

DILEMMAS OF TURKISH POLITICS

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The official symbol of the Justice Party in Turkey consists of the letters "A. P." (for the Turkish *Adalet Partisi*) set below an open book (representing the law) topped by the semicircle of the rising sun. This is the official interpretation. There are rumors of another interpretation, however. According to this rumored version, the letters A.P. stand for *Allah* (God) and *Peygamber* (prophet), the open book is the Koran, and the semicircle represents the Light of inspiration.

Whether this second version is in fact being whispered across the country as alleged or not, many Turkish intellectuals and other members of the urban elite are willing to believe that it is. This serves to justify the fears that the Justice Party represents a threat to one of the basic reforms of Atatürk, that is, the secularization of public life¹. Such fears are not new in Turkish politics. They have been aroused, in fact, with the appearance of all but the most progressive political parties in the forty years since the establishment of the Republic. The readiness with which the urban elite indulges in such fears signifies what is—and has long been—a basic problem of Turkish politics and society: the great gap, both in material and intellectual

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¹ We prefer this phrase to the more popular but less accurate "separation of church and state." It is entirely possible that these rumors are being spread by the opponents of the JP as a means of discrediting it, at least in the eyes of the urban elite.

terms, between the small, enlightened, largely cosmopolitan urban elite and the mass of relatively uneducated, tradition-oriented peasants, small townsmen, and urban ex-villagers. This dilemma underlies all public discussion in Turkey today. It colors the individual Turk's view of his past, his present situation, and his expectations of the future. It determines his conception of, and behavior toward, his fellow citizens. Finally, it underlies his ambivalent feelings toward democracy. Nor does the Turk take much comfort from the knowledge, only imperfectly perceived, that this dilemma is not peculiar to him, but is perhaps the hallmark of our age, from the poverty stricken masses in Asia and Africa to the Negro community in the United States. In short, Turkey is experiencing the twentieth century awakening of the masses. We propose to examine here the development of this basic dilemma, as well as the more immediate dilemmas through which it has been reflected in Turkish politics since May 27, 1960.

I

The day-to-day political scene in Turkey is currently dominated by three major forces symbolized by the names of Menderes and İnönü and the date of May 27. Menderes represents the spirit of the Democratic Party which ruled the country under his leadership from 1950 to 1960. This spirit, reincarnated in the Justice Party, stands for a so-called liberal approach to economic and social development with greater scope for private enterprise, and a more relaxed attitude toward traditional sentiments and institutions, particularly regarding religion. The Justice Party has inherited the bulk of Democratic Party support, making it the most numerous party in the country. Therein lies the crux of the first dilemma of current Turkish politics: The existence of a large body of opinion (perhaps a majority) supporting a party opposed to radical and rapid reform.

İsmet İnönü, symbolizing the second of the three forces in Turkish politics today, has once again in the twilight of a long life of public service emerged as the dominant political figure in the country, occupying the post of Prime Minister. The Republican People's Party, which he has led since the death of Kemal Atatürk in 1938, has been a minority party since the advent of free competitive elections in 1950. Established in 1923 by the great Atatürk, this party ruled the country without significant opposition for some 27 years before İnönü, as President of the Republic, permitted the formation

of opposition parties and allowed himself and his party to be voted out of office². The party has continued to stand for a vigorous effort at planned development and reform, centralized authority, and continued adherence to the six principles of Kemalism, including secularism. Most recently, the octogenarian Prime Minister has re-emphasized this aspect of his party by basing the program of his new Cabinet on three planks: Tax reform, land reform, and village community development. But the fate of the new government is uncertain because it is not assured of majority support in the Parliament or the country. Thus, the second dilemma of current Turkish politics is: those who are committed to democracy and who also favor progressive reform and development seem unable to acquire the majority support they must have to accomplish their goals by democratic means.

May 27 symbolizes the third major force in current Turkish politics. It stands for the armed forces, as this is the date in 1960 when a military coup took place³. The coup was justified as a defense of democracy and the reforms of Kemal Atatürk. Although some of its perpetrators have denied any such intent, the immediate effect of their action was the downfall of Menderes and the Democrats, and ultimately the rise of İnönü and the Republicans. More importantly, the action of the military violated a cardinal principle laid down by Atatürk from the early days of the Republic: The political neutrality of the Army. The breakdown of this principle has created a third major dilemma of current Turkish politics, that is, how to re-establish the political neutrality of the Army, particularly in the face of the continuing conflict between the Justice and Republican parties and everything they represent.

These dilemmas have come into especially sharp relief since the coup of May 27, 1960. It is therefore appropriate to begin by briefly examining the background of that coup.

² Many observers attribute that remarkable development to what they believe is İnönü's overwhelming commitment to democratic ideals and practices (in spite of the record of arbitrary government during İnönü's presidency prior to 1946). İnönü is reported to have said: "I have been a general, a diplomat, a Prime Minister, and a President. The only thing left is to be leader of the opposition."

³ The background of this coup is analyzed in greater detail in Walter F. Weiker, *The Turkish Revolution 1960-1961* (Washington, 1963); and Frederick W. Frey, "Arms and the Man in Turkish Politics," *Land Reborn*, August 1960. See also Richard D. Robinson, *The First Turkish Republic* (Cambridge, Mass, 1963), chapter ix.

The third of these three dilemmas of current Turkish politics burst on the scene with the coup of May 27, 1960. This coup was a direct reaction against the conduct of the Menderes government, which had enacted increasingly harsh restrictions on freedom of speech and press as well as on the other activities of the opposition political parties. These measures were Menderes's response to the growing dissatisfaction among Turkish intellectuals and the urban middle class, which in turn arose largely as a result of inflationary pressures generated by the government's fiscal and development policies.⁴ The climax came in mid-April 1960 with the establishment of a Parliamentary commission for the purpose of investigating the "criminal" activities of the opposition Republican Party and certain newspapers. The Commission was later given broad powers of subpoena, detention, and censorship; the press was forbidden to publish any news or information concerning the Commission's own activities. It seemed clear that the way was being prepared for the fatal weakening of the opposition party and the virtual establishment of a one-party regime⁵.

Denied legitimate avenues of protest, the opposition took the only other available course. Students from Istanbul and Ankara universities organized increasingly violent street demonstrations, some of which resulted in bloody clashes with the police. When it became evident that the police were unable to handle the situation, the Menderes regime took the fateful step of declaring martial law and thus calling into play the genie of the military.

There is some doubt as to whether the regime realized the danger of military rebellion at this time. This raises the general question of the army's attitude toward the civil authorities. The evidence indi-

4 For an objective discussion of the repressive measures of the Menderes regime, see Bahri Savcı, "Demokrasi üzerinde Tartışmaların Ortaya Çıkardığı Meseleler," *Ankara Üniversitesi Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi Dergisi*, Vol. 14, no. 1 (March 1959), pp. 249-81.

5 For the parliamentary debates on the establishment of this Commission, see *Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi Zabıt Ceridesi*, Period XI, session 3, vol. 13 (April 4-May 25, 1960), pp. 189-213. The act broadening the Commission's powers was published in the *Resmî Gazete* (Official Gazette), April 28, 1960. During the debates on this second bill, numerous fist fights erupted on the floor of the Parliament. At one point, İnönü declared that if the government insisted on its repressive policies "even I cannot save you". This remarkable statement has often been cited since by his opponents as evidence that İnönü was the real instigator of the coup of May 27. Some have gone so far as to accuse him of active participation in the plotting. The debates are to be found in *Zabıt Ceridesi*, Period XI, Session 3, vol. 13, pp. 246-309.

cates that, although the Army had generally accepted the Democratic regime when it first came to power in 1950, this favorable sentiment had disappeared by 1960 for reasons which were not directly connected with the immediate developments of that spring. The reasons for this shift in Army sentiment, we believe, have not yet been adequately analyzed.

