CHAPTER 4

THE SOCIAL CLASSES AND WARTIME DEVELOPMENTS

SOCIAL classes in Turkey became differentiated in the Republic owing mainly to statism which created capital and allowed its accumulation (in part) in private hands. Social and economic contradictions and conflicts were bound to arise throughout this economic process. The state had helped to create these contradictions, although in theory unwittingly it clung to the idea that its role was to distribute social justice, and to extend protection to all social groups on an equal basis. The state philosophy was not socialistic, although social considerations played a considerable part in shaping the ideology of the Republic.

The government had assumed the dual role of entrepreneur and mediator between various interests and social groups. It could, occasionally, use its economic power to support one particular social group while placing restraint and impositions on other groups. Hence there resulted in Turkey, especially during the war years, a tortuous economic and social policy that went from one extreme to another and usually ended in a rigid, middle-of-the-road conservatism. This policy left all groups dissatisfied. Especially during the war years, the accumulation of capital had gathered such momentum that it was hardly possible to maintain the old monolithic social philosophy and statist policy without causing general discontent. A clearer picture of the social groups, their situation and views, as well as special events concerning each one of them, should emerge if they are specifically studied.

A. The Peasants and Land Ownership

The largest social group in Turkey comprises the peasants who,[1] in 1945, formed eighty-three per cent of the population and lived in more than 40,000 villages spread all over the country.[2] The rate of rural population had fallen to seventy-one per cent in 1955. Although the land area of Turkey is rather large, the amount of arable land per capita is very small, because a good part of the total consists of mountains or arid and pasture lands.

The proprietorship of land, according to the existing and widely accepted table of land ownership,[3] is divided as follows: the large properties over 5,000 *dönüms*, or 1250 acres, amount to 418 estates; the medium properties (between 5,000-500 *dönüms*) to 5,764, and the small properties (less than 500 *dönüms*) to 2,493,000 holdings. (A *dönüm* is equal to 0.10 ha.) These three groups represent 0.01, 0.23, and 99.75 per cent of the total land ownership, respectively. Although this table brings into focus one main feature of Turkish agriculture—the fact that the small property is the dominant type—it is, nevertheless, both inaccurate and outdated.[4]

[1] For a view of the peasants in Anatolia during the Ottoman Empire, see Sir W. M. Ramsay, "The Turkish Peasantry of Anatolia," *Quarterly Review*, January 1918. See also my Chapter 3, notes 12 and 13.

[2] For the names of Turkish villages, see *Son Teşkilâtı Mülkiyede Köylerimizin Adları*, published by the Interior Ministry, İstanbul, 1928.

[3] Ömer Lütfi Barkan, *Çiftçiyi Topraklandırma Kanunu*, İstanbul, 1946, p. 33.

[4] The table is inaccurate because the figures were obtained by generalizing, to include the whole country, the results of a survey of land properties conducted in only 35 provinces out of a total of 63 provinces as they existed at that time (Barkan, *Çiftçiyi*, p. 36). Furthermore, some of the lands shown as small properties are equivalent, in terms of capital, productivity, and manpower to some of the large properties. The industrial crops (cotton, tobacco, olives, and fruit) are grown on properties smaller than 500 *dönüms*, but the productivity of these holdings and the number of persons employed on them place their owners in the category of the big landowners. Moreover, the figure for the small properties does not indicate whether all these properties suffice to provide a normal standard of living

The village population of Turkey is estimated to number about 3 million families (each family averaging five members). A family, in view of the low quality of the land, needs about ten hectares in order to make an adequate living. Therefore, a total of 30 million ha. of arable land would be required to support the whole village population of Turkey. The cultivated land, including the vineyards and the gardens, amounted to 14.9 million ha. in 1953-1954, excluding 6.4 million ha. of fallow land.[5] (This total represents a forty per cent increase in arable land compared to 1945.) Thus, if all the arable land available were distributed to the villagers it would not suffice. Moreover, the land in many areas, such as central Anatolia, is of such a poor quality that it has to stay fallow for as many as three consecutive years. In consequence, there is a rather large number of peasants who

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for a family. Actually a large percentage of small property owners are in the category of needy peasants.

The table is outdated because it was originally compiled in 1935; the situation of landownership in Turkey has since undergone spectacular changes, especially after 1950, through United States economic aid which has resulted in farm mechanization. Farm production increased from 7,069,500 metric tons in 1946-1950, to 14,343,900 in 1952-1953. *Zirai Bünye ve İstihsal*, Ankara, 1955, p. 5. Turkey, in 1955, had over 40,000 tractors, as compared with only 2,227 tractors in 1946-1950.

Along with farm mechanization, there has been a great change in land ownership, methods of land cultivation, and agricultural relations; as a result large land ownership has steadily increased to the detriment of the small farms. There has also been a dislocation of sharecroppers and agricultural workers, who have migrated to the cities. See *Economic and Social Aspects of Farm Mechanization*, F. O. A., Ankara, 1952, pp. 45ff. On the agriculture of Turkey, see also G. E. Brandow, *Agricultural Development in Turkey*, F. O. A. (Ankara, 1953). For a view on villages and the impact of mechanization, see Richard D. Robinson, "Tractors in the Village—A Study in Turkey," *Journal of Farm Economics*, November 1952, pp. 451-462. For a case study in the area, see Nicholas Helburn, "A Stereotype of Agriculture in Semiarid Turkey," *Geographical Review*, July 1955, pp. 375ff. The number of dislocated farmers can be placed as high as 1.5 million. This figure roughly corresponds to the increase in urban population which has taken place in Turkey since 1950, as indicated by the general census of 1955.

[5] *Zirai Bünye ve İstihsal*, p. 3. For land distribution according to crops, see *Zirai İstatistik*, a publication of the General Statistical Office, Ankara, 1957, p. 1.

are landless or who possess insufficient land for a normal living standard.[6] Land distribution in Turkey, although it has followed a steady pace in the last decade, has so far only partially solved the problem of the landless peasants.[7]

With the exception of the groups with lands of larger size who have greatly improved their living conditions under the agricultural policy followed since 1949, the living standard of the peasant is low[8] The villages of Turkey are therefore confronted with two problems: how to meet the shortages of land, and how to improve farming methods and techniques.[9] Moreover, in certain areas in the country there are

[6] The number of landless or land-short peasants, a point on which the interested parties are very "sensitive," has been a matter of speculation owing to the lack of definite official figures. The International Bank Mission estimated the number of landless peasant families as from 126,000 to 787,000, and those with insufficient land from 900,000 to 1,600,000 families. *The Economy of Turkey–Report of the International Bank*, Washington, D.C., 1951, p. 62. Fevzi L. Karaosmanoğlu, while Minister of Interior in 1951, estimated the number of families in need of land as high as 2,251,000. *Ulus*, December 19, 1951. Remzi Yüregir, a deputy from Adana, placed the number of landless peasants at 8 million. *BMMTD*, Session 8.4, Vol. 25, p. 376. The Socialists' estimates are much higher. See Esat Adil, *Tan*, May 15, 1945. The Agricultural Bank of Turkey asserted in 1950 that 719,047 families, or 35 per cent of the existing village holdings, worked as sharecroppers or tenants because their own land was not sufficient to provide a living. *Ziraat Bankası Bülteni*, Ankara, April 1950. Although these figures need careful analysis before acceptance, they nevertheless indicate one of the main problems of Turkey: the peasant's need for land. See also Wilfred H. Pine, "Some Land Problems in Turkey," *Journal of Farm Economics*, May 1952, pp. 263-267.

[7] Between 1947 and 1954, a total of 9,302,210 *dönüms* were distributed to 183,722 families. *Toprak-İskân Çalışmaları*, Ankara, 1955, pp. 26-27; also *Zafer*, July 16, 1955 (Declaration by Osman Kapani). Kapani's statement mentions 179,873 families and 14,754,984 *dönüms*. The difference in the acreage figures results from the fact that Kapani included also the pasture lands given to the villages. For a history of land problems, see Halil Inalcık, "Land Problems in Turkish History," *Muslim World*, July 1955, pp. 221ff.; also Barkan, *Çiftçiyi*.

[8] The capital of village enterprises in 1949-1950 in the poorest region in central Anatolia was TL. 427 for poor, 1,152 for medium, and 3,877 for rich farms. In the richest region in Anatolia (South) the capital was TL. 1,103, 2,542, and 9,949. *Ziraat Bankası Bülteni*. On land tenure see also, Reşad Mehmet Aktan, "Agricultural Policy of Turkey, with Special Emphasis on Land Tenure" (Microfilmed thesis), Berkeley, 1950.

