SOVIET EASTERN POLICY AND TURKEY, 1920-1991

Soviet foreign policy, Turkey and communism

Bülent Gökay
Soviet Eastern Policy and Turkey, 1920–1991

This book traces the relationship between the Soviet Union and Turkey on one hand, and the Soviet Union and the Turkish Communist Party on the other, from the consolidation of the communist regime in Moscow until its fall. It shows how the work of the Communist International (the Komintern), in encouraging local communist parties around the world, was at odds with the pragmatic policies of Lenin and his successors in fostering good relations with Turkey. It shows how pragmatic policies tended to prevail, though not completely, and how the position changed following the military coups in Turkey after the Second World War, and Turkey’s move to become a key US ally in the region and member of NATO. The book considers how ‘Soviet Eastern Policy’ was formed, how it changed over time, what the Soviet leaders hoped to gain in Turkey, and what impact Soviet policy had on the development of the Turkish Communist Movement. This is a story that, until now, has not been properly told. Here, for the first time, is a modern and scholarly account that does justice to both sides of the Soviet–Turkish relationship, and much besides. Throughout this book takes us on a fascinating journey, using the Soviet–Turkish relationship to illuminate some of the central processes of the twentieth century as a whole.

Bülent Gökay is Reader in International Relations, Keele University. He is the editor of the Eurasian Studies Network. His publications include A Clash of Empires: Turkey between Russian Bolshevism and British Imperialism, 1918–1923 (1996), The Politics of Caspian Oil (2001), and Eastern Europe since 1970 (2001).

‘This study of the interwoven fate of the Turkish Communist Party and the Soviet Union is truly unique; it is unique in its conception, unique in its execution and unique in the combination of personal and historical reflections Dr. Gökay has distilled from an involvement with the subject which has lasted since he was twelve years old’. Ben Fowkes, Honorary Visiting Professor, London Metropolitan University

‘This is a difficult and tense area of study which has great historical significance and is highly relevant at the present time. Bülent Gökay combines important new data with critical evaluations and challenging conclusions; his book offers readers an original account of how the Soviet Union affected the course of Turkish politics. Gökay’s study is unique in its coverage and treatment of Soviet–Turkish relations and will undoubtedly be essential reading for specialists as well as for students struggling to understand the troubled history of modern Turkey’. Richard Langhorne, Professor of Political Science and founding Director of the Center for Global Change and Governance at Rutgers University at Newark, New Jersey
1 **Modernizing Muscovy**  
   Reform and Social Change in Seventeenth-Century Russia  
   *Edited by Jarmo Kotilaine and Marshall Poe*

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   The Washington Conference, 1921–1922, and ‘Uninvited Russia’  
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3 **Tiny Revolutions in Russia**  
   Twentieth Century Soviet and Russian History in Anecdotes  
   *Bruce Adams*

4 **The Russian General Staff and Asia, 1800–1917**  
   *Alex Marshall*

5 **Soviet Eastern Policy and Turkey, 1920–1991**  
   Soviet Foreign Policy, Turkey and Communism  
   *Bülent Gökay*
Soviet Eastern Policy and Turkey, 1920–1991

Soviet foreign policy, Turkey and communism

Bülent Gökay
To my parents,
Müzeyyen and Sabri Gökay
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Bülent Gökay’s new book deals with a large and important subject. It is a story that, until now, has not been properly told. Here, for the first time, is a modern and scholarly account that does justice to both sides of the Soviet–Turkish relationship, and much besides. On the Soviet side, it makes use of the foreign ministry archives that were opened after the regime itself had passed into history, and which Dr Gökay was one of the first to be able to explore. On the Turkish side, it draws on a rich crop of memoir and other evidence, and examines the development of Turkish left-wing politics as well as of government policy. Throughout, it uses the Soviet–Turkish relationship to illuminate some of the central processes of the twentieth century as a whole.

An early focus is the dilemma that was faced by a Soviet regime dedicated to the overthrow of capitalism and which had an organization, the Communist International, that was intended to lead working people in their struggle to achieve it, but which at the same time was seeking to advance its own position in a larger competition for influence with British and later American imperialism. What were the Soviet authorities to do when a third world government was anti-imperialist, but also anti-communist, like Kemal’s Turkey? It was a dilemma that became particularly acute when Mustafa Subhi and some other communist leaders were drowned in 1921 in an action that Dr Gökay is able to establish took place with the knowledge and support of the Ankara government.

Later chapters take us through further stages in the relationship. There is a reassessment of the role of Enver Pasha, who sought to combine Turkey, Germany and Soviet Russia at the end of the war in an anti-Entente alliance that he described as its ‘second phase’. We learn much that is new about the deployment of spies on all sides, including the British. There is more about the tactics of the Kemalist government in relation to its domestic opposition, including the attempt to set up spurious non-revolutionary communist parties and trade unions – a tactic that had already been deployed in prerevolutionary Russia. The poet Nazim Hikmet is a presence in many chapters, right through to the conclusion when Dr Gökay visits his grave in Moscow and reflects on the ‘tragic and troubled history of Turkish communism: a well-deserved respect for their consistent sacrifices and bravery in representing the ideals of communism, but remote from the reality of the land in which they were trying to establish a just system’.
Over the post-war period, the larger canvas against which this story takes place is the development of the Cold War, and Turkey’s place within it after it joined NATO in 1952. It may not be too much to suggest that a new canvas is already beginning to replace it by the end of Dr Gökay’s account: one that includes the states that were formerly part of the Soviet Union, and a Turkey that has been reconsidering its international options and the possibility of a future that would place it within the European Union. But it is also a canvas on which a much older conflict has been re-emerging, one that pits the Christian West against the Muslim world in what Huntington has famously described as a ‘clash of civilisations’. Either way, it is clear that Turkey, a Muslim but a large and secular power in a strategic location, will once again be central to its resolution.

