldi. Güvenliği sağlamak için sıkıyönetim gerekliydi. Anayasa değiştirildi, bu da Hükümet için daha fazla yetki anlamına geliyordu. Reformlar başladı, ancak Adalet Partisi iş birliği yapmayı reddetti. 1972'de Türkiye zayıf yönetim, aralıklı terörizm ve baskıcı sıkıyönetimden mustarıptı, ancak Parlamenter demokrasi hayatta kaldı. Silahlı kuvvetler, Parlamento aracılığıyla reformları zorlama kararlılığını sürdürmedi. Daha sonra Erim'in parti üstü hükümeti istifa etti ve yerine Meclis'teki Muhafazakârlar için daha kabul edilebilir olan Ferit Melen'in hükümeti geldi. 1973, Atatürk'ün kurduğu cumhuriyetin 50. yılını kutladığı önemli bir yıldır. Hayatta kalan son yakın arkadaşı İnönü 89 yaşında öldü, sıkıyönetim kaldırıldı, silahlı kuvvetler cumhurbaşkanı adayını dayatamadı ve parlamenter demokrasi galip geldi. Dürüst bir genel seçim yapıldı, ancak silahlı kuvvetlerin politikacılara karşı sabırlı olduğu yeni bir hükümetin devamı gelmedi.

Anahtar kelimeler: İngiltere, Türkiye, 12 Mart Müdahalesi, Partiler-Üstü Hükümetler

Abstract

1971 was a turbulent year, with many serious internal difficulties left unresolved. There was loss of confidence in the Government and partial collapse of public security, especially in the universities. The armed forces demanded and obtained Demirel's resignation. He was replaced by Nihat Erim and an "above-party" Government, with a majority of technocrats from outside Parliament with a programme of radical, left-wing, reforms. Martial Law was needed to restore security. The Constitution was amended, meaning more power for the Government. In 1972 Turkey suffered from weak administration, intermittent terrorism, and repressive martial law, but Parliamentary democracy survived. The armed forces did not maintain their resolve to force reforms through Parliament. Thus, Erim's above-party Government resigned, and was replaced by Ferit Melen's, which was more acceptable to the Conservatives in Parliament. 1973 was a momentous year in which the republic founded by Atatürk celebrated its 50th anniversary. His last surviving close associate İnönü had died at 89, martial law was lifted, the armed forces failed to impose their candidate for President and Parliamentary democracy prevailed. An honest general election was held but there was no follow-through to a new Government, over which the armed forces remained patient with the politicians.

Keywords: Britain, Turkey, 12 March Coup, Above-Party" Governments

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1. Events in 1971

1971 was a year of "sane turmoil" in Turkey, with the grave internal problems of the opening months remaining unresolved. There were also a few serious difficulties in the international arena, and the Cyprus issue was contained though far from settled.¹

The Demirel Administration, of whom many held great expectations, had by January relapsed into inaction on all fronts. With a cabinet largely composed of "nonentities of mediocre ability", Demirel had begun to take to himself the right of decision more and more but had found it increasingly impossible to resolve his problems, apart from his "courageous and well-executed" act of devaluation in 1970. He had exposed himself to charges of nepotism and corruption and so played into the hands of the many interests in the armed forces and in Parliament, who opposed him. He complained that the 1961 Constitution was so liberal as to make a more efficient and orderly government impossible, but he inspired too little confidence in the armed services or the other parties to be given the constitutional reforms which he wanted, and which were since recognised as essential. Moreover, he was always conscious of the fate of his predecessor, Menderes, who had been executed after firm action to suppress student disorder violation of the constitution. This was not the main cause of the 1960 military coup but the memory constantly inhibited Demirel, as he often complained, in dealing firmly with student anarchy.²

By the beginning of 1971 student indiscipline, which had disrupted the work of the universities, developed into far more serious disorders showing signs of skilled and possibly external direction. The students gravely undermined public safety with frequent bomb attacks and armed clashes between right and left extremists, and of both with the police and even with the armed forces. Government action was hampered by an exaggerated interpretation of university autonomy and the siting of some universities outside municipal limits, and so outside the jurisdiction of the police, leaving to the ill-trained and uneducated conscripts of the gendarmerie the difficult and delicate role of coping with organised and armed subversion and the large stocks of arms hidden in university premises. The situation came to a head at the beginning of March when four American airmen were kidnapped. Although they were released unharmed a few days later, it was clear that the Government was powerless to halt the slide into public anarchy.³

Ever since the serious disorders in İstanbul in the summer of 1970 there had been persistent signs of disquiet in the armed forces and there was now strong evidence that in the early days of March a serious attempt was made to initiate by force of arms military coup. It failed only because initiators had, with foresight by their superiors, lost command of fighting units: their successors not only refused to act but reported to the General Staff. The Chief of the General Staff and the Service Commanders, who had certainly shared the general dissatisfaction with the Demirel Government, were brought by this development to act. On 12 March they sent a Memorandum demanding the immediate

¹ TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. Ahmet Gülen, "Nihat Erim Hükümetleri'nin Kıbrıs Politikası", *Yeni Türkiye*, Sayı: 128, ss. 225-243.

² TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. See Şerif Demir, *Türkiye'de Askeri Darbeler ve Vesayet (27 Mayıs-12 Mart-12 Eylül)*, TİAV Yayınları, Ankara 2020, pp. 163-223.

³ TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. See Çetin Yetkin, *Türkiye'de Askeri Darbeler ve Amerika (27 Mayıs 1960-12 Mart 1971-12 Eylül 1980)*, Yeniden Anadolu ve Rumeli Müdafaa-I Hukuk Yayınları, Antalya 2007, pp. 106-146.

formation of a new "above-party" Government to restore law and order and carry out reforms in keeping with the policies and ideals of Atatürk. The Generals threatened that, if parliamentary government failed in these tasks, they themselves would take over the government. On the same day Demirel resigned.⁴

A feature of this crisis and of the rest of the year was the prominent and helpful part played by the President, General Cevdet Sunay, as civilian Head of State but retired Chief of the General Staff. The Service Commanders had presumed to dictate to him and to the Turkish Government, and at first refused to obey a summons to discuss their Memorandum. Confronted with a threat of resignation from the President, the Commanders gave way, and a compromise solution was agreed. Nihat Erim, a distinguished Professor of Constitutional Law, was asked to form a government. A highly capable and respected moderate member of the People's Republican Party, from which he now resigned, he was acceptable to almost everybody in the special circumstances. He formed a government partly awn from three of the four largest parties, but with a majority of "technocrats" from outside Parliament.⁵