[9] The *Köy Kanunu* (Village Law) introduced in 1926 attempted to revo-

large estates,[10] and the distribution of national income to the population in agriculture has been unbalanced.[11]

It is against this rural background that industrialization took place in Turkey during 1930-1945, and it is on this agricultural structure that the state imposed new measures necessitated by war conditions. Industrialization in Turkey in its initial period was possible only by exploiting the internal markets, chiefly the rural ones. Heavy taxes were levied on agricultural products without regard to the peasant's financial capacity to pay.[12]

Two state organizations, the *Toprak Mahsulleri Ofisi* (Office of Soil Products) and *Orman İşletmeleri* (Forestry Enterprise), created initially with the purpose of helping

lutionize village life through administrative measures, but except for some organizational gains it was a failure. See Webster, *Turkey of Atatürk*, p. 262; Sıddık Sami Onar, *İdare Hukuku*, İstanbul, 1944. For village law and administration, see Ibrahim Yasa, "The Village as an Administrative Unit," *Studies in Turkish Local Government* (Published by the U N Public Administration Institute), Ankara, 1955, pp. 53-77; see also Paul Stirling, "*The Social Structure of Turkish Peasant Communities*" (Ph.D. dissertation, Oxford University, 1951, pp. 12-13. A mimeographed copy of this dissertation has been obtained through the courtesy of the author and the Bodleian Library.)

[10] In eastern Anatolia and in other parts of the country there are entire villages which belong to landlords. Şüküfe Nihal, "Doğu Illerinde Gördüklerim," *Türkiye Iktisat Mecmuası*, November 1949, pp. 21ff. See also debate on land reform in this chapter.

[11] Adnan Menderes, the present Premier, declared in 1949, during the debates on the budget law, that about 80 per cent of the population of Turkey was composed of peasants, but that only 44 per cent of the national income went to them; this meant that the remaining 56 per cent was in the hands of about 18 per cent of the population. According to him, this was evidence of economic unbalance and a problem of social justice. *BMMTD*, Session 8.3, Vol. 16, p. 302. In 1949 the income per capita was TL. 382; in 1954 it rose to TL. 489; and in 1956 to TL. 536. *National Income of Turkey* (a publication of the Statistical Office), Ankara, 1957, p. 24. The real distribution of national income, and consequently the actual per capita income, does not, however, correspond to the above. It is certain that the distribution of income remains quite unbalanced, as in the past, and probably more so. See *Forum*, December 15, 1955, pp. 17, 18. See my Chapters 11 and 12.

[12] The *Toprak Mahsulleri Vergisi* (Tax on Soil Products) yielded TL. 229 million in 1944-1947, which was comparatively higher than the share actually due the peasants. Faik Ökte, *Varlık Vergisi Faciası*, p. 36.

the peasant, in time became a burden on him, and as such had a considerable part in shaping his attitudes toward the government in 1940-1946. The Office was created, indeed, to protect the peasant through price supports, and to accumulate farm supplies for the army, schools, and certain needy regions of the country.[13] Scarcely had the Office been created when the war started. There resulted a sharp increase in the consumption of soil products and a diminution in agricultural production, made worse by the fact that former agricultural producers became consumers after being drafted into the army.

As can be seen from its expenditures for salaries (TL. 7,774,314 in 1945 to TL. 8,801,595 in 1946), the Office expanded rapidly.[14] The growing shortage of bread made the Office enact a number of drastic decrees under the *Milli Korunma Kanunu* #3780 of January 18, 1940. (National Defense Law) for the collection of farm produce.[15] Crop prices were established arbitrarily by the government below the local market prices. This was done to keep down the cost of bread, and, consequently, the cost of living in the cities, to the peasants' detriment.[16]

Antagonism to the Office and, consequently, to the govern-

[13] The Office was created on July 23, 1938 by Law #3491. See *BMMTD*, Session 8.2, Vol. 12, pp. 35ff. See also, Namık Zeki Aral, "1950 Yılında Toprak Mahsulleri Ofisi," *Vatan*, November 16, 1951.

[14] This was from a total operational budget of TL. 73,621,263. *Report of the Office for 1946*, İstanbul, 1946, p. 60.

[15] 2/14710, 2/14713, December 5, 1940; 2/14486, January 6, 1941; 2/15164, February 14, 1941. *Resmi Gazete*, December 1940 and January, February 1941. Niyazi Acun, *Ziraat Tarihimize Bir Bakış*, İstanbul, 1947.

[16] The state enterprises and public institutions were charged the equivalent of cost prices for the foodstuffs they bought. Exports and sales to individuals envisaged certain profits. The prices paid by the state in buying farm produce (wheat, oats, barley, corn) varied according to the cost of transportation from the producing area to the main consumption centers. A kilogram of wheat in 1938 in distant Erzurum was 4.50 piastres, while in Yozgat, which is closer to Ankara, it was 5.50, and in the south, in Urfa, it was 4.25 piastres. Decree 2/9922; see *Toprak Mahsülleri Ofisile, Ilgili Kanunlar, Kararname ve Nizamnameler*, Ankara, 1941.

ment and the Republican Party, was heightened by the compulsory contribution of crops demanded by the state. The contribution quota was pre-established. All crops in excess of the amount needed for family consumption and seeding were to be delivered to the state. In many cases peasants, under the compulsion of government officials, had to sell their belongings to meet the contribution quota.[17] Furthermore, the Office, unable to foresee the needs of the country, sold agricultural crops abroad while people in the northern regions at home starved to death.[18]

It is true that the drastic actions of the state were partly justified by war conditions. But though the peasants, in general, recognized the need for emergency measures, they could not accept the authoritarian and unrealistic manner in which the Office carried out its policies, nor the uneven distribution of the burden. (After 1950 the Office was used by the Democratic Party Government to enforce its own policy of price support and played a major part in helping the Democrats

[17] Peasants from Bursa (western Anatolia), explaining to Celal Bayar why they backed the opposition, said: "Despite the fact that we gave our entire crop to the Office, we still owe them 70 per cent in crops. We sold our oxen to pay them. . . . What can we do on the land without oxen; it stays fallow and we work on the land of the rich. We sell the wheat to city dwellers, yet they buy the bread for thirty piastres, while we pay thirty-five." *Cumhuriyet*, July 12, 1946. The Kaymakam, the district governor, hearing these complaints, became angry and shouted: "Communist instigation has really penetrated this village." These issues played a crucial part in providing support for the Democrats, who kept bringing up the issue for discussion. For other examples, see Ibrahim Yasa, *Hasanoğlan Köyü*, Ankara, 1955, p. 208.

[18] In the Black Sea region, where land is divided into small pieces, the agriculture consists of tobacco and corn. People sell their own produce and buy wheat. In 1948 the Office had no stocks in the region, for 40,000 tons of wheat were sold abroad. *Vatan*, April 26, 1948. A vivid description of the famine in the northern regions is provided by one of the prominent members of the Democratic Party from that region. See Fevzi Boztepe, *Hür Ufuklara Doğru*, İstanbul, 1952, pp. 96-114; also *Celal Bayar Diyorki*, İstanbul, 1951, pp. 253-255. There may be a degree of exaggeration in these statements, but the fact remains that the Office could not properly cope with all the needs, and the result was bitter antagonism toward the government. See *BMMTD*, Session 8.2, Vol. 11, pp. 124ff.

win the peasants' support. This time farm prices far above world market prices were paid, to the detriment of other groups.)

The Forestry Enterprise was created to exploit the national forests (a number of which had been expropriated from private owners), conserve the existing ones, and reforest new areas.[19] In order to achieve its purposes, the Forestry Enterprise started by first applying prohibitionist measures. The making of charcoal was subjected to strict and burdensome controls,[20] and flocks were not allowed to enter forests previously used as grazing lands. The villagers living in these areas, deprived of a living and in dire need of subsistance, violated the law and thus engaged in endless disputes with the government.[21] The villagers in forest areas were supposed to be removed and settled in areas suitable for agriculture; however, lack of a well-defined policy of settlement and of the technical and sociological knowledge required for such an undertaking left this obligation barely fulfilled. The economic distress caused by government operation of the forests was aggravated by the large government bureaucracy required.[22] Moreover, villagers were also required to help achieve educational reform by building schools. This practice amounted to forced labor.[23]

[19] Faik Tavşanoğlu, "Orman İşlerimize Toplu Bir Bakış," *İstanbul Iktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, April 1948, pp. 216-220. For the general situation on forests in Turkey, see E. G. Mears, "Forests," *Modern Turkey*, pp. 302-309.

[20] A petitioning peasant was first shown a certain area in which he was to cut the trees and for which he was paid. Then the engineer estimated the amount of charcoal to be extracted from the wood. The peasant then paid the price of the wood and was ready to light the charcoal pit. Thereupon, the engineer was called again to give permission for lighting it. After the charcoal was ready, the peasant was given another permit to authorize him to sell the charcoal in town. (As told by a villager to the correspondent of *Yeni Sabah*, April 14, 1948.)

[21] *Yeni Sabah*, February 26, 1946 (open letter to the Forestry Directorate).