Stephen White
University of Glasgow
October 2005
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## Abbreviations and terms

### General

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>Allied Coordination Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AKEL</td>
<td>Communist Party of Cyprus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>Central Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheka</td>
<td>Extraordinary Commission for combating counter-revolution, sabotage and speculation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHP (RPP)</td>
<td>Republican People’s Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNU</td>
<td>Committee of National Unity (Turkey, 1960)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPSU</td>
<td>Communist Party of the Soviet Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUP</td>
<td>Committee of Union and Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dev-Genc</td>
<td>Federation of the Revolutionary Youth (of Turkey)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISK</td>
<td>Confederation of Revolutionary Workers’ Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DP</td>
<td>Democratic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAM/ELAS</td>
<td>National Liberation Front (Greece)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>European Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EOKA</td>
<td>National Organization of Freedom Fighters (of Greek Cypriots)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FKF</td>
<td>Idea Clubs Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FO</td>
<td>Foreign Office (of Great Britain)</td>
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<tr>
<td>GRU</td>
<td>Chief Intelligence Directorate (Soviet Military Intelligence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IGD</td>
<td>Progressive Youth Organisation (youth organisation of the TKP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IKD</td>
<td>Progressive Women Organisation (female organisation of the TKP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITU</td>
<td>Istanbul Technical University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IWW</td>
<td>Industrial Workers of the World</td>
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<tr>
<td>JUSMAAT</td>
<td>US aid organization (in Turkey)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karakol</td>
<td>Secret Turkish Nationalist (Intelligence) Organisatio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kavburo</td>
<td>Caucasian Bureau of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kominform</td>
<td>Communist Information Bureau</td>
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<td>Komintern</td>
<td>Communist (Third) International</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kuomintang</td>
<td>Nationalist Party of China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KYP</td>
<td>(Greek) Internal Security Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHP</td>
<td>Nationalist Movement (Action) Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narkomindel</td>
<td>(Soviet) Peoples’ Commissariat for Foreign Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEP</td>
<td>New Economic Policy (official economic reconstruction programme of the USSR from 1921 to 1928)</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSC</td>
<td>National Security Council (Turkey, 1980)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODTU</td>
<td>Middle Eastern Technical University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL-BIR</td>
<td>Idealist Policemen’s Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>POL-DER</td>
<td>Police Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>Politburo</td>
<td>Political Bureau (of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCP(B)</td>
<td>Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIS</td>
<td>(British) Secret Intelligence Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSSR</td>
<td>Union of Soviet Socialist Republic</td>
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<tr>
<td>TBKP</td>
<td>United Communist Party of Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBMM (GNA)</td>
<td>Grand National Assembly of Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCK</td>
<td>Turkish Penal Code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THIF</td>
<td>People’s Commitment (Communist) Party of Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TİP</td>
<td>Workers Party of Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TKF</td>
<td>(Official) Communist Party of Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TKP</td>
<td>Communist Party of Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TKP/ML</td>
<td>Communist Party of Turkey/ Marxist–Leninist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TKP’nin Sesi</td>
<td>Voice (Radio) of the Communist Party of Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TMT</td>
<td>Turkish Defence Organization (in Cyprus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOB-DER</td>
<td>Confederation of Teachers’ Unions of Turkey</td>
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<tr>
<td>TUDEH</td>
<td>Communist Party of Iran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Türk-İş</td>
<td>Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YKD</td>
<td>Cultural Association of Yenimahalle, Ankara</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warsaw Pact</td>
<td>Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Bibliographical**

- AVP: Archive of the Foreign Ministry of the USSR
- D.: Delo (file unit)
- DGFP: Documents on German Foreign Policy
- DVP: Published Documents of Soviet Foreign Affairs
- Ed. kh.: Storage unit
- FBIS: Foreign Broadcast Information Service
- Fond: Archive group
- IISH: International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam
### Abbreviations and terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Op.</td>
<td>Opis (series or subgroup)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orgburo</td>
<td>Organizational Bureau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pap.</td>
<td>Papka (tied folders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Por.</td>
<td>Poryadok (a special order in series)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRO</td>
<td>Public Record Office (London)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TsPA</td>
<td>Central Party Archives (Moscow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tüstav</td>
<td>Social History Research Foundation of Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WO</td>
<td>War Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>WSWWS</td>
<td>World Socialist Web Site</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
1 Introduction

I was 12 when I first became interested in Soviet communism in Turkey. It began when I read a book of poetry by Nazim Hikmet that I found among the books my father kept at home. In his autobiography, he talked about a Communist University in Moscow, prisons, and the women he loved. To a 12-year-old boy these were all fascinating even though I had no idea what communism was.

I was born in 1902
I never once went back to my birthplace
I don’t like to turn back
at three I served as a pasha’s grandson in Aleppo
at nineteen as a student at Moscow Communist University
at forty-nine I was back in Moscow as the Tcheka Party’s guest
and I’ve been a poet since I was fourteen
some people know all about plants some about fish
I know separation
some people know the names of the stars by heart
I recite absences
I’ve slept in prisons and in grand hotels
I’ve known hunger even a hunger strike and there’s almost no food
I haven’t tasted
at thirty they wanted to hang me
at forty-eight to give me the Peace Prize
which they did
at thirty-six I covered four square meters of concrete in half a year
at fifty-nine I flew from Prague to Havana in eighteen hours
I never saw Lenin I stood watch at his coffin in ’24
in ’61 the tomb I visit is his books
they tried to tear me away from my party
it didn’t work
nor was I crushed under the falling idols
in ’51 I sailed with a young friend into the teeth of death
in ’52 I spent four months flat on my back with a broken heart
waiting to die
I was jealous of the women I loved
I didn’t envy Charlie Chaplin one bit
I deceived my women
I never talked my friends’ backs
I drank but not every day
I earned my bread money honestly what happiness
out of embarrassment for others I lied
I lied so as not to hurt someone else
but I also lied for no reason at all
I’ve ridden in trains planes and cars
most people don’t get the chance
I went to opera
most people haven’t even heard of the opera
and since ’21 I haven’t gone to the places most people visit
mosques churches temples synagogues sorcerers
but I’ve had my coffee grounds read
my writings are published in thirty or forty languages
in my Turkey in my Turkish they’re banned
cancer hasn’t caught up with me yet…!

