

14 · The Second Turkish Republic, 1960–80

The military takeover of 27 May 1960

The general public became aware that a military *coup d'état* had taken place at three o'clock in the morning of 27 May 1960 only when a declaration read by Colonel Alpaslan Türkeş was broadcast on Turkish radio later that morning. The statement announced that the Turkish armed forces had taken over the administration of the country 'to prevent fratricide' and to 'extricate the parties from the irreconcilable situation into which they had fallen'. The declaration emphasized the non-partisan character of the coup.¹

The military takeover was greeted with explosions of public joy in Ankara and Istanbul, notably among the large student population in both cities and in general among the intelligentsia. The rest of the country showed no such reaction. The countryside especially remained ominously silent. The upheavals of the past months had been almost completely limited to Ankara and Istanbul and there is no evidence of any sharp drop in Menderes's popularity elsewhere.

It is now known that the coup was the result of years of planning on the part of the conspirators, a number of radical colonels, majors and captains in their early forties. Two things were crucial to the success of their takeover. One was the posting of their members to command positions (such as that of the garrison in the capital), which were essential for the takeover of power, and the other was finding a senior officer to head their movement in order to gain the support of the rest of the armed forces. Eventually they were successful on both counts. By May 1960 they were in a position to strike and, after a few failed attempts, they had found the senior officer they needed as a figurehead. It was General Cemal Gürsel, a former commander-in-chief of the land forces, who had been sent on permanent leave on 3 May, after writing a memorandum to the minister of defence in which he commented on the political situation. Gürsel, an easy-going and fatherly figure, was well known and well liked throughout the armed forces. He had agreed to

head the *coup d'état* but he was not involved in the details of its organization. When the coup had succeeded, he was brought to Ankara by air force plane from his home in İzmir.

The military announced that power was now in the hands of a 'National Unity Committee' (*Millî Birlik Komitesi*) headed by General Gürsel, but for some time neither the exact functions nor the membership of the committee were clear. The day after the coup it was announced that Cemal Gürsel had been appointed head of state, prime minister and minister of defence, in theory giving him more absolute powers than even Atatürk had ever had.

From coup to revolution: the role of the professors

From the beginning the military were convinced that more was needed than a simple change of government. On the very day of the military coup, five law professors from the University of Istanbul, headed by its rector Siddik Sami Onar, were summoned to Ankara and given the task of drawing up a new constitution. The next day they issued a declaration, which has been likened to a modern-day *fetva*. In it, they justified the military intervention on the grounds that the DP government had acted unconstitutionally (notably in establishing the investigatory commission) and had thus itself become illegal. This interpretation, when accepted by the NUC, brought the military into direct confrontation with the Democratic Party and put an end to its pretensions of being above party politics. On 31 August the DP was suspended and on 29 September it was dissolved.

On 12 June the NUC, assisted by its team of professors, issued a provisional constitution, which gave a legal basis both to the coup and to the existence of the NUC. The cabinet of technocrats, which the military had installed after the coup, was a purely executive organ. All important policy decisions were made by the NUC itself.

Factions within the NUC

The NUC at this time consisted of 38 officers (one died in September and was not replaced). Ostensibly, Cemal Gürsel was the leader of the junta, but in reality Colonel Alpaşlan Türkeş, who held the position of adviser to the president, was the most influential member in the early period. A Turkish Cypriot by birth, Türkeş was a charismatic figure, much more widely read than most of his colleagues and with an excellent command of English. He was not well known to the public at large, but he had gained some notoriety 15 years earlier, at the end of the Second World War, when he was accused of pan-Turkist, and possibly pro-Nazi, sympathies (he was later acquitted). He was a representative of

the most radical wing within the NUC, which wanted a thorough reform of the political system and had no confidence at all in political parties.

It was undoubtedly Türkeş's group that forced through the NUC decision of 3 August to retire 235 out of 260 generals and some 5000 colonels and majors. Although it is true that the Turkish armed forces were notoriously top-heavy, the main reason for the retirements was doubt about the political reliability of those concerned.

After the army, it was the turn of the universities. Although Türkeş had to resign from his official position as counsellor to the president when his influence became too great in the eyes of his colleagues, the radical group was still powerful enough to push through a measure whereby 147 university professors and lecturers were sacked in October. The criteria for selection, however, were unclear and there followed an outcry during which the rectors of all the Turkish universities resigned. The extent of the academic protest clearly embarrassed the military leaders and soon negotiations about reversing the measure were started. Eventually, the university teachers were restored to their positions, but only in March 1962. The retired officers, united in the organization of 'Retired Officers of the Revolution' (*Emekli İnkılâp Subayları* or *Eminsu*), were unsuccessful in their attempts to achieve the same for themselves.

Despite the opposition to the purges, the radicals in the NUC launched an even more ambitious scheme in October. This was a plan, clearly inspired by Türkeş, for a Turkish Union of Ideals and Culture (*Türkiye Ülkü ve Kültür Birliği*), which was to take over the functions of the Ministry of Education, the Directorates of Religious Affairs and Pious Foundations and the press and the radio, thus establishing a totalitarian hold on the whole cultural life of the country. This went too far, both in the eyes of the civilian politicians and in those of the more moderate members of the NUC, including General Gürsel. On 13 November 1960 he suddenly announced that the NUC had been disbanded and that a new one had been founded, excluding 14 of the best-known radicals, among them Türkeş. The seemingly complicated way of sacking these officers from the NUC was necessitated by the provisional constitution, according to which NUC members could not be removed except in cases of grave misconduct. The 14 were posted as attachés to Turkish embassies abroad and flown out of the country. Türkeş himself became military attaché in New Delhi.

The NUC and the army

Originally, the NUC had consisted of the conspirators and a number of people, among them senior officers such as Gürsel, who commanded the respect of the army. Even though it had been successful and the

armed forces as a whole had sided with the coup, the committee did not represent the armed forces as such. Increasingly, during 1960–61 the army's highest-ranking officers became worried about the interference of the NUC in purely military matters and about the way it undermined the army hierarchy. To prevent any future independent action by junior officers, the army top brass itself founded the Armed Forces Union (*Silâhli Kuvvetler Birliği*), which interfered in politics repeatedly during 1961 and 1962 with memoranda warning the civilian politicians not to return to the politics of before 27 May. They did this in order to keep the initiative and forestall independent action by radical officers who opposed any return to civilian politics.

That fear of such independent action was not completely unfounded was shown by the actions of Colonel Talât Aydemir, one of the original conspirators in the mid-1950s and now commander of the War Academy in Ankara. Twice, on 22 February 1962 and on 21 May 1963, he executed an abortive *coup d'état*. The first time he was granted a pardon; the second time he was executed.

All through the period 1960–63 there were rumours of unrest and plotting within the armed forces and a new military takeover was still considered likely. The military takeovers in Iraq on 8 February 1963 and in Syria exactly a month later were seen as danger signs, the more so as the return to civilian politics in Turkey was far from smooth.

Return to democracy

The purge of the NUC in October 1960 was a clear sign that power was in the hands of those who favoured a return to parliamentary democracy. After that date, the structures of the Second Republic began to be put in place fairly quickly. The commission of professors charged with drawing up a new constitution had originally planned to finish its work within a month, but the work progressed more slowly than expected, mainly because of differences of opinion within the commission. Three of its members, led by the chairman, Onar, had little faith in the politicians and were in favour of a detailed document that would bind them hand and foot, while two others (Tarık Zafer Tunaya and İsmet Giritli) favoured a constitution that would leave maximum scope to the political parties to develop the system. Early in September, Onar had Tunaya and Giritli removed from the commission. Thereafter, a draft constitution was submitted to the NUC on 17 October.

In the meantime, however, a separate group of law professors from the University of Ankara had drawn up its own draft constitution under the leadership of Professor Yavuz Abadan. At the insistence of this group, the task of finalizing the text of the constitution was given to a

constituent assembly that consisted of two chambers, an upper house – the NUC – and a lower house consisting of 272 representatives of the remaining political parties (Republican People's Party and Republican Peasants' Nation Party), of professional groups and of the provinces. The constituent assembly convened for the first time on 6 January 1961. Thereafter its constitutional committee of 20 members, chaired by Professor Enver Ziya Karal and Professor Turhan Feyzioğlu, did most of the work.

The text that resulted from these deliberations was markedly different from the 1924 constitution. The main aim of the authors of the new constitution was to prevent a power monopoly such as the DP (and the RPP before it) had held, by counterbalancing the national assembly with other institutions. Under the old structure the party that held a majority in the assembly had an almost free hand. A second chamber, called the senate (*senato*), was created and all legislation would have to pass both chambers (with a mechanism to overrule a senate veto with a two-thirds majority in the assembly). The senate was to be elected, apart from a contingent to be appointed by the president. An independent constitutional court was introduced, which could throw out legislation it regarded as unconstitutional and the judiciary, the universities and the mass media were guaranteed full autonomy. In addition, proportional representation was introduced to lessen the chance of one party holding an overwhelming majority in the assembly. A full bill of civil liberties was included in the constitution.

Significantly, the military were given a constitutional role for the first time through the establishment of a National Security Council (*Millî Güvenlik Kurulu*) mentioned in the constitution. The council was actually established by law in March 1962. Chaired by the president (or in his absence the prime minister), the council advised the government on internal and external security. The service chiefs, the Chief of General Staff and the ministers concerned were *ex officio* members of the council, which had its own secretariat and a number of departments. In the two decades that followed its establishment, the NSC gradually extended its influence over government policy and became a powerful watchdog, sometimes replacing the cabinet as the centre of real power and decision-making.

