

STRIKES AND LOCKOUTS IN TURKEY*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Although there have been extensive publications in Turkey about legal aspects of industrial conflicts, strikes and lockouts, we rarely come across to analyses studying the subject from economic and social points of view. On the other hand, the problem with its various aspects has been subject to numerous publications in the West and both the causes of industrial conflicts and their effects on national economy, enterprises and lastly on workers and unions have been researched.

As it is known, strikes appear as the obvious sign of conflict and dissatisfaction in labour-management relations in the industrial life. However, strikes and lockouts are not the only manifestation of tension in industrial relations. High rates of labour turnover, grievances, tardiness, absenteeism, sickness and accidents, political labour movements, etc..., also appear as the manifestation of economic and social tension. (1).

Although there are various forms of maladjustments, among these industrial conflicts are perhaps the most obvious and measurable ones. Another important point is the fact that conflict in labour-management relations can result in the form of a strike or a lockout only in countries which have accepted these processes as dispute settlement. In other words, if the political system does not allow for

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1) Knowles, K.G.J.C.; *Strikes-A Study in Industrial Conflict*; Basil Black-well; Oxford; 1954, pp. 210.

the organization of free unionism, collective bargaining, strike and lockout rights and employer-employee relations, the industrial conflicts and discontent will undoubtedly not take the form labour disputes in such a country.

Even in countries lacking the right of strike workers strike illegally by leaving their jobs themselves. However, right to strike and lockout goes together with free unionism and collective bargaining process and this right compose inseparable part of these said institutions. What is more, in a country with all these fundamental rights, for the labour disputes to appear as strikes or lockouts, the workers must organize in unions and the collective bargaining process must be carried on by the unions.

Especially in an enterprise or in a branch of economic activity where the rate of unionization is very low and where there are extensive child and unskilled woman workers, conflicts may appear in the form of high labour turnover or in other forms. In this manner, the diminishing trend of labour disputes in a country has diversified meanings. In this situation, it may mean harmonious and satisfactory labour-management relations, as well as that labour struggles under certain economic and social conditions have moved to other forms.

While expecting the protests of wage earners especially in the early stages of industrialization movements the long-run analyses give us the conclusion that discontentment of the working class diminishes as time goes on².

Although there are many difficulties encountered in adaptation to social and cultural conditions of the new structure while passing from agricultural to industrial life, the attractiveness of living conditions of industrial societies in cities diminishes the effects of these difficulties to a large extent. By this way, the negative results of industrialization affecting the individual worker that is when compared with facilities introduced by the new living conditions become insignificant.

In a developing society, an individual who has worked before as an agricultural worker or as an unpaid family worker, if he can find a job in other sectors resulting from economic development, will have the opportunity to make use of the advantages of city life

2) Ross, Arthur-Hartman, Paul T.: *Changing Patterns of Industrial Conflict*; John Wiley and Sons, Inc.; New York 1960, pp. 181.

and the protection of a modern labour legislation and social insurance. From the point of income he will get a wage which is at least five times as much as his wage in the agricultural sector. On the other side, in the early periods of development, it has been found that incomes of industrial workers have increased a lot compared to the income increases in the other production factors³. The recent industrialization in developing countries has converted the improved working conditions determined by the International Labour Organisations through national legislation.

Especially large enterprises show the tendency of lowering the disputes to minimum levels by applying modern personnel administration methods. By this way, the social problems emerging as a result of industrialization in less developed countries are uncomparably less serious than the social problems created by the industrialization model a century ago.

Another important point of attention is that the industrial conflicts in this development trend pose an institutionalized form. Under these conditions the labour-management relations have become more in harmony and well balanced as compared to the last century. As a matter of fact, besides other factors, today, all the industrial workers and the society as a whole are more eager for accelerating industrialization and «machine breakers» are no longer regarded as heroes².

In essence, the system of collective bargaining in a less developed country, is a subject which is far beyond the scope of this research. In our following explanations we will briefly touch upon the characteristics of industrial conflicts, strikes and lockouts in Turkey and try to reach some conclusions and evaluate these in the light of international experiences.

II. THE NATURE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF INDUSTRIAL CONFLICTS, STRIKES AND LOCKOUTS IN TURKEY

In Turkey, industrial conflicts arising from labour-management relations have been solved by different processes in the historical development trend. The regime introduced by the Labor Law of

3) Kerr, C. -Dunlop, J. T. -Harbison, F.H. -Myers, C.A.; *Industrialism and Industrial Man*; Harvard University Press; Cambridge; 1960, pp. 195.

2) *Ibid*; pp. 231.

1936 during its a quarter-century application, has handled the industrial conflicts by the compulsory arbitration system; industrial disputes put forward by shop stewards or later by unions, after passing mediation and conciliation stages have been subject to provincial compulsory arbitration or supreme arbitration committees.

This system for many years has been subject of various criticisms and with the 1961 Constitution, labour-management relations in Turkey have been put into a completely different and a new democratic system. This new regime, regulated by the laws on «Unions» and «Collective Bargaining, Strike and Lockout Laws», numbered 274-275 and dated 1963, has brought together with itself all the fundamental processes necessary for the functioning of the collective bargaining system.