As the mutual hostilities of the Cold War era finally came to an end in 1991 with
the collapse of Soviet-style communism as a force in world politics, I became
increasingly interested in how relations between the Soviet government in
Moscow and the communist movement in the country where Nazim was banned
were being practised. Most of the assumptions and conclusions about Soviet for-
eign policy that developed during the Cold War occurred under the powerful
influence of the ideological bipolarity between NATO (North Atlantic Treaty
Organization) and the Warsaw Pact, were based on official announcements and
concentrated on ‘high policy’, which was understandable during the Cold War
with its limited access to primary sources. However, the opening of many new
archival sources after the collapse of the Soviet Union now provides historians
with an opportunity to look more deeply into the realities of Soviet–Turkish rela-
tions, and specifically into the role that the Turkish Communist Party played in
shaping those relations. This should allow for the development of a fresh histor-
cal analysis without the ideological constraints of the Cold War.

The events of 1989–91 transformed both the task of writing a history of Soviet
foreign relations and the methods by which it could be researched. The dissolu-
tion of the Soviet Union into its component republics that ended communist con-
trol in Eastern Europe also led to the demise of communism as a state ideology
in world politics. What is now required in the aftermath is a new assessment of
how Soviet foreign relations and Moscow’s relations with foreign communist
parties affected this process. With the Cold War at an end, scholars from both
sides of the former Iron Curtain should be able to develop new perspectives
beyond those of a simple East–West antagonism. Thus my purpose here is to doc-
ument and analyze the foundations, rationale and history of Soviet Eastern pol-
icy, with specific emphasis on the strategy and tactics of the Soviet government towards the Turkish communist movement, which will place the history of the Communist Party of Turkey in a new and I hope better illuminated international and national context.

Understanding Soviet foreign policy

Soviet foreign policy has generally been described as the search for security, or as determined mainly by Russia’s geopolitical situation, or as a function of a totalitarian political system, or, as described by the Soviet sources, an ideologically consistent search for world peace. Many authors argue that the destruction of capitalism by direct insurrection was the central goal and ultimate aim of the Soviet leadership and government. This argument suggests that the conduct of normalized political and commercial relations did not genuinely represent Soviet foreign policy, but was an expedient and temporary façade adopted only until proletarian revolution destroyed capitalism everywhere. Thus there is also a tendency to see Soviet foreign policy as a mystery and an enigma: Bolsheviks, their mentality and their diplomacy, were described as exceptions in the history of world politics that were not readily understood and not to be analyzed using the same categories and terminology as were the foreign relations of capitalist states. In reality, Soviet foreign policy was made by individuals influenced by Lenin’s pragmatism but who acted with a passionate idealism: they were guided by the ‘science’ of history that was conditioned by a curious, antiquated view of Western societies. It also was a foreign policy characterized by decisions that were often instant reactions to the imperfectly planned and improvised policies of other states.

Soviet leaders and policy-makers were famous for producing reams of ideological statements defending and explaining their every move. The difficulty in this was that it used an ideological tone that produced formal policies spoken and written in Marxist–Leninist language. Because Marxism–Leninism claimed to be the ‘scientific’ key to the secret of history, everything was presented as if the Soviets had expected it to happen from the beginning. Thus formal Soviet policy statements were constructed with a significant amount of propaganda when writers reported current events, simply because these writers shared the same ideological matrix. This is readily apparent to readers of official Soviet publications and archives, where the language used in secret documents differs little from the published proceedings of official state bodies. If Soviet foreign policy leaders and policy-makers talked differently among themselves, we have no record of it and no evidence of what might have been ‘the real line’, if there ever was a ‘real line’.

Understanding the character of the Soviet leaders and leading personalities is crucial to analyzing Soviet foreign policy. Individuals, each with his or her own particular personality traits and psychological make-up, such as Lenin, Stalin, Khruschev and Brezhnev, differ markedly in their approach to politics and leadership, and other significant foreign-policy-makers, such as Krassin, Chicherin and Molotov, all practised different styles and interpretations. These differences
in personal style and ideological tendency all inevitably affect foreign-policy processes and positions.

Narkomindel, the Peoples’ Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, which Trotsky organized in his position as the first Commissar after the Bolsheviks seized power, was designed to be an effective instrument in Soviet foreign affairs. Officially, it was the central body or ministry that provided all the ordinary procedures and bureaux required to conduct foreign relations. But of course major foreign-policy decisions were not made in Narkomindel, but in the Politburo of the Russian Communist Party, which was the principal policy-making body in foreign affairs.

The first operating Politburo of the Russian Communist Party, created in 1919 at the Eighth Congress of the Party, included five full members – Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Kamenev and Krestinsky – and three candidates – Zinoviev, Bukharin and Kalinin. After 1919, debate and decision-making in foreign as well as domestic affairs was concentrated in the Politburo. During Lenin’s illnesses in 1922–23, the Politburo decided foreign-policy issues collectively, then transmitted its decisions to the Narkomindel, headed by Chicherin during this period, for implementation. However, when healthy, Lenin formulated basic theoretical and practical concepts of foreign policy himself. His fertile political imagination and tactical skills made him prominent in determining the general outlines of early Soviet foreign policy.