On 13 January the ban on political activity was lifted and new parties were given a chance to register for the elections that were to take place later in 1961. Eleven new parties were registered (in addition to the RPP and RPNP). Most were ephemeral, but the most important new party was without doubt the Justice Party (*Adalet Partisi*), which had as its primary goal full rehabilitation of the retired officers and arrested

democrats. It was seen, both by its supporters and by its adversaries, as the continuation of the DP. Its relations with the NUC were therefore extremely delicate from the beginning. Until his death in 1964 Ragıp Gümüşpala, one of the retired generals who by his moderate stance did much to alleviate the tension between the NUC and his own more radical supporters, headed the party.

The first chance for the Turkish population to express itself politically came with the referendum on the new constitution on 9 July 1961. This turned out to be a severe setback for the forces of 27 May: the constitution was accepted with 61.7 against 38.3 per cent of the votes cast, but the latter percentage must be – and was – regarded as remarkably high considering the government's propaganda effort on behalf of the constitution. It showed that even without any organization, the pro-Menderes vote held up to a large extent. This was confirmed by the fact that the constitution was rejected outright in the 11 coastal provinces in the west where the DP had been strongest before 1960.

The trend was confirmed in the parliamentary elections held on 15 October 1961. By all accounts the elections were free and honest. The only restriction on the parties was a protocol the NUC had forced them to sign in September, in which they promised not to make the 27 May coup or the trials of former Democrat politicians then being held an issue in the campaign. İnönü's Republican People's Party was deeply disappointed to gain just 36.7 per cent of the votes (173 seats), only slightly more than the Justice Party, which polled 34.7 per cent (158 seats). The New Turkey Party (*Yeni Türkiye Partisi*), which can be regarded as a continuation of the Freedom Party founded by dissident Democrats in 1955, got 13.9 per cent of the vote, while the conservative RPNP polled 13.4 per cent. Taken together, the parties that were considered heirs to the Democrats were clearly still the strongest force in the country.

The new constitution was more liberal than the old one in the sense that it tolerated a wider spectrum of political activity than before, both to the left and to the right. The first party to emerge, which was clearly outside the old Kemalist mould was the Workers' Party of Turkey (*Türkiye İşçi Partisi*), which was founded in February 1961 by a number of trade unionists, but whose driving force for almost its whole existence was to be the publicist, lawyer and former university teacher, Mehmet Ali Aybar. The party modelled itself after the British Labour Party.

The importance of the WPT lay not in its political power or in the votes it attracted – it never managed to attract more than 3 per cent of the vote in a general election and it never entered a governing coalition – but rather in the fact that it was the first really ideologically based party to compete in elections. By its existence it forced the other parties

to define themselves more clearly in ideological terms, too. During the 1960s, the WPT attracted the support of many young intellectuals and it served as a kind of laboratory for the Turkish left, which would later split up into innumerable factions. It also served as a legal home for quite a few important cadre members of the outlawed Turkish Communist Party, although it would go much too far to call it a communist front organization.

The greater political freedom under the new constitution did not immediately lead to the formation of parties of an outspoken rightist or Islamist signature; that came later. To the surprise of many observers, however, who had noticed the way in which Menderes and his government had been fiercely attacked by both the military and the RPP for the political use they made of religion, there was no return to the strict secularist, or even anti-Islamic, policies of the years before 1945. On the contrary, efforts were made to cut the ground from under the feet of the Islamist currents by increased attention to the building of mosques and the restoration of shrines and to religious education in schools. To combat religious bigotry, the early governments of the second republic tried to propagate a modern, rationalist version of Islam, very different from that practised by the average villager. The curriculum of the colleges for preachers was changed to include sociology, economy and law. The Directorate for Religious Affairs started publication of 'enlightened' sermons and the Koran was published in Turkish translation. At the same time, the new regime, like İnönü's government after the war, guarded itself against the risks this greater tolerance of religious expression might entail: the prohibition of the political use of religion, which had been incorporated into the High Treason Law in 1925 and into the penal code in 1949, was now made an article in the new constitution.

The trial of the old regime

The one issue dominating public opinion in Turkey during this time was not that of the constitution but that of the fate of the former leaders of the Democratic Party, who had all been arrested in the aftermath of the coup. The trials took place on a heavily guarded island in the Sea of Marmara, off Istanbul, and were conducted by a nine-man tribunal of judges, appointed by the NUC and chaired by Judge Salim Başol.

Opinions vary on the legality and fairness of the trials.² It is true that the only changes in the existing procedures were those that made the verdicts of the tribunal irrevocable and suspended the rule that death sentences on people over 65 years old would not be executed (a change clearly aimed at Celâl Bayar). For the rest, the procedures took place under the existing laws of the republic. On the other hand, there was no

legal basis for the existence of the tribunal itself and its members were clearly biased politically against the DP. The proceedings seem to have been reasonably fairly conducted, although the judges made no effort to hide their distaste for the accused.

The charges were a rather strange mixture. The cases brought against the defendants consisted of three criminal cases, nine cases of corruption and seven cases of violation of the constitution. The criminal cases and the corruption charges – some of which were bizarre, such as the one in which Menderes was accused of killing his illegitimate baby, or in which Bayar was accused of forcing a zoo to buy a dog he had received as a gift – were clearly brought in a largely ineffectual effort to tarnish the reputations of these men. The constitutional cases were based on Article 146 of the penal code, making it an offence to attempt to alter the Turkish constitution by force or forcibly to silence the national assembly. The Democrats were deemed to have done this when they instituted the investigatory commission on the activities of the RPP and sections of the press in 1960. Article 17 of the former constitution, however, stated that deputies could not be held accountable for their votes. Furthermore, the constitution also stipulated that it itself could be altered by a two-thirds majority of the assembly (which the DP had had).

In the end, 123 people were acquitted, 31 were sentenced to life imprisonment and 418 to lesser terms, while 15 were sentenced to death. Of these, 11 were sentenced by majority vote and the NUC commuted their sentences. The four other death sentences, those of Bayar, Menderes, Foreign Minister Zorlu and Finance Minister Polatkan, were unanimous. Bayar's death sentence was commuted because of his advanced age (he lived for another 26 years) and ill health (and possibly under the influence of his strong showing during the trial, which contrasted sharply with Menderes's behaviour), but Zorlu and Polatkan were hanged on 16 September 1961 and Menderes the next day after a failed suicide attempt. In confirming the sentences, the NUC disregarded pleas from many foreign governments and from İnönü. It has been speculated that the disappointing result of the referendum on the constitution, showing as it did the extent of the following Menderes still had in the country, decided his fate. Since then Turkish public opinion has generally regretted the killing of these politicians who had certainly not acted with less legality or abused their power more than either their successors or their predecessors. Menderes, Zorlu and Polatkan were eventually reinterred at a state funeral in Istanbul in September 1990.

Politics: a period of transition

Parts of the army wanted to intervene after the disappointing election

result of September 1961, but the army's most senior officers and the AFU prevented it. Instead, heavy pressure was put on the two parties to collaborate in a coalition to be led by the veteran İsmet İnönü. The parties bowed to the pressure and a 20-member cabinet was formed on 20 November but it was a marriage of convenience, not love. There was inevitably a lot of bad blood between İnönü and the Republicans on the one hand, and the JP, which claimed to be the heir to İnönü's old enemies in the DP, on the other. Many JP members suspected İnönü of collusion with the military. The coalition's failure was brought about by the delicate problem of an amnesty for the former DP politicians – where the cabinet had to tread warily because of the sensibilities of both the military and the old DP supporters in the JP – and by the project for a planned economy, which was supported by the RPP and the military but bitterly opposed by the JP.

In May 1962, the JP rejected as insufficient a proposal to reduce the sentences of the imprisoned Democrats and withdrew its ministers from the cabinet, whereupon İnönü formed a new cabinet, this time based on a coalition of the RPP with the two smaller parties (RPNP and NTP). A partial amnesty was agreed upon but this coalition did not work any more smoothly than the first one. There were many frictions and the worst was the proposal, sponsored by İnönü as part of the reforms demanded by the constitution, for a land tax. When the local elections of November 1963 produced a clear victory for the opposition Justice Party, the fate of the coalition was sealed. The two smaller parties wanted out and when they withdrew their ministers from the cabinet, İnönü had no choice but to resign. He did so on 2 December after his return from President Kennedy's funeral in Washington.

Now, for the first time, President Gürsel (with the backing of the Chief of General Staff, General Sunay) asked the JP leader, Gümüşpala, to form a government, a highly significant development since it showed that the military now regarded the JP as a normal and acceptable part of the political landscape and no longer required it to be held under tutelage by İnönü. Gümüşpala, however, failed in his attempt and once again, for the last time, İsmet İnönü, who was by now nearly 80, was charged with forming a government. On 25 December 1963 the third İnönü coalition, this time a minority one of RPP and independents, took office. Like its predecessors it was weak. During 1964 it was kept in office because of the serious international crisis that developed over Cyprus in that year, but when the crisis had passed the JP lost no time in bringing it down. On 13 February 1965 İnönü resigned when he failed to get his budget approved in parliament. A caretaker cabinet headed by a former diplomat and independent deputy, Suat Hayri

Ürgüplü, then ruled the country until parliamentary elections were held in October.

By this time General Gümüşpala no longer headed the Justice Party, for he had died suddenly in 1964. After his death there had been a bitter struggle for the succession, during which some contenders tried to whip up feeling with attacks on the military *coup d'état* of 27 May 1960. The Chief of General Staff, Sunay, had reacted with a stern warning, which tipped the scales in favour of the moderates within the JP. Their candidate, a 44-year-old hydraulic engineer called Süleyman Demirel, was elected party chairman in November. Demirel was a self-made man, born in a village in the province of Isparta, who had been in charge of dam building under Menderes and had had a successful career in private enterprise (working for an American firm) after 1960. He proved, if not the most important, certainly the most enduring Turkish politician of the postwar era. The emergence of Demirel as party leader was at the same time the symbol of the emergence of an entirely new elite. The DP had managed to capture the vote in the more developed parts of the countryside, but it had its origins in a split within the Unionist/Kemalist elite, which had, it is true, always co-opted members of the traditional landowning elite, but was itself city based. The JP by contrast was a party in which, and through which, self-made men from the countryside and from the smaller (but fast-growing) provincial towns became a dominant force.