With this system there have been changes both in the nature and in the solutions of the industrial conflicts, it has been more appropriate to solve these problems by the mediation of democratic and voluntary organizations. By this way, 81 % of 870 collective agreements in 1965 and 91 % of 1032 in 1966 have been signed without any dispute. However, in order to sign the remaining agreements in 1965 and 1966, it had been necessary to pass through the stages shown below:

<i>Years</i>	<i>Agree- ments</i>	<i>Conci- liation</i>	<i>Government Mediation</i>	<i>High Mediation</i>	<i>Private Arbitration</i>	<i>Provincial Arbitration</i>
1965	730	98	4	3	11	6
1966	939	48	8	6	—	2
<i>Supreme Arbitration</i>			<i>Strike and Lockout</i>			
	7		37			
	4		14			

The facts about industrial conflicts, strikes and lockouts are only published in the «Year Book of Labour Statistics» of the «International Labour Office»⁵.

⁵) International Labour Office; *Year Book of Labour Statistics*; 1967; Geneva; 1967, pp. 723.

All the statistical knowledge about this subject are gathered in the Ministry of Labour. The Ministry of Labour through District Labour Offices follow regularly the collective bargainings, strikes and lockouts in Turkey. These District Labour Offices keep records of collective bargaining, strikes and lockouts in their region and send these records to the Ministry. All the statistics we used in our following discussions are from this source.

TABLE : I

*Yearly Number Of Strikes, Period, Workers Participating
And Workdays Lost*
(1963 — June 1967)

<i>Years</i>	<i>Number of Strikes</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Workers Participating</i>	<i>Workdays Lost</i>
1963	8	269	1500	19,459
1964	83	2969	6640	238,416
1965	43	1156	6540	304,920
1966	41	962	11300	412,947
1967	5	169	379	8,112
Total	180	5525	26365	983,854

We see that in Turkey there have been 180 strikes during the second half of 1963 and the first half of 1967. During these 180 strikes, nearly 1 million workdays were lost, 26 thousand workers participated in the strikes and these strikes lasted about more than 5 thousand workdays. It is found out that the strikes were at the highest level especially when the campaign of collective bargaining was rapidly spreading in 1964.

But the highest number of workers participating strikes seems to be in 1966. And it is understood that the highest number of

TABLE : II

*Yearly Number Of Lockouts, Period, Workers
Subject To Lockouts And Workdays Lost*
(1963 — June 1967)

<i>Years</i>	<i>Number of Lockouts</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Workers Subject to Lockouts</i>	<i>Workdays Lost</i>
1963	1	21	580	12,180
1964	1	21	36	1,008
1965	52	36	1045	22,990
Total	54	78	1661	36,178

workdays lost was also in 1966. The situation occurring as a result of lockouts is presented above :

In Turkey employers rarely have recourse to lockouts. Especially in 1965, if we disregard the exceptional lockouts in the leather industry there were only two lockouts. The analysis of the strikes and lockouts from the point of view of duration, participating workers and the workdays lost will show us that in industrial conflicts, compared to strikes, the lockout has been an institution which is resorted to only in extraordinary and exceptional cases.

Undoubtedly, there are various reasons why the employers lockout compared to strikes very rarely. It must be said before anything else that, in Turkey, the nature of lockouts, in industrial conflicts, being more limited than that of strikes is parallel to fundamental tendencies in a country where the worker-employer relations are regulated in a democratic way.

In Turkey, the right to strike is clearly regarded as a social right in the Constitution but lockout has not been mentioned. And this situation has made way for long arguments in the press, among unions and in public, about the nature of lockout and its suitability to our constitution. In a less developed economic and social structure, these arguments have made lockout a means which is not attractive and socially desirable. And what is more, there are various econo-

TABLE : III

*Yearly Average Period Of Strikes And Average Number
Of Workers Participating In Strikes*

(1963 — June 1967)

<i>Years</i>	<i>Number of Strikes</i>	<i>Period of Strikes</i>	<i>Average Period of Strikes</i>	<i>Workers Participating</i>	<i>Average Num- ber of Wor- kers Parti- cipating in Strikes</i>
1963	8	269	33	1500	187
1964	83	2969	35	6640	80
1965	43	1156	26	6546	152
1966	41	962	23	11300	275
1967	5	169	33	379	76
Total	180	5525	30	26365	146

mic and social factors enabling the employers to have recourse to lockouts.

By our calculations it is understood that in our country during the five years period, strikes have lasted 30 days on the average, and around 150 workers have participated in each strike. The period of a strike being 30 days on the average means that the duration of strikes is too long in Turkey. Especially, the lack of an effective arbitration mechanism in every stage of industrial conflicts and obstinate conduct of employers who are not worried about the struggling power and capacities of the disorganized and broken Turkish unionism seem to account for the long duration of strikes in Turkey. It is proper to add to these factors the unions' failure in following wise and effective strike tactics at this stage of Turkish unionism. The thought that these long strikes will have more destructive effects especially on unions instead of employers has an important rôle on the extension of strikes.