[22] In Şile, a small town near İstanbul, the government forestry personnel amounted to 200 officials. *Yeni Sabah*, April 12, 1948.

[23] The villagers were required by the government to build their own

Economic development and its consequences, migration and the movement of the population and their socio-cultural effects, altered the mode of living,[24] the mental attitudes, and the habits of the villagers. As the thinking of the people became more individualized, the influence of religion in their at-

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school houses by providing material and labor at their own expense. See *Ayın Tarihi*, May 1945, pp. 95ff.; *Cumhuriyet*, July 12, 1946; *BMMTD*, Session 8, Vol. 6, pp. 564ff.

[24] The surveys conducted in various parts of Anatolia by this writer and others indicate that immigration helped bring some changes in the mode of life in peasant communities of Anatolia. The immigrants brought the four-wheeled, steel reinforced horse wagon, usually known as the *muhacir arabası* (immigrant's cart), and this created a need for better roads, so different was it from the traditional two-wheeled wooden ox-cart which can use any kind of roads. The immigrants from Dobrujda (Rumania) settled in Eskişehir and Polatlı (today important wheat producing areas) introduced the cultivation of wheat on a large scale; the Bosnians introduced the cultivation of potatoes in Adapazarı, while the Lazes from the Black Sea region, who settled in Düzce and Hendek, introduced the cultivation of tobacco. Hüseyin Avni, *Reaya ve Köylü*, İstanbul, 1941, p. 85. The immigrants in central Anatolia brought a hygienic way of preparing bread and cooking it in ovens. They used wheat flour and left the dough to ferment, the natives cooked the bread on the hearth without prior fermentation. The immigrants in central Anatolia preferred to build their houses with large windows and triangular roofs instead of the flat roof normally used. The advice of the government contributed partly to building this kind of house. On the other hand, the immigrants substituted the water buffalo for the cow, because the former is more adaptable to the climate of Anatolia and serves many more purposes than the cow. Mümtaz Turhan, in his study of the cultural changes in five villages in eastern Anatolia during a period of fifteen years, found that a new type of house, new construction methods, and new interior arrangements were adopted. Similarly, new agricultural methods and new occupations were accepted, but only when people were sure that the changes proposed would bring them material benefits and when this was clearly explained to them. In view of the increase in economic activity, special attention was paid to communications with the cities. The villagers developed a great interest in agricultural machinery, and when news of the American economic aid was received, they requested the authorities to inform them immediately of the machines to be distributed through the aid funds. Turhan, *Kültür Değişmeleri*, pp. 89-110. Behice Boran, in a survey of eight Turkish villages in western Anatolia, arrived at the same conclusions as above. Behice S. Boran, *Toplumsal Yapı Araştırmaları*, Ankara, 1945, pp. 143, 164. See also Sadri Aran, *Evedik Köyü*, Ankara, 1938, pp. 128ff.; and S. H. Jameson, "Social Mutation in Turkey," *Social Forces*, May 1936, pp. 482ff. For a more recent study, see Yasa, *Hasanoğlan*, pp. 225-244.

titudes and concepts decreased greatly. The religious leaders lost much of their old prestige because people could question the wisdom of their teachings and of Islam in general, if they contradicted their interest and welfare. They preserved, however, interest in religion as a faith. Modern schools were accepted, and the villagers themselves even took the initiative in opening such schools, which they thought were better than the religious ones. The growing interest in establishing relations with the outside world and ideas was shown by the increased number of radio listeners and newspaper readers. The adoption of modern equipment and machines became a standard practice and medical science and drugs were welcomed by the villagers.

New groups arose within the village population. They tended to break the domination of old landed families, despite the fact that the latter tried to preserve their authority by adjusting to the administrative reforms in order to become *muhtar* (village heads).[25] Thus a competitive economic-social system and the intrusion of outsiders into the village helped break the monopoly of the old groups. As wealth instead of family background acquired priority in establishing positions in the village community, the old dom-

[25] Boran, *Toplumsal*, pp. 133, 139, 214, 242. Paul Stirling found that relations between town and village were slight. This assertion may have been true in 1949-1950 when Stirling conducted his excellent survey, but since the mechanization of farms this is no longer so. Moreover, Stirling takes the view that differences among villages in various parts of Turkey are not so wide as it is usually asserted. Villages in various parts of Turkey, greatly differ in their relations with cities, and in their mentality, occupational habits, and degree of modernization. Mümtaz Turhan's five villages in the Kayseri province differ even from the Sakaltutan village studied by Stirling in the same province. On the other hand, this author believes with Stirling that family life and marriage—that is, household habits and the social values arising therefrom—are fairly uniform in Turkish villages. In many other aspects Stirling's conclusions support the findings of Turkish sociologists, whose views have been described above. See Stirling, *The Social Structure of Turkish Peasant Communities*, pp. 18-280 *passim*. For a more recent, brief view on village life, see Norman Bentwick, "Village Life in Turkey," *Contemporary Review*, March 1955, pp. 174-177. See also my Chapter 13 for more recent behavioral changes.

inant groups disintegrated and few villages remained under the domination of one *ağa* (landlord).[26] The relatively freer and more natural way of life in villages, which as a whole differed from the arch-conservative life in towns and cities, gained further impetus.[27] The villages seemed inclined to imitate, willingly, and without much opposition from inside, city manners, habits, and clothing. Small villages also seemed to disappear either by fusion with other smaller villages or by becoming part of larger ones.

The Turkish peasants had not yet developed a political doctrine of their own corresponding to the agrarian philosophies in the Balkans prior to the second World War.[28] Their views and demands resulting from their conditions of life had nevertheless become crystallized and sufficiently forceful to find political expression and to find representation in political parties.

B. *The Industrial Workers*

The most recent social group, one which was formed almost exclusively during the Republican regime, is the industrial

[26] This view does not apply to the eastern part of the country, where the economy is still in the primitive stage and where the landlords still are powerful. For a general description of villagers in the Near East, see Douglas D. Crary, "The Villager," *Social Forces in the Middle East*, pp. 43-59. An objective study on the social organization and property relations in Turkish villages is long overdue.

[27] Boys and girls could freely visit each other, if they were engaged, and daughters could choose their future consorts, rejecting the choice of their parents. In family life, however, the husband still enjoyed undisputed authority and privilege. Monogamy in the family seemed well established. Boran, *Toplumsal*, pp. 189-197. According to Turhan's study in the eastern part of Anatolia, the *noveau riche* in the villages seemed to favor a polygamic family. The villagers still preferred the religious marriage (*imam nikâhı*) to the civil one because the latter was complicated and took too long. See "The Reception of Foreign Law in Turkey," *International Social Science Bulletin*, IX, 1957, pp. 7-81, *passim*. For a study of villages in central Anatolia, see Niyazi Berkes, *Bazı Ankara Köyleri Üzerinde Bir Araştırma*, Ankara, 1942; also Yasa, *Hasanoğlan*, pp. 126ff.

[28] For a survey of agrarian philosophies in the Balkans, see Feliks Gross, ed., *European Ideologies*, New York, 1948, pp. 396-452.

working class. The formation of such a group was anticipated from the very beginning when economic development was planned. It was generally accepted that industrialization would create a group of industrial workers with attitudes and specific political tendencies of their own, and that this would have repercussions on the whole political development. Recollecting the class struggle in Europe, the leaders of Turkey arbitrarily assumed that the political tendencies of the Turkish workers would be "leftist." The first measures concerning the workers were consequently political in character and motive. Class struggle and related activities, such as strikes, were sternly punished, and any political literature concerning labor or labor problems was suppressed. The Labor Act (#3008) of 1936, enacted on the model of the prewar Italian labor law, regulated labor relations in a totalitarian manner.[29] In general, from the inception of the Republican regime until 1945, and despite statism with its theoretical policy of welfare, labor in Turkey was considered only as a factor in production. The human aspect of labor was disregarded; politically it was held to be a liability created by economic necessities.

The number of industrial workers increased steadily as industry expanded. Most of these workers came from rural areas or immigrant groups, and in many ways still preserved their relations with their villages. In 1923 the number of industrial workers in Turkey did not exceed 20,000-30,000 people. In 1948, 301,299 persons were employed in large factories alone,[30] while there were twice that number of workers

[29] Recep Peker declared in 1936 that: "the new law shall not allow the birth or the survival of class consciousness. . . . With this law we are not following one-sided purposes but are establishing a nationalist and populist front and an occupational life in which the rights and positions [interests of the parties involved] are mutually organized. . . . We are on our way towards performing our duty of establishing a society without a [class] struggle and exploitation based on principle of reconciliation." *BMMTD*, Session 5, Vol. 1, p. 84, debate of June 8, 1936.

[30] *Labor Problems in Turkey*, a publication of the I.L.O., Geneva, 1950, pp. 73ff. *Çalışma*, August 1947.

in agriculture and small industries. Together with their families, these workers totalled at least 1,500,000 persons.[31] The number of industrial workers in 1953 was placed at 801,858,[32] and as many as 150,000 people were members of the trade unions in the country-wide confederation.[33] This means that the total number of people depending for a living on industrial employment was well above 3 million.