In the first place, the Democratic leadership was the first completely non-military administration in the history of the Turkish Republic. This in itself was enough to sow the seeds of suspicion within the officer corps. It was commonly believed, for example, that Menderes had little respect for the professional army officer. Secondly, the Army was displeased by the new government's move to broaden the base of recruitment for the officer corps, a move that was probably dictated by the desire to win votes.⁶ Significantly, one of the first actions of the National Unity Committee which assumed power in May of 1960 was to deprive all but University graduates of commissions in the military reserves. Finally, the military officers have much in common with the urban educated elite. Products of a regular high school education followed by three years of special training at the Military Academy, most of these officers emerge with progressive ideas and a profound respect for the reformist spirit of Atatürk. Thus, along with the rest of the intelligentsia, the officers were irritated by Menderes's relative lack of enthusiasm for the principles of Kemalism, particularly on the highly sensitive subject of religion. The Army officers also suffered from the limitations of fixed income salaries. The inflationary pressures engendered by Menderes's development policies imposed a heavy burden on those groups and served to increase their unhappiness with the regime. Moonlighting became a common practice, and many officers, particularly those with linguistic and technical skills, retired from active service and sought positions with private enterprise. As a countermeasure, Menderes increased the period of obligatory service for professional officers. Clearly, the climate was not one to inspire mutual trust and confidence between the military officers and the civilian political leadership.⁷

⁶ Specifically, the graduates of Village Institutes and vocational schools were now granted reserve officer status, a status previously limited to high school graduates.

⁷ Robinson suggests that the Menderes era was also marked by increasing opportunities in the military for those with talent, a situation brought about both by the change in government in 1950 and by a thoroughgoing modernization spur-

In the light of these considerations, the alleged anti-government plot attributed to nine military officers in 1958 acquires some significance.⁸ At any rate, it is safe to assume that there were activist elements among the military long before the coup of 1960. Indeed, some members of the National Unity Committee (the name assumed by the junta after the coup) have themselves confirmed this.^{8bis} Undoubtedly, however, the majority of the officer corps remained loyal to the principle of political neutrality up to the spring of 1960.

An important indication of the conflicting emotions under which the military came to labor was provided in March of 1960 when İnönü as leader of the opposition, defied the government by undertaking a political tour into central Anatolia. Troops were used in an effort to turn him back, thus bringing the Army directly into the arena of political conflict.⁹ Significantly, the figure against whom the Army was called upon to act was himself a retired general of as yet undimmed prestige.

The straw that broke the camel's back, however, was the order to use arms against the demonstrating university students. This, we believe, was the turning point that made support for the activist minority general among the officers. By this time, the urban elite had also come to view military intervention as the only alternative to the Menderes regime. The anti-Menderes coup therefore was accomplished without much difficulty.¹⁰

Having violated the principle of political neutrality by assuming power, the Committee of National Unity, consisting of 38 officers representing every rank from Captain up, immediately sought to

red by massive American aid. At the same time, he feels that upward mobility in the civil administration became subject to political considerations. *Op. cit.*, ch. ix.

⁸ The 1958 plot was brought to light by a staff colonel who alerted the authorities. He implicated nine officers stationed in Istanbul. Although Menderes ordered an investigation, the military tribunal which tried the accused officers acquitted them of the charges. See *Cumhuriyet*, January 17, 1958 and *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, Vol. XI (1957-58), p. 15983.

^{8 bis} See the series of interviews with CNU members published in *Cumhuriyet* during July and August 1960.

⁹ Frey, *loc. cit.*; Robinson, *op. cit.* pp. 262-63, gives the date of this incident as April 3-4. Some of the officers involved were arrested, and some resigned in protest. See *Cumhuriyet*, May 28, 1960, and *Keesing's*, Vol. XII (1959-60), p. 17501.

¹⁰ As yet unanswered is the question of the personal roles of Menderes and President Celâl Bayar during the dying days of the regime. See Robinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 264-65, and the account of Professor Ali Fuat Başgil in *Cumhuriyet*, June 5-6, 1960.

insure the re-establishment of that principle. Accordingly, they announced their intention of retiring at the earliest opportunity in favor of a democratically elected government. There were some among them, however, who from the first favored retention of power for a longer period of time. The emergence of certain difficulties in the months following the coup tended to strengthen this group and delay the return of the soldiers to their barracks. These difficulties may be briefly summarized.

In the first place, the task of preparing a new legal framework for the body politic turned out to be far more complicated than the politically inexperienced soldiers had anticipated. The Committee of National Unity (CNU) had created a commission of legal experts on the very day of the coup and instructed them to prepare a new constitution without delay, setting a maximum limit of three months. These legal experts, drawn primarily from the Law Faculty of the University of Istanbul, had gained reputations during the Menderes era as champions of democratic rights and liberties. Now, however, confronted with substantive responsibilities, they fell victim to basic disagreements which prevented them from producing a draft constitution within the given period of three months. When they finally produced a document after six months of acrimonious debates, its utility was badly damaged by the inclusion of sharply critical comments by every individual member of the group.¹¹ Consequently, the military began to doubt the political abilities of these civilian experts. To be sure, it was perhaps naive to expect a new constitution to be produced within such a short time. The important point, however, is that the political inexperience of the military combined with divided counsel among the civilians produced a sense of disappointment and frustration. At the same time, various groups sought to gain the ear of the military junta with varying degrees of success at different times; none, however appears to have gained decisive influence over the CNU.

A second problem which arose to plague the junta evolved out of the very fact that the military were now actively involved in politics. A purge of some 6,000 officers was announced in July 1960. This purge was undertaken ostensibly to cut down on the excessive number of officers. It is not unlikely, however, that it was also de-

¹¹ For more detail, see Weiker, *op. cit.*, chapter iv.

signed to eliminate those who had lukewarm attitudes toward the coup. In any event, this purge prompted dissatisfied elements within the civil service and particularly within the universities, to approach the CNU with proposals for similar purges of their own institutions. The result was the now famous dismissal of 147 professors, associate professors, and assistants from the universities of Istanbul and Ankara. This action aroused such a storm of protest that there can be no doubt of its failure as an attempt to reform the institutions affected. Since the initiative had ostensibly come from within the institutions themselves, however, the result was a further weakening of respect for the civilians among the army officers.

A third and more significant factor arose out of the trials of the leaders of the deposed Menderes regime. Aside from the CNU's failure to enact a special law as a basis for these trials—which in itself evoked some criticism—the preparation of the indictments and the progress of the trial turned out to last much longer than had been anticipated, as had been the case with the drafting of the Constitution. Until the trials had been brought to a conclusion, however, the political parties could not be expected to participate in new elections, since they did not wish to be saddled with the responsibility of carrying out what might be highly unpopular sentences. Thus, from the point of view of the parties, the CNU should not give up power at least until the end of these trials.

A fourth and final problem in bringing the rule of the junta to an end may be found in the political atmosphere which emerged after the coup, and which is a direct reflection of the basic dilemma of Turkish politics and society. The unrest which had prevailed among the urban intellectuals under Menderes had never extended beyond the large cities. The great mass of the population had been largely unaffected by the restrictive laws and measures of the Democratic regime. However, no sooner had the first impact of the coup passed, no sooner had the effects of the junta's policy of economic austerity—initiated in an effort to counteract the effects of Menderes's economic policies—become clear the unrest shifted from the cities to the villages. This new unrest was exacerbated by the vengeful attitude of local leaders of the Republican Party who had lost prestige and influence during the Democratic era. The efforts of both junta and the national leadership of the party to stem this tide of vengeance were not outstandingly successful. In addition, the Republicans came

to be identified with the coup in the popular mind, and to be held responsible for its unpopular measures. Correspondingly, the popularity of the ex-Democrats began to recover within a short time.

The realization that large masses of the people remained loyal to the Democratic Party exacerbated the dilemma with which the CNU had tried to deal from the day it assumed power. On the one hand, the Committee was on record with a promise to hold free elections immediately after the adoption of a new Constitution, and to turn over the reins of government to whatever party might win such an election. On the other hand, if such an election were to bring the unreformed Democrats back into power with no more than a change in name, then clearly the coup would have served no purpose other than to deepen the already bitter divisions in Turkish political life. This dilemma has been sharpened as the coup has receded into history, and has been brought into especially clear relief by the local and provincial elections of November 1963.

In the face of this dilemma, the CNU was unable to follow either of two alternative courses of action to a logical conclusion. It was clearly unwilling to hold elections immediately, both because it feared a comeback by the Democrats and because it did not believe that a popularly elected government would be able to enact certain reforms which the majority of the Committee considered necessary. At the same time, the Committee was not able to extend its own tenure in power because of its promise of early elections and because of unrelenting pressure by the public and the parties, particularly the RPP.