Demirel in power

The JP won a landslide victory in the elections of October 1965, gaining an absolute majority of the votes cast (52.9 per cent) and of seats in the assembly. The RPP was down to 28.7 per cent. All the other parties (RPNP, NTP, WPT and the new Nation Party, which had split off from the RPNP) gained less than 7 per cent of the vote. It was clear from the distribution of the votes that the JP had managed to capture the old DP support. Demirel proved to be a first-rate vote catcher in the countryside, where people could identify with his background and see his career as the embodiment of their hopes. Like Menderes before him, Demirel was an orator who could speak the language of the mass of the people – something İnönü and the other Kemalist political leaders, or for that matter socialists such as Aybar, had never been able to do.

With a solid majority in the assembly, Demirel had no problem getting a vote of confidence for his cabinet. For the next five years he dominated Turkish politics. As we shall see, the mid- and later-1960s were good years for Turkey. Economic growth was high and real incomes went up almost continually, by an average of 20 per cent in the

years between 1963 and 1969. One of Demirel's most important achievements was to reconcile the army with rule by civilians who were clearly heir to the Democrats the military had toppled only five years before. He had to pay a price, however: the armed forces were granted almost complete autonomy, their submission to the authority of the Minister of Defence and the cabinet being no more than a formality. At the same time he had to keep in check the more radical members of his following who were still bent on vengeance for the 27 May coup.

Keeping his cabinet and his party together was Demirel's main problem, which occupied far too much of his time. The JP was a coalition of industrialists, small traders and artisans, peasants and large landowners, religious reactionaries and Western-oriented liberals. It had very little ideological coherence. Besides, Demirel was a relative newcomer on the political scene and he lacked legitimacy in the eyes of the old DP cadres, who saw him as no more than a caretaker for the real leaders who were still in prison at the time. This aspect of the matter was emphasized, when, after the promulgation of an amnesty law in August 1966, the DP leaders, including former president Celâl Bayar, were set free. From 1968 onwards a pressure group called *Bizim Ev* (Our Home) formed around Bayar to influence the policies of the JP. Nevertheless, Demirel – against the expectations of most observers – managed to preserve the unity of the party and his own position at the top of it throughout the 1960s.

To do so he had frequent recourse to two tactics. He emphasized the Islamic character of the party and the way it stood for traditional values, especially during elections (openly flirting with the leaders of the *Nurcu* movement, for instance); and he kept up a constant campaign of anti-communist propaganda and of harassment of leftist movements. With the backing of the National Security Council and with the help of the infamous MİT (*Millî İstihbarat Teşkilâtı*, or National Intelligence Organization), which had succeeded the older Bureau for State Security in 1963, continuous pressure was exerted on left-wing organizations and individuals. In 1966–67 there was an attempt to purge the schools and universities of leftist teachers. Translators of foreign socialist or radical literature were brought to trial, even if the translated texts were eighteenth-century tracts. People were arrested for publishing communist propaganda, which, in the most famous case, turned out to consist of quotes from an early speech by Atatürk himself.

Demirel's position was, however, fundamentally different from that of Menderes because of the checks and balances built into the constitution. The independent judiciary, including the constitutional court, in many cases did its job of protecting the rights of individuals and

ensuring the constitutionality of new legislation in defiance of the government. The state radio and television were autonomous and often very critical of the government (as was a large part of the press) and the autonomy of the universities meant that the police could now enter a campus only at the invitation of the rector. Demirel's hands were therefore tied in many ways and he never had the two-thirds majority in the assembly required to change the constitution and curb civil liberties, although many in his party were in favour of such a change.

Because of these policies, Demirel became as unpopular among intellectuals as Menderes had ever been, but that his support held up well in the countryside was shown in the elections of 1969. The JP suffered slight losses (its percentage of the vote was down to 46.5 per cent) but it kept its majority in the assembly and the RPP was unable to profit from its decline, polling only 27.4 per cent. Demirel formed a new cabinet, slightly more centrist than the old one.

Demirel's problems lay not with the electorate or the opposition but within his own party. In spite of all his efforts, he eventually lost the support of the most conservative wing, representative of the interests of the Anatolian landowners and small traders and artisans over his proposals for new taxation to help pay for the industrialization of the country. In February 1970 the right wing of the JP voted with the opposition and forced Demirel to resign. There was no alternative to Demirel, however, and in March he was back at the head of a new cabinet. But the rift had only been healed superficially and in June the right wing started talking openly about leaving the party. Some of its members were forced out by Demirel and some resigned of their own accord. In December 1970, 41 representatives and senators who had left the JP, led by the former president of the national assembly, Ferruh Bozbeyli, founded the *Demokratik Parti* (Democratic Party), its name, of course, recalling the banned *Demokrat Parti* of Menderes and Bayar.

The Republican People's Party moves left of centre

The RPP had gone into the 1965 elections with a new manifesto, written by the two coming men of the party, Turhan Feyzioğlu and Bülent Ecevit, which emphasized social justice and social security without being explicitly socialist. Ecevit defined the position of the party as 'left of centre' (*ortanın solu*), a definition that was used – and thus endorsed – by party chairman İnönü for the first time in a speech on 28 July. Ecevit had managed to convince İnönü that the future of the RPP lay in mobilizing the votes of the proletariat, the inhabitants of the *gecekondus*. This meant that the RPP would have to compete with the Workers' Party, something the new slogan was meant to help achieve.

The RPP's new stance did not profit it in the 1965 elections, however. It still lacked credibility as a progressive party (certainly with İsmet İnönü at the helm) and anyway the people in the squatter towns were still basically villagers who had moved to the big city, taking their village values with them. As in the villages, they voted JP. The real party of the left, the Workers' Party, fared just as badly in the elections as did the RPP. Besides, the 'left of centre' slogan offered JP propagandists every opportunity to use the crudest scare tactics against the Republicans. The slogan '*Ortanın solu, Moskova yolu*' (left of centre is the road to Moscow) was much used during the campaign.

After the defeat an acrimonious debate started within the party and there were many who blamed the 'left-of-centre' tactics for the defeat. İnönü stood by Ecevit and the new programme, however, and the latter was elected secretary-general of the party in 1966. The infighting continued until the Fourth Extraordinary Congress, which met on 28 April 1967. Ecevit, backed by İnönü, proposed measures to increase central office's hold over the party and its parliamentary representatives and to increase party discipline. When they were adopted, a group of 47 representatives and senators who opposed the 'left-of-centre' line left the party to found the *Güven Partisi* (Reliance Party). They were led by Turhan Feyzioğlu, who had been Ecevit's main competitor for the position of 'crown prince' of the RPP. He had always belonged to the progressive wing of the party and it is hard not to believe that personal jealousy of Ecevit was one of his motives for splitting the party.

The local elections of 1968, in which the RPP improved its share of the vote in the big cities, seemed to indicate that the new line was beginning to have an effect, but the 1969 elections were again a big disappointment, possibly due to the still ambiguous position of the RPP, for, while Ecevit and his supporters enthusiastically embraced the new orientation of the party, İnönü seems to have had second thoughts – while not actually disavowing Ecevit, in declarations and interviews he strongly emphasized the RPP's Kemalist traditions and anti-communist character.

The political landscape of the late 1960s, however, can no longer be described in terms of the activities and ideas of the two major parties alone. The 1961 constitution offered opportunities for much more political diversity, opportunities that were only fully exploited from the mid-1960s onwards.

The growth of political radicalism

The 1960s were years of rapid change. People became more mobile, both socially and physically. There was a growing student population and a growing industrial proletariat, both of which could have been the natural

stamping grounds of a modernized RPP, had it not been for the fact that this party, in spite of the rhetoric about being 'left of centre' remained a coalition with a broad base, and did not dare to opt for radical policies. This left an opening for the Workers' Party and, later, for the militant left.

The Justice Party in turn was vulnerable on the right. Its electoral base consisted of farmers and small businessmen, but its policies increasingly served the interests of the modern industrial bourgeoisie, of big business. This left many of its voters disgruntled and they became the prime targets of both the Islamic and the ultra-nationalist parties that were founded.

The left

The oldest party on the left was, of course, the Turkish Communist Party. In spite of having been banned for nearly 50 years, it still had a small but devoted following inside Turkey, but its influence among those interested in left-wing politics was declining, both because of its hard-line pro-Moscow stand (which had discredited it in the eyes of many when the horrors of the Stalin era became known, and certainly after the suppression of the Hungarian independence struggle in 1956) and because of its doctrinaire concentration on the industrial proletariat as the moving force of the revolution. The industrial proletariat, although growing, was still relatively small. The main legal party of the left was the Workers' Party, which also aimed at the proletariat (especially the trade unions) for support, but at the same time was very influential among intellectuals.

The 1960s saw a lively intellectual debate about all kinds of political and social issues, which found expression in a host of new periodicals whose publication was made possible by the new constitution. The first was the journal *Yön* (Direction), which started to appear in 1961. It was not a narrow Marxist publication but a broad-based forum for the expression of different radical and leftist views. Its editor, Doğan Avcıoğlu, saw socialism as the only viable model of development in a semi-colonial country and he advocated state planning and protectionism. Later journals, such as *Devrim* (Revolution) or *Aydınlik* (Enlightenment) were as a rule more narrowly committed to one specific brand of Marxism. The groups that formed around these publications often developed into factions or parties.