At the same time the National Security Council under the chairmanship of the President and composed of the senior Service Commanders and Ministers took on much increased importance as a vehicle for the very close co-operation henceforward to be maintained between the Erim Administration and the Turkish Staff. The Army, with unhappy memories of direct military rule after 1960, were well content to leave government to the civilians while maintaining through the Council and personal contact with the President a close control of policy.⁶

Erim came to power hoping to disrupt the militant left by appointing some younger Ministers well known for their radical outlook and by publishing a left-wing programme of reform. For a time, this showed some promise of success but the gravity and the extent of the subversion which came to light necessitated the declaration of martial law in 11 provinces on 26 April. However, the continuing disorder, and most notably the kidnapping and murder of the Israeli Consul-General in İstanbul in May, denied to the new Government time to work out reforms and revealed that a hard core of organisers was at work who would be uninfluenced by any change of policy. Erim was therefore compelled to defer reform in favour of direct action against the subversives and to give to constitutional reform and the right to govern by decree the place he had at first hoped to give to economic measures.⁷

The concentration on public order now began to achieve considerable success. Public attacks and demonstrations ceased, and the universities went back to work freed of intimidation. The constitutional reforms, ironically on lines long advocated by Demirel and the Justice Party (JP) were passed. After many months of negotiation in Parliament,

⁴ TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. See Kurtuluş Kayalı, *Ordu ve Siyaset (27 Mayıs-12 Mart)*, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul 1994, pp. 133-201.

⁵ TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. See William Hale, *Türkiye'de Ordu ve Siyaset*, Çev. Ahmet Fethi, Alfa Yayınları, İstanbul 2014, pp. 228-261. See Ahmet Gülen, *Türk Siyasal Hayatında Nihat Erim*, Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Yayınları, Ankara, 2020.

⁶ TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. See Rıdvan Akın, *Türk Siyasal Hayatı (1908-2000)*, XII Levha, İstanbul 2010, pp. 389-411.

⁷ TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. See Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, I. B. Tauris, London 1995, pp. 253-291. See Gülen, *Türk Siyasal Hayatında Nihat Erim, Passim*.

the executive obtained greater power as against the previously excessive checks and blocking mechanisms available to the legislature. However, although legislation by decree was no longer unconstitutional, the National Assembly proved unwilling to pass the necessary enabling legislation for the reform programme. This limited success and the removal of public security from the forefront of national priorities brought into the open the conflicts inherent in the composition of the Erim Government.⁸

The radical technocrats, pointing to the Army Memorandum of 12 March and to the principles of Atatürk, demanded reform, and first of all land reform. The JP, which still held a majority in Parliament, now showed their opposition to the Government's programme, parts of which, particularly the proposals on land reform, was abhorrent to its conservative principles. Probably the party leaders had their eye on their credibility with their supporters in any future election. Relations between Erim and Demirel rapidly deteriorated and on 5 October an angry JP withdrew its five Ministers from the Government, which it alleged had forsaken its "supra-party" attitude for unjustified criticism of the JP. The crisis was "put in the refrigerator" for Queen Elizabeth II's visit on 18 October. Thereafter, on 26 October, Erim resigned, as he had always threatened to do in such a situation. After much bargaining behind the scenes, he was persuaded to withdraw his resignation and the JP to allow their Ministers to remain in the Government after all - both in the national interest. There was a sigh of relief, but it soon became clear that the crisis was far from resolved.⁹

Erim had realised that if he were to make any progress he had to compromise with the JP. His efforts culminated in the appointment on 2 December of a member of Demirel's old government to the post of (third) Deputy Prime Minister "with special responsibility for relations with Parliament". On the following day 11 of his Ministers resigned. They included the most important technocrats, all of more or less radical tendency, and they declared that they had joined the Government on the understanding that they could implement a drastic reform programme, but it was now obvious that this was impossible. They may have misunderstood their terms of reference and had not realised that, in the interests of democracy, they were obliged to work through Parliament. They were probably also justified in complaining that their efforts had been deliberately obstructed by vested interests. There was a strong suspicion that they expected their action to precipitate a military takeover, enabling their radical and nationalistic programme to be carried through by decree without reference to the National Assembly.¹⁰

The radicals miscalculated the mood of the Army, where the Generals seem to have gained greater control of their own radical wing and to have modified their earlier insistence on radical economic reforms. Erim duly resigned but was again called to form a government. Freed from the pressing menace of left-wing anarchy, and his left-wing Ministers who were no longer needed to appease the left, Erim was able to move back to the centre, and therefore closer to the mood of the National Assembly. Parliamentarians

⁸ TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. See Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, Routledge, London 1993, pp. 148-171. See Gülen, *Türk Siyasal Hayatında Nihat Erim, Passim*.

⁹ TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. See Feroz Ahmad, *Demokrasi Sürecinde Türkiye (1945-1980)*, Çev. Ahmet Fethi, Hil Yayınları, İstanbul 2010, pp. 353-398.

¹⁰ TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. See Feroz Ahmad, *Modern Türkiye'nin Oluşumu*, Çev. Yavuz Alogan, Kaynak Yayınları, İstanbul 2011, pp. 177-213.

were in the majority while the “technocrats” were now only 11 out of 25 Ministers, and appeared less radical and doctrinaire. The new programme was carefully vague on reform and its more pragmatic approach to the country’s problems was seen as an overt attempt to mend fences with the business community who had been invited to consult on policy with the Government. There was less insistence on State intervention and the substitution for “nationalisation” of the idea of “utilisation in the best national interest.”¹¹

The radical programme of the previous Government was claimed initially to have split the left. Nevertheless, previous government’s hostile attitude to the private sector, its excess of new controls and its threats of nationalisation united businessmen in a deep distrust which brought investment virtually to a halt and activity to a low ebb. Aggravated by the enormously increased wage bill resulting from the State Personnel Law of 1970, prices rose more than 25% and unemployment also rose sharply. This law and the mounting losses of the State Economic Enterprises caused serious financial difficulties for the Government throughout the year. The only really bright spot in the year pushed the over-all growth rate to over 9%. Exports failed to take full advantage of the 1970 devaluation, but foreign exchange reserves were healthy thanks to increased remittances from Turkish workers abroad. The unaccustomed availability of foreign exchange brought an unfamiliar, and often unwelcome, element of competition into the economy. The business outlook at the year’s end was brighter; but it would take time for confidence to return.¹²