The only plausible justification for an extended tenure for the junta was the need for basic reforms which could ensure a more viable and stable democratic order. But the question of how to establish such viability and stability gave rise to a sharp divergence of views both within the CNU and among the intellectuals. The increasing limitations imposed by the Menderes regime had inspired discussions of democratic rights and liberties and had distracted attention from more basic economic and social problems. Thus, almost all the intellectuals had concentrated their fire on what they considered the failure of the 1924 Constitution to protect basic democratic freedoms. A perusal of the scholarly and political literature of these years reveals an overwhelming belief in the efficacy of such measures as the adoption of a new Constitution with a more stringent bill of rights, a bicameral legislature to counteract rampant partisanship,

the establishment of a Constitutional Court to check unconstitutional laws and official acts, and the adoption of a system of proportional representation¹³. However, after May 27 some doubts arose concerning the adequacy of this four-part panacea. For example, as early as August of 1960, a young scholar stated in *Forum*:

The great misfortune of the 1924 Constitution is that it was held responsible for conditions which were extraneous to it in their origins, even though it was well designed to achieve a modern administration embodying a democratic concept based on the model of Westminster. In fact, the situation which prevailed prior to the coup of May 27 did not arise from the provisions of the 1924 Constitution; the real cause of that situation — the weaknesses of character, irresponsible leadership, and all the faults which may basically be attributed to the whole nation, are not due to the Constitution; those who sought votes by appealing to reactionary forces; those who used time-honored traditions to advance their own personal interests; those who, although they occupied highly responsible governmental positions, turned their backs on logic, wisdom, and industriousness; and those who failed to protest in the face of all this— none of these were created by the 1924 Constitution. As long as these basic factors remained, not even the most elaborate constitutions in the world could have prevented the emergence of the situation which prevailed prior to May 27¹⁴.

In other words, the unrest which led to the coup was due to the economic and social structure of the country, not the absence of legal or political guarantees. Moreover, in a society in which the bulk of the population is poor and illiterate, and which is characterized by great gap between these masses and the economic, social and intellectual elite, there was some question whether a government subject to democratic pressures and limitations could enact the measures of social and economic reform required for rapid development combined with maximum popular participation.

There can be no doubt that this point of view was shared by the younger members of the CNU. These young officers, mindful

13 See Mümtaz Soysal, "Yanlış Reçete," *Yön*, February 28, 1962, p. 14. The Turkish Constitution of 1924 provided for a unicameral legislature and included only very broadly phrased guarantees of civil rights. There was no Constitutional Court and elections to the Grand National Assembly were conducted under the majority list system which penalizes minorities even more heavily than the single member district system.

14 Mümtaz Soysal, "Suçsuz Anayasa," *Forum*, No. 152, Vol. 13 (1 August 1960).

of the traditional role of military personnel in the modernization of Turkey, wanted to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by their control of the government to initiate the reforms they thought necessary to establish a more equitable social order. They favored such measures as land and tax reforms, a new effort to improve and expand the educational system, renewing the fight against religious conservatism, and enactment of a program of socialized medicine. They feared that an early return to civilian government would jeopardize such attempts to deal with thorny social problems.¹⁵

II

These dilemmas gave rise to serious differences of opinion both within the junta and more generally among the intelligentsia. These disagreements emerged during the six month period between June and November of 1960. The sequence of events clearly demonstrates their development. First, the junta's initial promise to give up power within three months was contradicted by the end of June in a statement which indicated that elections could not be held before the end of the year. In July, discussions of land reform were opened, and the purge of the Army was begun. In August, the target date for the return of civilian government was set back to October 29, 1961, the anniversary of the original proclamation of the Republic. Finally, on September 10, 1960, the CNU issued a directive to the civil service calling for the preparation of "a plan of action for the solution of basic long range problems."¹⁶ The directive failed to specifically define these problems, but, since it clearly implied a longer tenure of office for the junta, it met with severe criticism by the political parties and important sections of the press. The result was an irrevocable internal division within the CNU. Ten days after the publication of the directive, the self-proclaimed leader of the young activist officers, Col. Alparslan Türkeş, was dismissed from his post as Chief Secretary to the Prime Minister. Furthermore, discussions were begun, particularly in the press, concerning the feasibility of convoking a Constituent Assembly as a first step toward a return to civilian government, a proposal which the activists opposed.

¹⁵ One of the most prominent of the radicals on the CNU told one of the present authors that the original idea had been to remain in power for about five years and during that time to re-evaluate all the basic laws of the state, rewrite the Constitution, and organize new political parties. The junta's radical wing thus wanted to follow a Nasserite pattern.

¹⁶ *Cumhuriyet*, September 11, 1960.

Nevertheless, the CNU did not abandon its reformist policies. In October, the law concerning reserve Army officers was amended as mentioned previously. On October 27, the purge of the universities was announced. The reaction against this purge was so strong that, in our opinion, it rendered unbridgeable the gap between the civilian and military elements supporting the junta. Moreover, the already existing rift within the CNU was also widened. Less than two weeks later, the younger members of the Committee drafted a proposal calling for the establishment of a nationalist union of culture and ideals. On November 13, 1960, before this draft was completed, General Gürsel dissolved the CNU and immediately reconstituted it; fourteen members of the original group, all of the younger generation and including those who were drafting the aforementioned proposal (specifically Alparslan Türkeş, Muzaffer Özdağ, and Numan Esin), were not included in the reconstituted Committee. They were assigned duties outside Turkey.

It seems to us that this purge of the CNU is of the utmost importance. First, it opened a rift between the CNU and the Army, since the activists enjoyed extensive support among the younger officers generally. In fact, as a result of the earlier massive purge of the officer corps, the activists now probably dominated the Army. Small wonder that the Army was displeased by the removal of the fourteen activists from the CNU. Although it had previously regarded the Committee as its spokesman, the Army now began to question its authority and representative character.

Second, why was it necessary for the Committee moderates, particularly the chairman, Gürsel, to expel these fourteen officers, with whom they had successfully cooperated until then? Since the Committee made decisions by majority vote, it seems evident that if there were only fourteen extremists out of a total membership of 38, there would be nothing to fear. The fact that a purge was thought necessary indicates that the activists did not, in fact, constitute a minority at all. Indeed, General Gürsel himself openly stated that Committee meetings had begun to assume the character of pitched battles, and that it had become impossible to reach decisions.¹⁷ It follows that in expelling the fourteen, Gürsel did not purge all the extremists but only the most vulnerable among them in order to create a majority of moderates, thus enabling the Committee to operate more effectively.

¹⁷ *Cumhuriyet*, November 14, 1960.

Among the factors which impelled Gürsel to undertake an action which cost him the support of the Army was the economic situation. The atmosphere of indecision which now pervaded politics irritated the business community. Economic activity had already been severely slowed down by the cutback in state investments initiated after the coup. Now total stagnation seemed to threaten. Moreover, as one of the fourteen later stated, the business community threw all its energy into opposition against the coup.¹⁸

Whatever the real causes underlying the purge of the fourteen, Gürsel himself portrayed it as a necessary prerequisite to the fulfillment of the promise of the early establishment of a democratic order. Notably, on the day after the purge, it was announced that a Constituent Assembly would be established as a first step toward a return to civilian government. The enabling act for this Assembly was promulgated on December 16, 1960.¹⁹

It would be inappropriate to examine in detail the legal duties and functions of the Constituent Assembly. It is more useful to analyze the new developments which appeared in Turkish politics from the convocation of the Assembly in January 1961 to the elections of the first regular Parliament under the new regime in October of the same year.²⁰ Suffice it to say that the Assembly was a bicameral body. The 24-member CNU became its upper house. The members of the lower chamber, or House of Representatives, were partly appointed and partly elected by various private and public groups, such as political parties, municipalities, chambers of commerce, labor unions, and the universities. The duties of the Assembly were two-fold: First, to consider the draft constitution prepared by the legal experts of the University of Istanbul; and second, to act as a legislative body.

By sharing power with the newly established House of Representatives, the Committee of National Unity was obviously accepting voluntary limitations on its own authority. However, before the convocation of the new body, the Committee promulgated several

18 "Numan Esin 27 Mayısın Bilançosunu Yapıyor," *Yön*, May 23, 1962, p. 7.

19 Text in *Resmî Gazete*, December 16, 1960; for Gürsel's statement on the purge of the fourteen, *Cumhuriyet*, November 14, 1960.