It is seen that in 54 lockouts the average period was 26 days and 30 workers on the average were subject to a lockout.

While evaluating the strikes, it is undoubtedly necessary to analyze the problem together with the collective bargaining pro-

cess. As it is known, collective bargaining composes only one phase of the structure and has a meaning only when considered as a part of the whole system. Disregarding the various forms and phases of industrial conflicts, it is calculated that to sign each 100 collective agreements there had to be theoretically 5 strikes. In fact, corresponding to the 3209 collective agreements signed in the 5 year period, there have been 180 strikes and the ratio of strikes to collective agreements has reached 5,6 %. The most important fact that calls attention in yearly changes is that each year collective agreements are signed thus making fewer strikes. While there were 8.3 strikes per 100 agreements in 1963, in 1967, 100, collective agreements have caused only 3 strikes.

TABLE : IV

Relation Between Collective Agreement And Strikes

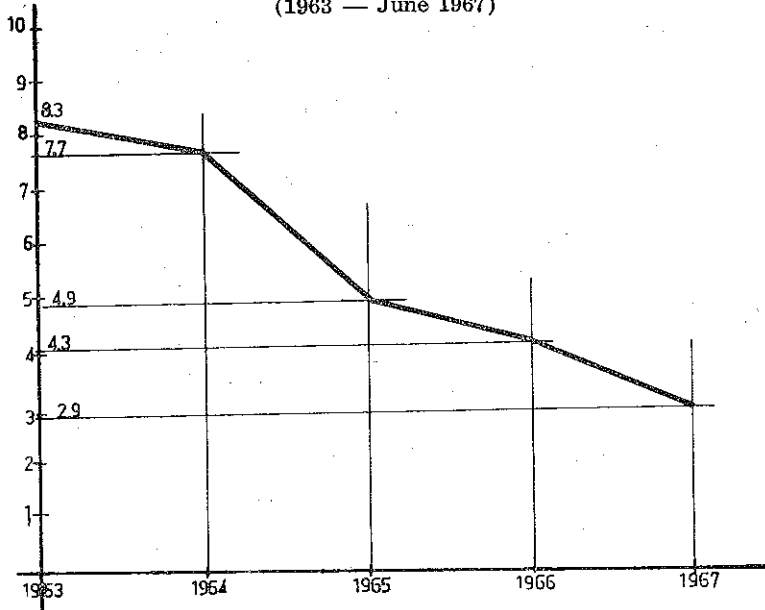
(1963 — June 1967)

<i>Years</i>	<i>Number of Collective Agreements Signed</i>	<i>Number of Strikes</i>	<i>Strikes as the Ratio of Collective Agreements</i>
1963	96	8	% 8,3
1964	1078	83	% 7,7
1965	867	43	% 4,9
1966	999	41	% 4,1
1967	169	5	% 2,9
Total	3209	180	% 5,6

As a matter of fact, this situation is seen even clearer below. In Figure I. It will be proper to regard the increase in the number of strikes in the beginning years as a reaction to accumulated social and economic pressures of previous years and relate it to the in-experiences of the first years. With the passage of years, worker-employer relations are being based on more sound foundations. While the collective bargaining process shifts to more economic subjects the experienced union leaders tend to solve industrial conflicts before these conflicts take the form of work struggles, as far as possible.

FIGURE : I.

Strikes As The Ratio Of Collective Agreements
(1963 — June 1967)



Similar tendencies are recorded in regards to the proportion of workers participating in strikes to workers benefiting from collective agreements. In 1963, it was necessary to have 16 workers on strike in order to make 100 agreements; this ratio has been diminished to 2 % in 1967. In the last 5-year period, nearly 1 million workers had participated in strikes and by this way 3 out of each 100 workers were involved in strikes in the collective bargaining regime.

TABLE : V

Number Of Workers Participating in Strikes As The Ratio Of Workers Benefiting From Collective Agreements
(1963 — June 1967)

Years	Number of Workers Benefiting from Collective Agreements	Workers Participating	%
1963	9472	1500	16,0
1964	436762	6640	1,5
1965	167400	6546	4,0
1966	292585	11300	4,0
1967	15192	379	2,0
Total	921411	26365	3,0

On the other hand when we analyze strikes by provinces, we obtain some noteworthy results. Province of Istanbul, with 47 strikes, has been the leading province during the last five years. In Istanbul, only 4,3 % of laborers working in the whole province have participated in strikes. During the five years period under study, more than 11 thousand workers have been involved in strikes in Istanbul and there have been no strikes in 30 other provinces in Turkey yet. We have to add the 52 lockouts in 1965 to 47 strikes made in Istanbul. The 52 lockouts in leather business have all been in Istanbul.

In this manner the relation between the size of the enterprises and the duration of strikes can be made subject of research. Table - VI is presented for this purpose. In order to find the relations between the size of enterprises and the duration of strikes there have been some classifications made by taking the number of workers as a base in determining the size of an enterprise.