Aid continued to be an important factor in Turkey’s development. The World Bank was particularly active in 1971, agreeing on projects to the value of almost 100 million dollars. It seemed to take a more optimistic view of prospects than the members of the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) Aid Consortium, who were more conscious of the problems faced by their investors. Aid from the European Economic Community (EEC) both bilaterally and through the European Investment Bank continued at a high level, with Germany now the largest bilateral donor. In April, after some difficult negotiations, the largest British loan yet, £6.7m, was made to the Turkish Government to finance a private sector fertiliser project. The British technical assistance programme continued to provide experts to help in Turkey and training for Turks in Britain.¹³ Imports from Britain increased by a modest 6% against an over-all rise of 23%, while Turkey’s exports to Britain continued to decline, dropping from £12.5m to £11.4m. This increasing imbalance lent force to Turkey’s complaints about exclusion from the Generalised Preference Scheme. British investment and enterprise generally suffered the general lack of confidence and stagnation.¹⁴

On 5 July Turkey ratified the protocol governing the transitional period of Association with the EEC. Although the full protocol was still waiting at the time of the current dispatch, its ratification by the Community, its trade provisions were brought into force on 1 September, giving immediate advantages to most of Turkey’s exports and the first small preferences to EEC goods. Discussions on changes to take account of the

¹¹ TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. See Tevfik Çavdar, *Türkiye’nin Demokrasi Tarihi (1950’den Günümüze)*, İmge Kitabevi, Ankara 2008, pp. 191-263.

¹² TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. See Şevket Pamuk, *Türkiye’nin 200 Yıllık İktisadi Tarihi*, İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, İstanbul 2018, pp. 223-260.

¹³ TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. Pamuk, Op. Cit., pp. 223-260.

¹⁴ TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. Pamuk, Op. Cit., pp. 223-260.

enlargement of the Community were already under way. The protocol allowed Turkey to move very gradually towards a customs union, but at least the objective of a more competitive economy had been firmly set.¹⁵

Although the year saw three different Foreign Ministers, there was no significant change in foreign policy. The two professional diplomats, Osman Esim Olcay and Ümit Haluk Bayülken, who had served in the successive Erim governments, represented mainly a change in style from the activist JP politician, İhsan Sabri Çağlayangil - more sophisticated and western-oriented and also more dependent on Erim, who regarded himself as something of an expert in foreign affairs, particularly Cyprus.¹⁶

The first Erim Government initially showed signs of impatience to achieve an early solution to the Cyprus problem, as to so many other problems, and various public statements were made to this effect in April and May. The apparent tough line was partly designed to reassure Turkish public opinion and partly to serve as a warning to Greek Cypriot President Archbishop Makarios not to make trouble by taking advantage of Turkey's internal difficulties. There was, however, never any serious military threat - as always, this would only be likely to materialise in the face of an outright attack on the Turkish Cypriot community. As the intercommunal talks ground slowly and inevitably towards deadlock, the "alternative solutions" which the Turkish Government had been talking about turned out in practice to be little more than continuing dialogue with the Greek Government - first at the meeting between Olcay and Christos Xanthopoulos-Palamas at the NATO Ministerial Council in Lisbon in May/June and subsequently at a further meeting in New York in early October, at which they agreed to infuse new life into the talks by including representatives of the Turkish and Greek Governments. The ensuing bargaining over the exact status and terms of reference of the additional participants, including in addition, the General Secretary of the United Nations, U Thant's suggestion, a representative of the UN Secretary-General, continued until the end of the year but the Turks remained adamant that the UN should not be allowed to play any role of substance.¹⁷

In spite of friendly overtures from the Greek Prime Minister, Erim persisted in his view that the path to better Turkish-Greek relations lay through Cyprus. The similarity of approach, however, towards broadening the intercommunal talks, combined with bilateral exchanges in the economic field and the signature of a number of technical agreements following a meeting in November/December of a Turkish-Greek Border Commission, showed that by the end of the year relations were developing reasonably satisfactorily, although the Greek Embassy in Ankara maintained there was continuing discrimination against the Greek minority in İstanbul.¹⁸

The main change of direction during the year was the establishment of relations in early August with the People's Republic of China. Although the initial steps had been taken towards the end of 1970 by the JP government, the announcement of the decision,

¹⁵ TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. Pamuk, Op. Cit., pp. 223-260.

¹⁶ TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. Sina Akşin, *Kısa Türkiye Tarihi*, İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, İstanbul 2011, pp. 263-273.

¹⁷ TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. See Baskın Oran (Ed.), *Türk Dış Politikası (Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar)*, Cilt-I: 1919-1980, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul 2003, pp. 653-808.

¹⁸ TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. Oran, Op. Cit., pp. 653-808.

after several months of negotiation in Paris, to recognise the PRC as “the sole legal government of China” caused considerable controversy - not least within the JP itself. This was mainly on the grounds that there was inadequate evidence that recognition would serve Turkey's national interests, especially as it required a severance of relations with Nationalist China, although the latter claimed that relations were only “suspended”. The Turkish Government’s apparent haste was, however, partly motivated by a desire to be seen to be keeping ahead of US policy.¹⁹

The importance of not offering more hostages to anti-American opinion than necessary was shown by the decision in June, under strong US pressure, to ban opium production from 1972. This provoked considerable complaints amongst certain sectors of Turkish public opinion, mainly over the alleged inadequacy of the proposed compensation for opium farmers, which the visit in November by the US Secretary for Agriculture, Hardin, did little to dispel. A brief visit by Vice-President Agnew in October, on his way to Iran and Greece, passed off uneventfully.²⁰

Aside from Greece and Cyprus, there were no developments of importance in Turkey’s relations with its immediate neighbours. Makarios’ visit to Moscow in May heightened Turkish suspicions of Russian intentions towards Cyprus. Protests were made to Syria about allowing left-wing Turkish students to pass through Palestinian training camps for guerrilla training, and some concern was shown over the position of Turks in Iraq. No serious problems, however, arose over relations with Iran and the opening of the CENTO Railway in September, attended by President Sunay and the Shah, helped to strengthen in a practical way the close links between the two countries. As regards Pakistan, Turkey took a moderately sympathetic line over events in East Pakistan, though without ever offering more than moral support against threats to its national integrity.²¹

The highlight of the year for Anglo-Turkish relations was the State Visit in October by Her Majesty the Queen, accompanied by His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh and Her Royal Highness the Princess Anne. This was treated by the Turks as a very special occasion and even the threatening political crisis at the time was as mentioned earlier, temporarily “put in the refrigerator”. Enthusiastic and friendly crowds gave the Royal Party a very warm welcome in Ankara, İzmir and İstanbul, while the huge press coverage was exceptionally favourable. The visit was undoubtedly an outstanding success for both Britain and Turkey and added warmth to Anglo-Turkish relations for some time to come. Godber’s presence as Minister-in-Attendance provided a useful opportunity for bilateral talks with Olcay on matters of current interest including in particular European security and Cyprus.²²

The events of the year injected a great deal of realism into the heavy reforms programme that had been put forward at the height of the crisis of public order in March. The military and intellectual heirs of the Atatürk revolution now appeared to concede to more gradual reforms and, accepting democracy as the necessary framework, recognised the limitations imposed by the elected Parliament. They remained dissatisfied and impatient, talking of electoral reform and more drastic methods to push through by

¹⁹ TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. Oran, Op. Cit., pp. 653-808.