All the information collected by the Soviet intelligence network in Turkey, together with the official representatives of Moscow in Turkey and the Caucasus, came to the Politburo primarily through Narkomindel, which then made policy decisions accordingly. However, Komintern (the Communist International), with its wide network of local communist parties and individual contacts, also played an important role in this information-gathering process. In practice, the Politburo would transmit its decisions to Narkomindel for implementation, and Narkomindel’s role was thus limited to executing policies already determined by the Politburo. At local level the implementation of these decisions was always more problematic because they depended upon different interpretations by local Soviet representatives. Disagreements arising often reflected a clash between the rather romantic inclination of the Bolshevik representative in a specific locality and the pragmatic diplomacy of Chicherin in Moscow.

There is no simple explanation of Soviet foreign-policy behaviour, and simple stereotypes miss the more complicated motives that ultimately produced policy choices. Claims regarding the personalities of the Soviet leaders and leading officials tend unjustifiably to inject an irrational element into Soviet foreign policy, and thereby neglect the stabilizing influence of the Marxist–Leninist ideology in providing a continuity to Soviet/Russian state interests. In fact, all Soviet leaders were conditioned by Marxist–Leninist ideology concerning goals, world outlook and basic patterns of action, thus rendering a foreign policy that was not merely geographically determined by a search for warm-water ports, or the desire to conquer the world for communism. Rather, a kind of motivational triad appears to have formed an interlocking and mutually reinforcing influence that conditioned
Soviet behaviour. The elements of this triad include: (1) the maintenance of power by the ruling elite; (2) the preservation of state interests; and (3) the habits of thought and action derived from Marxist–Leninist ideology. The Soviet leaders obviously did not, and probably could not, always differentiate among these in forming reasons for their actions, but a close evaluation of the structure of their decision-making provides evidence of them.

The maintenance of power by the ruling elite

The ruling elite in the Soviet Union desired to maintain and increase their power above all else. They determined their policy decisions, both foreign and domestic, by the simple formula of ‘will such an action increase our political power?’ There are several variations and interpretations of this. Some authors emphasize the drive for power as the only motivating factor, while others offer a considerably more sophisticated view that admits the influence of ideology. In both cases, the consistent thread in the story of Soviet communism is that party leaders gave priority to the maintenance and expansion of their power. In part, this came from a love of personal power, but it was also supported by Marxist–Leninist ideology, which held that the Communist Party is the chosen instrument for the achievement of progress. Thus party leaders believed that maintaining power was both a duty and conferred a moral right to determine the correct path and force the majority to follow.

The preservation of state interest

Early in their regime, Soviet leaders began to rationalize any apparent conflict between the goals of world communism and the interests of the state. The devotion of the Soviet leaders to Soviet Russian interests was bound up with their commitment to Marxist-Leninist ideology – the third part of the motivational triology. In this way, the protection of state interests became a natural extension of the need to preserve personal power, the first primary motive in the trilogy, allowing Soviet leaders to claim that there was no basic conflict between the Soviet state and communist interests. In their view, anything advancing the interests of the Soviet state advanced the interests of world communism. Many non-Soviet communists also appear to have accepted this rationale, and thereby logically gave first priority to the defence of the Soviet Union as the ‘socialist fatherland’, which was considered indispensable for future revolutions. This then connected non-Soviet communists to the Soviet leadership’s concern for national survival, which required that Soviet security take precedence over all other state goals, including the furtherance of world communism: when Soviet minimum security was in jeopardy, the Soviet leaders emphasized their interest in world communism in muted form, but when Soviet rulers felt relatively secure, they pursued their goal more energetically. The Soviet leadership always stated publicly that world communism was a long-range goal that was subordinate to Soviet state security. As Stalin noted, ‘one Soviet tractor was worth more than ten good for-
eign communists’. Thus what was good for the Soviet Union by assumption was good for all communists. Stalin may have made the point rather crudely, but almost all the Soviet leadership shared this approach.

**The impact of Marxist-Leninist ideology**

Ideology had a profound influence on Soviet behaviour because it established particular long-range goals for foreign policy, and provided the Soviet leaders with a system of knowledge on which to build their view of the world, justified the party’s continuance in power, and justified the moral right of the party leaders to make foreign policy. It also provided a unique method of control that served to unify and coordinate the activities of communists all over the world. The Soviet commitment to world communism might have been only one-third of the trilogy of primary motivations, but the other two motives – the preservation of the leading role of the party elite, and the furthering of the Soviet state interest – came to be expressed in revolutionary terms and rationalized by that same ideology.2

‘Soviet Eastern policy’

The Communist International (Komintern) was established in Moscow in 1919 to coordinate the activities of the foreign communist parties according to the direction of the Russian Communist Party. At that time, Lenin believed that the revolutionary environment produced by the post-First World War chaos called for an entirely new international communist organization that would foster working-class solidarity and world revolution against the capitalist rulers of the West. The centre of the Komintern was to be in Moscow because it seemed only natural to locate it in the sole socialist country then in existence.

The structure of the Komintern was modelled on that of the Russian Communist Party, not because of any sinister design to ensure Russian domination, but simply because the Russian party was the only one to have carried out a successful revolution. However, in 1920 it subordinated all foreign communist parties to Moscow by imposing 21 conditions. Among these, communists were called upon to make propaganda within their own countries’ armed forces, make special efforts to win peasant support, and achieve emancipation of oppressed nationalities and colonial peoples. They were urged to remove reformists and centrists from all positions in the working-class movement, and to replace them with communists, denounce pacifism, accept all decisions of the Komintern as binding, take the name ‘Communist Party’, and expel all members who voted against accepting the 21 conditions at a congress called for the purpose of implementing them. Communist parties were also required to structure their organizations on the principle of ‘democratic centralism’, and to support unreservedly the interests of the Soviet Union.