The working class in Turkey, despite formal denials, has shown keen interest in politics, either by acting independently or by backing one of the major parties, although such political action was not always undertaken specifically on behalf of the workers' organizations. The mere fact that only a few months after the ban on the trade unions was lifted in 1946, several hundred trade unions—and this without much prior organizational experience—were established, shows that the Turkish workers' interest in class organization is similar to that shown by industrial workers elsewhere in the world. Most of these trade unions were dissolved in 1946 because, supposedly, they fell under the influence of "leftists." But after 1947, that is, after the Trade Union Law was enacted, new trade unions were again formed throughout the country and later federated on a country-wide basis in spite of controls and financial difficulties,[34] proving once more that the

[31] *Türkiye İktisat Mecmuası*, June 1949, p. 23.

[32] *Economic Development in the Middle East, 1945-1954*, United Nations, New York, 1955, p. 215. Actually the number of industrial workers is much higher since many workers are left out of the census. The U N Public Administration Institute in a recent study conducted in Adana found that the census indicated no increase of industrial workers between 1954-1957 despite the fact that the city population went up from 175,000 people in 1955 to 220,000 in 1957. *Developpement des Villes et Programmes Sociaux*, Ankara, 1958, pp. 10, 12 (mimeographed).

[33] Kemal Sülker, *Türkiyede Sendikacılık*, İstanbul, 1955, p. 266. A new socio-political study of labor in Turkey is urgently needed. Such a study will reveal some essential features of Turkish labor. Since 1947 labor has steadily organized itself and asked for wage increase and the right to strike. Within trade unions there has developed a group of leaders who show a remarkable understanding of the country's situation and the needs of the workers. They have courageously defended workers' viewpoints on many occasions despite pressure and intimidation.

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 265. For a brief study on labor in Turkey, see Fuat M. Andic,

industrial workers were interested in organizing themselves.

Industrial workers did not benefit from any government welfare programs except for a few measures connected with work safety and hygiene until 1945, when a Ministry of Labor (Law #4763, June 22, 1945) was established and their welfare needs were tackled in a more basic fashion. Workers' insurance (#4772, June 27, 1945) and paid holidays (#5837, August 9, 1951) laws were later passed. Wages in industry, compared with the profits of private and state enterprises, remained extremely low and insufficient for an adequate standard of living.[35] Instead of diminishing interest in politics, unilateral government control barring the workers from political activity resulted in well-formulated views which needed to be expressed. In general, the birth of a working class in Turkey was the result of economic and social changes in the society and, in its turn, altered the structure of that society and affected the country's socio-political philosophy.[36]

C. The Middle Class: Landowners, Businessmen, Intellectuals

Turkey does not have a class of capitalists who control the country's economy, but it does possess a fairly large middle

"Development of Labor Legislation in Turkey," *Middle Eastern Affairs*, November 1957, pp. 366-372. For a general view on the industrial workers in the Near East, see Thomas B. Stauffer, "The Industrial Worker," *Social Forces in the Middle East*, pp. 83-98.

[35] The average daily wage in state enterprises during the war years was TL. 3 ($1.30). At Kayseri in 1936, the daily wage was TL. 1.70. Webster, *Turkey of Atatürk*, p. 249. The profits of Sumer Bank, the largest state enterprise, in 1943 amounted to 25.3 per cent of the capital invested, and in 1945 rose to 34.7 per cent of the capital invested. *Review of Economic Conditions in the Middle East, 1951-1952*, United Nations, New York, 1953, p. 36. For a discussion on workers wages, see *BMMTD*, Session 8.2, Vol. 9-11, pp. 31ff. In the recent years wages in private enterprises, especially in construction have increased between TL. 10 and 20 a day. Wages in state enterprises remained low, seldom amounting to TL. 10 (one dollar is worth 9 liras). Workers in state enterprises, on the other hand, benefit from social insurance, sometimes special aids and even housing. See my Chapter 12.

[36] For a discussion on trade unions and the causes for enacting the Trade Union Act, see Chapter 12.

class composed of landowners, businessmen, industrialists, and the intelligentsia,[37] including government officials, all of whom are influential in politics and as a whole direct the country's life.

Landowners originated in both the Ottoman Empire and the Republican regime. They accumulated land by inheritance, purchase (in some cases the moneylender became landowner by buying the mortgaged land of the indebted peasant), or by combining and preserving two or more properties on the basis of family relationship, such as inter-group and inter-family marriage, or by voluntary fusion of several land holdings. There is no definite criteria for "landlordism." Those who work their land with hired labor or rent it to tenants and sharecroppers are normally included in this category. Definite statistics are lacking in respect to this group, but it can be estimated safely to number about 50,000 families.[38]

The landowners who deserve special attention are those who own farms which produce industrial crops such as tobacco, olives, cotton, and fruit, and who reside in a number of small towns in the Aegean, Adana, and Marmara regions.

[37] The middle classes in Turkey, according to our criteria in this study, would have the following characteristics: semi-manual or non-manual occupation, incomes above the average, a relatively comfortable living, a certain degree of education and refinement, and consciousness of their special status in the society as an actual or potential factor in politics and culture. For a discussion of definitions of social classes, see Aydın Yalçın, "Içtimai Sınıflar Meselesi," *İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası*, October 1946-July 1947, pp. 3-45. It is generally accepted that the Middle Eastern countries possess tiny middle classes and that this view is valid for Turkey too. However, this cannot be accurate in view of the fact that the urban population in Turkey—a relative measure of the middle class—according to the last census of 1955, increased to 29 per cent of the total population as contrasted with 17 per cent in the past. A detailed study of the Turkish middle class and its economic status is urgently needed to appraise more accurately political developments in that group. For a description of some aspects of demography in Turkey see Webster, *Turkey of Atatürk*, pp. 49-60. For changes in mentality in recent years, see my Chapter 13.

[38] A survey by the Ministry of Agriculture in 1953 showed that 25 per cent of the total arable land belonged to only 1.5 per cent of the farm families. *Forum*, April 1, 1956, p. 6.

They cultivate and process their crops, selling them to the government or directly to the consumers, or export them through their own business offices, which serve at times also as intermediaries for the small farmers raising the same crops.[39] They are thus a semi-urbanized group who deal with the populations of both towns and villages, and exert political influence in both areas, as was seen in the political struggle after 1946.

The industrialists and businessmen, the latter group including the shopkeepers, have grown considerably in number during the Republican regime.[40] Their business capital varies from a few thousand Turkish pounds to several million.[41] Statistics in respect to this group are scanty, but a moderate estimate would be that the group numbers not less than 300,000 families.[42]

These two sections (landowners and industrialists) of the middle class are politically conservative, in general. A good many of their members lack a sense of social responsibility, and to some extent reflect the old mentality of the ruling groups of the Ottoman Empire:[43] the inclination to luxury,

[39] A typical example of such landowners could be found in the town of Ayvalık on the coast of the Aegean Sea, the capital of the olive growers and oil and soap makers of Turkey. The town has the greatest percentage of millionaires in Turkey—over 50, in a population of about 15,000 people. The largest part of the population is composed of immigrants from Greek Islands, who replaced the former Greek residents. For the history of Greek residents, see Toynbee, *The Western Question*, pp. 121-122.

[40] Small privately owned industries, exclusive of home industries, vendors, utility enterprises, mines, construction, defense works, and municipality and state sponsored activities, amounted to 96,626 enterprises in 1950, employing 225,346 people. *Istatistik Yıllığı*, p. 283.

[41] For instance, one business association, *Kolad* (the truck, car, and tire dealers), in Turkey, has 183 members, and the total capital of 91 of them is estimated at more than one billion Turkish pounds. *Cumhuriyet*, December 10, 1955. Premier Menderes claimed during the 1957 election campaign that each *mahalle* (neighborhood) in cities had 10-15 millionaires.

[42] For the basis of this estimate see *Istatistik Yıllığı*, pp. 383ff.

[43] For a description of the mentality of the middle (ruling) classes in the Ottoman Empire, see Sabri F. Ülgener, *Iktisadi Inhitat Tarihimizin Ahlâk ve Zihniyet Meseleleri*, İstanbul, 1951, pp. 196-197.

imitation, indulgence in epicurean consumption habits, and the use of expedient means for making quick profits. The morality preached and applied here presents wide discrepancy. The West has penetrated the society partly through this group, which, although outwardly critical of Western materialism, has nevertheless adjusted itself quickly to it.[44]

In general, the rural middle class in Turkey favors religious freedom, while the upper urban class, partly because of its cosmopolitan nature, favors secularism. In matters of social policy they are equally conservative. Again different from the rural middle classes, the urban middle class includes rather large numbers of people who, although of modest origin, have acquired wealth through personal initiative and effort in the Republic. Many of these businessmen are dynamic and self confident, and are inclined to adopt the ways of modern business and even to accept social responsibilities in accordance with the concepts of "modern businessmen."