²⁰ TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. Oran, Op. Cit., pp. 653-808.

²¹ TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. Oran, Op. Cit., pp. 653-808.

²² TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. Oran, Op. Cit., pp. 653-808.

extraordinary means the reforms the current Parliament opposed. As always in Turkey, in this situation of uneasy balance, the Army held the key. The Generals were not only anxious to avoid direct power, but to terminate as soon as possible the unwelcome burden of martial law. As long as the senior Commanders accepted the need for patience, showed some results and maintained the current improvement in public order, the British Ambassador predicted that the present system of controlled democracy would probably survive until the elections of 1973.²³

2. Events in 1972

In 1972, Turkey saw the virtual failure of its novel experiment in political science, the "above-party government". Governmental weakness, Parliamentary chaos, terrorism, and repressive reaction by way of martial law, and endless talk of reform achieved as the year passed, there was less and less real progress towards it. Despite all this, Parliamentary democracy survived, some might say too healthily for Turkey's own good, the economy showed encouraging optimism, and business confidence remained high.²⁴

Fundamentally the evolution of the political scene reflected the long-standing contradiction left by the Atatürk revolution, between the ideal of a Westernised secular European industrial State, to which all paid lip-service and to which the majority of the country, never convinced by Atatürk in his lifetime, had always been opposed; and the traditional Islamic society which had held back Turkish development for so long and would "long continue to do so".²⁵

The year marked a steady retreat from the impatient and imperious demands of the army for rapid reform as each attempt collided with the democratic will expressed by the National Assembly to which the army, had sincerely professed their allegiance. The Prime Minister, Erim, caught in this contradiction, abandoned his second attempt to resolve it in April, and resigned disappointed, dispirited, and disillusioned at the refusal of the army to force through the reforms they and he desired. His resolve was strengthened because he foresaw the witch-hunt against the Left-wing academic world which duly followed and which he was unwilling to face and powerless to stop.²⁶

In 1971 Erim, in his first Administration, had been forced to give priority to the fight against ever more dangerous subversion and incipient anarchy. The country, alarmed at the extent of public disorder, had agreed to the necessary measures and the National Assembly had even accepted a number of constitutional reforms to strengthen the hand of the Executive. But as countersubversion improved public security, and began to verge on a blanket repression of all Left-wing opinion, the traditional attitudes of the Deputies reasserted themselves.²⁷

Already the second Erim Administration had shed the brilliant and diverse band of technocrats in favour of politicians more in tune with the thought of the National

²³ TNA/FCO9/1606/WST1/2, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971. See Gülen, *Türk Siyasal Hayatında Nihat Erim, Passim*.

²⁴ TNA/FCO/1831/WST1/1, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972. See Gülen, *Türk Siyasal Hayatında Nihat Erim, Passim*.

²⁵ TNA/FCO/1831/WST1/1, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972. See Gülen, *Türk Siyasal Hayatında Nihat Erim, Passim*.

²⁶ TNA/FCO/1831/WST1/1, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972. Kayalı, Op. Cit., pp. 133-201.

²⁷ TNA/FCO/1831/WST1/1, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972. Kayalı, Op. Cit., pp. 133-201.

Assembly. The first attempt to replace Erim produced a team headed by an agreeable and elderly ex-Prime Minister, Suat Hayri Ürgüplü, too committed to and bound by conditions set by their parties to be acceptable to the army. The second and successful nomination was the “safe, amiable and unimaginative” Minister of Defence, Melen, well known from his previous appointment to the Turkish General Staff and generally reported to be wholly in accord with, if not subservient to, the Service Commanders. Melen’s Government continued to be described as “above-party”, but the reconciliation of the contradictions alluded to is now taking the form of the sacrifice of reform to the realities of democracy, and acquiescence in the wishes of the majority Justice Party. Only those reforms, therefore, which Demirel and his party found both acceptable and conducive to their preparation for the elections due in October 1973 seemed likely to be passed. Other legislation called for by the constitutional amendments of the first Erim Administration has little chance of reaching the statute book. The inevitable corollary had been the withdrawal from the Government of the People’s Republican Party (founded by Atatürk and the professed exponents of his radical reformist ideals) which had inclined in recent years more markedly to the Left. The party withdrew, but its representatives in the Council of Ministers resigned from the party but not the Government.²⁸

The Melen Administration thus survived the crisis, and continued its cautious and unexciting path with the appearance of a caretaker Administration waiting for the elections of October 1973, far removed from the exciting band of reformers of April 1971.

These developments have been accompanied by far-reaching changes in the radically-inclined People’s Republican Party. The first was the election of Bülent Ecevit as leader of the party and the defeat of its conservative rear-guard, which had the tacit support of “the grand old man of Turkish politics: İsmet İnönü”. This led to a first bout of resignations from the party. The second was the People’s Republican Party’s withdrawal from the Melen Government, which gave İnönü the chance he had sought since Ecevit’s election also to leave the party. His subsequent move into the Senate was thought by many to be in preparation for the Presidency which would fall vacant in March. Over 30 Senators and Deputies followed İnönü and for a time it seemed that Ecevit might have irreparably damaged his party and with it any chances for a viable socialist and liberal opposition. Time however seemed to show that Ecevit’s claim was proving justified that he has effectively purified his party, consolidated it in the country and provided it with a coherent policy of opposition. His target was the rising generation and the new industrial class who had the potential to bring him fresh strength. Moreover, those who left the party had been incapable of coalescing sufficiently to produce any alternative or constructive opposition to the People’s Republican Party as the commanding element in the opposition.²⁹

If the army bowed to democracy in the matter of reforms, it did not feel able to make such concessions in the restoration of public order. The urgent need to crush subversion and anti-social violence inevitably gave power to officers who were little able or inclined to distinguish the gradations of opinion to the Left of their own political thought. All discussion of Marxism was now treated as subversion and large numbers, perhaps 4,000 suspects among senior and junior members of universities, were arrested and held for interrogation for various periods. This was accompanied by an increasing flow of stories

²⁸ TNA/FCO/1831/WST1/1, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972. Kayalı, Op. Cit., pp. 133-201.