20 For a useful account of the structure of the Constituent Assembly, see Robert Devereux, "Turkey and Corporative State," *SAS Review*, Spring 1962, pp. 16-24.

important laws, including a new tax schedule drawing more heavily on larger incomes. It was feared that neither the new House of Representatives nor a regularly elected parliamentary body would be able to resist the inevitable pressures of special interests against such changes. This clearly indicates that even after the expulsion of the fourteen activists, the CNU, although prepared to surrender power was less than optimistic about the ability of a civilian regime to handle such controversial problems.

III

The ten-month period from the opening of the Constituent Assembly to the elections of October 1961 saw the beginnings of a number of very significant long run developments. The first and most important was the appearance of a serious and unprecedented split among the intellectuals. This split first appeared when it became evident that the intellectuals no longer agreed on the solution for Turkey's problems. Whereas prior to the coup of 1960 there had been unanimous agreement on such measures as adoption of a new Constitution and a system of proportional representation, as we have already pointed out, this unanimity now broke down and the outlines of a new political alignment began to emerge both within and outside the Assembly. In this connection, the Assembly itself played a most important role in Turkish politics, for it became the arena in which this new political alignment developed.

According to a young Turkish intellectual, the greatest importance of the 1960 coup was that it brought social unrest to the fore by ending the repressions of the Menderes era.²¹ The Constituent Assembly, one of whose functions it was to draw up the legal framework of the new Republic, now found itself plunged into profound debates on basic social and economic problems sparked by the younger members of its constitutional committee. The most significant of these debates were those which concerned the basic character and responsibilities of the state. An analysis of these debates indicates that two main points of view were put forth. One embodied the tenets of social democracy and a socialized or planned economy. The supporters of this view insisted that the new Constitution clearly endorse the principle of social justice. Furthermore, they argued that economic

21 Doğan Avcıoğlu, "Yeni Türkiye," *Yön*, January 17, 1962.

and social development within a framework of social justice could only be accomplished under a planned economy. Finally, they held that rapid economic development required a powerful executive arm in the government with authority to nationalize industry, place limits on property rights, and with powers of expropriation. Some members of this group openly adopted the socialist label, a new departure in the history of republican Turkey.

As a young member of this group has said, it was extremely difficult to gain acceptance for such proposals in a country which had barely emerged from the Menderes era, an era in which political repression had been justified as necessary for rapid development²². A majority of the Assembly was dedicated to the ideal of classical democracy, partly because of the experiences of the Menderes regime, and gave priority to broad guarantees of political rights and liberties rather than to social and economic rights. They were therefore hostile to the idea of giving the government wide powers in this field. Those who defended the principles of classical democracy against the social democrats were in turn supported by the business community and others who favored a *laissez faire* economy. They argued that the business community was now ready, willing and able to assume the burdens of development previously borne by the government, and that now was the time to cut back rather than expand the government's role in the economy. They have continued to argue that economic and social development takes time and cannot be accomplished overnight by means of radical reform.

From one point of view, it is not surprising that a Constituent Assembly should concern itself with such broad and basic questions. On the other, the depth and extensiveness of the debate were entirely unexpected. This development was due primarily to the presence in the Assembly of a number of intellectuals who had never before had such an opportunity to raise their voices. They had gained access to their new-found platform because the elections for the Assembly were conducted within the bounds of relatively small groups, some of which they dominated (e. g., the universities, teachers' associations, and journalists' societies). Significantly, very few of these intellectuals were successful in the regular parliamentary election of October 1961.

²² Mümtaz Soysal, "Kalkınma ve Hukuk," *Yön*, January 17, 1962.

The system of election to the Constituent Assembly also created an anomalous situation with regard to the political parties. The Democratic Party had been outlawed and no new parties had yet been allowed to establish themselves. Consequently, the overwhelming majority of the Assembly was affiliated with the Republican Party. However, this fact, if taken out of context, can be misleading. The act establishing the Assembly had prohibited the enforcement of party discipline, or caucusing. Thus, instead of party groups dominating the Assembly, interest groups emerged. For example, some members of the Republican Party, whose program incorporated that principles of a planned economy, sat in the Assembly as representatives of business groups. As a result, they spoke for private enterprise and assumed an intransigent position on the issues of nationalization and expropriation. By contrast, some members of the more conservative Republican Peasants National Party gave support to some extremely progressive proposals. The consequence was that on social and economic issues, both of these parties split into three groups: Conservatives, *laissez faire* liberals, and progressives.

The second major development which emerged during the period between January and October 1961 was the consolidation of those opposed to the coup of May 27. With the opening of the Constituent Assembly, the CNU had granted permission for the formation of political parties. It had already become clear that the millions of supporters of the outlawed Democratic Party would have to be reorganized under new leadership. The question of how and by whom this reorganization was to be accomplished remained temporarily unanswered. In our opinion, the CNU wanted to entrust this task to some prominent political figure in whom it had confidence and who support the coup. The most obvious choice was the Finance Minister of the revolutionary government, Ekrem Alican. Alican had both training and political experience. As a leader of the short-lived Freedom Party, he had gained a reputation as an opponent of both Menderes and İnönü. Moreover, there could be no doubt about the sincerity of his support for the coup. He did not, however, possess the qualities of leadership required for the establishment of a new party. Other than opposition to the Republican Party and support for private enterprise, the staff which gathered around Alican failed to develop any clear political views or positions. Furthermore, because of its determination to remain loyal to the May 27 coup, Alican's group, which assumed the name New Turkey Party, was

eventually eclipsed by another political group which showed greater understanding of the prevailing mood of the masses and greater skill in taking advantage of the opportunities of the day. This group formed the new Justice Party.

From the point of view of personality and political experience, the Justice Party should not have fared as well as the New Turkey Party. Whereas the individual leaders of the NTP had both some political experience and some ideas, the leadership of the Justice Party had neither. It should be added, however, that with certain exceptions, the JP leadership had no basic quarrel with the May 27 coup. In fact, the members of the CNU had every reason to believe that the leader of the new party, former Chief of Staff General Ragıb Gümüspala, was a trustworthy person and that he would lead the ex-Democrats along the "right road". Before long, however, the founders of the JP, partly under the influence of several politicians who later joined their ranks, and partly because of the exigencies of the upcoming electoral campaign, decided that opposition to the coup might provide the shortest and easiest road to political victory. The results of the general elections of October 15, 1961, and especially the local elections of November 17, 1963, suggest that they were not far wrong.

At the time of the founding of the Justice Party, the opponents of the coup fell into two major groups: 1) those who remained loyal to the Democratic Party and resented the fact that a government which they had elected had been removed from office by force; and 2) those who had initially approved of the coup but later drifted into opposition either because they disapproved of some of the actions of the CNU or because they felt that their interests were being threatened. This second group consisted both of those who had been the victims of the purges instituted by the Committee and those who were unhappy with the worsening economic situation. Included in this group were a large number of officials across the country – mayors, administrators, army officers and professionals – some of whom were later prosecuted. The results of the 1961 elections indicate that the Justice Party found ample support among both groups. Undoubtedly, a large number of those who were unhappy with the government of the CNU held the Republican Party responsible, as well as the Army, and therefore withheld their votes from the RPP.

As for the internal structure of the JP, at this time three groups were discernible. The first consisted Gümüspala and his associates.

They wished to remain within the bounds of the party program, to follow a straightforward course of action, and to avoid making the party an instrument of outright hatred and revenge. But as we have already indicated, with the approach of the 1961 elections and under the influence of the other groups within the party, they began to see opposition the May 27 coup as the easiest road to power. Second, there were those who transferred directly from Democratic to the Justice Party. This group included the most powerful politicians within the JP prior to the elections. They played a dominant role in the determination of the electoral lists of the party because of their control of the local organizations. Above all, they wanted to have the new party simply assume the place formerly held by the Democratic Party. Understandably, the great pressure generated by the JP for an amnesty for the imprisoned leaders of the Democratic Party originated with this group.²³ The third group consisted of those whose reputation as extreme rightists and racists was well established. They hoped to seize control of the new party, fill the gap left by the moribund Democratic Party, and thus impose their views on the country.²⁴

A third party which hoped to become the political heir of the Democratic Party was the Republican Peasants National Party. The leaders of this party, particularly in the face of the JP's opposition to the coup, came to the conclusion that unless they too followed this course, they would be unable to win the support of the ex-Democratic voters. Thus, the campaign of this party consisted of praise for the politics of the Menderes administration and claims that they were the true political heirs of the Democratic Party.