The urban and rural middle classes in Turkey were affected during the war years by two major laws passed by the government with the purpose, among others, of establishing social justice and stimulating agriculture. They were *Varlık Vergisi* (Tax on Capital) and *Toprak Kanunu* (Land Reform Law). The *Varlık Vergisi*, submitted to the National Assembly by Şükrü Saracoğlu's cabinet, was adopted on November 11, 1942 as Law No. 4305 after a debate that lasted only a few hours.[45]

[44] For a view on the attitude of these classes in the Near East, see Gibb, "La Reaction Contre la Culture Occidentale," pp. 6-7. For a description of the businessman in the Near East, see Charles Issawi, "The Entrepreneur Class," *Social Forces in the Middle East*, pp. 116-136; for Turkey, see pp. 129-130.

[45] On this tax see *Resmi Gazete* No. 5255, *V. Vergisi Tatbikat Kararnamesi*, No. 19.288, January 1943; *BMMTD*, Session 6, Vol. 28, pp. 20-30; *Vatan*, March 25, 1948 (Celal Bayar in Erzincan); also *Celal Bayar Diyorki*, p. 248; Ökte, *Varlık*; Lewis, *Turkey*, pp. 117-120; Lewis V. Thomas and Richard N. Frye, *The United States and Turkey and Iran*, Cambridge (Mass.) 1952, pp. 95-98; and Jäschke, *Die Türkei 1942-1951*, p. 10. The debate centered chiefly around measures to prevent ill reactions

The law was the product of wartime difficulties. Its purpose was to secure additional revenue for urgent military expenditures by levying a tax upon incomes and capital accumulated through unorthodox means, which could not be subjected to ordinary taxes. In other words, it was supposed to levy taxes upon the profiteers, businessmen, and intermediaries who had acquired wealth by speculating and black-marketing with imported goods and essential items, and thus provide moral satisfaction for the low-income groups which suffered economic privations.[46] Its justification is rather easy up to this point. Criticism arose because of the manner in which the law was applied.

The tax was imposed on businesses,[47] industrial enterprises, building owners, real estate brokers, and landed estates, according to the recommendations of a committee composed of government officials and selected businessmen.[48] All properties, including those owned by ethnic Turks, were subject to taxation, with the difference that while their assets and financial ability to pay the tax were estimated realistically, the firms of the minorities were subjected to the tax in an arbitrary and unrealistic way.[49]

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that may be felt on the market because of the law (K. Karabekir). Premier Saracoğlu, in introducing the *Varlık Vergisi* Law to the National Assembly, declared that he rose from among simple people (he was the son of a saddle maker in Ödemiş), that he was "a son of the people," and that by passing that law he was making a moral repayment to those people. *BMMTD*, Session 6, Vol. 28, pp. 20ff. Refik Ince, who emerged in 1946 as a staunch opponent of the Republican Party, declared: "I would like to answer those who would say that this law is against the principles [of law] that law is worth respecting only the day it follows the needs of life." *Ibid.*, p. 22.

[46] Ökte, *Varlık*, pp. 10ff. The author cited was chief financial official in İstanbul charged with enforcing the tax.

[47] The Premier, defending the law, said that the businessmen had profited because of the war and that therefore they had to bear the burden. He called them a "class," which contradicted the idea of the classless society defended by the government. *BMMTD*, Session 6, Vol. 28, pp. 20ff.

[48] Ökte, *Varlık*, pp. 75ff.

[49] The excuse was that most of the import business was in their hands, and that the imported goods were on the black market and caused a sharp rise in the general cost of living. Without attempting to excuse the tax,

In order to bring hoarded goods onto the market, the tax was supposed to be paid in fifteen days. Those who would not pay the tax, or paid it only partially, were to be subjected to forced labor until the completion of payment. The law was enforced by authoritarian methods and those newspapers, such at *Vatan*, which dared criticize it, were closed. However, the law's effects were detrimental to the country in all fields; it did not provide the government with the necessary income,[50] and it worsened the general economic situation. The big firms were able to survive, but these, in a furious effort to recover their losses, increased the prices of goods.[51] The government, already under the pressure of internal and ex-

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we may say that it carried in it reminiscences of the past. The foreign firms preferred to deal with the minority firms, partly because of a tradition originating in the days of the Ottoman Empire when trade with foreign countries was handled exclusively by minority groups. The minority business firms in the Republic tried to perpetuate this advantage both by labeling the firms of the ethnic Turks as incompetent to conduct business properly and by complaining of unfavorable, discriminatory treatment by the government. The tax had precedent, but of a different nature. During the occupation of Turkey by the Allies after the first World War only the Muslims had to pay a tax on coal. Moreover, the coal magnates of Turkey, chiefly French, refused to buy for distribution to the population the coal extracted by Muslim (Turkish) miners in Ereğli. See Celal Bayar's speech *Celal Bayar Diyorki*, pp. 22-23. Ultra nationalistic ideas played an important part in this tax in 1942 because it aimed also at the firms of the Turkish businessmen, the so-called *dönme*, that is, Turks of Jewish origin converted to Islam, who were taxed twice as much as the ethnic Turks. Ökte, *Varlık*, pp. 39, 85. The arbitrary aspect of the tax, according to Ökte, was also demonstrated by the fact that, in many cases, the friendship or enmity felt within the government for the taxpayer contributed greatly to lowering or increasing his tax. *Ibid.*, pp. 176-186.

[50] The number of taxable individuals amounted to 114,368, and the total estimated tax to TL. 465,384,820. However, the total tax collected was only TL. 314,920,940, and 2,057 people were taken in to be sent to a forced labor camp at Aşkale for non-payment of taxes. *Ibid.*, pp. 157, 197, 237.

[51] Firms owned by foreign citizens were exempt from taxation, although even this rule was not uniformally applied. A great number of small firms which were unable to pay the tax were sold at auction. They were bought by people who had accumulated capital through various means during the war. The new owners were both inexperienced and avid for profits. Their inexperience created confusion on the market and their avidity for profits contributed to the rise in the cost of living.

ternal criticism, could no longer curb them without causing a great uproar. The cost of living naturally went up fast, and the low-income groups suffered further.

The reaction to the tax among businessmen, regardless of their ethnic origin, and the criticism from abroad were so effective that less than one year after the enactment of the law, tax enforcement was greatly relaxed, and on March 15, 1944 it was entirely abolished.[52] However, this measure did not dispel the animosity toward the government nor the fear that as long as the state was motivated by anti-property considerations, capital would not have political security. This view was shared both by minority and ethnic Turkish businessmen and industrialists. The only means of neutralizing the anti-property threat was to put an effective check on the government, and, if possible, replace it with a new government which would provide and effectively enforce property guarantees together with other individual freedoms.

The *Çiftçiyi Topraklandırma Kanunu*, or Land Reform Law (No. 4753), was of much wider scope than the *Varlık Vergisi* (Tax on Capital) and produced violent criticism of the government. The law was submitted to the National Assembly by the government headed by Şükrü Saracoğlu, the author of *Varlık Vergisi.* At this time the Assembly was largely composed of Republican Party deputies who usually had been, with minor individual exceptions, in agreement with the party and the government.[52] The plenary debates on the draft began on May 14, 1945,[54] and ended with the

[52] *Vatan*, March 15, 16, 1944. Jäschke, *Die Türkei 1942-1951*, p. 23.

[53] The *Müstâkil Grup* (Independent Group) was composed of Republican Party deputies in order to provide a kind of fictitious opposition. There were also four independents nominated by the Republican Party.

[54] The debate started five days before Inönü's crucial announcement that the establishment of opposition parties would be allowed. One may say that the opposition to the government during the debate on the Land Reform Law was greatly enhanced if not caused by this announcement. Yet the evidence on hand (cited later in this study) clearly indicates that there was opposition to the government in the Agricultural Committee months before Inönü's announcement. That committee had been widely split, as had the

passage of the law on June 11, 1945.[55] The Land Reform Law was basically a social reform intended to ameliorate the situation of the peasant, as advocated repeatedly by Atatürk himself,[56] and to further social democracy in Turkey, the lack of which was criticized abroad, especially in socialist countries.

The purpose of the reform was to distribute land sufficient to provide a living, and furnish equipment for its continuous cultivation, to the landless and land-short peasants and to those wanting to become farmers.[57] The land was to be provided by expropriation from state lands, *vakıfs* (pious foundations), municipalities, and privately-owned large estates in excess of 5,000 *dönüms* (1 *dönüm* = 0.10 ha.). If that proved insufficient, then expropriation would be made from the properties of over 2,000 *dönüms*, that is, the average properties (Articles 14, 15, 16). Article 17, on the other hand, provided a sweeping provision in respect to densely populated areas in which the existing land of the state, *vakıfs*, and municipalities was insufficient. In such cases, even properties of 200 *dönüms* or less, cultivated by sharecroppers, tenants, and agricultural workers without land or with insufficient land of their own, became subject to expropriation. The original landowner was free to choose and retain a minimum of 50 *dönüms* only. (The landowners were to be reimbursed according to a long and cumbersome procedure.)