²⁹ TNA/FCO/1831/WST1/1, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972. Demir, Op. Cit., pp. 163-223.

of torture which caused grave disquiet, in spite of all official denials. Liberal opinion in Turkey was anxious and frightened, and these events gave rise to mounting criticism among liberal circles in Europe. Trouble in the Council of Europe seemed inevitable.³⁰

If the reformers had been disappointed in the past year, the commercial community were much heartened. Economically, the generally "middle of the road" approach of the Melen Government, except on such emotive issues as mineral rights, helped to create the conditions for more substantial progress. The political quarrelling had surprisingly little effect on business confidence. The brighter aspects of 1971 - the good harvest and the steadily increasing flow of remittances from workers abroad - continued. More significantly, by comparison with 1971, exports had risen by 39 per cent by the end of November, industrial production was expected to increase by 10 per cent, while investment showed a healthy rise, particularly in the private sector, even though it was hampered by the inability of the banking system to provide medium and long-term finance on anything approaching acceptable terms. Thanks to the workers' remittances, economic recovery was achieved without strain on the balance of payments and foreign exchange reserves were at a record level.³¹

The Government also succeeded in moderating the previous year's alarming rate of inflation, mainly by its blank refusal to increase agricultural support prices. However, the government faced the familiar problem, in the face of a rise in the cost of living expected to be around 13 per cent that year, of trying to resist large wage claims, which the public sector certainly could not afford. Industrial unrest was kept in check by martial law restrictions but there were a number of strikes and lock-outs and the underlying problem remained.³²

The problem of State sector finance was also unresolved. After so many years of foreign exchange crises, it was ironic that development was now being held up by a shortage of Turkish lira resources. That year, Parliament showed that it was not prepared to go on voting for steep tax increases in each budget, even if it had voted for the programmes they were intended to finance. Unfortunately the long-promised structural reforms which might have eased the problem, such as of the State Economic Enterprises and the taxation system, seemed to have been pushed way back in the Parliamentary queue. Priority was given to those "reforms" with more political appeal such as agrarian reform or the mining and petroleum reforms with their proposed restrictions on foreign capital; but even these were making slow progress. The main long-term measure passed by Parliament, the Third Five-Year Plan, with its emphasis on the rapid expansion of heavy industry at the expense of both agriculture and much-needed social improvements seemed unfortunately only too likely to add to the future problems.³³

While the Turks showed interest in extending their trade with their neighbours, the EEC remained the dominant trading partner and the need to be ready for full membership of the Community was the theme of Turkey's long-term development strategy. The Turkish attitude was however ambivalent, and negotiations for the adaptation of Turkey's

³⁰ TNA/FCO/1831/WST1/1, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972. Demir, Op. Cit., pp. 163-223.

³¹ TNA/FCO/1831/WST1/1, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972. Çavdar, Op. Cit., pp. 191-260.

³² TNA/FCO/1831/WST1/1, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972. Çavdar, Op. Cit., pp. 191-260.

³³ TNA/FCO/1831/WST1/1, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972. Çavdar, Op. Cit., pp. 191-260.

Association Agreement to take account of enlargement ran into difficulties over Turkish demands to retain the right to take unilateral protective action.³⁴

Given the pre-occupation with internal affairs over the year, foreign policy was a secondary concern of the national thinking. Turkey remained firmly anchored to NATO and her American alliance, despite some friction over the ban on opium growing imposed under the threat of a withdrawal of American aid. Erim himself visited the US with this partly in mind. He also visited France.³⁵

The “technocrat” Foreign Minister, Bayülken, tried to give the impression of great activity through frequent visits abroad and the reception of numerous high-level visitors. His style and relative lack of authority in the Government led at times to an even narrower and more stubborn view of the Turkish national interest than usual. This tendency manifested itself not only in policy over Cyprus, particularly in the period leading up to the opening of the enlarged intercommunal talks in June with Constitutional advisers from Turkey and Greece, but also in the Turkish attitude towards the new institutions of Western Europe and the approach to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and talks on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions.³⁶

In general, there was a growing realisation that Turkey’s position in Western Europe was changing and that new groupings were being formed without it. There were in consequence increasingly insistent demands that Turkey be associated in some way with the political consultations of the enlarged Community, possibly through some kind of organic link via the EEC Council of Association. There was little disposition on the part of the Nine to satisfy the Turkish demands. Although the British PM, Edward Heath, was able to acknowledge to his Turkish counterpart, on the eve of the European Summit, that Turkey had a “legitimate interest” in all political and economic initiatives taken within the European framework, this matter is likely to be a continuous irritant in Turkey’s relations with NATO and the Community.³⁷

There were few positive developments in Turkish policy over Cyprus. There was little expectation of achieving a satisfactory solution through the enlarged intercommunal talks, but their continuance was recognised to be necessary if only as a safety valve. Meanwhile the Turkish Government continued to encourage the separate identity of the Turkish Cypriot Community through emphasis on equality and partnership. Apart from insisting in the early part of the year that the Czech arms imported by President Makarios be effectively neutralised by the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), the Turks could on the whole afford to sit back and observe the friction, first between Athens and Nicosia and subsequently within the Greek Cypriot community. They were not however convinced that the Greek Government had done everything possible to push President Makarios and the Greek Cypriots towards a settlement. Melen sent a reasonably friendly message to Yeoryos Papadopoulos in September in response to the Greek Prime Minister’s continued friendly overtures. Continuing friction over the minorities in their respective countries and the animosity engendered by the procedures on which the Turks insisted for the election of a new Patriarch in July showed however

³⁴ TNA/FCO/1831/WST1/1, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972. Oran, Op. Cit., pp. 653-808.

³⁵ TNA/FCO/1831/WST1/1, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972. Oran, Op. Cit., pp. 653-808.

³⁶ TNA/FCO/1831/WST1/1, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972. Oran, Op. Cit., pp. 653-808.