This growth of a new left consisting of students and intellectuals during the 1960s was not, of course, unique to Turkey. It happened all over the world, but there were two reasons why its development in Turkey was especially important. The universities had played an important part in toppling Menderes and in formulating the constitution of the second republic. It was only logical therefore that students and

teachers began to see themselves as the moving force of society. It was, moreover, an idea that tallied perfectly with the Kemalist concept of a revolution from above carried out by an enlightened elite.

Political debating societies (*fikir kulüpleri* or 'idea clubs') sprang up at all the major universities, the most prominent being the one at the political science faculty of Ankara University (the successor to the old imperial *mülkiye* as the breeding-ground of Turkey's civil servants), where Professor Sadun Aren, one of the leaders of the Workers' Party, was a formative influence. In the mid-1960s this and other debating societies were taken over by student activists of the WPT who now founded a national network, the *Fikir Kulüpleri Federasyonu* (Federation of Debating Societies).

The major debate in Marxist circles in the mid-1960s was about which historical phase Turkey was in. Mehmet Ali Aybar and the main faction of the WPT maintained that it was ripe for a socialist revolution, which could be brought about by democratic means. They expected success to come from a growing class-consciousness and political awareness among Turkey's workers, whom they tried, with considerable success, to organize in a new trade unions confederation led by WPT members. Another influential group, led by Mihri Belli, held that Turkey was an Asiatic society with feudal characteristics, that the proletariat was too weak and that revolutionary change could only be brought about by a coalition of intellectuals and officers. This current, which was called *Millî Demokratik Devrim* (National Democratic Revolution) took over the Federation of Debating Societies in 1968 and turned it into the organization 'Revolutionary Youth', known by its Turkish acronym as *Dev Genç*.

From 1968 onwards, student movements in Germany, the United States and especially France (where students had come close to launching a revolution and toppling General de Gaulle in May 1968) influenced the youth movement in Turkey. At the same time, the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia caused a crisis of consciousness among the Turkish left, as it did in socialist circles around the world. The WPT split when Mehmet Ali Aybar's condemnation of the invasion was not supported by a number of other party leaders, such as Sadun Aren and Behice Boran. At the same time, the *Millî Demokratik Devrim* group also split, over the rather more esoteric question of whether Turkey was a feudal society or rather one in which the 'Asiatic mode of production' dominated. This seemingly arcane discussion was not without political relevance. Those who defended the feudalism thesis saw the state (for state read army) as a potential ally in a progressive coalition to fight feudal and 'compradore' interests. The supporters of the Asiatic mode

of production thesis on the other hand saw the struggle as being between an oppressive state (including the armed forces) and the population. Thus the historical analysis was also a coded discussion about a vital question: the possible role of the army in any revolution. One part of the radical wing of the movement, led by Dođu Perinçek, later turned Maoist.

From 1970 onwards some radicals from the MDD circle decided that agitation was not enough and that only ‘armed propaganda’ (in other words terrorist attacks) and an armed guerrilla struggle could bring about a revolution. The Maoist splinter group TKP–ML (*Türkiye Komünist Partisi–Marksist/Leninist*) spawned the TİKKO (*Türkiye İşçi Köylü Kurtuluş Ordusu* – Turkish Workers and Peasants Liberation Army), while other groups were the THKO (*Türkiye Halk Kurtuluş Ordusu* – Turkish People’s Liberation Army) of Deniz Gezmiş and the THKP/C (*Türkiye Halk Kurtuluş Partisi/Cephesi* – Turkish People’s Liberation Party/Front) of Mahir Çayan. These groups began a campaign of terrorism, or urban guerrilla warfare, aimed at destabilizing the country.

In radical left circles some people began to demand that attention be paid to the plight of the Kurdish minority. When the majority felt that ethnic identities should be submerged in class solidarity, Kurdish intellectuals founded the ‘Revolutionary Culture Clubs of the East’ (*Dođu Devrimci Kültür Ocakları*).

The hopes of the National Democratic Revolution for a coalition with progressive officers received a blow on 15 June 1970, when large-scale demonstrations of workers in Istanbul were dealt with heavy-handedly by the troops. With both the WPT and the other groups of the new left having suffered serious setbacks, the old Turkish Communist Party regained some of its influence among intellectuals around this time.

The right

The conservative Republican Peasants’ Nation Party had done badly in the elections of October 1965, gaining no more than 2.2 per cent of the vote. Nevertheless, the party was destined to play a major role in Turkish politics in the following 35 years. That it would do so was wholly due to one man, Colonel Alpaslan Türkeş, who had returned to Turkey announcing his intention to enter politics. After an unsuccessful attempt to found his own party in 1964, he had, together with ten of the ‘fourteen’, the officers dismissed from the NUC in 1960, joined the RPNP in the spring of 1965. Shortly afterwards, in August, Türkeş managed to be elected chairman of the party. After ousting the old leadership, he turned it into a hierarchically organized, militant party with an ultra-nationalist programme.

The RPNP's new ideology was laid down in a booklet written by Türkeş and published late in 1965, called *Dokuz Işık* (Nine Lights). The basic principles were nationalism, idealism, morality, social responsibility, scientific-mindedness, support for freedom, support for the peasants, developmentalism and industrialization/technology. In many ways Türkeş's programme was not far removed from the Kemalism of the 1930s, but in practice a violent nationalism (also in a pan-Turkist sense, meaning the reunification of all the Turks of Asia) and anti-communism were the elements emphasized. In 1969 the party's name was changed to *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* (Nationalist Action Party). As well-known as the party itself was its youth organization, officially called the 'Hearths of the Ideal' (*Ülkü Ocakları*), whose members called themselves *Bozkurtlar* (Grey Wolves), after a figure in pre-Islamic Turkish mythology and who in December 1968 began a campaign to intimidate leftist students, teachers, publicists, booksellers and, finally, politicians. The Grey Wolves received paramilitary training in specially designed camps and, like Hitler's SS, their mission was to conquer the streets (and the campuses) on the left.

Until 1969, Türkeş was an outspoken supporter of secularism, but in the run-up to the elections that year he changed course and began to emphasize Islam as a part of the Turkish national heritage. For Türkeş, although not necessarily for his followers, this was clearly a tactical move, intended to catch votes. The other major party of the right, which emerged around this time, went further. In 1969, Professor Necmettin Erbakan was elected president of the Union of Chambers of Commerce and Industry after a campaign in which he had made himself the voice of the smaller businessmen who criticized Demirel and the JP for being subservient to big business and, especially, foreign capital. A religious flavour entered into Erbakan's argument when he denounced the JP for being an instrument of Freemasons and Zionists that had turned its back on Islam. The same year he left the JP and was elected to the national assembly as an independent member for Konya, the stronghold of religious conservatism in Turkey. In January 1970 Erbakan, with two other independents, formed his own party, the National Order Party (*Millî Nizam Partisi*).

Together, the NAP and the NOP posed a serious threat to Demirel's power. This was not because either of the new parties was able to replace the JP as the mass party of the right, but because, together with the dissidents within the JP who were later united in Bozbeyli's new Democratic Party, they could endanger his hold on the assembly. There is little doubt that left-wing groups started political violence in the late 1960s. There were violent clashes with police and troops during visits

by the American Sixth Fleet in July 1968 and February 1969, during which people were killed. There were bombing attacks, robberies and kidnappings. But from the end of 1968 onwards, and increasingly during 1969 and 1970, the violence of the left was met and surpassed by violence from the militant right, notably Turkeş's Grey Wolves.

The military ultimatum of 12 March 1971

By early 1971, Demirel's government, weakened by defections, seemed to have become paralysed. It was powerless to act to curb the violence on the campuses and in the streets and it could not hope to get any serious legislation on social or financial reform passed in the assembly. This was the situation when, on 12 March 1971 the Chief of General Staff handed the prime minister a memorandum, which really amounted to an ultimatum by the armed forces. It demanded that a strong and credible government be formed that would be able to end the 'anarchy' and carry out reforms 'in a Kemalist spirit'. If the demands were not met, the army would 'exercise its constitutional duty' and take over power itself. Soon rumours circulated that the high command had in fact acted to forestall a coup by junior officers on the pattern of that of May 1960. The rumours seemed to be confirmed when a number of officers were retired soon afterwards, but the existence of such a plot has never been established with certainty.

The politicians' immediate reaction to the ultimatum was negative. Demirel immediately resigned and İnönü sharply denounced any military meddling in politics. But both party leaders soon took up more conciliatory positions. Demirel cautioned his party to remain calm and adopted a wait-and-see attitude, while İnönü announced his support for the new government installed by the generals once it became clear that that government would be headed by Nihat Erim, a member of the right wing of the RPP and a close associate of İnönü's for many years. İnönü's support for Erim so infuriated Ecevit that he resigned as secretary-general.

Many on the left at first greeted the ultimatum with hope, interpreting it as a 1960-type coup against a right-wing government. This soon proved to be a dreadful mistake. It was a 'coup' by the high command, not by a radical group of officers and the high command by this time was mesmerized by the spectre of a communist threat.

Erim formed a cabinet, which consisted largely of technocrats from outside the political establishments. He announced that his government would restore law and order and enact a number of long overdue socio-economic reforms. Atilla Karaosmanoğlu, a leading progressive economist who had worked for the World Bank, drew up a reform

programme. The programme included land reform, a land tax, nationalization of the mineral industry and measures to protect Turkish industry by demanding that joint ventures be at least 51 per cent Turkish owned. This reform programme met with stubborn opposition from vested interests in business and agriculture. Only the largest and most sophisticated industrialists, men like Vehbi Koç and Nejat Eczacıbaşı, supported the reform proposals, which they saw as necessary if Turkey was to join the industrialized countries in the foreseeable future.