It is understood that during 1963 and 1967, 6,5 % of strikes have lasted one day, 25 % one week and 7 % fifteen days. 30 % of all the strikes have lasted more than one month. As will be seen by studying the same table, nearly one third of strikes has been in plants with less than 100 workers. In five years, there have been only 17 strikes, which is about 10 % in large workplaces with more than 500 workers. It can be said that, usually, strikes last from 15 days to months in small work places in Turkey.

TABLE : VI

*Relations Between The Size Of Enterprises And Period
Of Strikes*
(1963 — June 1967)

<i>Period of Strikes</i>	<i>Number of Workers Working in Enterprises</i>					<i>Total %</i>
	<i>10</i>	<i>11—50</i>	<i>51—100</i>	<i>101—500</i>	<i>500 +</i>	
— 1 day	3	2	2	3	2	12 %65,5
2 — 7 days	22	11	2	9	3	47 %25,6
8 — 15 days	3	3	2	4	2	14 % 7,6
16 — 30 days	22	13	5	11	1	52 %28,4
31 — 90 days	1	15	9	17	7	51 %27 8
91 + days	—	6	1	—	—	7 % 3,8
Total	51	50	21	44	17	183 %100
%	%27,8	%27,3	%11 4	%24,0	%9,2	%100

The industrial enterprises being generally of small sizes, the employment conditions in small businesses being comparatively bad and the paternal conduct of employers being more powerful all account for this situation. Tables VII and VIII give information about the relations between the number of workers participating in strikes, the duration of strikes and size of the work places. First

TABLE : VII

*Relations Between Economic Activity Andnumber
Of Workers Participating In Strikes*

(1963 — June 1967)

<i>Economic Activity(*)</i>	<i>Striking Workers</i>					<i>Total</i>	<i>%</i>
	<i>-10</i>	<i>11-50</i>	<i>51-100</i>	<i>101-500</i>	<i>501+</i>		
Agriculture	—	—	1	—	—	1	0,5
Mining	—	1	1	2	—	4	2,1
Petroleum	—	2	—	1	—	3	1,6
Food	36	20	3	5	2	68	37,0
Textile	—	3	2	4	3	12	6,5
Leather	—	2	3	1	—	6	3,2
Wood	8	—	2	1	—	11	6,0
Printing	2	1	1	—	—	4	2,1
Rubber	2	1	—	6	4	13	7,1
Chemicals	—	1	—	—	1	2	1,0
Ceramics	9	4	1	3	—	18	9,2
Glass	—	—	—	—	1	1	0,5
Cement	—	1	—	1	—	2	1,0
Metal	—	—	3	7	—	10	5,4
Construction	1	2	2	4	—	9	4,9
Energy	—	—	1	1	—	2	1,0
Transportation	—	1	—	—	—	1	0,5
Warehousing	—	—	—	—	1	1	0,5
Public Services	—	2	4	3	—	9	4,9
Hotel and Restaurant	—	2	—	2	—	4	2,1
Bureau	2	—	—	—	—	2	1,0
Military	—	1	1	1	—	3	1,5
Total	60	44	25	42	12	183	100,0
%	32,7	24,0	13,6	22,9	6,5	100,0	

(*) These categories are not based on the I.L.O. Standart Classification. They have been determined specifically by the Turkish Ministry of Labour for union organization and for various other purposes.

TABLE : VIII

Relations Between Economic Activity And Period Of Strikes

(1963 — June 1967)

<i>Economic Activity</i>	<i>Period of Strikes</i>					<i>Strikes</i>	
	<i>1 day</i>	<i>2—7 days</i>	<i>8—15 days</i>	<i>16—30 days</i>	<i>31—90 days</i>	<i>91+ days</i>	<i>Total %</i>
Agriculture	—	—	1	—	—	—	1 —
Mining	2	—	1	—	1	—	4 2,1
Petroleum	—	—	—	2	1	—	3 1,6
Food	4	19	3	24	16	2	68 37,1
Textile	—	—	2	2	7	1	12 6,5
Leather	—	—	—	5	1	—	6 3,2
Wood	—	1	2	8	—	—	11 6,0
Printing	—	1	2	—	—	1	4 2,1
Rubber	1	2	—	1	8	1	13 7,0
Chemicals	1	—	—	—	1	—	2 1,0
Ceramics	—	15	1	2	—	—	18 9,8
Glass	—	—	—	—	1	—	1 0,5
Cement	—	1	—	—	—	—	1 0,5
Metal	—	2	1	2	6	—	10 6,0
Construction	—	2	1	3	1	—	9 4,3
Energy	1	—	—	—	1	—	2 1,0
Warehousing	—	1	—	—	—	—	1 0,5
Public Service	1	1	—	2	5	—	9 4,9
Hotel and Restaurant	1	—	—	1	2	1	4 2,7
Bureau	—	—	—	—	—	1	1 0,5
Military	1	1	—	—	—	—	3 1,0
Total	12	47	14	52	51	7	183 100,0
%	6,5	25,5	7,6	28,4	27,8	3,8	100

of all, it is seen that strikes reach to an important ratio especially in food industry.