IV

The dilemmas facing the CNU were deepened by the unexpected strength of the opposition to the coup. The leaders of the junta had anticipated that the supporters of the Democratic Party would maintain a high degree of cohesion; indeed, they considered this as

23 These two groups are clearly identified in the responses to a questionnaire submitted to candidates for mayor in the local elections of November 1963. Of 33 Justice Party respondents who indicated previous affiliation with another party, 27 listed the Democratic Party as their previous affiliation, 25 of these listing no other. There were 14 respondents who said they had never belonged to any party other than the JP. The complete results of this questionnaire will be reported in a separate monograph currently in preparation.

24 See "A. P. deki ihtilafın içyüzü," *Milliyet*, October 22, 1961.

a necessary condition for the maintenance of a multi-party system. They did not, however, anticipate the direction which the ex-Democrats would take, nor their great strength, nor the fact that the junta itself would lose so much popular support. Moreover, it became evident to the CNU that supposedly trustworthy politicians might well, under the pressure of the election campaign, return to the "arbitrary" and "planless" methods of the past.

The rapid growth of the Justice Party and the decision of the New Turkey and Peasants' National parties to base their campaigns on a defense of the old order were indications of the growing strength of anti-CNU sentiment. By far the most important danger signal, however, was the Constitutional referendum of July, 1961. In the hope of hastening the end of the military regime, all the parties officially urged the voters to approve the new Constitution. Furthermore, both the Army and the intelligentsia campaigned actively on behalf of the new Constitution. Indeed, the Army organized a number of propaganda teams which toured the country in an energetic effort to stimulate popular support. In the wake of all this fanfare, the results of the referendum can only be viewed as disappointing. Of those who participated (81% of the electorate), only 62% voted "yes". In fact, according to official figures, the Constitution was approved by slightly less than a majority of all the voters in the country²⁵.

Faced with these signs of popular disapproval, the CNU cast about for some means of maintaining its influence. It was clearly too late to go back on the promise of free elections. The junta aimed, therefore, to prevent the prospective civilian regime from becoming an instrument of revenge and reaction. The attempt to accomplish this end took the form of a "round table" conference of the leaders of all the political parties which was designed establish agreement on the following points:

1. There would be no political exploitation of the "Revolution" of May 27 for whatever purpose and there would be no attempt to revive the spirit of the Democratic Party;

²⁵ 6,384,092 of 12,747,901 qualified electors voted for the Constitution; eleven of 67 provinces returned a majority against the Constitution. See State Institute of Statistics, *The Results of Popular Vote on Constitution*, 9.7.1961, Publication No. 425 (Ankara, 1962). Robinson's figures disagree slightly with these official results. The high proportion of negative votes in the referendum also indicates that the Junta refrained from exerting direct pressure on the electorate.

2. The reforms of Atatürk would be preserved and all attempts against these reforms would be resisted;

3. Freedom of religion and conscience would be respected and there would be no political exploitation in this field;

4. Turkish justice would be respected, with particular reference to the judgments about to be handed down by the Special High Tribunal at Yassıada which was trying the ex-Democratic leadership; the parties undertook to express no opinions which might affect the judgments and to refrain from discussing or exploiting them for political ends;

5. Extreme left wing and right wing views would be opposed, as well as all types of totalitarian movements, regionalism, opportunism, separatism, *revanchism*, and other destructive movements.²⁶

The round table conference did not achieve the purpose which General Gürsel and the junta had in mind. The parties participated reluctantly. İnönü and the Republicans were persuaded only after the Constitutional referendum clearly indicated that the electoral victory which they had anticipated might not be forthcoming. Initially, they had resisted the proposal because they feared that any decisions reached at such a conference would give the military a pretext and a right for renewed intervention in the future. The Justice Party was also less than enthusiastic since the conference was clearly designed to deprive it of the main points in its campaign strategy. In any event, none of the parties took the conference very seriously.

An important question was what would happen if the parties violated these conditions set by the CNU. The intellectuals lost no time pointing out that in such an event the future of democracy in Turkey would be in grave danger. One of the most prominent Turkish journalists, Nadir Nadi, a dedicated supporter of Atatürk's reforms, characterized the round table agreement as the "last chance" for democracy in Turkey. If the parties did not hue to the line of the agreement, there would be no way of preventing the re-entry of the Army into politics.²⁷ On the other hand, according to Nadi, the behavior of the parties after the round table conference indicated that they were too busy competing for the votes of the ex-Democ-

26 *Cumhuriyet*, September 6, 1961; *Keesing's*, Vol. XIII (1961-62), pp. 18649-50.

27 Nadir Nadi, "Son Fırsat," *Cumhuriyet*, September 6, 1961.

rats to heed these warnings. He felt that their campaign speeches showed a complete failure to understand that Turkey had just emerged from a revolution, that in fact the country was still living under the conditions of that revolution, and that the whole purpose of the elections was to liquidate the revolutionary regime and normalize political life. Nadi accused the parties of exploiting religion, eulogizing the pre-revolutionary regime, and portraying the sentenced members of the Democratic Party as heroes innocent of any crime.²⁸

A final important indication that the Army simply could not remain politically neutral were the results of the general election of October 15, 1961. Two facts stand out: 1) No party won enough seats to establish a strong government by itself; and 2) the parties which considered themselves heirs of the defunct Democratic Party and which were recognized as such by the voters (i. e., the Justice and New Turkey Parties) received a much larger vote than was anticipated either by the military or the intelligentsia.²⁹

V

In the light of the above analysis and more recent developments, it would have been idle to expect the military to withdraw completely from politics. In the aftermath of the election, the military leaders undertook several measures which were designed to preserve the results of the May 27 coup. These measures gave rise to significant consequences whose effects are still visible in current Turkish politics. In the first place, the President of the Republic, Cemal Gürsel, was the leader of the May 27 movement. Gürsel had stated in the early days of the coup that once a civilian administration was founded he would accept no further responsibilities. But as the opponents of the coup organized and gained strength, he apparently felt com-

28 Nadir Nadi, "Yarın Millet Konuşacak," *Cumhuriyet*, October 14, 1961.

29 The election results are shown in Table 1, p. 34; see also State Institute of Statistics, *The Results of the Election of Representatives and Senators*, 15.10.1961, Publication No. 434 (Ankara, n. d.). These results may be explained by the factors we have already discussed, that is, the spreading opposition to the coup of May 27 and the imputation of responsibility for that coup to the Republican Party, as well as the worsening economic situation. A further factor stemmed from the trials of the leaders of the Democratic Party at Yassıada. The sentences, which were handed down on September 15, exactly one month before the election, included 15 death sentences, of which only three were carried out: Those on Menderes himself, his Foreign Minister Fatin Rüştü Zorlu, and the former Finance Minister Hasan Polatkan. These executions naturally displeased those who were already opposed to the coup. It also aroused some uneasiness among supporters of the coup who did not like to see blood spilled.

pelled to change his mind. Immediately after the October election, which gave the Justice Party greater strength than it had anticipated for itself, that party put forward the name of Professor Ali Fuad Başgil in candidacy for the Presidency. Başgil's close association with the leadership of the Democratic Party was well known. The military leaders, who suspected that this might be only the first step in a much feared reaction, once again called the heads of all the parties together and announced their support of Cemal Gürsel for the Presidency. The agreement reached at this meeting came to be known as the *Çankaya* Protocol, signed at the official residence of the Turkish president. It assured the collapse of the Başgil candidacy and the support of JP senators and deputies for Gürsel, and committed the parties to refrain from pressing for an amnesty for the convicted Democrats, not to revise the laws passed since May 27, 1960, and not to reinstate the purged Army officers³⁰. At least two of these provisions were soon to be violated.