³⁷ TNA/FCO/1831/WST1/1, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972. Oran, Op. Cit., pp. 653-808.

that the underlying suspicions still prevailed on both sides. On the other hand, there was some recognition of a joint interest with Greece in the attitude towards the EEC and, for instance, participation in the Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) talks.³⁸

The Turks were disappointed at the lack of progress over Pakistan's reconciliation with India and more particularly with the newly formed state of Bangladesh. Partly in the interests of keeping Pakistan in CENTO, they faithfully kept their promise to President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who paid two flying visits to Turkey in January and June, not to recognise Bangladesh until he gave the green light. Turkey's relations with its other CENTO ally, Iran, remained good. Official visits were exchanged with its southern neighbours Iraq and Syria but there was little sign that Turkish visions of helping to open windows to the West had had any practical results. Meanwhile the Chinese were establishing themselves unobtrusively in Ankara and any fear which the Turks may have had of being isolated on the fringes of different spheres of influence would be balanced by the knowledge that they had reasonably friendly relations at that time with all comers.³⁹

The goodwill and warmth generated by The Queen's successful visit in October 1971, was unfortunately partially dissipated by the "Press war" over a then 14-year-old boy, Timothy Davey, following his sentence to six years' imprisonment in March for drug peddling. He continued to be a tiresome irritant in Anglo-Turkish relations for the rest of the year and renewed public attention was focused on him after an unsuccessful attempt to flee the country after he escaped from a reform school in October. Efforts to find a formula that would gloss over the requirements of the Turkish and British legal systems and permit his release to British authorities had by the end of the year proved impossible owing to the glare of publicity. Consequently, the Turkish Prime Minister turned his attention to the boy's inclusion in an amnesty on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Republic in 1973. A further shadow was cast over the Anglo-Turkish scene by the kidnapping and murder of two British radar technicians in March, although no serious damage was done to Anglo-Turkish relations.⁴⁰

The Turks continued to regard the UK as a potentially useful all attaining their foreign policy objectives, especially in the European arena, and also in a more general way in Cyprus, but this basic attitude was never seriously put to the test. Visits by two British Ministers in the autumn provided evidence of continuing British interest in Turkey. That of Lord Balniel, who was Minister of State for Defence at the time, was viewed mainly as coming within a CENTO context, while that of Lord Limerick (as Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Trade) helped to keep the Turks fully informed about the economic implications for Turkey of British entry into the EEC.⁴¹

British exporters took good advantage of the easier foreign exchange and licensing situation and by the end of October British exports had risen by 51 per cent, well above the 26 per cent rise in Turkey's import bill. Although capital aid continued to be expended at a high level, the British were unable to make a new pledge in 1972 and no decision had been taken on the future level of their programme. This uncertainty was a handicap to British firms. While Turkey's improved performance may have justified some reduction

³⁸ TNA/FCO/1831/WST1/1, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972. Oran, Op. Cit., pp. 653-808.

³⁹ TNA/FCO/1831/WST1/1, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972. Oran, Op. Cit., pp. 653-808.

⁴⁰ TNA/FCO/1831/WST1/1, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972. Oran, Op. Cit., pp. 653-808.

⁴¹ TNA/FCO/1831/WST1/1, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972. Oran, Op. Cit., pp. 653-808.

in British aid, a substantial cut in the bilateral programme to make room for future British commitments through the European Investment Bank risked being regarded as an act of bad faith by both the Turks and Britain's EEC partners. The technical assistance programme, which did not face the same problems, continued to play a valuable role although the reorganisation of responsibilities in London led to what was hoped to be only a temporary slowing down of the training programme.⁴²

Turkey ended the year in some uncertainty. Its formula of Government was accepted only because it had set a term to its own life and made little pretence at leadership. Its political parties were engaged almost exclusively in preparing for elections which were 10 months away. Its Civil Service was dispirited from lack of leadership and was less effective than ever. A crisis could at any time have bought the armed forces back to the centre of the stage. In spite of this, the economy was reasonably healthy and virtually everyone, except the anarchists, believed that sufficient stability must be maintained to allow elections to be held on time and a return to full Parliamentary democracy the following autumn. That was at least something to aim for. "Given Turkey's undoubted, and sometimes surprising, capacity for producing Turkish solutions to Turkish problems", the Ambassador predicted that the country would somehow muddle through and remain a viable trading and defence partner for the UK and the West. It was important, if only for strategic reasons, that it should be helped in any way possible to do so.⁴³

3. Events in 1973

It would have been an important year for Turkey even if the only noteworthy events had been the 50th Anniversary of Atatürk's Republic and the death of İsmet İnönü, Atatürk's immediate successor and last remaining close link with him. However, there were other events that proved to be more significant in the long term that combined with the anniversary to make the year historic: the all-party rejection of the armed forces' nominee for President; the lifting of martial law; a general election with surprising results but no follow-through to the creation of a new Government.⁴⁴

The 50th anniversary, on 29 October, which with the opening of the largely British-made bridge across the Bosphorus to connect Asia with Europe, which the Ambassador had described in a despatch at the time, marked the coming of age of the republic created by Atatürk out of the ruins of the Ottoman Empire. It was a republic firmly orientated towards Europe and aspiring to take its full place in the Community before the end of the century. The public veneration of the memory of Atatürk, who had died 35 years previously, was matched only by the homage paid to his last surviving associate of note, İsmet İnönü. The ailing 89-year-old soldier, politician and statesman was spared for the anniversary. Then on Christmas Day he died, and with the close of the year an era ended.⁴⁵

Early in the year the commanders of the armed forces, who were the traditionally self-appointed guardians of the principles of Atatürk, publicly warned politicians against "irresponsibility". Two weeks later their senior member resigned his commission and put himself forward as a candidate in the elections for President. Although the political parties themselves could not then agree on a candidate, they joined with courage and

⁴² TNA/FCO/1831/WST1/1, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972. Pamuk, Op. Cit., pp. 223-260.

⁴³ TNA/FCO/1831/WST1/1, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972. Pamuk, Op. Cit., pp. 223-260.

⁴⁴ TNA/FCO9/2112/WST1/3, Turkey: Annual Review for 1973. Hale, Op. Cit., pp. 228-260.