37 % of the total strikes have been made in this branch of activity. In other words, in Turkey, one out of each three strikes is made in this industry. In five years, 68 out of 183 strikes have been made in food branch and less than 10 workers participated in 36

of these 68 strikes. The ratios of strikes are respectively 9 % in rubber, 6,5 % in textile and 6 % in wood working industry. The number of strikes is lowest in agriculture, transportation, warehousing, brick, glass, etc. branches. There have been no strikes in sugar, paper, highway construction, trading, etc. branches. There were 52 lockouts in leather business, one in textile and one in general services.

On the other hand less than 10 workers have participated in 32.7 % of strikes in Turkey. The ratio of strikes where less than 50 workers have participated is 57%. There are only 12 strikes with more than 500 workers participating and the ratio of this is nearly 6,5%. One third of the total strikes in Turkey, where less than 50 workers have participated is in the food industry. Also seven strikes in rubber industry, with more than 100 workers participating deserve attention.

Table VIII which we have prepared for the purpose of presenting the relationships between branch of activity and strike duration has important implications. While in Turkey 68 strikes out of 183 in the last five years occurred in food industry more than 100 strikes out of this 183 have lasted from 15 days to 3 months. Undoubtedly, other calculations are needed to determine the industry in which the tendency to strike is greater. Table IX is prepared to show the tendency to strike in various branches of activity⁶.

It is seen that the tendency to strike in Turkey is greatest in the rubber industry. The tendency is as high as 19,09. Following this are warehousing with 6.10 ceramics, glass, cement with 3.83, leather with 3.75 and petroleum with 3.28. In food industry where the number of strikes are the greatest, the tendency is only 0,77. The lowest tendencies are seen in construction, mining and agricultural establishments. The branches suffering most from the workdays lost are textile with 287 thousand workdays, ceramics, glass, cement with 218 thousand workdays, rubber with 125 thousand

6) To determine the tendency to strike in various economic activities the following formula is used :

$$\frac{\text{Total No. of workers} \times \text{No. of strikers}}{\text{No. of workers in the Branch} \times \text{Total No. of Strikers}} = \frac{\text{to strike}}{\text{Tendency}}$$

As the number of total branch of activity the number of workers subject to Social Insurance in 1966, which is 894, 529, and as the number of workers in the branch the number shown in the same year by making some corrections have been used. For these numbers see :

Sosyal Sigortalar Kurumu İstatistik Yılıhı; 1966, Ankara; pp. 16 and 36,

workdays, rubber with 125 thousand workdays and food with 125 thousand workdays.

While the factors determining the tendency to strike depend on the number of workers working in that branch they, at the same time, depend on the number of strikers in the same branch of activity. Besides, the employment conditions in the workplaces, the nature and the structure of the unions, ideology and the conceptions of the employers and union leaders all affect the tendency to strike.

TABLE : IX

*Tendency To Strike In Various Branches Of
Economic Activity*

(1963 — June 1967)

<i>Economic Activity</i>	<i>Number of Strikes in the Branch</i>	<i>Number of Workers in the Branch</i>	<i>Number of Striking Workers in the Branch</i>	<i>Workdays Lost in the Branch</i>	<i>Tendency to Strike</i>
Agriculture	1	12.398	85	1,020	0,23
Mining	4	73.160	426	2.067	0,19
Petroleum	3	2.734	269	7.581	3,28
Food	67	129.738	2,987	124,763	0,77
Textile	12	123.648	5,695	287,643	1,53
Leather	6	2.980	336	10,321	3,75
Wood	12	11.207	396	10,323	1,18
Printing	4	10.114	128	6,527	0,42
Rubber	13	9.406	5,393	125,658	19,09
Chemicals	2	19.305	1,016	40,172	1,75
Glass Cement	20	31,240	3,590	218,349	3,83
Metal	10	110,168	2,080	79,591	0,63
Construction	7	199.652	1,037	24,077	0,17
Energy	2	13.950	228	5,748	0,54
Warehousing	1	3,941	722	1,444	6,10
Service	17	69.859	1,603	37,620	0,76
Total	180	823,500	26,365	983,854	2,76

Professor Kerr and Siegel have found out high tendencies to strike in mining, ship transportation, loading and unloading, wood and textile industries in their research on 11 countries during 1919

- 1950. The lowest tendencies were found in clothing, public services, hotels and restaurants and agricultural establishments⁷.

The causes for high strike tendencies have been researched and as a result of this international comparison, the following conclusions have been arrived. Before anything, the workers, being isolated from the society, causes a high tendency to strike. Such workers usually work in mines, on sea and in forests, far away from cities. Besides, in these activities, the opportunity of promotion to higher levels is very limited. The nature of the work and of the employee also affect this tendency. Whether or not the work done is physically very difficult and unpleasant, whether it is unskilled or semi-skilled and temporary or seasonal, all affect the individual's psychology and cause the accumulation of unstable quarrelsome, tough workers. Undoubtedly, this situation causes the tendency to strike to increase.