For better or worse, communist parties emerged in foreign countries as the ideological allies and foreign-policy instruments of the Soviet Union. Komintern, in a radical departure from the precedents set by both the First and Second
Internationals, was no longer to be a series of national parties, but to act more as a single communist party with branches in different countries. Between congresses, the highest authority was to be the Executive Committee of the Komintern, which would have powers parallel to and superseding the powers of the Central Committees of the individual parties, which would allow it to be directive centre of the world revolution.

At first, the Komintern was purely a westward-looking organization. A considerable number of recruits came from Western countries and strengthened the belief that world revolution in Western industrialized countries was quickly approaching. The Bolsheviks were convinced that the proletarian revolution was afoot all over Europe and sweeping everything before it. But by the autumn of 1920, Soviet leaders began to fear that revolution in the West might not be imminent after all. Failures in Germany and Hungary, and the consolidation of a belt of anti-communist regimes between the Soviet Union and the defeated Central Powers, caused them to reconsider their analysis, and while it did not lead them to abandon the idea of the coming world revolution in the West, it refocused their attention on the revolutionary potential that the East might offer.

Lenin was very concerned with Asia, and as hopes failed after the Polish War in October 1920 he turned his attention to the colonies of the Western powers. In them he saw a way of using bourgeois nationalist revolutions to deprive imperialist powers of the raw materials and markets that he believed to be necessary for their survival. In almost all his communications and reports in 1920, he pointedly referred to Asia, observing that ‘One of the chief causes hampering the revolutionary working-class movement in the developed capitalist countries is the fact that because of their colonial possessions and the super-profits gained by finance capital’. If Europe had failed them, Asia could revive their flagging spirits.

The Bolshevik leadership decided that the capitalist world must be undermined by the loss of its colonies before communism could succeed in the West, reasoning that revolution in the East and the destruction of the system of imperial control might have to precede revolution in the West. This was the key element in the revolutionary struggle because ‘about 70 percent of the world population belong to the oppressed nations, which are either in a state of direct colonial dependence or are semi-colonies, as, for example, Persia, Turkey and China, …’ At the Komintern’s Second Congress, in 1920, Lenin officially introduced the new eastern orientation, the so-called ‘Soviet Eastern Policy’. Lenin went so far as to suggest that with Soviet aid and propaganda, it might be possible for Asia to skip the capitalist stage and move towards socialism before a European revolution.

It must be remembered that the West lives at the expense of the East: the imperialist powers of Europe grow rich chiefly at the expense of the eastern colonies, but at the same time they are arming their colonies and teaching them to fight. By so doing, the West is digging its own grave in the East.

Although Soviet foreign affairs never took a wholly eastern or wholly western orientation, after 1920 there was increasing interest in eastern revolution-
ary prospects and a clear and mostly consistent shift towards an eastern political tilt.

As part of the Komintern strategy, pro-Soviet communists offered solidarity with the anti-imperialist national liberation movements in the East. For the Bolsheviks, the October Revolution had built a bridge between the ‘enlightened’ West and the ‘enslaved’ East, which provided the basis for an appeal by the Soviet leadership to colonial peoples at the Komintern-sponsored Congress of Peoples of the East in Baku, Azerbaijan, in September 1920. Thereafter, the Komintern set up the Council of Propaganda and Actions of the Peoples of the East, with its location in Baku. These actions marked a turning point in Soviet foreign policy that revived the suspicions of Muslims about the Soviet Union, which the Soviet government had been taking such pains to eradicate. As a consequence, numerous links were established by the Bolsheviks with the Muslim peoples of the East, and many Asian revolutionaries were trained in the Soviet Union, all of which had profound consequences for the West.

In the years following 1920, the Bolsheviks tried to strengthen this bridge by advocating a united front between communists and eastern nationalists against western imperialism. In doing this, the Soviet government applied a multi-faceted strategy of concurrent alternative policies, which simultaneously combined ‘peaceful co-existence’ and ‘fraternal aid’ to communist parties and movements with collaboration and assistance to reactionary nationalist governments who were suppressing those same parties and movements. This flexible strategy made it possible for the Soviet Union to infiltrate target countries to further its ‘cause’ and its influence. This flexibility also permitted the use of all available means — communist parties, international organizations, and even occasionally reactionary parties. In the end, the decisive factor for the Soviet Union was not necessarily the success of a particular communist party, but rather whether the foreign-policy goals of the Soviet Union were advanced. World communism remained the publicly stated, long-range maximum goal, but always secondary to the immediate goal of achieving Soviet state interests.

Beginning in the early 1920s, the Bolshevik Politburo developed several activities in a number of countries in the East. In each case, there were basically three players. The main player was the Bolshevik Politburo in Moscow, which naturally knew all about different spheres of Soviet foreign-policy activities because it was planning and implementing them. The second player was the bourgeois–nationalist government of the foreign country, naturally aware of its own foreign relations and interests but not fully aware of the ties between the Kremlin and the local communists. The third actor was the local communist party, whose members, and even leaders, knew almost nothing of what was going on between Moscow and their country’s bourgeois–nationalist government.

Being in the dark seriously handicapped the local party, but it allowed Moscow to negotiate with a bourgeois–nationalist government and at the same time control the local communist party. A bourgeois–nationalist government could then deal freely with Moscow and at the same time crack down on the local communist party. Caught in the middle, the local party was at one and the same
time unable to oppose Moscow’s policies and effectively resist reprisals by the bourgeois–nationalist government. This policy frustrated the Komintern purposes throughout its lifetime. An early example of this conflict was the ‘Black Sea affair’, which occurred in Turkey in the late 1920s and represented the tragic history of the Komintern in the East.

**Soviet Eastern policy and Turkey**

In conformity with the new eastern orientation of its foreign policy during the early 1920s, the Soviet government pursued common interests with the nationalist government of Turkey. Drawn together by a mutual fear of the plans and activities of the Western powers in the region, Soviet Russia and Kemalist Turkey moved to an uneasy rapprochement. This might be explained in terms of old-fashioned power politics, as Soviet Russia was heir to imperial Russia and certainly had no intention of abandoning the Caucasus to other powers, whether Western or Eastern.