⁴⁵ TNA/FCO9/2112/WST1/3, Turkey: Annual Review for 1973. Demir, Op. Cit., pp. 163-221.

determination in opposing this attempt at imposing a military presence; and their eventual agreement on a new President (Senator Fahri Korutürk) established the supremacy of Parliamentary democracy and sent the armed forces back to their barracks for the first time in the 50 years of the republic.⁴⁶

Since then, the more interventionist among the generals had retired due to seniority. This, and the lifting of martial law, though with residual provision for security trials, gave hope that the general elections in October would mark the definitive end of traditional armed forces pressure on politicians, although this had never gone as far as actual military take-over since 1960. In the event, the elections proceeded quietly and with integrity, even to the point of a surprise victory for the leading Socialist Party and astonishing gains for the new Islamic Revivalist Party. However, the subsequent failure to form a Government, because no party had an absolute majority in Parliament and so far none had been able to agree on a coalition, had by the end of the year begun to raise the question how long the armed forces would remain patient while the politicians put personal and partisan interests before those of the country.⁴⁷

There seemed to be no imminent answer to this question, because, according to the New Year message from the Army Commander, the armed forces' role was to defend the constitutional regime and democracy against all external and internal threats, while remaining above and out of all kinds of political and ideological trends. And if internal security continued to improve as it had done through the year they would have been even less inclined to intervene unless they felt it was necessary. Subversive activity, although not eliminated, had been contained. Trials of suspects continued, and many sentences passed - though noticeably less harsh than in previous years. Predictably these gave rise to renewed allegations of torture in Turkey in the Council of Europe, with British representatives there well to the fore. Torture almost certainly went on, though probably not systematically: and whether in a genuine attempt to put an end to it or, more likely, to create a more acceptable world image, the Prime Minister in November ordered an investigation into it. Turkey seemed on all counts to be justifying its claim to progress towards a proper Parliamentary democracy.⁴⁸

This made it somewhat easier for the British Government to defend at Westminster their continued support for Turkey as an ally - for which the Foreign Minister expressed appreciation to the British Prime Minister Sir Alec Douglas-Home in the margin of several international meetings during the year. The cordiality of Anglo-Turkish relations was strengthened by a number of visits from the UK: those of, among others, Julian Amery, the Minister of State (three times, including the funeral of the veteran statesman İnönü), Sir Thomas Brimelow, the Permanent Under-Secretary, Lord Carrington, the Secretary of State for Defence (heading a NATO delegation), John Davies, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (for an EEC meeting), Geoffrey Rippon, the Secretary for the Environment (for the 50th Anniversary of the Republic), and Robert Mellish, the Opposition Chief Whip.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ TNA/FCO9/2112/WST1/3, Turkey: Annual Review for 1973. Demir, Op. Cit., pp. 163-221.

⁴⁷ TNA/FCO9/2112/WST1/3, Turkey: Annual Review for 1973. Demir, Op. Cit., pp. 163-221.

⁴⁸ TNA/FCO9/2112/WST1/3, Turkey: Annual Review for 1973. Oran, Op. Cit., pp. 653-808.

⁴⁹ TNA/FCO9/2112/WST1/3, Turkey: Annual Review for 1973. Oran, Op. Cit., pp. 653-808.

The Foreign Minister and his senior officials left no doubt about Turkey's identification with Europe and determination to progress from associate to full status in the EEC, though seeming at times more anxious to have the benefits of this than the obligations. It was also noticeable how often they sought UK support for Turkey's bid to be brought into closer consultation on the shaping of the emerging Europe. The Government's allegiance to NATO remained absolute and they hosted meetings of its nuclear planning group and of the North Atlantic Assembly. They played a part, although low key, in the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and MBFR discussions. And they continued to play a constructive leading role in CENTO. At the same time, relations with the Soviet bloc were well maintained; though Communism continued to be illegal.⁵⁰

The year's outstanding effort in foreign relations, however, was the cultivation of good relations with the Muslim world and Turkey's neighbours in particular, which involved a string of visits by the Foreign Minister from Tunisia to Indonesia and visits to Turkey by the Foreign Ministers of Kuwait, Syria, and Iraq as well as the President of Pakistan. This paid off in the Middle East war when Turkey, despite its refusal to sever relations with Israel, remained a most-favoured-nation with the Arabs. However, it was a policy that strained relations with the US, to whom Turkey prohibited the use of an important American air base in the country while at the same time being obliged to give the Soviet Union overflying rights under the Montreux Convention. It was not until the Americans realised the strength of feeling against them on this issue in many other parts of Europe that they accepted that Turkey had acted under *force majeure*. Thereafter relations gradually got back in balance.⁵¹

Cyprus remained, as always, a matter of direct concern. However, it was a quiet year, with the Turkish Government confident that it had found a defensible minimum position for the Turkish community in the island. Turkey finally abandoned Fazıl Küçük and supported Rauf Denktaş for Vice-President. The intercommunal talks were approaching the crunch of a political decision on the key issue of local autonomy. Yet they were basically troubled by intense mistrust on both sides - not helped by changes of Government in Athens - and it was difficult to see which side was dragging its feet more. At the end of the year reports of more importing of Czech arms by the Greek community were arousing Turkish suspicions and looked like setting back further the slow progress towards any settlement.⁵²

Despite some difficult moments in domestic and foreign affairs the economy remained afloat and domestic investment continued undiscouraged. Foreign trade expanded: in the first 10 months of the year UK exports increased by 45% per cent to £68 million, about 20% per cent of the EEC and 11% per cent of the global input. Multilateral and bilateral aid continued even though gold and foreign exchange reserves reached a record \$2,000 million. But half of this was derived from the remittances of approximately one million Turkish workers in Europe, 80% per cent of them in Germany. Bonn's decision not to take any more in view of the likely recession ahead was likely to lead to a serious reduction of foreign exchange earnings. Acute social difficulties would arise if matters

⁵⁰ TNA/FCO9/2112/WST1/3, Turkey: Annual Review for 1973. Oran, Op. Cit., pp. 653-808.

⁵¹ TNA/FCO9/2112/WST1/3, Turkey: Annual Review for 1973. Oran, Op. Cit., pp. 653-808.