On the other hand, in finding out the distribution of strikes in public and private sectors, it is seen that the information on hand is not sufficient and not convenient for detailed analyses. Since the statistics reflecting the distribution of strikes in public and private sectors are in the form of yearly strike statistics, it is necessary to be contented with simple data. However, it has been found out by an analysis in public and private sectors, that during 120 strikes in 1965 93 % of 120 strikes which makes 111, have been in the private sector and the remaining 9 in the public sector. 6 out of 9 strikes in the public sector have been in the «general services» branch.

Looking at the lockouts, except the one in general services during 1964, 53 out of the total 54 lockouts have occurred in the private sector. During this 36-days lockout in the public sector 36 workers have been subject to lockout and 1008 workdays have been lost. The comparison of these numbers with the number of workers subject to total lockouts and to the workdays lost shows us clearly that it is unconsiderable in the whole lockout movements in Turkey. While 5903 out of 3209 collective agreements were concerning the private sector during the end of the first half of 1967, 3602 agreements concerning the public sector were signed.

7) Reynolds, Lloyd G.; *Labor Economics and Labor Relations*; Prentice Hall, Inc.; New Jersey; 1960, pp. 282.

Another point of interest is this: In private sector, with the signing of 3209 collective agreements, 329 thousand workers have been involved in these agreements; and because the enterprises in the public sector are comparatively larger, although there was a decrease in the number of public enterprises subject to collective agreements. 529 thousand workers have benefited from the collective agreement in the public sector. By these figures, we can say with ease that the tendency to strike and lockout in the public sector is very low compared to the tendency in the private sector. As to another source, the distribution of strikes made in public and private sectors until August 1967 is shown below⁸:

TABLE : X

*Yearly Changes In The Number Of
Strikes In Public And Private Sectors*

(1963 — August 1967)

<i>Years</i>	<i>Number of Strikes</i>	<i>Public Sector</i>	<i>Private Sector</i>	<i>Strikes in the Public Sector As % of Total Strikes</i>
1963	8	1	7	% 12,5
1964	83	5	78	% 6,0
1965	43	6	37	% 14,0
1966	41	6	35	% 14,0
1967	24	20	4	% 83,3
Total	199	38	161	
%	% 100	% 20	% 80	

III. THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF STRIKES IN TURKEY

We do not have information in Turkey about the effects of strikes on unions, workers, employers and the national economy. What is known only is that, in five years as a total more than 1 million workdays by strikes and 36178 by lockouts have been lost.

8) Statistics taken from Turkish Trade Union Confederation (Türk-İş).

There is no doubt that both sides and the national economy have material and immaterial losses and gains as a result of industrial conflicts. The parties must evaluate their possible losses and gains as a result of being involved in the conflict, already during the collective bargaining phase. It can be assumed that in most cases in Turkey they start conflicts for emotional reasons or without ever thinking the possible outcome of their action.

Essentially, the negative results of industrial conflicts can be eliminated. For instance, workers can compensate for their financial losses either by working overtime or by the increased wages obtained in the collective bargaining following the strike. From the point of view of national economy and enterprises, industrial conflicts in an enterprise with high stocks will mean compulsory re-organization and a vacation period. When the economy is taken as a whole, industrial conflicts will mean the transfer of economic functions from a certain employer to another in the same industry.

For this reason, it will be seen that, the losses of the whole economy are not so great. However, in developing countries, where industrial enterprises are very few these transfers among businesses are more liable to become limited. Therefore it is necessary to analyze the results in a less developed country in a manner different from the results in a developed country.

Since in Turkey there is no possibility for industrial conflicts to have an ideological nature due to the current legislation, they must have been caused by employment conditions. Therefore it will be proper to state that, in Turkey, wage conflicts have become the essential causes of industrial conflicts.

In essence, to find out the social, psychological and political causes underlying strikes and lockouts, very careful analyses must be made. It must not be forgotten that industrial conflicts are just like icebergs on the sea, uncovered parts are very limited but their unseen phases go deep into the sea⁹.

In a society like Turkey, which recently has adopted the practice of unionism and collective bargaining which is accepted as fundamental in the regulation of worker - employer relations, the unions being unavoidable institutions in these relations open way to extensive conflicts. In a community trying to develop where there is extensive unemployment and where there is no unemployment

9) Ross-Hartman; *Changing Patterns of Industrial Conflicts*; op. cit. pp. 1.

insurance and especially where the tendency of division in the union movement is very strong; the resistance of the employers against the new system becomes, indirectly, very severe. Another point of importance is that, there are some hidden reasons behind the obvious ones which open way to industrial conflicts.

One important point in researches made to find out the causes for industrial conflicts is that, it is not a meaningful way of analysis to classify the causes according to some ratios while deducting out the reasons of industrial disputes. In other words, why the sides have not come to an agreement in this matter is a more important problem than the nature of the matter which is the subject of the conflict. Accordingly, to find out the causes of industrial conflicts makes it necessary for us to know the conditions which makes it impossible for the parties to come to an agreements.