With unequivocal backing from the military, Erim might have been able to push through his programme in spite of the resistance from the right, but the military's attention was elsewhere. In April there were renewed terrorist attacks and on 27 April the National Security Council decided to proclaim martial law in 11 provinces, including all the big cities, from the next day; it was to be renewed every two months for the coming two years. Under martial law the military began to round up people who were suspected of terrorism. This in itself might have been justified, but the military, which had a free hand under the Erim government, used the situation to institute a veritable witch-hunt against anyone with leftist or even progressive liberal sympathies. The persecution of the left became very serious after members of the THKP/C (Turkish People's Liberation Party/Front) kidnapped and killed the Israeli consul in Istanbul, Ephraim Elrom, on 22 May. About 5000 people were arrested, among them many leading intellectuals (writers, journalists and professors), all the leading members of the WPT and many prominent trade unionists. There were widespread reports of torture, both in the prisons and in so-called 'laboratories', torture chambers of the MİT.

A role in the suppression of the left seems also to have been played by the 'contra-guerrilla', an underground organization of rightist civilians who were paid and armed by the army. It had been founded in 1959 with American help to organize resistance in the event of a communist takeover. Its existence became known to the public at large 20 years later, when Ecevit was prime minister (in the 1980s the existence of similar operations in other NATO countries, such as 'Gladio' in Italy, received much publicity).³

The Workers' Party was closed down on 20 July, when at its fourth party congress a motion was carried, expressing support for the 'democratic aspirations of the Kurdish people'. The National Order Party of Necmettin Erbakan had met the same fate in May. The closure of the NOP was adduced as proof of the even-handedness of the anti-terror campaign, but in fact Erbakan himself was not brought to court and he was allowed to resume his activities in October 1972, when he

restarted the NOP under a new name, *Millî Selâmet Partisi* (National Salvation Party). The terrorists of the right and the NAP, under whose aegis they worked, were left conspicuously alone.

The Erim government in the meantime made very little progress with its reform programme. When Erim showed himself ready to compromise with the conservatives in the assembly and accept some of Demirel's old ministers in his cabinet, 11 of his reformist technocrats resigned from the cabinet in December. Politicians from the right took their places. Erim's cabinets did, however, propose a number of amendments to the constitution, aimed at making it less liberal, which the national assembly adopted with the support of the parties of the right. All in all 44 articles were changed. The opportunity was created to limit by law the civil liberties mentioned in Article 11 of the constitution; the autonomy of the universities and of radio and television was ended; the freedom of the press was limited, as were the powers of the constitutional court. By contrast, the powers of the National Security Council were increased to include giving unsolicited advice to the cabinet, advice that, in the circumstances, was binding. In addition, special 'state security courts' (*Devlet Güvenlik Mahkemesi*) were instituted, which were to try more than 3000 people before they were abolished in 1976.⁴

Some of these changes were carried through by Erim's successor. He himself resigned in April 1972 when the assembly refused to give him the right to rule by decree as he and President Sunay demanded. He was succeeded by Ferit Melen, one of the leaders of the Reliance Party, who collaborated even more closely than Erim had done with Demirel and the JP. The only party not to subscribe to the policies of the Erim and Melen cabinets was the RPP. Within the RPP, Ecevit's principled stance was rewarded when he ousted İnönü from the party chairmanship and succeeded him at a tumultuous party conference in May 1972. In November, İnönü resigned from the party he had helped to found almost 50 years earlier.

The reason that the politicians in general, and Demirel in particular, could slowly but surely re-establish their hold over the cabinet and its decision-making from 1971 to 1973 lay in the dilemma with which the army was faced. It did not want to take over power itself, having seen the damage that that course of action had caused to Greece after the takeover by the military junta there in 1967. On the other hand they could hardly intervene with memoranda and ultimatums on a daily basis to keep the politicians in line without losing their credibility, so the politicians' leeway gradually increased.

The parties showed their teeth during the presidential elections of

1973. The term of office of President Sunay, who had succeeded Gürsel in 1966 (because of the latter's ill health), came to an end in 1973 and the army put forward the chief of general staff, General Faruk Gürler, as his successor. The parties, however, agreed that it should not become traditional for a president automatically to be succeeded by the chief of staff (as had happened with Sunay), and Gürler was defeated. Finding an alternative candidate proved more difficult. After 15 ballots the main parties finally managed to agree on a candidate, senator and retired admiral Fahri Korutürk. He in turn appointed the economist Naim Talû to lead a caretaker government to take the country to the first free elections after the 12 March coup, those of October 1973.

The elections produced a surprise result. Ecevit's new look RPP became the biggest party, polling 33.5 per cent against 29.5 per cent won by Demirel's JP (down nearly 15 per cent). None of the parties had an absolute majority – a situation that continued throughout the decade – so coalition or minority governments were inevitable. After long-drawn-out negotiations, in January 1974 a cabinet was formed, based on the surprising combination of Ecevit's RPP with Erbakan's NSP, a marriage of convenience that nevertheless had some common basis in a distrust of European and American influence and of big business.

The coalition had only been in power for a few months when the Cyprus crisis broke out (see p. 275 below). Ecevit became a national hero overnight through his successful handling of the crisis and the invasion of Cyprus. He wanted to use his new popularity to gain an absolute majority in early elections and he therefore resigned on 16 September 1974. This was a major miscalculation. The other party leaders, well aware that Ecevit had eclipsed them all, were prepared to go to any lengths to avoid early elections. After months of rather undignified haggling, and the installation of a caretaker cabinet under Professor Sadi İrmak, Demirel was finally able to put together a coalition of the JP, the NSP, the NAP, the RRP and a number of defectors from the DP, which announced itself to the public as the 'Nationalist Front' (*Milliyetçi Cephe*).

Demirel had only been able to get the parties to cooperate by bribing them with cabinet posts. As a result the new team included 30 cabinet ministers. The parties in the coalition, especially the NSP and the NAP, knowing full well that Demirel depended on them, wielded disproportionate influence. They set about colonizing 'their' ministries in an unprecedented way: thousands of civil servants were discharged or demoted and replaced with party loyalists. The coalition held together until the 1977 elections. These elections, held in an atmosphere of increasing violence and economic crisis, seemed to show a return to a

two-party system in Turkey. The RPP, profiting from Bülent Ecevit's personal popularity, got 41.4 per cent of the vote, its highest share ever in a free election. The JP also went up to 36.9 per cent. Again there was a stalemate. An attempt by Ecevit to form a coalition of his party and independents soon failed. Demirel then formed a second 'National Front' coalition, in which the influence of the NSP and NAP was even greater than in the first, and which held out amid increasing chaos until December, when defections by JP representatives brought about its fall.

The defectors were rewarded when in January 1978 Ecevit formed a cabinet of RPP and independents. The independents were all given cabinet posts. Ecevit's cabinet survived until October 1979, but it accomplished little. It clearly could not master the rising tide of violence. The military leadership grew increasingly disillusioned with what it saw as Ecevit's 'soft' attitude to terrorism and Kurdish separatism, and there are strong indications that the army top brass decided in the summer of 1979 to start preparations for a coup, which it now regarded as inevitable.⁵ Life was made extremely difficult for Ecevit's cabinet by the savage attacks of the opposition, notably Demirel, who denied the very legitimacy of the government and even refused to call Ecevit 'prime minister'. The administration was partly paralysed by the cabinet's efforts to purge the ministries and services, which the 'Nationalist Front' coalitions had parcelled out among themselves. Nor could Ecevit muster much support from the left. His relationship with the left and the trade unions deteriorated because of the way the government had to emphasize law and order and austerity.

In October 1979 elections for the senate showed a drop in support for the RPP. As a result defections began in the assembly. Ecevit lost his majority and had to resign. Demirel returned to power, but to the relief of many he did so with a minority government supported by his own party and independents but without the NSP or NAP.

The coalition governments of the period between 1973 and 1980 were without exception weak. The one solution that would have yielded a government with a large and stable majority, a JP-RPP coalition, proved impossible to realize. The political system gradually became paralysed because the two major parties, the JP and RPP, were unable to cooperate after the restoration of democracy in 1973, thus giving small extremist groups disproportionate influence. The polarization of the big parties was due partly to ideological factors (the parties were now far more 'ideological' than for instance the DP and RPP during the 1950s), and partly to personal rivalry between the leaders. Besides, each party felt that it was just one step away from an absolute majority and that cooperation would only harm its chances in the next election.

The paralysis of the political system this produced was shown clearly when the assembly proved utterly incapable of electing a successor to President Korutürk when his term ended in 1980, even after 100 rounds of voting. This paralysis meant that no government was able to take effective measures (and even more importantly see them carried out) to combat the two overwhelming problems Turkey faced in the 1970s, political violence and economic crisis.

Political violence

During the late 1970s political violence became a real problem. A number of extremist youth groups on the left, and the Grey Wolves and fundamentalists on the right, fought for control of the streets and the campuses. They had no trouble with recruiting youngsters who had few or no career prospects due to the economic crisis that hit Turkey in the 1970s and to the system that made higher education available to only 20 per cent of the 200,000 potential students who graduated from high school each year.

The struggle between right and left was an unequal one. During the Nationalist Front governments of the years between 1974 and 1977, the police and the security forces had become the exclusive preserve of Türkeş's NAP, and even under Ecevit's government of 1978–79, they had remained heavily infiltrated by fascists who shielded and protected the Grey Wolves. The splinter groups of the left enjoyed no such protection. Not only did Ecevit, as leader of the only left-of-centre party, reject the policies and methods of the extreme left, but also he could not afford to leave the RPP open to accusations of fostering political violence.

The number of victims of political violence rose quickly: from around 230 in 1977 (39 of them the victims of unknown gunmen who opened fire on a 1 May demonstration organized in Taksim Square in Istanbul) to between 1200 and 1500 two years later. What made the political extremism in Turkey so exceptionally violent was the fact that it overlay a traditional culture in which honour and shame, an extreme contrast between one's own family or clan and outsiders, and vendetta played a prominent role. Traditional conflicts were given political connotations. The most notorious case was in Kahramanmaraş in December 1978, when the worst in a series of pogroms of Alevis (Turkish Shi'ites, who generally supported the political left), organized by the Grey Wolves, left more than 100 people dead. Even Ecevit, though he opposed military interference under any circumstances, had no alternative but to declare martial law in 13 provinces (it was later extended to 20 provinces), but he did his best to control the military

authorities and presented his measures as 'martial law with a human face' – hardly a likely combination.