A second instance of political intervention by the military in the fall of 1961 occurred in connection with the establishment of the first coalition Cabinet. Since no party had won a large enough representation to form a government by itself, it became necessary to organize a coalition. But none of the parties indicated a desire to cooperate with the others. At first, Gürsel and the other members

30 For the text of the *Çankaya* Protocol, see *Cumhuriyet*, October 26, 1961. The meeting was called at 1 AM on October 24 and was preceded by protest demonstrations by army officers and military cadets. According to Avni Doğan, at that time an influential member of the RPP, there was strong feeling among high ranking military officers against surrendering power to the political parties. In fact, 38 of these officers (10 generals, 2 naval commanders and 2 air force and 24 colonels of the army) signed a secret agreement at the Istanbul War College on October 21 (i. e., within a week after the election). This secret agreement provided: "A) The Turkish armed forces will actively intervene before the convocation of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey which was elected on October 15, 1961. B) Power will be turned over to the true and competent representatives of the nation. C) All political parties will be rendered inactive, the election results invalidated, and the Committee of National Unity dissolved. D) The execution of this agreement will not be postponed beyond October 25." This agreement indicates beyond the shadow of a doubt how far the split between the CNU and the field commanders of the armed forces gone. Doğan adds the following significant sequel: "On October 23, the Chief of the General Staff, General Sunay, called a meeting of commanding generals and staff officers at the army and corps levels, and requested that the agreement concluded in Istanbul be abandoned, arguing that the prevailing atmosphere of distrust should be brought to an end by making General Cemal Gürsel President of the Republic and İsmet İnönü Prime Minister. The meeting ended with a decision to temporarily give up the idea of intervention. This last mentioned meeting led directly to the *Çankaya* Protocol." Avni Doğan, "... Ve Sonrası," *Dünya*, December 5, 1963. Italics added. See also: *Yenisabah*, July 5, 1962.

of the CNU favored a national coalition including all four parties. But in the face of the opposition of party leaders, attempts at two- and three-party coalitions were undertaken. These were so completely unsuccessful that the military commanders felt it necessary to intervene yet once more, leading to the most improbable coalition conceivable, comprising only the Republican and Justice parties.

Because these two parties had engaged in the most violent mutual recriminations during the campaign, the expectation was that the coalition would not last very long. However, fear of renewed military intervention served to prolong the life of this first Cabinet under the headship of İsmet İnönü beyond original expectations. It was also characteristic that this government became so involved in efforts to prolong its own life that it could not spare time to develop and carry out very many effective policy decisions. This situation so depressed the intellectuals that some of them, along with the "reformists" among the military, began to express doubts about the viability of the democratic system in Turkey. These doubts became so widespread during 1962 that İnönü sponsored a bill (the *Tedbirler Kanunu*) designed to prevent the publication of anti-democratic articles in the press. The bill went so far as to threaten prison terms of up to five years for writings which "injure the prestige of the democratic regime and seek to disgrace that regime."³¹ Those who dared might draw a parallel with the restrictions placed on the press by Menderes.

The feeling of the leftist intellectuals and the military "reformists" that İnönü was proving unable to overcome the inertia of conservative forces within the Parliament was strengthened by the openly expressed opposition of some JP deputies to the May 27 coup and the Army. In order to save his coalition in the face of this opposition, İnönü felt constrained to agree to the repeal of some of the laws passed by the CNU, in direct violation of the Çankaya Protocol.

³¹ Typical of the tendency to deprecate democracy were Nadir Nadi in *Cumhuriyet*, Falih Rifkî Atay in *Dünya*, and the newly established weekly *Yön*. The last-named journal was published by the young socialist intellectuals who had first been heard from during the debates in the Constituent Assembly (see above, pp. 15-16). The first issue appeared in December 1961 and included a forthright statement signed by more than 150 intellectuals outlining what they considered to be the basic principles of economic development within a framework of social justice. For a translation with commentary on this statement, see Frank Tachau, "Statement on Economic Development in Turkey," *Middle Eastern Affairs*, March 1963.

These developments in turn gave rise to rumors of an impending coup less than three months after the inauguration of the civilian regime. Indeed, on February 22, 1962, an attempted coup did take place under the leadership of the commander of the War College in Ankara, Col. Talat Aydemir, with the participation of the cadets of the College and almost all the ground forces stationed in the vicinity of the capital city. The regime was saved because most of the high ranking officers and the entire Air Force remained loyal to İnönü. It should be added that İnönü understood that the rebellious officers enjoyed widespread support within the Army. He feared that harsh punishment would turn the entire officer corps against him, and therefore arranged an amnesty for the rebels. Only four officers were detained, although a large number were retired or transferred.³²

The failure of the attempt of February 22 had various effects on Turkish politics. In the first place, İnönü's position was immeasurably strengthened. It was now abundantly clear that he enjoyed the support of the commanders of the armed forces who had by no means lost their interest in politics. Secondly, and of equal importance, public opinion, led by the press, also gave support to İnönü. The feeling was that even a poor parliamentary regime was preferable to a good military dictatorship. This point was not lost on the military officers, nor on the leftist intellectuals, both of whom now began following a more cautious line. This caution has prevailed ever since, and helps to explain the failure of the second attempted coup of May 20-21, 1963, also led by Col. Aydemir and the War College cadets.³³

Paradoxically, a third effect of the attempted coup of February 22 was that the Justice Party assumed a more intransigent position.

³² *Keesing's*, Vol. XIII (1961-62), p. 18652.

³³ At the time of writing, the cases of the perpetrators of this attempt have not yet been finally settled. The long delay in the disposition of these cases may be taken as an indication of the conflicting loyalties and emotions involved. At the same time, the continuation of these cases provides justification for the extension of martial law in Ankara and Istanbul, thus giving the Army a relatively free hand in the main political centers of the country. The martial law commanders have used this freedom with some restraint, limiting themselves to closing down some leftist and some conservative publications (the former including *Yön*; the latter primarily JP organs). In addition, during the local election campaign, the Army actively discouraged open air meetings and political demonstrations in the two large cities, thus setting an example of restraint for the rest of the country.

The leaders of the party now felt that İnönü had strong support among the military commanders and concluded that as long as he remained Prime Minister there was no need to fear further military intervention. Conversely, they felt that because of his desire to avoid a military coup, İnönü would not readily resign. Consequently, among other things, the JP raised demands for an amnesty for the Yassiada convicts (contrary to the Çankaya Protocol), and thus created a major political issue. Such demands had already been put forth during the election campaign, but had been soft-pedalled because they had been greeted with a strong reaction on the part of the army and the intellectuals. But when it came to the special amnesty for the perpetrators of the attempted coup of February 22, the ex-Democratic wing of the JP seized the opportunity to press for a general amnesty. The pressure from this group became so intense that İnönü capitulated to the extent of promising an amnesty at an appropriate time, though he was careful to avoid specifying when that might be. The Prime Minister was unable, however, to reconcile opposing views about the form and substance of the projected amnesty, particularly, on the matter of the extent of its applicability. Ultimately he submitted his resignation as a result of this impasse, thus bringing the first coalition government in Turkish history to an end on May 31, 1962. The issue on which the coalition foundered, be it noted, was a direct outgrowth of the coup of May 27. This did not augur well for the future.

It is evident from the reactions created by İnönü's resignation that the Justice Party had not expected such a move. The resignation, in fact, created a split between "moderates" and "extremists" in the JP. The former attempted to use the opportunity afforded by the crisis to seize control of the party, force Gümüşpala to give up the post of party chairman, and organize a new coalition with the RPP. Evidently this group was not strong enough to carry through its plan, with the result that a number of its members resigned from the party. In any case, if any members of the JP expected to take control of the government as a result of the crisis, they were to be disappointed. Not only did President Gürsel fail to call upon the JP to form a new coalition, but he went so far as to state publicly: "Under present conditions, the office of Prime Minister cannot be turned over to anyone but İnönü; no one else is in a position to assume this responsibility"³⁴. The three-week crisis was ultimately brought

³⁴ Quoted in *Cumhuriyet*, June 6, 1962, p. 5.

to an end when the NTP and the RPNP agreed to join a new coalition led again by İnönü and the RPP. This new government did, in fact, enact a partial amnesty.

One further major incident produced important effects on the political parties. This was the temporary release (for reasons of health) of 80-year-old ex-President Celâl Bayar late in March 1963. The Justice Party used the occasion of his arrival in Ankara to organize a massive demonstration on his behalf, and Bayar obligingly made several statements of a provocative nature³⁵. This aroused violent opposition, leading to several days of rioting on the part of university students and culminating in an attack on JP headquarters in Ankara. Bayar was re-arrested, İnönü scolded the JP for its recklessness and declared that "we cannot continue in this way," and ultimately, Gümüşpala abjectly confessed that his party had erred and that it looked to İnönü for guidance. The JP has been more restrained in its public conduct since this incident; notably it has ceased pressing for an amnesty for the imprisoned ex-Democrats.