The farms from 200 *dönüms* upward form the basis of land ownership in Turkey and the great majority of small farms of 200-2,000 *dönüms* are in densely populated areas in which land is scarce. A literal enforcement of Article 17

Assembly itself, on the law, and it took strong pressure from the government to have it pass the draft and bring it to the plenary session of the Assembly.

[55] *Official Gazette*, No. 6032, June 15, 1945. Jäschke, *Die Türkei 1942-1951*, p. 46.

[56] *Cumhuriyet*, November 2, 1936, 1937.

[57] *BMMTD*, Session 7, Vol. 17, pp. 97-102.

would therefore have eliminated the medium sized farms or the landowning class in the villages and small towns.

The deputies in the Assembly divided into two groups as soon as the debate on the law started; one in favor of the law, the other opposed to certain parts, namely to the drastic expropriation aspects of the law (Article 17). The first group was composed mostly of intellectuals and government officials who adopted a social-intellectual approach to Land Reform.[58] The second group, composed mostly of deputies with some personal land interests involved,[59] adopted a technical viewpoint. They insisted on preserving the existing agricultural structure and on strengthening it by improving the cultivation methods instead of partitioning the land.[60] This second group demanded the respect for and guarantee of the right to private property granted by the Constitution. They appeared determined to assure it by any means, including defiance of party discipline and regulation. The controversy between the two groups, greatly augmented by the new liberal atmosphere spreading in the country after Inönü's liberalization promise of May 19, 1945, led to the first concerted opposition to the government and formed some basis for the future opposition party, the Democratic Party.[61]

The Land Reform Law, according to its proponents, was

[58] Alaeddin Tiridoğlu defended Article 17 of the Law as an attempt to end the "medieval institutions" of sharecropping, which had made entire villages the property of one man and had forced the peasants to work for generations without any rights over the land on which they lived. *Ulus*, November 27, 1947.

[59] *Son Telgraf*, *Vakit* (editorial), May 16, 1945.

[60] Technically speaking, the latter group was right. An immediate increase in agricultural production could not have been achieved by disbanding the large properties, nor could machinery have been introduced. On the other hand, socially speaking, a proper land reform could not have been achieved without an advanced degree of expropriation.

[61] Ibrahim Arvas, at the time of the statement a member of the Republican Party and presently in the Democratic Party, remarked: "Some friends left us in anger against Article 17 and alike [of the Law] and established the nucleus of democracy which we are happy to witness." *BMMTD*, Session 8.4, Vol. 25, p. 325.

the natural social consequence of the principle of populism accepted in the Constitution.[62] It brought social justice and "protected the Turkish peasant from becoming serf or slave to this or that one."[63] The law was a "national necessity imposed by the course of [our] history and the economic structure of [our] society,"[64] to save "millions of citizens from working the land as the sharecroppers and servants of landowners or for subsistence." It was "the proof of the fact that we are a nation without classes and social privileges."[65]

The Land Reform Law aimed at fulfilling a promise the Republican Party had made to the farmers; it was most needed, and was already overdue. In order to back the land reform, one deputy claimed that in one province there were forty-three villages, established on eighteen estates, in which the peasants did not have "one inch of land of their own."[66]

The opponents claimed that certain provisions in the law violated the private property rights granted under the Constitution and the Civil Code. The law, in their opinion, had a number of shortcomings: it paid no attention to the production capacity of the farms and the means of cultivation; it overlooked the fact that the expropriation would create stagnation in the country's economy; it liquidated in effect the average sized farms; it neglected the problems of settlement and rational cultivation of land; and finally, it took away the land from the citizens.[67]

[62] *BMMTD*, Session 7, Vol. 17, pp. 59ff. See also Volume 18, pp. 37ff. *Vatan*, May 15, 1945.

[63] *BMMTD*, Session 7, Vol. 17, p. 100, Feyzullah Uslu (Manisa).

[64] *Ibid.*, p. 125, H. Oğuz Bekta (Ankara). *Ayın Tarihi*, May 1945, p. 39.

[65] *BMMTD*, Session 7, Vol. 17, pp. 124-125.

[66] *Ibid.*, pp. 118ff., 130, Sadi Irmak (Konya), E. Erişirgil (Zonguldak); p. 141, Salahattin Batu (Çanakkale); p. 79, Recai Güreli (Gümüşhane), who supplied also an example of unorthodox land acquisition in the Ottoman Empire.

[67] *Ibid.*, pp. 63ff., 101ff., Cavit Oral (Seyhan), Hamdi Şarlan (Ordu); p. 78, Halil Menteşe (İzmir); p. 83, Damat Arıkoğlu (Seyhan); pp. 64ff., Cavit Oral (Seyhan); pp. 131ff., Naci Eldeniz (Seyhan). Seyhan province is situated in the Çukurova valley where there are extensive land estates.

The strongest opposition was voiced by two deputies who were to be among the future founders of the Democratic Party, Refik Koraltan and Adnan Menderes. Koraltan demanded respect for certain constitutional principles. According to him,

> . . . the most important element in a modern society, which requires careful handling, is, first, and above all, the right to think, speak, write, associate, and express ideas, and finally, to have a guarantee of property and home. Humanity's fight throughout the centuries has capitalized on obtaining a guarantee of these rights. If an individual in a community cannot speak, think, associate, live freely, and let his conscience work freely, if he cannot accumulate wealth and preserve it, and is deprived of a guarantee that he may benefit from it, it is difficult to believe that such a community will last long. . . . My friends, whatever is said, the spirit of this Law is to take Ali's fortune and give it to Veli.[68]

And this was done in spite of the Constitution, which upheld as a basic principle the property rights of the individual.[69]

Menderes (himself descendent from an ancient land-own-

[68] *Ibid.*, p. 70.

[69] Emin Sazak, a very rich landowner and a deputy from Eskişehir, became a fierce opponent of the government because of the land reform. He acquired a short-lived popularity in 1946-1948. His views on the land reform and his motives in opposing it are clear in his declaration: "I haven't abused my position or anything else. I cannot avoid suffering when I give away my lands which I have acquired with my sweat and intelligence [ability]. I have feelings. What would anyone of you do if you were subject to the same treatment? The Turkish people put me by chance among you [in the Assembly]. They placed me in a position to be able to fight for my rights. But the interests of other people are here involved." Discussing social philosophy he continued; "We cannot change peoples' *dough* [nature]. One becomes a commander, a marshal, while the other remains a private. We cannot make marshals of all of them. Friends, this question of workers [agricultural workers to receive land] will create turmoil in all the villages. The farmers will get out of it [land reform] relatively more easily. But if this principle [distribution of property] is generally accepted the worker then will be entitled to request a room in any apartment house. Brothers, this is the principle we are accepting." He concluded, "Now that the land to be left to the owner will be only something like fifty *dönüms* (5 ha.) it is impossible for someone like me who feels this loss not to become crazy [sic]. Laughter and, God forbid, voices in the Assembly." *Ibid.*, pp. 80, 81.

ing family of Aydın) accused Premier Saracoğlu of having intervened in the debates of the Agricultural Committee after the two mandatory committee debates had been concluded, and of having introduced Article 17 in violation of established procedure.[70] According to Menderes, Turkey had no large landed properties. The shortage of land resulted from not opening up new lands for agriculture, and the Ministry of Agriculture, instead of achieving this, was dealing in erroneous statistics. "After twenty years," he declared, "we are far from victory in the battle against the *Kağnı* and the wooden plough;[71] as a matter of fact, the battle has not started yet." In his view, the law, in effect, restricted agriculture to the villagers only and thus severed the relations of the city dweller with the land, raising impassable barriers between town and village.[72]

Menderes held that the Turkish peasant needed agricultural credits and measures to protect his produce. The Land Reform Law instead proposed "ideas and provisions taken almost intact from the National-Socialist [Germany] Erhhof Law on Land and Settlement."[73] He declared that free debate, which had been developing in the country and which was essential for its welfare, had been stopped when the draft law came for discussion, because free discussion in this case was deemed to be detrimental.[74] He added, "as long as we remain a one-party system the situation [unconstitutional] will become more deplorable."[75]

Menderes declared his support of the Land Reform Law with the exception of Article 17. He favored an emphasis on the technical aspects of the land problem and land cultivation, as opposed to those who saw only the social aspects of the

[70] *Ibid.*, p. 111.

[71] The two-wheeled wooden oxcart of the Hittites, considered the symbol of agricultural backwardness in Turkey.