⁵² TNA/FCO9/2112/WST1/3, Turkey: Annual Review for 1973. Oran, Op. Cit., pp. 653-808.

were taken a stage further and those already in Europe forced to return to Turkey, where there would be little chance of employment.⁵³

Inflationary pressures intensified during the year, mainly from the massive inflow of workers' remittances coupled with the high world prices for Turkish primary products (especially cotton) and the effects of a widespread drought on agricultural production. The already serious situation was exacerbated by inflation imported from abroad. Several anti-inflationary measures were taken by the Government, but they had little measurable effect upon the increasing prices. The attempt to suppress consumer price increases hit oil companies in particular; and Arab producers' assurances of full supplies would not be likely to spare Turkey, already short of energy to meet normal economic expansion, from the current world difficulties in this field, nor from the consequent effects on its domestic economy.⁵⁴

It is perhaps the economic considerations - inflation and oil prices chief among them - that made the country's entry into the new year still without a government a matter of greatest concern. For there were difficulties ahead which would require unpopular measures, and there was so far no party or combination of parties confident enough of public and Parliamentary support to be willing to form the Government that would put such measures through. It was to Turkey's credit that in the 50 years of the new republic, and more particularly since 1945 when İnönü first allowed opposition parties, Parliamentary democracy had taken root. However, it was still frail, uncertain of whom it could turn to, and too often overshadowed by the self-interest of political leaders anxious to look after their own interests. All of them paid lip-service to the principles of Atatürk, but only an Atatürk would have been able to instil in them and the country as a whole the discipline needed to apply his principles and give the lead. Since his death 35 years previously, there had been no such guiding force; even İnönü at the height of his powers could not live up to those expectations. In the meantime, the country moved uncertainly from interim measure to measure, jealous of its democracy but fearful that the politicians would destroy this by personal and partisan self-interest that would provoke the armed forces, unwilling though they may be, to step in yet again to give the country some order and purpose in the difficult year ahead. However, as the year ended more hopeful signs could be discerned that renewed attempts to form a Parliamentary coalition capable of running the country might succeed.⁵⁵

Conclusion

1971 was a turbulent year, with many serious internal difficulties left unresolved. There was loss of confidence in the Government and partial collapse of public security, especially in the universities. The armed forces demanded and obtained Demirel's resignation. He was replaced by Erim and an "above-party" Government, with a majority of technocrats from outside Parliament with a programme of radical, left-wing, reforms. Martial Law was needed to restore security. The Constitution was amended, meaning more power for the Government. There was a start on reforms, but the Justice Party was refusing to co-operate. Concessions were made to the JP, leading to the resignation of 11

⁵³ TNA/FCO9/2112/WST1/3, Turkey: Annual Review for 1973. Pamuk, Op. Cit., pp. 223-260.

⁵⁴ TNA/FCO9/2112/WST1/3, Turkey: Annual Review for 1973. Pamuk, Op. Cit., pp. 223-260.

⁵⁵ TNA/FCO9/2112/WST1/3, Turkey: Annual Review for 1973.

radical Ministers. The Government resigned, and the new, more moderate Erim Government was hoping to mend fences with Parliament and the private business sector. However, economic difficulties were exacerbated by the doctrinaire policies of the first Erim Government, resulting in a loss of confidence. Inflation levels were serious, but there was a record harvest that year. Nevertheless, it was expected that confidence would take some time to return. Aid, from the World Bank and the OECD, continued to be important. A large British loan, the Anglo-Turkish balance of trade, was still tilting in Britain's favour. Turkey ratified the EEC Annex Protocol, but there was no significant change in foreign policy. In Cyprus, there was a period of impatience that leads to continuing dialogue, especially with Greece. In August, China recognised the decision to ban cultivation of opium, at the United States request. Links between Turkey and Iran were strengthened by the opening of the CENTO Railway. Her Majesty the Queen's state visit in October was highly successful, and there were undoubtedly benefits of this for Anglo-Turkish relations. On the whole, 1971 injected some realism into the demand for reforms. The armed forces, who were still anxious to avoid direct rule, would probably accept this. If the Government could show some results and maintain public order, the current system of controlled democracy would be likely to survive.

In 1972 Turkey suffered from weak administration, intermittent terrorism, and repressive martial law, but Parliamentary democracy survived. The armed forces did not maintain their resolve to force reforms through Parliament. Erim's above-party Government resigned, and was replaced by Melen's, which was more acceptable to the Conservatives in Parliament. This resulted in the withdrawal of the radical People's Republican Party, which had suffered setbacks in 1972, but seemed to have emerged as a viable opposition. The armed forces suppressed both subversive and non-violent Left wingers without discrimination. This, and allegations of torture, were disturbing and foreshadowed trouble in the European context. Nevertheless, the economy prospered. Exports and foreign exchange reserves were well up. However, vital economic reforms were still not on the horizon. Turkey's principal development aim was to prepare for full membership of the EEC. Turkey remained loyal to NATO and the West, but its foreign policy was "nationalistic". It was most anxious to be included in any "European" developments. There was no change over Cyprus, and Greek/Turkish relations remained moderately good. Relations with Pakistan and Iran were good. Anglo/Turkish relations remained sound, despite the Davey affair. There were visits by two British Ministers. Although there was a big rise in British exports, it was expected that a substantial cut in bilateral aid could bring trouble. All in all, it was an uncertain period for Turkey. There was little to no leadership, yet the economy was healthy and there was a general wish for conditions to be stable enough for a general election in 1973. Turkey would probably muddle through again.⁵⁶

1973 was a momentous year in which the republic founded by Atatürk celebrated its 50th anniversary. His last surviving close associate İnönü had died at 89, martial law was lifted, the armed forces failed to impose their candidate for President and Parliamentary democracy prevailed. An honest general election was held but there was no follow-through to a new Government, over which the armed forces remained patient with the politicians. Internal security remained good, and the Prime Minister ordered an enquiry into further allegations of torture of suspected subversives. This helped the image of

⁵⁶ TNA/FCO/1831/WST1/1, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972.

Turkey outside, including the UK, which continued its support as friend and ally. Consequently, several leading politicians paid visits. The country remained loyal to NATO and CENTO and continued the slow progress towards full status in the EEC. Relations with the Communist bloc were maintained but Communism remained illegal. Closer links with the Muslim world helped Turkey in the Arab-Israel war, despite its refusal to sever diplomatic relations with the latter. The intercommunal talks in Cyprus made little progress; nevertheless, there was no friction between Ankara and Athens. The economy remained optimistic, but world inflation intensified an already serious inflationary situation. Power output was not meeting growing requirements. Germany's decision not to take in any more foreign workers, of whom Turks formed the largest single group, foreshadowed a decline in Turkey's high foreign exchange reserves, half of them derived from workers remittances. The need for urgent action in many fields of the economy made the continued lack of Government especially serious. Parliamentary democracy existed, but had not yet matured and political leaders put selfish and party interests before it. The country was lacking direction. As the Ambassador expressed, "It could do with the firm centralised direction of another Atatürk in the difficult year ahead. But there is no such leader in sight".⁵⁷



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⁵⁷ TNA/FCO9/2112/WST1/3, Turkey: Annual Review for 1973.

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