VI

The various tendencies in Turkish politics which we have outlined thus far were carried one step further by the local and provincial elections of November 17, 1963. These elections marked the third time the Turkish people had gone to the polls since the coup of 1960. Although this was formally not a national election (not a single national office was at stake), yet atmosphere was that of a national referendum, and rather important effects were produced at the national level by the election results.

The most active party in the campaign was the Justice Party which clearly intended to make the elections a demonstration of its popular strength and thus pave the way for it to assume power. Proclaiming that this was an opportunity for the "national will" to express itself, the JP campaigners urged the voters to unite under its banner in order to defeat the Republicans. The smaller parties were portrayed as serving the Republican cause by splitting the opposition. JP spokesmen also boldly attempted to spike the continuing impression that they would not be allowed to come to power. They denied that they were reactionary or backward, or that they opposed the

³⁵ See *Keesing's*, Vol. XIV (1963-64), p. 19385; *Cumhuriyet*, March 29, 1963.

Army. Indeed, on occasion they went out of their way to express confidence in the Army's patriotism and commitment to democracy. On the other hand, JP campaigners also made it as clear as they dared that they were the heirs to the mantle of Menderes. Privately, this point was explicitly emphasized. It remains the most important single identifying feature of the party.

On more substantive matters, the JP continued to maintain positions staked out earlier, that is: in favor of an amnesty for the ex-Democrats still in prison (though this point was muted during the campaign); opposed to the application of the five-year plan adopted early in 1963, although ostensibly not to the principle of planning; and against "radical" reform, particularly in land ownership and taxation.

The other parties were less vociferous and less elaborate. As the leader of the coalition, the RPP naturally defended its record in office and attacked what it claimed were its opponents, personal and political shortcomings. The party also claimed credit for having preserved Turkish democracy during the critical two-year period since the elections of 1961, and characterized the present election as "the first test of the new order." On the whole, the Republican campaign was pitched in a low key, reflecting the party's view that this was a local and not a national election, and that neither the coalition nor the national political scene should be affected by the outcome. İnönü alone among the party leaders never left Ankara during the campaign.

The New Turkey Party entered the campaign as a distinct underdog. It had been greatly outpaced in terms of organization and mass appeal by the Justice Party, as we have already noted. What is more, the NTP's freedom of motion was somewhat limited by its participation in the coalition. Nevertheless, the party waged an active campaign in those areas in which it had entered the competition. Its main campaign line was that the people were being divided into two extreme camps by the major parties and that there was need for a third force to maintain a balance and equilibrium between them. The general chairman of the party, Ekrem Alican, attacked the RPP for portraying itself as the sole exponent of progressivism (or, in Turkish parlance, Atatürkism) and the reforms of May 27. The JP was attacked for portraying itself as the sole inheritor of the Democratic mantle and as the sole personification of the national will, as well as for ma-

king impossible election promises. Finally, Alican emphasized the importance of these elections by announcing early in the campaign that he would pull his party out of the coalition if the election results showed either that it alone had lost heavily or that the coalition parties as a group had failed to collect a majority of the votes cast.

A non-partisan theme was also stressed by the leaders of the RPNP.

A significant feature of these elections was the appearance of a new party on the scene. This was the Turkish Labor Party (*Türkiye İşçi Partisi*, or TİP). It represents an outgrowth of the socialist trend which first appeared openly after the 1960 coup. The party is dedicated to the achievement of social justice through radical reform, but rejects non-democratic methods in pursuit of this goal. There is no doubt that, with the suspension of socialist publications (including *Yön* and *Sosyal Adalet*) after the second unsuccessful coup of May 1963, the Labor Party has become the chief mouthpiece of the leftist intellectuals. Its commitment to democratic procedures is a mark of the more cautious tendencies which seem to have characterized Turkish politics during the second half of 1963. One of the main points of the party's campaign was that it was a party of the people and that control of the organization itself was in the hands of the rank and file³⁶. The participation of the Labor Party in the elections, limited to nine of the 67 provinces, was intended primarily as a symbolic gesture. The party made maximum use of its share of radio time to identify itself as a radical new force in Turkish politics. Its appeal, addressed to the poor, the landless, and the unemployed, marked a sharp departure from the usual pattern of Turkish campaign propaganda. As a result, the party attracted wide attention. Two reactions predominated: On the one hand, the party was characterized as subversive and unpatriotic, particularly as it raised the ugly specter of social upheaval. This assessment was put forward most prominently by the Justice Party, which went so far as to label the Labor Party as a communist front. A second reaction was one of intense interest. This reaction was most prominently shown by the intellectuals and professional groups (who also gave the party most of its votes) and the left wing of the RPP. The feeling in these circles was that here for the first time was a group that did not shrink

³⁶ *Amacımız, Yolumuz, Yöntemimiz*, Türkiye İşçi Partisi Ankara Araştırma ve Yayın Bürosu (Ankara, 1963).

from openly proclaiming some unpleasant truths about the social and economic problems confronting the country. The best exemplification of this point of view came from Kasım Gülek, recently expelled former leader of the RPP, who declared that the RPP could only recoup its strength by adopting the reforms demanded by the Labor Party. Most significantly, however, the Turkish Labor Confederation, representing the bulk of the organized labor movement, has pointedly disavowed the party, in spite of the party's claim to speak for the worker and the peasant³⁷.

The results of the local and provincial elections were significant though not entirely unexpected. The most important figures are presented in Table I, together with comparable data for the 1957 and 1961 general elections. Several conclusions may be drawn from these figures. In the first place, the basic bipolar structure of Turkish politics has re-emerged. In fact, this basic structure never really disappeared, but it was at least temporarily overshadowed by the relative strength of the two minor parties in the 1961 election. These parties have now suffered serious setbacks, with the combined votes of the Nation Party and the Peasants National Party amounting to less than their single predecessor in 1957 (and for that matter not much more than in 1954). The greatest single gainer was the Justice Party, which stands today approximately where the Democratic Party stood in 1957. Significantly, the gains registered by the JP do not represent losses of the RPP, but rather result from the attrition of the three small parties. The RPP has, in fact, preserved almost intact the same number and proportion of votes in every election since 1950. Thus, once again the Turkish electorate appears to have divided itself into two opposing camps: Pro-RPP (that is to say, formally pro-reform or progressivist) and anti-RPP (that is to say, ostensibly anti-reform and conservative). All parties favor development.

These elections have stimulated the process of realignment among the parties which has gone on ever since the elections of 1961. Three major developments may be cited as evidence.

First, there was the Cabinet crisis of December 1963. It was evident that the other parties felt that the JP had benefitted from

³⁷ There are, however, indications of unrest within the Confederation, and there is evidence that the Labor Party is attempting to capitalize on this unrest. These developments came to the surface during the Confederation's fifth Congress held in Bursa during the week of January 28, 1964. See *Cumhuriyet*, February 3, 1964.

its position as the major opposition party; thus all agreed that it should be brought into the government. There was disagreement as to how this should be done. The RPNP and NTP argued in favor of a coalition of the two large parties; the RPP at first stated that it simply would not participate in the next Cabinet—at least until the other parties had made an attempt to govern without its help. Only the JP indicated a willingness to assume governmental responsibility. Even then, it attached conditions to its willingness, notably that new general elections be held no later than June 1964. This reflected the party's conviction that the gains it had registered indicated a general trend in its favor. In fact, the JP was given an opportunity to establish a government, but it failed to gain the necessary cooperation of the other parties, save only Osman Bölükbaşı's small Nation Party,

The Justice Party's failure to form a government left the responsibility up to the Republicans once more. Making it clear that he would return to power only because there was no other alternative, İnönü proclaimed that this time the party was determined to undertake serious reforms along lines originally laid down by the CNU, namely, tax reform, land reform, and a determined effort to develop villages through the establishment of a new Ministry of Villages. Negotiations with independents and the other parties, though initially hopeful, were in the end unsuccessful. When the Cabinet was finally announced toward the end of December, after a three-week crisis, it was entirely an RPP group with the addition of only three independents. What is more, in the debate preceding the vote of confidence, the violence which had exploded on Cyprus loomed as an important background factor. Indeed, Ekrem Alican announced his support of the new government only because the country could not afford to limp along without a government in the face of the Cyprus crisis. Of 405 votes cast, the government gained 225, one short of an absolute majority, but a comfortable majority of the votes cast. The new government contains a number of new faces belonging to some younger men. However, in view of the political situation, there is grave question as to whether it will fare any better than its two predecessors in terms of accomplishments³⁸. In sum, this second Ca-

38 Shortly after the formation of the new Cabinet, new tax proposals were in fact put forth, heralded by a radio speech over a national hook-up by İnönü. The proposals were allegedly designed to close a projected deficit of a billion liras in the 1964 budget, to counteract income tax evasion among wealthy landowners, and to introduce a more equitable tax load. There were immediate criticisms es-

binet crisis differed in two important particulars from the first crisis 18 months earlier: 1) President Gürsel at least went through the motions of inviting the JP to form a government; and 2) there was no public evidence of military pressure (indeed, several ranking military officers embarked on highly publicized tours of inspection away from Ankara).