Another instance of traditional divisions coalescing with the right-left divide was the founding of the neo-Marxist Kurdish Workers' Party (known as PKK from its Kurdish initials) by Ankara University student Abdullah Öcalan in 1978. Its aim was the establishment of a socialist Kurdish state in the southeast of the country.

In 1979–80, the character of the violence changed in that increasingly it no longer consisted exclusively of reciprocal killings by left-wing and right-wing extremists, but that they started to kill public figures. In May 1980, the deputy chairman of the NAP was killed, followed in July by former prime minister Nihat Erim and Kemal Türkler, former president of DİSK (Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions). In spite of the proclamation of martial law the military felt that they lacked a free hand to deal with the problem.

The authorities seemed unable to restore order. Whole neighbourhoods, especially in the squatter towns, came under the control of one or the other of the competing groups and were declared 'liberated areas'. The most famous example was the small Black Sea town of Fatsa, where a left-wing mayor and his supporters officially repudiated the authority of the government and proclaimed an independent Soviet republic. Eventually, this peculiar experiment was ended when the troops were sent in.⁶

The rising tide of political violence was not, however, the only, or even the most important, factor to lead to the breakdown of the political system of the second republic and to armed intervention. This development must be seen against the background of an escalating economic crisis, which had a deeply destabilizing effect on the society. To understand this we must now look at the economic and social developments of the 1960s and 1970s.

The economy: planning and import substitution

The NUC and the RPP had both placed the blame for the economic and financial chaos at the end of the 1950s on the Democrats' lack of planning (which in the case of Menderes had developed into a pathological aversion to the word itself). Both had a natural affinity with the concept of planning. The Republicans had their statist heritage and to the officers, many of whom were or had been staff officers, planning was a way of life. A more planned approach to the economy was also supported by the modern industrial bourgeoisie, whose political representation had been the Freedom Party, which split off from the DP in 1955. This group was still too weak in the early 1960s to impose its

own policies, but the developmentalist ideals of the bureaucrats (with their RPP background) and the military gave it support.

The wish for planned and coordinated development found expression in the creation, in Article 129 of the constitution and later in Law 91 of September 1960, of the State Planning Office (*Devlet Planlama Teşkilâtı*), which was given extensive powers in the fields of economic, social and cultural planning. Together with foreign consultants the SPO started to formulate five-year development plans. From the beginning there was a large measure of disagreement, however, on the role and position of the SPO. The RPP took a statist view of its role and saw the SPO policies as binding for all sectors, but the other parties found this unacceptable and İnönü had to make a number of concessions on the SPO's powers.

Under the Justice Party government after 1965, the SPO's influence was curbed further. The second five-year plan, which went into operation in 1968, was declared binding for the state sector, but only indicative for the private sector. Where the RPP, true to its statist traditions, saw the role of the state as one of guidance, the JP as keepers of the DP tradition, saw the state as subservient to private enterprise.

The development policies of the governments of the second republic, almost until the very end, were aimed at the substitution of imports through industrialization. Turkey was still dependent on imports for almost all industrial goods apart from processed foodstuffs, textiles and iron and steel: almost all consumer durables had to come from abroad. On the other hand, the growing wealth of the population during the 1950s had created increased demand for precisely these consumer durables. A greater awareness of the outside world and Western (especially American) lifestyles had given status to the possession of goods like cars, refrigerators and vacuum cleaners.

Apart from direct investment incentives, such as subsidies and tax rebates, successive governments stimulated the creation of a home-grown industry in three main ways: through extensive import restrictions and high tariffs designed to keep out European and American industrial products; through manipulation of the exchange rate (by keeping the rate of the Turkish lira artificially high firms that were allowed to purchase dollars or Deutschmarks from the government were able to buy foreign materials comparatively cheaply); and by creating a buoyant internal market. The latter was done by paying high guarantee prices to farmers (far above the world price) and by allowing industrial workers high wage rises.

As a rule, the import-substituting industrialization took the form of a joint venture, with the foreign company supplying technological know-

how (and the necessary licences) and most of the time (part of) the components and raw materials. The Turkish partner supplied (part of) the capital, the workforce, the distribution system and, at least as important, the influential contacts. In the 1960s and 1970s, the army, through the *Ordu Yardımlaşma Kurumu*, the Army Mutual Help Society, the pension fund of the officer corps, became a major investor in the new industries.

The inward orientation and import restrictions saw to it that there was no real competition between the foreign firms and their Turkish partners. There was also very little competition between Turkish producers. In almost every sector oligopolies were established, with two or three rival holding companies each founding one car factory, one firm producing appliances, one soft-drink distribution network, and dividing the market between themselves. Under this cosy arrangement, industries that would never have been able to compete on an open world market made handsome profits on the home front. The new industries were spread very unevenly among the regions, the vast majority being established in the Istanbul area, with smaller concentrations around İzmir and Adana.

In terms of economic growth, the import-substitution strategy was quite successful for some time. After a hesitant start subsequent to the 1960 coup and the period of uncertainty that followed it, the economy picked up in 1962 and between 1963 and 1976 the annual rate of growth averaged 6.9 per cent.

In the industrial sector the role of the state economic enterprises (SEEs) was still important. About 40 per cent of total industrial production came from this sector, though it was far from efficient. In spite of all professions to the contrary, business decisions in the state sector, including the pricing of products, remained politically influenced and together with huge overstaffing (the workforce doubled to 650,000 in the 1960s and 1970s) resulted in heavy losses, culminating in a loss of nine billion Turkish liras for 1977 alone. The state sector's inefficiency also shows in the fact that, while between half and two-thirds of fixed capital investments were in this sector, its share in total value added declined from over half to one-third in this period.

The Achilles heel of this development policy was that new industries were heavily dependent on imports of foreign parts and materials for production, and thus on the availability of foreign reserves to pay for them. This meant that access to these (largely government-held) funds, rather than industrial or commercial qualities, tended to determine whether a firm could survive. Given that Turkey had a persistent balance of trade and balance of payments deficit throughout these two

decades (as one would expect with an economy that was industrializing but that was not export-orientated), making available the necessary dollars and Deutschmarks was a major problem. It was partly met by foreign, especially American, aid, which totalled \$5.6 billion over 20 years. Increasingly, however, huge transfers from Turkish workers who had moved to Europe covered the deficit. These peaked in 1974 with a total of \$1.462 million.⁷

The economic crisis of the later 1970s

It has already been pointed out that, more than the social unrest or even the violence in the streets, it was the growing economic crisis that derailed the governments of the later 1970s.

The combination of a persistent balance of payments deficit and an industry that depended on foreign inputs, and thus on the availability of foreign reserves, made the Turkish economy extremely vulnerable. The oil crisis of 1973–74 led to a quadrupling of the price of oil on the international market. For Turkey, which since the 1950s had become increasingly dependent on oil as a source of energy, this meant a steeply rising import bill, which had to be paid in dollars. By the end of the 1970s, and after a second oil price shock in 1979–80, two-thirds of Turkey's foreign currency earnings went to meeting the oil bill. At the same time the Western market for Turkish products declined because of the recession in Europe. For a little while it was possible to keep up economic growth by depleting the Central Bank's foreign reserves and by using the transfers of the Turkish workers in Germany. These began to decline steeply after 1974, however, as the situation of the workers in Europe deteriorated and at the same time as they lost confidence in the situation in Turkey. Increasingly, they kept their money in Germany.

The National Front coalition governments tried to meet the problem by concluding extremely costly short-term Euro-dollar loans (by the end of the decade more than half of Turkey's debt consisted of this type of loan) and by printing money. They also tried to conserve precious foreign reserves by imposing import restrictions. Oil for industry and for generating electricity became increasingly scarce and by 1979 power cuts of up to five hours a day were the rule, even in mid-winter.

The rising price of energy and the irresponsible financial policies of successive governments fuelled inflation. Inflation had been running at around 20 per cent a year during the early part of the 1970s, but by 1979 it was at 90 per cent and rising. The government tried to keep inflation down by controlling prices through the price-control board (which existed from 1973 to 1980). The result was a huge black market. Another measure to keep down inflation was an artificially high rate of

exchange for the Turkish lira. There were a number of devaluations but they always came too late, the result being that the black market was extended to money. Import restrictions imposed to save foreign exchange fuelled the black market even more and gave rise to large-scale smuggling, while the shelves in the shops were emptier and emptier.

It was clear that radical measures were needed to extricate Turkey from its financial and economic quagmire. In 1978 Ecevit's government began negotiations about new credits with the IMF, the World Bank and the OECD. The negotiations dragged on because of the drastic demands for economic reform made by the creditors, but in July 1979 an agreement was reached that would release \$1.8 billion in new credits. This was dependent on the Turkish government introducing a reform package that included abolishing import and export controls; cutting subsidies; freeing interest rates; raising prices; and cutting government expenditure.

When Süleyman Demirel returned to power in October 1979, his new government made implementation of this programme its highest priority. The task was given to the under-secretary for economic affairs in charge of planning, Turgut Özal. In January 1980 he launched the reform package, after which the credits began to arrive. Part of the package was a drastic 48.6 per cent devaluation of the lira. During the spring of 1980, however, it became clear that there was widespread resistance to what was called the 'Chilean solution' (a reference to the policies General Pinochet had introduced in Chile after his coup against President Allende). The continued activity of the unions, and especially DİSK, made it impossible to implement Özal's economic package. Members of DİSK occupied a number of factories between January and April and there were strikes everywhere, often accompanied by clashes with the police or the army.