In this matter, various situations can be subject of discussion. Sometimes, one of the sides wishes the conflict to take the form of a work struggle under any circumstances. For instance, an employer may think of strike as a means of weakening the unions or getting rid of the collective bargaining regime or making the bargaining with a weakened union defeated in the strike. On the other hand, a union leader to realize his ideological and political objectives, may apply to strike action even though he does not hope for any advantage out of the strike.

Industrial conflicts can emerge inescapably in cases where it is impossible for the parties to make an agreement. For example, a demand which is vital for the union may be contradictory to the authority of the management which is not desired to share with the union.

Even if the sides act with the same ideas to have an agreement through the collective bargaining, the bargainers, as seen in some large enterprises and organizations fixing the financial compromises on the one hand the union members forcing the union to attain some advantages beyond the acceptance of the enterprise on the other hand make work conflicts inescapable.

Another important fact from the view of tactics and strategy of industrial conflicts is that although there is not a serious difficulty in making an agreement, the sides do not wish to make the agreement deliberately. These conflicts are caused by the sides having wrong knowledge about each other's power and struggle ability.

Some employers from time to time, cannot appreciate the fi-

nancial powers of the unions, the close relations of the members to the union, their success in the strikes and the unions make wrong forecasts about the period of resistance of the employer to the strike. Especially, in situations when the wages increase continuously from year to year and the employment conditions are improved, the employers resist strikes for the purpose of stopping cost increases at a point when they think that they will be placed in undesirable positions by these wage increases and improvement of the employment conditions. Accordingly the union leaders who are used to make take compromises very easily from the employers do not take their resistances seriously but realize how firm the employers are at this matter too late after the strikes have begun.

Also some employers who act here to the principle of «do too much and long bargaining and give hardly», try to prolong by various difficulties and resistances, the collective bargaining period and tie the signing of the agreement to the results of the conflicts after it has been created. Of course, similar problems are created by the unions. Some times bluffy threats cause serious and useless strikes.

As a matter of fact, it becomes very difficult to trace out, under these circumstances, which side is responsible for industrial conflicts. Since the first initiative usually comes from the unions' side, it is believed by public that in general conflicts are started by the unions. In reality, the employers by rejecting wholly or partially the demands of the unions that are logical and suitable to economic conditions and by conducting persistently make the industrial conflicts and struggles inescapable. Therefore, an employer can cause a strike by doing nothing. For these reasons it becomes very hard to detect which side is responsible for industrial conflicts.

All these matters we have explained above are unfortunately true for Turkey as well. In the nearly five-year application of the collective bargaining system, it is met that this democratic system which depends on two side understanding, causes conflicts and struggles by acting improperly and sometimes with evil intentions¹⁰. But as we have pointed before the non-existence of an analysis made on this subject makes it impossible for us to handle the problem while studying the subject from the point of view of Turkey.

10) *Türk-iş 6th General Assembly Executive and Administrative Committee Report*; March 7; March 7-14, 1966; Ankara; pp. 51.

IV. CONCLUSION

We can evaluate the results derived from our explanations until now around the following points :

1 — Turkey has adopted political democracy as its political regime and collective bargaining system from the point of industrial relations. Both of these systems are executed in the West together as unseparable parts, and unionism, collective bargaining, strike and lockout processes are unabandonable fundamental institutions of political democracies. However, the most important thing that differentiates Turkey from the classical democracies of the West is that it is a country trying to rid itself of the «underdeveloped nation» status and this to develop in all social and economic aspects.

2 — If we look at the problem in this way, in a developing country confronting various difficulties, it becomes necessary to study the industrial relations, which are models of the West, in regards to national economy, workers and employers and in regards to some recent economic and social factors. The non-existence of scientific researches, as it is the case in many areas, is felt in this area too. Work conflicts and struggles caused by industrial relations will have to be analyzed and examined very seriously especially from economic and social view points. However, recently the State Planning Organization, Turkish Trade Unions Confederations and Employers' Associations have been interested in the subject and have started to make some studies.

3 — In the course of time, will there be an increasing or decreasing trend in industrial conflicts in Turkey? Undoubtedly it is very dangerous to assert an idea at this stage on this subject. As a matter of fact, in time, it is seen that there are some contradictory progressions of factors increasing or decreasing the industrial conflicts. The unions being financially powerful and with increasing number of members can mean both an increase in conflicts and struggles, but it may also mean a system in which the unions are dependable, powerful and mature. These can facilitate the recognition of unions by the employers and bring about more stable and settled societies.

Surely, in a dynamic, developing society various political, social, cultural and psychological factors may influence the trend of industrial conflicts. Studies on these subjects made in some of the developed countries have not provided conclusions enabling to trace

any tendency. As a matter of fact, as a result of a research referring to the strike statistics in England during 1911-1947 it has not been possible to detect a declining tendency neither in the number of strikes nor in the ratio of the members of unions participating in the strikes.