[72] *Ibid.*, pp. 114, 116.

[73] *Loc.cit.*

[74] *BMMTD*, Session 7, Vol. 18, p. 37.

[75] *Ibid.*

problem and who were ready to go to extremes.[76] Menderes' farm policy after he became Premier in 1950 followed this line of thought.

Premier Saracoğlu, on the other hand, accused Menderes of having long opposed, as the spokesman of the Agricultural Committee, many aspects of the Land Reform Law,[77] and of having made attempts in the Committee to ease the terms of the law to the detriment of those who would receive the land. The heated discussions on the law, especially concerning Article 17, resulted in a petition initiated by Alaeddin Tiridoğlu and signed by 321 deputies who declared their support of this article. This petition assured the passage of Article 17 by the Assembly and seemed to imply that those who criticized the law were opposed to land reform.[78]

The public in general, although keenly interested in the opposition to the Republican Party, greeted the law as an overdue social reform.[79] Whatever may be the validity of the arguments for and against the Land Reform Law, the fact remains that the victory of those defending rational agriculture and mechanization meant the preservation of the *status quo* of landed property in Turkey. The discussion on land reform in 1945 brought into evidence, nevertheless, the fact that when basic social or economic interests are endangered,

[76] *Ibid.*, p. 41.

[77] *Ayın Tarihi*, June 1945, pp. 37-42. *BMMTD*, Session 7, Vol. 18, p. 106.

[78] *BMMTD*, Session 7, Vol. 18, pp. 31, 32, 68. It has been rumored that immediately after gaining power in 1950, the Democrats summarily recalled Tiridoğlu by cable from his Ambassadorial position in Saudi Arabia. Tiridoğlu who has meanwhile joined the National Party, submitted a proposal to the last convention of the party to the effect of making it a socialist party. "Turkey must direct herself towards doctrinal parties," he said. "A socialist party which will aim at the establishment of social justice and security and prevent working people from falling into communism will also be a defender of democracy." *Vatan*, January 12, 1959. His proposal was rejected and he resigned from the party. Compare with my Chapter 14, n.83.

[79] *Vakit*, *Tasvir*, *Cumhuriyet*, *Tan*, May 16, 1945. *Akşam* (editorial), May 18, 1945.

superficial political ideas which seem temporarily to unite members of a party are swept aside, and dissension begins.

Land reform continued to affect profoundly political developments after 1945, and therefore it is necessary to provide some information on further developments in this respect. The expropriation provisions of the Land Reform Law concerning private property were barely applied, the area thus expropriated amounting to only 36,000 *dönüms*.[80] It is known that a number of landlords distributed the land among members of their family in an effort to keep intact their property within the family. Although in some instances the lands belonging to members of the opposition parties were purposely distributed first, this was done only on a limited scale.[81] On the other hand, land secured from other sources was distributed on a larger scale. (See note 7 in this chapter.)

The owners of large estates and medium sized farms bitterly opposed the law and showed their opposition by strongly supporting the Democratic Party following its establishment six months after the debate on land reform. The Republican Party decided to amend the law, in its convention of 1947, to appease the opposition. This decision resulted also from the fact that, after 1947, the power in the Republican Party passed into the hands of moderate intellectuals and groups with landed interests. The actual amendment, accepted originally by the Republican government in 1948 but delayed for technical reasons, was approved by the National Assembly in 1950. Article 17, along with some articles giving land to those who wanted to become farmers and restricting the right of property, were abolished, thereby limiting, in essence, the land to be distributed to that owned by the government and *vakıfs*. Those who opposed the amendment, and they were the ones who had supported the initial law in 1945, stated

[80] *BMMTD*, Session 8.4, Vol. 25, p. 344. For additional debates on Land Reform, see *ibid.* pp. 281ff., 286-290, 325-368, 500, and *passim*; *Vatan*, December 4, 1947 (Hasan Saka's declaration).

[81] *Tasvir*, June 8, 1948.

that land reforms had not been carried out to satisfy the peasants, that the law was applied sluggishly, and that if the government lands had sufficed there never would have been need or question of a land reform law in the first place.

The defender of the amendment was the new Minister of Agriculture, Cavit Oral, who in 1945 had defended the technical approach to land reform. (Oral is no longer with the Republican Party. He joined the Democratic Party, in whose government he also became Minister of Agriculture.) Oral placed importance on the technical aspects of land problems and asserted that the state lands would suffice for the landless peasants. Raşit Hatipoğlu, who had been Minister of Agriculture in 1945 and had introduced the original law, was in defense in 1950. Previously he had been a professor of Agriculture in the Agricultural Institute of Ankara. Both men were in the Republican Party but their views were diametrically opposed. Hatipoğlu has continued to remain *persona non grata* in the eyes of the Democrats until the present day, and his name is used by them as an anathema of vicious designs. Hatipoğlu and the group sponsoring the Land Reform Law have never been allowed, as have many other ex-Republicans, to rehabilitate themselves and gain some position in the Democratic Party Government.

The defenders of the amendment in 1950 pointed out that Article 17 had created distrust and a sense of insecurity, and actually had lowered agricultural production. The debate on the amendment was limited and the major speakers in the 1945 debate did not participate, despite the fact that three political parties (Republican, Democratic, National) were represented in the Assembly at the time. This limited debate resulted from the fact that after the enactment of the Land Reform Law, political theory in Turkey underwent fundamental changes and the political parties, to a certain extent, became alike, for in a way they had settled their major ideological differences and concentrated on the race for power.

The last group in the middle class, if it can be included there at all, contains the intellectuals, the "problem children" of the Republican regime.[82] Since there are no definite criteria for defining the term "intellectuals," it has been viewed in this study as including individuals with a minimum of high school or equivalent education, although this is a rather arbitrary choice and does not give a qualitative appraisal of their abilities. Many individuals in the two preceding middle class groups are included here. The "intelligentsia," according to the available statistics, at present may number at least 600,000 people.

The intellectual group in Turkey can be divided, organically, into two parts: the first section includes those who received their education during the days of the Empire and who formed their views in its spirit, tradition, and philosophy; the second and larger section includes those educated during the Republican regime.[83]

The Ottoman intellectuals, especially of the Young Turks period, were brought up in the political and economic chaos which resulted in the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and which reflected itself partly in their own mentality. They

[82] The intellectual is referred to as *aydın* (enlightened) or *münevver*. In the past intellectuals were also called *letre*. Falih Rıfke Atay, *Niçin Kurtulmamak*, İstanbul, 1953, pp. 57ff.

[83] The first group includes all the high ranking families who were transferred from the Monarchy to the Republic. They lost their titles in the Ottoman Empire but preserved their wealth and attitudes. In many ways this group, whose social status was due to government position, represents the "aristocracy" as compared to the second group, who normally came from the grass roots of Turkish society and whose education was made possible by the extended educational facilities of the Republic or by the wealth acquired by their families through economic activities. The two groups are mixed in all professions and government jobs; the first group is inclined to view the other classes with some feeling of superiority. Its consequent tendency is to restrict the affairs of state to a small, select group capable of leadership, that is, to an "elite." The "aristocratic" group can be found primarily in İstanbul, İzmir, or Bursa, while the second group is spread all over the country. Since the advent of political parties, the influence of the intellectuals in the second group, in particular professionals such as lawyers and doctors, has grown considerably.

witnessed this disintegration and, unable to prevent it, turned in frustration and animosity against the outside world. The Ottoman intellectual, wrapped in his paternalistic philosophy of life, was socially, economically, and culturally aloof from the masses. His rigidity of thought, his belief in the use of force, and finally, his almost fatalistic feeling of inferiority to all that was Western, deprived him of constructive ideas for charting the political, cultural and social transition of the Empire. The Ottoman intelligentsia, aware of the fact that the West judged them in the light of its own standards, came to judge themselves in the same way. An inner unrest and the need to justify themselves arose. In some cases there was a tendency to cling to the traditional ways of life, while in other cases there was an eagerness to abandon totally those ways and to accept Western views and manners unconditionally.[84] All these shortcomings and psychological problems the intellectual reflected onto his own people, whom he despised and mistreated. Once in a government position of some kind, he acquired an arrogance which had become proverbial in those days.

The Republican regime, by accepting the Western system of education with its rationalist and universal spirit, pitted the intellectual against his own family background in which Islamic, traditionalist, contemplative views and social values were dominant. The intellectual could not accept fully Western standards without estranging himself from his own society, which preserved its Islamic traditions and was slow to change. Unable to effect an assimilation between the two, the intellectual was forced into passivity. Dependence and asso-

[84] For a view on intellectuals in the Near East, see A. H. Hourani, *Great Britain and the Arab World*, London, 1945; and Morrison, *Middle East Tensions*, pp. 128ff. For patterns of modernization among the intellectuals in the Near East, see Raphael Patai, "The Dynamics of Westernization in the Middle East," *The Middle East Journal*, Winter 1955, pp. 1-17; see also Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "The Intellectuals in the Modern Development of the Islamic World," *Social Forces in the Middle East*, pp. 190-204.

ciation with the government is another limiting factor. A large number of intellectuals earn their living in government jobs. Many of them have studied in the country or abroad based on government subsidies, and are bound to work for it a given number of years. This identification with the government deprives many intellectuals of unbiased or even free thought, although in recent years the total identification with the government has lost much of its prior rigidity.