The end of the second republic

The developments that led to the end of the second republic and to the third military intervention in Turkish politics in 20 years were thus manifold: increasing law and order problems, Kurdish separatism, a political system that seemed completely deadlocked and an economy in tatters. To this was added what seemed to many, including many in the army, the threat of Islamic fundamentalism. The Islamic revolution in Iran in January 1979 encouraged the NSP and other Islamist groups that may also have been receiving assistance from Iran. They were increasingly visible and on 6 September 1980 they held a mass demonstration in Konya, during which they called for a return to the *şeriat*, the Islamic holy law, and refused to sing the Turkish national anthem even

though, curiously enough, its text had been written in 1921 by Mehmet Akif (Ersoy), a Pan-Islamist poet who is greatly revered in fundamentalist circles.⁸

The fundamentalist threat was generally considered to be the immediate cause of the military intervention, but in all probability it was a mixture of the above-mentioned factors that induced the general staff to take power after they had gradually lost confidence in the politicians' ability to run the country effectively. As we have seen, preparations for a takeover had been started in the summer of 1979 and in December of that year, at a meeting in Istanbul, the country's most senior generals decided to draw up an ultimatum to the politicians (very much in the vein of the ultimatum of 12 March 1971). It was made public on 2 January 1980, but from the point of view of the generals the first six months of 1980, with the endless charade of the presidential elections, showed that the politicians would not listen. At three o'clock in the morning of 12 September 1980, therefore, the Turkish army took power again.

Social change: squatters and 'guest workers'

For most Turkish citizens, the squabbles between the different political parties were a long way off. Their lives were affected by different things: the violence in the streets, of course, but also growing wealth in the 1960s and early 1970s, shortages and price rises thereafter, and industrialization and large scale migration throughout the period.

Turkey's rapid population growth, a lack of opportunities in agriculture, and the attraction of the new industries combined to increase the flow of people from the countryside to the big cities, which had started in the 1950s. Huge numbers of people migrated to Istanbul, Ankara, İzmir and Adana. There, the squatter towns of *gecekondu* (built at night) dwellings, the emergence of which was described in chapter 13, soon assumed gigantic proportions and their growth has continued. Today over half of the built-up surface of Ankara, the capital, consists of *gecekondu*s, and over half its inhabitants live in them.

Although the *gecekondu*s have sometimes been called slums, the description is misleading. The houses were small and primitive, but not more so than the average village house, and they were usually surrounded by a small garden. In the beginning the *gecekondu* neighbourhoods lacked any kind of infrastructure. The first links to the 'official' town usually consisted of bus services (first privately owned, later also municipal) and of postal deliveries. The inhabitants of the neighbourhoods, organized in their own societies, made quite effective use of the competition between the parties before elections to extract

promises from local politicians, with the result that gradually the squatter towns were connected to the municipal electricity grid and water supply, the road system and – sometimes – the sewers. The municipalities made repeated but feeble attempts at zoning and often tried to get the squatters to move to newly constructed high-rise buildings, but the supply of housing always lagged behind the demand.

Another reason why the appellation ‘slums’ is misleading is that, unlike the inhabitants of the slums in major Western cities, who have reached the end of the line and often do not feel part of society any more, the people in the Turkish squatter towns were, and are, upwardly mobile and integration-orientated. Another difference is that the social fabric of the squatter communities on the whole remained quite strong, helped by the fact that the population of a neighbourhood usually consisted of people from one area in the country (even if that area lay 500 miles away). Ties between the squatter town and the original villages remained close, with people going back to marry, for instance, or to invest in land.

As was pointed out earlier, only a minority of the migrants found regular work in the new industries. Many more had to make a living in temporary jobs, as day labourers, street vendors or janitors. As a rule, several members of one household would contribute to the family income. Vast numbers of women from the squatter towns worked as domestics in bourgeois neighbourhoods. Nevertheless, the migrants usually decided to stay in the city, only returning to help with the harvest.

Many people who had left their ancestral village to go to the city left on an even bigger adventure during the 1960s. The first Turks to go to work in Germany (in 1957) were graduates of technical schools on training courses, but from the beginning of the 1960s Turkish workers started to move to Germany in ever-increasing numbers. In the beginning this movement was caused by a ‘pull’ rather than a ‘push’ factor. Germany’s booming industry had an acute labour shortage from the early 1950s onwards. Large numbers of German men had been killed in the war and the iron curtain made it impossible to recruit migrant workers in Poland, as Germany had done since the late nineteenth century. Hence, it had been recruiting in the poorer Mediterranean regions of Europe (Italy, Yugoslavia and Greece) for some time. In Turkey initial reactions to the German recruitment drive, which began in earnest after a bilateral German–Turkish agreement had been signed in 1961, were rather hesitant. The first to go to Germany were skilled workers from the cities, but later recruitment took place increasingly among new city dwellers who had recently migrated from the country-

side (thus establishing a pattern of two-stage migration). Later still, recruitment took place directly in the provincial towns. The numbers tell their own story: in 1962 there were 13,000 Turkish workers in Germany; by 1970 there were 480,000 and, by 1974, the total had reached 800,000. While the main drift of the migration continued to be to Germany, Turkish workers also went to Belgium, Holland, France, Switzerland and Britain. By the end of the 1970s more than 2.5 million Turks were living in western Europe.

At first, the overwhelming majority of the migrants intended to return to their country within a few years. They came alone, without wife or children, stayed in what were often dismal hostels and saved every penny. Gradually, however, the prospect of an impending return to Turkey faded; as life in Europe proved unexpectedly expensive, their expectations (and those of their families) rose and unemployment in Turkey made a return there almost impossible. From the early 1970s onwards, more and more workers moved their families to Germany. After the oil crisis of 1973, when the economic recession hit Europe, regular recruitment in Turkey stopped. The number of Turks in Europe kept on rising, however, as more and more relatives joined their husbands or fathers. Illegal immigration, which had been a feature as early as in the 1960s, continued after 1973. With rising unemployment in Turkey, many people were easy prey for unscrupulous middlemen who arranged, or pretended to arrange, illegal entry into European countries. The illegal workers (euphemistically called *turist* in Turkey) mostly did low-paid menial work without any social security. Their illegal status made them vulnerable to all kinds of pressures. Still, the success stories of those who made good in Germany ensured that for many in Turkey it remained the Promised Land.

The effects of labour migration on Turkey, and especially the Turkish countryside, were many and varied. There was undeniably an injection of wealth, visible in new and grander houses, tractors, cars and appliances (sometimes before electricity had arrived in the village). The emergence of new wealth disturbed power relationships and social systems in the countryside. It also introduced a more materialistic outlook and established new mass consumption patterns. The migration also introduced a new awareness of the outside world, although not necessarily a deeper understanding of it. The migrant communities in Europe tended on the whole to become more rather than less traditional when confronted with the unfamiliar surroundings of an industrial society. This tendency grew stronger when relations between the migrants and the host populations began to deteriorate. When recruitment started, both industries and governments had tried to create a

positive image for the migrants (calling them *Gastarbeiter* or ‘guest workers’ – a term that later acquired extremely negative connotations in the eyes of the migrants themselves), but when unemployment rose after the oil crisis, resentment began to grow among the host populations. This resentment became much stronger in the 1980s.

Trade unions and social security

That so many of the most active and highly skilled workers emigrated was a handicap for the Turkish labour movement. Nevertheless, the 1960s not only saw the emergence of home grown industry, but they also saw the growth of a serious labour movement. The constitution had promised the workers the right to strike and to conduct collective bargaining. In July 1963 a new law spelled out these rights in more detail. The unions were quite successful at defending workers’ incomes. The protection of the Turkish market meant that relatively high wage rises could be granted to buy off social unrest, because they could be easily translated into price rises for industrial goods. Real wages in industry rose by approximately 50 per cent in the 1960s and 1970s, something that would have been impossible had Turkish industry been export-orientated and subject to competition from other newly industrializing countries (for instance in the Far East).

It has to be said, however, that these gains were reserved for a limited part of the workforce: the workers in the modern part of the economy with its large industrialized firms. During the 1960s and 1970s they developed into a kind of labour aristocracy. The far larger proportion of the workforce, which worked in small establishments, was largely unorganized and earned much lower wages. The small industrialists’ lower profit margins simply did not allow them to offer the kind of wage rises that big industry paid. After 1975, even the bigger employers were no longer in a position to pay real wage increases. Union pressure did not let up, however, and the result was a rising tide of labour unrest, with strikes and lockouts, in the late 1970s.

The number of jobless at that time is very hard to estimate: since there was – and is – no system of unemployment benefits, there is no inducement to register the unemployed. But there are indications that the number of unemployed as a percentage of the labour force, which was relatively stable at around 10 per cent in the 1960s and early 1970s through mass emigration, went up steeply in the later 1970s.

Türk-İş, the confederation of trade unions, under American influence was geared to gaining material benefits for its members. It was politically mixed, with some unions and union leaders supporting the WPT, some the RPP and some the JP. As a rule, the confederation did

not interfere in politics, but sought good relations with whoever was in power. In 1967 a number of trade unions led by people connected to the Workers' Party broke away because they rejected the cooperation of *Türk-İş* with Demirel's increasingly rightist government. The actual split occurred over the refusal of *Türk-İş* to support a strike at the glass factories in Istanbul and soon the trade union movement was deeply divided between *Türk-İş* and a new confederation, *DİSK* (*Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*, or Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions). Competition between the two organizations was fierce from the beginning, each competing for the favour of the workers by setting higher wage demands than the other. By the late 1970s *Türk-İş* was estimated to have had between 1 million and 1.3 million members, while *DİSK* had between 300,000 and 400,000.⁹

The constitution of 1961 had declared Turkey to be a 'social state' (a contemporary reinterpretation of the old Kemalist principle of populism) and during the 1960s the politicians made some efforts to make good this promise and to improve the working and living conditions of the mass of the people. In 1965, the 'Social Securities Society' (*Sosyal Sigortalar Kurumu*) was founded as a first step in the development of a welfare state. It provided insurance for medical care, insurance against work accidents and life insurance. Two years later a new Labour Law replaced the one of 1936. It was extended to cover all wage earners, not only those in establishments with ten employees or more, as had been the case with the older law. The working week was limited to 48 hours and restrictions (but not a ban) on child labour were introduced.