When Bekir Sami, the Turkish envoy, came to Moscow in July 1920, he was confronted with a proposal from Chicherin that Turkey relinquish Van, Bitlis and Mus to Armenia and engage in an exchange of populations so as to restore the Armenian population to those territories. Bekir Sami replied that Turkey would not surrender an inch of territory. Curiously, this did not prevent Lenin from receiving Bekir Sami in person, and did not stop the signing of the Draft Treaty of Friendship between Turkey and the Soviet Union on 24 August 1920. Against the wishes of Chicherin, the Soviet–Turkish Treaty was then signed on 16 March 1921. In its preamble, it committed both countries to the ‘struggle against imperialism’, which reflected Moscow’s position that a Turkish alliance against British imperialism was far more important than sparing the sensibilities of a few Armenians and Georgians. Thus began a long era of Soviet–Turkish friendship that was again confirmed by the December 1925 treaty. None of this appears to have affected the troubled relations between the Turkish government and its indigenous communists.

Aid from the Soviet Union to or an alliance with a local government or a ‘bourgeois’ national movement against ‘imperialists’ always posed the danger that the non-communist ‘client’ might turn against the local communists, and there was no real escape from this dilemma. In the Turkish case, the third party, Türkiye Komünist Partisi, TKP (the Communist Party of Turkey), although always politically and financially supported by Moscow, was a loser from birth. The conflicted relationship between Moscow and the Turkish communists continued throughout, even to the end of the Soviet Union and the Communist Party of Turkey.

Marxist ideas began to penetrate Turkey towards the end of the nineteenth century. During the First World War, many Turkish socialists in Germany as students of technical colleges became associated with the Spartacus League. At the same time, another group of Turkish socialists in Russia were eyewitnesses to the Russian Revolution. Consequently, the Communist Party of
Turkey, one of the oldest political parties in Turkey and among the oldest communist parties in the Middle East, was founded in Baku in September 1920, the same year that the Chinese Communist Party was founded. Organized in the shadow of the Russian Revolution, the Turkish communists adopted a Leninist organization before most other countries, and Turkish communists played an active part in Komintern affairs. Sefik Husnü, one of the leaders of the party, was a member of the Executive Committee of the Komintern until 1936.

In September 1920, soon after its establishment, the leadership of the Communist Party of Turkey decided to shift the centre of its activities to Turkey. Later that year, party leader Mustafa Subhi and other leading members of the party left Baku for Anatolia. They openly entered this country, which turned out to be sheer bad timing! The group could not proceed further than Trabzon, and on 28 January 1921, Mustafa Subhi and 15 other leading communists were put in a boat destined for Batum. However, immediately after they embarked, another boat left the harbour and overtook them. The details are obscure, except that what is known is that no one on the first boat survived – a classic Ottoman-style elimination.

This incident did not have a serious impact on Turkish–Soviet relations; it was simply noted and put aside by both parties in a business-like fashion. The experience, however, is significantly rich in lessons. The murder of the leading Turkish communists in early 1921 represents the first example of the failure of the Soviet dilemma in the East: how to support the anti-communist leadership of a national liberation movement and at the same time to sponsor and organize local communist groups against the nationalist leadership of the country. When the Kemalist leadership openly started to root out all communist activities in Turkey, the protests made at world communist gatherings did not affect the good diplomatic and economic relations between Moscow and Ankara. The Soviet government chose to continue its official policy of cooperation with Ankara, regardless of the fate of the local communists loyal to Moscow. This was the first but not the last time that the interests of Soviet foreign policy directly affected other communist parties.

During the 1920s, the communists and socialists were weak and were thus denied any part in the new Turkey. The Turkish government under Mustafa Kemal pursued a cat-and-mouse policy towards local communists: sometimes they were tolerated, and at other times repressed – but most often they were repressed. Kemal banned the party in 1925, and after that the Communist Party of Turkey was forced underground for most of its history, with its membership repeatedly facing mass detentions. The activities of these early communists could hardly aim at revolution, and the Bolshevik leadership in Moscow had no illusion about it. Sultan-Galiev, one of the top Muslim communists in the Soviet hierarchy, openly acknowledged in 1920 that: ‘Turkish communists consist of a group of underground workers, former Turkish prisoners of war in Russia. This group is not particularly large, but works very intensely’. Another leading Bolshevik, the top Soviet expert on Turkey, Pavlowitch said in 1921: ‘the Turkish
people, due to historical reasons of adherence to religion, cannot at this moment accept the communist programme’.11

The Sixth Komintern Congress, held in 1928, was the scene of a dispute between the Turkish delegate, who stated that Mustafa Kemal had gone over completely to the camp of the counter-revolution, and Otto Kuusinen, one of the top officials in the Komintern apparatus, who said in his draft theses that Kemal’s struggle against imperialism was still a progressive factor. Like the Turkish question, Kuusinen’s official theses were attacked by the Persian delegate, Sultan Zade, who said that Riza Shah was not a representative of ‘nationalism and progress’, as Kuusinen claimed, but the representative of the ‘reactionary forces in Persia’. Neither of these complaints had much effect. The fundamental strategic requirement – to support national movements against Western imperialism whatever their domestic character – was upheld throughout the whole period of the Komintern’s existence and into the 1960s and 1970s.

The Soviet leaders continued to support Turkish communists financially and politically, almost to the end of the Soviet Union. At the same time, they knew that at least until 1960 there was no chance of a communist revolution, or even a significant left-wing presence in Turkey. The Soviet leaders knew that conditions were not ripe for a true revolution and probably never would be, and they were careful not to provoke a British or (after 1945) American counter-move, or sacrifice good relations with the nationalist government in Ankara. This sensitive balancing act characterized Soviet policy toward Turkey at all times.