During the 20 - years period between 1927-1947 similar results have been reached in a research with five developed countries. As a ratio of members to unions, the number of workers participating in strikes are used in determining strike tendencies. In this period, while there was a decrease in Sweden it was constant in England and increasing in Canada, Australia and United States of America. However, although, in these five developed countries, there was an increase in the number of workers involved in strikes and in the workdays lost due to strikes, it has been seen that the average period of strikes are gradually decreasing.

On the other hand in wider international comparisons noticeable decreases in tendencies are pointed out. According to the results of these investigations there are important changes in the structure and nature of industrial conflicts¹¹. In reality for Turkey it is too early to make evaluations in this manner.

4 — In addition, because of the reasons we have explained before, it is seen that strikes in Turkey last longer. As pointed out strikes in Turkey are of uncertain periods and they are of a non-political nature. Except the generally very short and political strikes the application of which we have seen in France and Italy, the length of industrial conflicts in the West is very short. The extension of the trends of conflicts, because of various reasons effects directly and indirectly the national economy, employers, workers and unions. The shortening of the duration in the course of time will be suitable to international experiences and a very desirable improvement.

5 — When we try to evaluate industrial conflicts and struggles from the stand point of collective bargaining it seems obvious that these disputes reach a very limited ratio in the functioning of this system.

For instance, 91 % of the collective agreements concluded in 1966 have been signed without having any conflicts, and again in

11) Ross-Hartman; *Changing Patterns of Industrial Conflicts*; op. cit.; pp. 3.

the same year only 4,1 % of the signed agreements have passed through the strike stage. According to the calculations we have made in Turkey we see that to sign 100 collective agreements, it is necessary to have five of them pass through the strike stage on the average. Anyway, as the years pass by the number of strikes, compared to collective bargainings, show a tendency to decrease.

6 — Another peculiarity of the industrial conflicts in Turkey is that in general these disputes are put forward by comparatively few workers and in small enterprises. As a matter of fact, in Turkey in the last five years to each strike an average of nearly 150, and to each lockout 30 workers have been subject, and one third of the strikes have been in businesses with less than 10 workers and two third of the strikes have been in businesses with less than 10 workers and two third it is seen that strikes in Turkey last from 15 days to 3 months in small enterprises.

This peculiarity, while reflecting the size of the Turkish industry also enlightens the problems in industrial relations. The operation of collective bargaining on the level of local instead of the national level makes the union-employer relations tenser in paternalist small enterprises. On the other hand, in evaluating industrial conflicts in regards to the national economy, it will be proper to be careful for the fact that in Turkey small strikes are extensive.

7 — The analysis of industrial conflicts as to the branch of activity in Turkey supports explanations above. As a matter of fact we see that most strikes are in the food industry where there are many small enterprises. In Turkey, one out of each three strikes is in this activity As far as the lockouts are concerned, leather business presents an exceptional. In Turkey the highest tendency to strike is in the rubber industry. The lowest tendencies are seen in mining, construction and agriculture. These tendencies to strike by activity are not in accordance with the results derived from international comparisons.

As a matter of fact, in mining, ship transportation and textile where the tendency to strike is very high, either there have been no strikes at all or this tendency has always been very low. In addition there are some activities where the operation of strike is forbidden by legislation and these limitations must be considered in such an analysis. It is obvious that there is still enough time

to determine the strike tendencies and derive some conclusions from them.

8 — Another point to stress is the distribution of conflicts among public and private sectors. As it is possible to relate the staying of the strike movements in the public sector at a very limited level to the public sector being more favourable in regards to wages, fringe benefits, and other employment conditions and security; we can also state that the collective bargaining process in this sector is conducted under more tolerant circumstances. In addition to these, we can mention many other economic, political and psychological reasons preventing the transformation of conflicts into struggles in the public sector¹².

9 — In reality industrial conflicts is the most important phase of the labour-employer relations attracting public interest. While every year there are some hundreds and even thousands of agreements being signed one or two strike news occupy headlines in the newspapers, and work conflicts attract people's attention to them in a negative or positive way. Especially marches and other activities to keep current and lively the interference of the government to the conflicts increase the interest for the subject.

During recent years, the most important subject of the industrial relations in Turkey which the public reads, hears and shows interest has been strikes. In reality, except showing the industrial conflicts in a way more than what they really are, it is hard to say that they have always created negative results. Before anything, there has not been found a more democratic and desirable solution for the problems of conflicts in a democratic society. In addition these conflicts do not always cause negative results, on the contrary they bring dynamic improvements to the work life in economic and social views.

10 — Although in a developing country industrial conflicts have considerable economic and social influences, it is an unrealistic claim to say that conflicts and struggles, in their up to date operations in Turkey, have brought negative results in various ways. In other

12) Tuna, Orhan; *The Criticism and Analysis of Türk-İş 6th General Assembly Executive and Administrative Committees Reports*; Faculty of Economics Review; vol. 25, No: 1-2, pp. 301.

words, to say that these conflicts have slowed down economic development and that they have had negative effects on development rate is an unappreciable opinion, although there are no researches on this subject have yet to be made.