A second development indicative of the realignment of the political parties occurred toward the middle of January 1964 when the New Turkey Party proved unable any longer to conceal the rift within its leadership. The quarrel burst into the open with the resignation of some fifteen Senators, deputies, and members of the party's executive committee. Most prominent among the resignees was Professor Aydın Yalçın, one of the original founders of the party. After this incident, Ekrem Alican and his deputy, Yusuf Azizoğlu, were granted two months leave from their positions as party leaders, pending the convocation of a party congress scheduled for May 9. These developments, following close on the heels of electoral defeat, probably mark the end of the NTP as a factor on the Turkish political scene. Thus, the Justice Party's main rival in the competition for votes of the ex-Democrats appears to have been eliminated.

VII

We began our analysis by pointing out the basic dilemma posed by the great gap between the peasant village masses and the urban educated elite in Turkey. We went on to cite the three dominant forces in Turkish politics today: The spirit of Adnan Menderes, embodied in the Justice Party; İsmet İnönü and the Republican Party; and May 27. We suggested further that each of these forces corresponded to a dilemma in current Turkish politics: The Justice Party representing massive resistance to further radical reform; İnönü and the Republicans representing a commitment to both progressive reforms and the democratic method; and May 27 representing the continued political involvement of the armed forces. In early 1964, these three forces seemed to find themselves in something of a stalemate. It could be said that each of them had burned its fingers at

pecially from the left wing Socialist Cultural Society (representing the publishers of *Yön*) to the effect that these proposals were merely palliative and that far more radical measures would be required. See *Ulus*, January 18, 1964; *Milliyet*, January 19 and 20, 1964. Somewhat later, the JP also raised objections. See *Milliyet*, January 31, February 1, 1964.

least once and all were proceeding with greater caution than had been evident before.

This was particularly true of the Justice Party. Although to all appearances this party was full of self confidence and vitality, yet its conduct during the local election campaign late in 1963 and during the Cabinet crisis that followed was exceptionally moderate by comparison with its behavior on earlier occasions. Perhaps this moderation was due to the fact that it sensed the approach of its day in power. It is also likely that the party has been sobered by the experience of the two unsuccessful military coups of February 1962 and May 1963, as well as the violent opposition it encountered in late March 1963 when it attempted to capitalize on the temporary release of ex-President Bayar.

Inönü and the Republicans were also sobered by the realization that they seemed destined at least for the immediate future to remain a minority party. Between 1961 and 1963, they were able to maintain their dominance by relying on the support of the minor parties, but after the local elections and the Cabinet crisis late in the latter year, they reverted to their earlier pattern of enacting "reforms." Whether these reforms (the five-year plan, new taxes, land reform, and community development) are sufficiently radical or whether they will take effect soon enough to benefit the party politically is highly doubtful, however. For that matter, there is serious question as to whether those whom the reforms are designed to help, that is, the poor villager and urban exvillager, understand or support these measures. It is therefore entirely possible that Inönü will upon retirement from public life be unable to claim more than the preservation of democratic forms as his last achievement.

Even this minimal achievement will be robbed of any meaning unless the principle of military neutrality is enforced in practice as well as in theory. The developments of the period since the coup of 1960 indicate clearly, we believe, that this principle has not yet been re-established. It is true that the military, too, demonstrated greater caution (or perhaps patience) during the latter half of 1963. Their sobering experience occurred during the seventeen months between May 1960 and November 1961 when they alone held power. There is every indication that the senior officers, at least, do not relish a repetition of that experience. Not only did they find that they lacked the necessary political background and skills, but their

prestige and influence in Turkish society has suffered a grivous blow. Criticism and resentment of the armed forces is now freely voiced throughout the country, something that would have been unthinkable a few years ago.

On the other hand, the younger officers may well have drawn a different conclusion from the events of 1960 and 1961. It is quite likely that they feel that the major mistake of those years was to permit the political parties and the civilian politicians to stage a premature comeback. The most overt evidence of this reaction lies in the two attempted coups of February 1962 and May 1963. For the present, however, it appears that the more moderate senior officers are still in control.

Another doubtful factor is the future of the Labor Party and the leftists. If deadlock remains the pattern, and the party is allowed to remain active, it may possibly begin to make inroads on the major parties. For the immediate future, however, the party will probably remain small and ineffective, both because of its radicalism and because of its apparent commitment to the principles of Kemalism. The former tends to preclude mass support, while the latter tends to overlap with the RPP. It is not impossible that the very existence of the Labor Party may keep the RPP further to the left of center than it might otherwise feel obliged to go.

The future of Turkish politics is thus rather blurred. A great deal will depend on the general elections due to take place no later than October 1965. It is difficult to see how the Justice Party can be prevented from winning a very large block of seats in the Parliament, if not an absolute majority, unless repressive measures against the party are adopted. If the party does win the election, then the key to the future will lie in the relations between its leaders and the commanding echelons of the military. Perhaps more important, whatever the relations between the future civilian and military leadership, will be the question of the attitude of the younger officers who will have to be persuaded to trust both the politicians and their own generals.

In any case, regardless of the particular developments in the day to day politics of the country, the basic dilemma of the gap between the masses and the elite will remain. If the more immediate dilemmas we have attempted to analyze here prove capable of resolution, then perhaps the Turkish people can turn their serious attention to the basic ills of their society. If not, then Turkey may prove closer to the social upheaval threatening all of Asia, Africa, and Latin America than most observers have hitherto suspected.

TABLE : I
LOCAL ELECTION RESULTS
(Provincial Councils)
COMPARED TO 1957 AND 1961

Year	No. of Voters	No. of Votes Cast	Participation (%)	DP - JP		RPP		RPNP-NP		NTP (Freedom Party)		Independents	
				No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1957	12.111.183	9.344.246	77.15	4.394.893	47.9	3.763.866	41	659.970	7.2	346.881	3.8		
1961	12.925.395	10.522.716	81	3.527.435	34.8	3.724.752	36.7	1.415.390	14.0	1.391.934	13.7		
1963	13.067.911	10.143.540	77.62	4.335.193	45.36	3.460.586	36.2	585.515	6.1	624.950	6.54	515.987	5.4

Sources: For 1957, *Seçim Neticeleri üzerine bir inceleme*, RPP Research Bureau, Publication no. 7 (Ankara, 1959); for 1961, State Institute of Statistics, *Results of the Election of Senators and Representatives*, 15.10.1961, Publication no. 434 (Ankara, n.d.); for 1963: as announced by the Supreme Electoral Council, *Resmî Gazete*, January 17, 1964. Abbreviations: DP=Democratic Party; JP=Justice Party; RPP=Republican People's Party; RPNP=Republican Peasants' National Party; NP=Nation Party; NTP=New Turkey Party. Notes: The Democratic Party participated only in the 1957 election; figures for 1961 and 1963 are Justice Party figures. In 1957 and 1961, the RPNP ran as a single party; in 1963, it had split into two. The 1957 figure in the NTP column is for the Freedom Party which was dissolved shortly after that election. Its inclusion here is not to be construed as suggesting continuity between it and the NTP; the majority of the leaders of the Freedom Party have remained in the RPP since its dissolution, and the size and distribution of the votes for the NTP belie any effort to draw parallels between these two parties. In 1963, the Labor Party collected 34.301 votes in nine provinces, representing % 0.36 of the total vote cast.