The Communist Party of Turkey was one of the most loyal to Moscow, and throughout this period Turkish communists closely followed Moscow’s lead and remained tightly controlled by elements responsive to Moscow. The party did not express any strong interest in independence in making its own decisions and judgements, and thus did not attempt to formulate its own strategy and tactics based on the conditions of Turkish state and society. To begin with, the party had very little contact with the Turkish people, but consisted primarily of a scattered group of self-converted communists. These small numbers of members were almost entirely middle class, and although the party attracted many Turkish intellectuals, such as Nazim Hikmet, the best-known poet of Turkey, its leadership was composed of de-classed intellectuals with university-level education. In this way, the party’s mind was the mind of Western-educated Turkish middle class intellectuals.

At a meeting in 1973 of the Politburo of the Communist Party of Turkey and some cadres from the 1968 youth movement, it was decided that a new attempt would be made to achieve a breakthrough in Turkey. A new programme was drafted, and a new and more effective radio station, TKP’nin Sesi (Voice of the Communist Party of Turkey), began broadcasting from Leipzig. As a result, for the first time the Communist Party of Turkey became an effective political force within Turkey. In 1977, the party held a conference in Moscow, its biggest organizational gathering since its Fourth Congress in 1932, and during the later 1970s the entire balance of influence within the Turkish Left shifted as the party secured most of the key posts within the trade union movement.
After the military coup of 12 September 1980, an extensive campaign of persecutions and arrests was launched against all democratic movements, including the Communist Party of Turkey. The number of party members who were arrested or sentenced to prison on the basis of the articles 141 and 142 of the Turkish Penal Code (taken directly from the legislation of fascist Italy) numbered in the thousands. In October 1983, the party held its Fifth Congress in Moscow, and soon after it merged with the Türkiye Isçi Partisi (Workers’ Party of Turkey), adopting in 1987 the name Türkiye Birleşik Komünist Partisi, TBKP (United Communist Party of Turkey). Upon their return to Turkey, the general secretaries of both parties were immediately arrested and detained until 1990. In 1990, a group of founders of the TBKP applied for legal status of the party, but this was denied in a 1991 decision by the Constitutional Court.

The shifting priorities of Soviet foreign policy, and the changing agenda of Soviet Eastern policy, substantially affected Moscow’s interests in the activities of Turkish communists. The support given to and influence exercised over the Communist Party of Turkey provide a good illustration of how various sources motivated Soviet foreign policy, particularly with respect to the Third World and Soviet Eastern Policy.

This book seeks to provide a chronological framework that examines the extent to which the Soviet Union affected the course of Turkish politics, and the degree to which Moscow exploited Turkey’s communists to its advantage. Within this research, I would like to discover what Soviet leaders and policymakers were expecting to achieve in Turkey, including their short-term aims, and their long-term goals in supporting Turkey’s small contingent of communists. I would also like to see how this policy was first formulated, and how it went through various stages, to ask to what extent it was affected by the general changes in Soviet foreign policy, and how it might explain shifts and changing policy orientations within the Turkish communist movement in relation to critical points in the history of Soviet foreign policy. Finally, I would like to show how changing Soviet perceptions of the international situation in general, and their relations with the Muslim peoples of the East in particular, affected the style and amount of Soviet support provided to the Communist Party of Turkey.

The conventional analysis of Soviet interests in a particular country as a combination of geo-strategic, historical, political and ideological factors misses the important question of ‘how’ this occurred: in what combination, or changing combinations, and in relation to what internal as well as international situations? The themes and the associated events recounted here should provide the groundwork from which to build a thorough investigation of Soviet Eastern policy. In particular, these questions need to be re-investigated in the post-Cold War period, and the opening of the Soviet state archives in Moscow, as well as the recent acquisition of a number of collections on Turkish political parties by the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam, make it possible for historians and social scientists to look afresh at this complicated issue. In addition, the book contributes an
interesting narrative and point of view that offers a new interpretation of the evolution of ‘Soviet Eastern Policy’ and Soviet relations with Turkey.

There is no single book in English or in Turkish on Soviet Eastern policy and Turkey or Moscow’s impact on Turkish politics. Neither is there a full account of the connections between the Comintern and the communist movement in Turkey. There exist several scholarly studies of Turkish communism, but none of them spans the period covered here.12

G. S. Harris, *Origins of Communism in Turkey* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institute, 1967) is, perhaps, the only book that deals with the communist movement in Turkey directly, and this work covers only the early period up to 1925. I. Lipovsky, *The Socialist movement in Turkey 1960–1980* (Leiden: Brill, 1992) offers a detailed description of the temporary institutionalization of the Turkish Marxist Left between 1960 and 1980, but there are only a few pages concerning the history of the Turkish Left before 1960. Similarly, D. Quataert and E. J. Zürcher (eds), *Workers and the Working Class in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic, 1839–1950* (London: Tauris, 1995) investigates the growth of the industrial workforce in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, with special attention devoted to the role of ethnicity and gender, to the transition from traditional guilds to modern trade unions, work stoppages and strikes, and the role of the state. While this is all very interesting and useful, it does not deal with the impact of Russian Bolshevism on the development of the communist and socialist movements in Turkey. I. Spector, *The Soviet Union and the Muslim World, 1917–1958* (University of Washington Press, 1959) has a chapter on Soviet–Turkish relations, and several pages about the Communist Party of Turkey, and usefully combines official inter-state relations with the Communist International’s semi-official activities. However, the treatment of Turkey is now outdated.