Recently there have been some honest efforts on the intellectual's part to achieve some true assimilation between his own and Western culture. It is the new group of younger intellectuals who, coming from the grass roots of the society and being closely acquainted with the problems and mentality of the Turkish masses, are searching for a new philosophy which can preserve the intrinsic values of the Turkish society and yet allow it to progress and adjust to modern requirements.[85] Their aim is no different from the one professed by the older generations, but their method and mentality is different, for liberalism—an equal respect for and acceptance of other values—receives expression from them. There is, however, a definite clash between this group which is more liberal and tolerant, socially conscious and realistic,[86] and the older generation of intellectuals and some of their successors who tend to remain conservative and aloof from the people and continue to live in their romantic world.

In politics the participation of intellectuals as a group is rather insignificant. Between 1946 and 1950, there was an upsurge of intellectual interest in politics, but this interest

[85] Among them about 25 thousand graduates from Village Institutes, although not all of the same quality, deserve special mention for having brought village problems to national attention and for having the courage to defend their views vigorously. See *Varlık* (İstanbul, 1945-1955), whose editor, Yaşar Nabi gave them a chance to express their views.

[86] For current discussions of the intellectual problem, see Metin And, "Türkiyede Aydınlar," *Forum*, December 15, 1955, January 15, 1956, and March 15, 1957. *Varlık*, October-December 1956 (N. Ataç); *Türk Yurdu*, October 1955 (C. Tanyol); see also, *Kadro*, February 1932 (Y. Kadri).

faded away in the following years as interest groups and especially professionals in small towns became influential in politics. The idea that the intellectual should be the guide of the masses instead of opening avenues for their development (an idea inherited from the Ottoman Empire and one party paternalism) seems to prevail.

One could not finish this subject without dealing with government personnel, who formed the intellectual backbone of the Ottoman society for several centuries. The Republic inherited an Ottoman bureaucracy whose personal ability was as worthy of praise as its general efficiency was lamentable.[87] The number of government officials in the Republic expanded as new positions opened in government enterprises.[88] The original remuneration of government officials was through the *barem* (an inflexible statutory salary plan soon to be changed), which divided all officials into groups on the basis of seniority and placed all those within a given category on the same salary level.[89] Their salaries were originally computed at a time when prices were stable. During the war years, as prices on the market soared and a variety of staple items became scarce, the economic situation of the salaried personnel became extremely difficult.[90] To remedy this situation the government passed a law with the purpose of providing its personnel with assistance in kind, e.g., coal, clothing,

[87] For a critical view of the Ottoman bureaucracy, see Celal Nuri, *Tarihi Tedenniyatı Osmaniye*, İstanbul, 1915. See also my Chapter 1.

[88] Officials and employees who drew their salaries from state, local, and municipal budgets, excluding personnel in the utility and military services and orphans and pensioners, numbered 127,000 in 1938 and rose to 184,000 in 1945. Bilkur, *National Income*, pp. 13-14.

[89] Caldwell, "Turkish Administration," p. 132. On Turkish administrators, see also B. Kingsbury, *The Public Service in Turkey: Organization, Recruitment and Training*, Brussels, 1955. For a historical survey, see N. Osten, "Administrative Organization of Turkey: Historical Summary and Present Day Administration," *Asiatic Review*, October 1942, pp. 407ff.

[90] The index of wholesale prices rose from 100 in 1938 to 126.6 in 1940, 175.3 in 1941, 339.6 in 1942, and 590.1 in 1943. Lewis, *Turkey*, p. 118.

sugar, fats, rice.[91] The number to be aided in this way amounted to 1.6 million people.[92] Thus there was on the one hand the government *memur* who enjoyed a relative bounty amid general privations, and on the other hand the peasants and the low income groups in the cities who had to lower their own living standard because of taxation and the forced delivery of goods to meet the war-time emergency. The government was quite legitimate in protecting its own personnel, but by so doing it acted as though its interests and survival were above and unrelated to those of the people. During the war years a wedge was driven between the government as an institution and the large part of the population which saw itself as existing for the government's sake. This state of affairs profoundly affected the struggle for a multi-party system after 1946.

The present-day bureaucracy in Turkey has changed considerably in the light of political developments in the country, but it still possesses the power, owing to its long-entrenched habits and skill, to mould the policy of any government to accord with its own mentality and views.[93]

The Republican government, through its efforts at over-all development, accelerated the social transformation of Turkish society, which in two and one-half decades came to differ

[91] *Dar Gelirlilere Yardım Kanunu* (Law for assistance to the fixed income groups, No. 4306 of November 13, 1942). In the latter years the government officials were occasionally assisted by double salaries. Jäschke, *Die Türkei 1942-1951*, p. 10. Recently salaries were doubled.

[92] *BMMTD*, Session 6, Vol. 28, pp. 14-24, 18, *passim*; Declaration of Premier Saracoğlu.

[93] A considerable number of government officials now come from families who had held government positions in the past. Some no longer regard as desirable the tradition of government jobs. The liberal professions, such as engineering, medicine and politics seem to appeal to them. For the new mentality of the new bureaucracy and their organization, see A. T. Matthews, *Emergent Turkish Administrators*, Ankara, 1955; and Caldwell, "Turkish Administration," pp. 131-135; also *Studies in Turkish Local Government*, U N Public Administration Institute, Ankara, 1955. For the change of mentality in the government bureaucracy after 1946, see my Chapter 13.

greatly, both in structure and mentality, from that of the Ottoman Empire. Social differentiation in Turkey was caused directly by the government and developed rather fast. The resulting social classes have not yet reached the cultural, organizational, and political level of Western society, and some of them, such as the peasants, are still in an amorphous stage. These classes have, nevertheless, outgrown the initial stage of organization and continue to develop and differentiate rapidly.

The most important aspect of these social changes lies in the fact that the various groups formed, in time, some opinions about their own status and interests, and demanded appropriate measures to improve and defend them. The middle class which had accumulated capital desired to invest it without being faced with government restriction, competition, interference, and controls. It wanted full returns on its investments. The villagers needed land, an equitable tax system, relief from the burden of industrialization, improved farming methods, financial protection for farm products, and better social measures. The workers demanded an improved standard of living, wage increases, and the right to organize trade unions freely and generally to defend their interests. All these demands were addressed *pro forma* to the government, but in essence they criticized it.

The government that initially started the economic process became in time a hindrance to many who had originally benefited from it. Thus, on the one hand, the government developed its own institutions and philosophy, and political omnipotence in all fields; but on the other hand, by initiating the economic development and by preserving the social classes and the process of social transformation along traditional lines, it prepared the basis for the end of its own absolute political domination.

At the end of the second World War, Turkey had approached the crucial point at which profitable war conditions for some groups had to end and a new economic adjustment to peacetime conditions was necessary.[94] In the light of the transformation which had taken place, statism was bound to be altered drastically. Two alternatives clearly appeared before the government. It was bound either to expand in order to embrace the minutest detail in production and distribution and to apply an equalizing rule to every social group, or to limit its economic activities in favor of private enterprise. The new course was to be determined by the philosophy prevailing in the government, by social and economic forces, by political developments in the country and abroad, and last but not least, by the vision of the country's leaders.

Statism, through its excesses and deviations from its initial social purpose, had become an obstacle to the development and the interests of all social groups. The benevolent paternalism of the Republican Party no longer corresponded with the needs of any group.[95] Their common purpose, not expressly stated but manifest in complaints, was to limit the government's harmful functions and authority and then use the government for their own purposes. The middle class demanded freedom in economy. The peasants and workers demanded liberation from a system which, though established to promote the welfare of all groups, had aided only some specific groups.

When Hikmet Bayur rose and spoke in the National Assembly against this state of affairs he expressed a sincere and quite general view. "People are so tired of the existing economic conditions which . . . they think stem from the principle rather than from mal administration. They are inclined to think that this results from statism and industrialization

[94] For the economic situation of Turkey at the end of the war, see A. C. Edwards, "Impact of the War on Turkey," *International Affairs*, July 1946, pp. 389-390.

[95] Lewis, "Recent Development in Turkey," pp. 329-333.

and other causes. The time will come for some of them to say how tired they are of statism and industrialization, and that will take such proportions that nobody will be able to stop it. We must take measures before this happens. We ought not to deceive ourselves with the thought that all is well. A storm is brewing."[96]

[96] *BMMTD*, Session 7, Vol. 20, p. 120. See also my Chapter 11.