Government employees already had their pension fund and a pension scheme for the self-employed was introduced with the founding of *Bağ-Kur* in 1972. Nevertheless, even at the end of this period the coverage of the social security system was still very patchy. Only about 70 per cent of the industrial workforce and about 60 per cent of the self-employed in the towns had any social security. For more than half the Turkish population, agricultural workers and their families, there was no social security at all.

Foreign relations during the second republic

The foreign policies of all governments of the second republic were firmly linked to the principles laid down after the Second World War. Close ties with the United States and an orientation towards the Western democracies remained the cornerstone. The policies of successive governments were aimed at increasing Turkey's strategic value in the eyes of the Western alliance, both in order to have them remain committed to Turkey's defence and to extract from them military and

economic aid. The underlying continuity was punctured, however, by crises over missiles, opium production, Cyprus, human rights and the Armenian question. Furthermore, during this period the policies pursued by the foreign policy strategists in Ankara were less and less in tune with public opinion.

Turkey was tied to the United States not only by its membership of NATO, but also by 56 separate agreements, of which three were concluded before 1950, 31 under Menderes and 22 during the early 1960s.¹⁰ An umbrella agreement concluded in 1969 served partly to supplant these agreements and partly to update them. The 1954 treaty on military facilities granted the Americans the right to build military installations and bases in Turkey. The Turkish army met the cost of the building and upkeep of the installations and they remained Turkish territory, but the Americans ran them. From 1957 onwards, Jupiter nuclear missiles were based in Turkey.

During the 1960s there were two contradictory developments: on the one hand the rising cost of weaponry and higher pay for the officer corps made Turkey more dependent on foreign financial assistance; on the other, the new liberal constitution allowed left-wing intellectuals, such as those connected to the journal *Yön* and to the Workers' Party, to criticize Turkey's dependence on America and NATO with increasing vehemence. They protested against the bases and against the prerogatives of the American servicemen: immunity from the Turkish law and law courts while on duty, their own postal service and tax-free imports through the PX stores. These reminded nationalist Turks (and in Turkey many left-wingers were ardent nationalists) of the system of capitulations in force during the Ottoman Empire. During the 1960s and 1970s the cry for an 'independent Turkey' or a non-aligned Turkey (*bağımsız Türkiye*) grew louder and louder, and there were mass demonstrations against visiting ships of the American Sixth Fleet.

Successive Turkish governments generally stayed loyal to the alliance and defended it at home. They were put in a difficult position when developments seemed to show that NATO was an organization that served American strategic interests and not those of Turkey. The first time this happened was in 1962–63. During the negotiations following the Cuban missile crisis President Kennedy gave in to Russian demands that the missiles based in Turkey should be withdrawn in exchange for the USSR not basing missiles in Cuba. This was no great sacrifice since the Jupiter system was obsolete anyway and about to be replaced by the submarine-based Polaris system, but the withdrawal of the missiles gave Turkey the feeling that it was no more than a pawn in the American game.

Another irritation was opium production. By the end of the 1960s hard drugs were beginning to be a major problem and a sizeable proportion of the opium and heroin used in America was produced in western Anatolia. The American government put pressure on Turkey to ban the growing of poppies, but Demirel's shaky government could not afford to be seen to be giving in to pressure. When democracy was temporarily suspended in 1971, however, Nihat Erim's government did conclude an agreement to ban the growing of poppies after 1972 in exchange for financial help for the peasants. This decision was very unpopular: no other crop could yield the peasants anything like the income derived from opium. Turkey itself did not have a drugs problem, so it was felt that Turkish interests were being subordinated to American ones. Reversing the decision was one of the first things Ecevit did when he came to power in 1974.

Cyprus again

By far the most serious crises in Turkey's foreign relations were linked to the problem of Cyprus.

In 1964 President-Archbishop Makarios of Cyprus and his government made moves to change the island's constitution, limiting the autonomy of the Turkish minority. The Turkish population was put under pressure and a number of Turkish villages were besieged. İnönü's government responded by having the air force make demonstration runs over Cyprus and threatening an invasion if Makarios did not back down. It is doubtful whether the Turkish navy at that time had the technical capability to execute such a landing, but in any case it was prevented by American reaction in the form of a letter from President Johnson to Prime Minister İnönü. In it he warned that a Turkish invasion might bring the Soviet Union into the conflict and that NATO countries would not automatically side with Turkey if that were to happen. He also pointed out that he would not permit the use of war *matériel* donated by the USA in any invasion. The letter was leaked to the press and caused a wave of anti-Americanism. Once more it seemed that NATO did not see fit to protect Turkish interests.

The crisis, which had died down in 1964, flared up again in 1967 when the newly installed colonels' junta in Athens encouraged the Greek nationalists in Cyprus to step up the agitation for *enosis*, the union of the island with mainland Greece. The Turks put pressure on the Greek government – for a few days in November war seemed imminent, but the junta backed down and the crisis was again defused. But when the Greek junta was in its death throes in 1974, it engineered a *coup d'état* against Makarios in Cyprus by the Cypriot national guard,

which went on to proclaim *enosis*. Ecevit's government in Ankara demanded intervention by the powers that had guaranteed the independence and the constitutional order of Cyprus in 1960 (Turkey, Great Britain and Greece). Ecevit was determined to show that Turkey could act independently and when the other two countries refused to act he ordered military intervention by the Turkish armed forces alone. Turkish troops landed in northern Cyprus on 20 July and established a bridgehead around Kyrenia (Girne). Two days later a ceasefire was agreed, but when communal violence on Cyprus continued, the troops began a second offensive on 14 August, during which about 40 per cent of the island was brought under Turkish control.

After these actions (which Turkish government propaganda called *barış harekâtı* or 'peace operations') the island was to all intents and purposes partitioned. The Greeks living in the north and the Turks living in the south fled their homes. Some Greek villagers were driven out at gunpoint by the army. All of the refugees had to be resettled in the other sector. In 1983 a formally independent Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (*Kuzey Kıbrıs Türk Cumhuriyeti*) was proclaimed, though only Turkey recognized it.

In the eyes of the vast majority of Turks Ecevit had successfully protected the rights, and perhaps saved the lives, of the Turkish minority in Cyprus, but internationally the action put Turkey in an isolated position. The USA declared an arms embargo, which was only gradually lifted after 1978. In reaction, the Turkish government closed down a number of American installations. In the United Nations there were consistent majorities for calls for a withdrawal of Turkish troops and reunification of Cyprus.

Attempts at reorientation

There were attempts to lessen dependency on the American connection by developing ties with Europe, the Soviet Union and, to a lesser extent, the Islamic world. Turkey had become an associated member of the European Community in 1964. The agreement, signed a year earlier, foresaw a preparatory phase (in two stages) of 17 years, after which Turkey would be in a position to apply for full membership. While the road to membership proved considerably longer than foreseen (and perhaps endless), economic relations blossomed and the EC replaced the USA as Turkey's most important trading partner in the 1960s. Ecevit was particularly keen to reorient Turkish foreign policy towards Europe (the EC and the Scandinavian countries ruled by socialists), which made him extremely unpopular in Washington. Relations with the Islamic, and especially the Arab, world were always

problematic because of Turkey's relations with Israel. The Six Day War of 1967 resulted in a surge of support for the Palestinians among the Turkish left, but government policy continued as before. The oil crisis of 1973–74, which brought such difficulty for the Turkish economy and such wealth to the Gulf countries, encouraged the government to explore the possibilities of Turkish–Arab cooperation. This was also desired by the ministers of Erbakan's NSP for ideological reasons, but the policy yielded very little. Turkey's industry was not export-orientated and there was little tradition of trade with the Arab peninsula, so schemes for joint ventures (Turkish know-how and Arab money) nearly all came to nothing. Real development in this sphere took place only after the second oil price shock in 1979–80.

Armenian terrorism

A separate headache for the Turkish Foreign Ministry, and the government in general, was the emergence in the 1970s of Armenian terrorism, aimed primarily at Turkish diplomats. The first attack was on the Turkish consul-general in Los Angeles (a city with a large Armenian community) on 27 January 1973. This seems to have been an individual act of revenge, but in 1975 the 'Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia' was founded in Beirut. Its founder was Bedros Ohanessian, a 28-year-old Armenian from Mosul in Iraq who used the pseudonym Hagop Hagopian. In the following ten years the ASALA murdered more than 30 Turkish diplomats all over the world and wounded many more.¹¹ It also carried out terrorist attacks on travellers at Orly airport near Paris and at Ankara's Esenboğa airport (both in 1982) and on Turkish tourist and airline offices. The ASALA was not motivated only by revenge for the 1915 killings. It also demanded Turkish recognition that genocide had been perpetrated and the establishment of an Armenian state in northeast Anatolia. From the beginning, the ASALA had close connections with Palestinian terrorist groups (which trained its men) and with the drugs trade (which supplied it with money to buy arms). Until the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, its headquarters were in Beirut. Thereafter, it seems to have been based in Cyprus.

At the same time as the ASALA was murdering diplomats, the Armenian communities in France and the United States (the two countries with by far the largest Armenian communities) pressed their governments for recognition of the 'Armenian genocide' of 1915. In both countries they had considerable success, which soured Turkish relations with the French government of President Mitterrand and with the United States Congress.