2 The opening act

End of the First World War: the Soviet Union and Turkey

The end of the First World War effectively destroyed the power centres in the Near East by excluding tsarist Russian, German and Ottoman empires from the political scene for the foreseeable future. With all of Britain’s wartime rivals defeated, and the Bolsheviks fighting for their own existence in the Russian Civil War, the most likely solution appeared to be for Britain to impose ‘order’ as the victorious force in the lands stretching from the Caspian in the East to the European hinterland of the Black Sea Straits in the West. These vast lands, which had been partly under the sovereignty of the former Russian Empire and partly under the Ottoman Empire, suddenly became an area of British interest.

The favourable circumstances of the post-war euphoria created an overly optimistic view of building a new status quo under the direct control of the British Empire. Britain claimed the area, based on the dominant role that it had played in defeating the Ottoman Empire, which had previously controlled it. Under the Treaty of Sèvres, signed on 10 August 1920, Britain and its allies settled on the terms under which a substantial part of Ottoman territory was detached, severely limiting its national sovereignty and preserving the pre-war arrangement of extra-territorial rights for Westerners (extended even to Allies not previously recognized), and internationalized the Straits.

These events also had a direct impact on the lands of the former Russian Empire, which were at the time embroiled in a civil war between Lenin’s Bolsheviks and the so-called White Russian armies that sought to restore the tsarist empire of the past. The Bolsheviks had renounced the earlier Russian claims to the territories of Istanbul and eastern Anatolia, which had been promised to Russia by the wartime agreements among the Allies. Their objective was to stop the flow of arms and men which the British and the Greeks were sending through Istanbul and the Black Sea to support the White Russian armies. The British arms were accompanied by a large number of Greek soldiers, also sent to support the White Russian armies, who by then had massacred thousands of Jews as well as Russians who supported the Bolsheviks in southern Russia.
This optimistic vision, however, did not long survive. During this same period, a Turkish national resistance movement had been born and was rapidly growing in Thrace and Anatolia. Shortly after the Treaty of Sèvres, and only three years after its organization, this national resistance movement succeeded in tilting the balance of power in its favour and moved to establish a sovereign state in Anatolia and Thrace. At the same time, the Bolsheviks too sufficiently consolidated their power enough to claim to be sovereign representatives of the young Soviet state. Strengthened by a series of military victories against the White Russian armies, and having already established a secure base of power in Russia, the Soviet regime became a formidable contender for supremacy through the considerable length and breath of the Caucasus. The Soviet state had from the beginning of its post-war political and military conflict been the champion of anti-Western nationalist sentiments. Thus, following the motto ‘my enemy’s enemy is my friend’, it capitalized on any opportunity that could serve its own interests, and gave material and diplomatic assistance to anyone showing anti-Western tendencies, quickly becoming the diplomatic power that most opposed the British-led Allied bloc from Thrace to the Caucasus.

In these circumstances, and because they shared a common threat from the Western Allies, Turkish nationalists and Russian Bolsheviks were able to reach a mutually advantageous settlement. Their cooperation was based on several considerations: fear of foreign intervention, opposition to the Versailles Treaty, a desire that the Turkish Straits remain under Turkish control, and suspicion of the League of Nations. From the beginning the Soviet government showed that it was ready to offer assistance to the Turkish national movement as long as that movement opposed the enemies of the Soviet state.

It was a practical necessity for Ankara to rely on the material help and diplomatic recognition of Soviet Russia in its opposition to the British effort to divide Turkey. However, for the Bolsheviks, supporting the national struggle in Turkey was a strategic move as well as an ideological investment: strategic in that a friendly Turkish state would protect the vulnerable southern flank of Soviet Russia, and ideological in that its support for a fight by ‘revolutionary masses’ of an Asian country against the Western powers was an important duty for the Soviet socialist government.

From the beginning, the British authorities tried to stop all communist and pro-Soviet activities in the region, initiating extensive surveillance and actively using vigorous techniques of control. British Foreign Office documents reveal the extent of this activity. On 12 April 1920, Admiral Webb sent from Istanbul to the British Foreign Office a ‘list of undesirables whom it is proposed to deport’. The list included nine Russians, one Ukrainian, and one Chinese, living in Istanbul and Prinkipo, and all were accused of being Bolshevik agents. Early the following month, the Director of Military Intelligence issued a detailed report on the activities of Bolshevik agents in Istanbul. According to the report, there were ‘a good many agents and they usually confine themselves to the low quarters of Galata and Stamboul, frequenting beer halls and coffee houses, and disseminating their propaganda among sailors, hamals, lower class workmen...
and riff-raff of the city’.4 One document is particularly interesting and representative of other documents in that it indicated the serious level of concern among the British authorities concerning the communist threat in Turkey. It was related to the visit of a representative from the Greek Communist Party to Istanbul in late 1922, and was titled as a Secret Political Report, dated 7 November 1922. It offers the following description of ‘a delegate, whose name is given as Nicolas Zairimis, arrived in Constantinople from Athens on the 15th October, on behalf of the Greek Communist Party’. The report goes on to say that ‘a special meeting of the Committee of the IWW [Industrial Workers of the World] was held on Saturday, the 21st October, at 7.30 p.m., Zairimis was chief spokesman, and stated that he had come to Constantinople to study the feeling among the Greek proletariat [in the city] and to find out whether the IWW and the kindred organizations would cooperate with the Communist Party in Greece in forming a “united front . . .”’5

Initial contacts

The young Bolshevik government viewed the British control of the Straits, Istanbul and the Black Sea (an area traditionally regarded as the most sensitive to the overall security of Russia) with increasing concern. From the time the armistice at Mudros was concluded, the possibility of a powerful anti-Bolshevik attack initiated by Britain from the South through the Turkish lands had been considered.6

The Greek landing in Smyrna (Izmir) increased this anxiety. The Bolshevik leadership believed that Greek operations were directly controlled by the British Empire and Greek expansion in Asia Minor was thus regarded as a threat to the Soviet regime. A powerful Greece extending into Asia Minor could have blocked the Soviet access to the Mediterranean in the long term. The frontiers of Greek expansion, according to the Bolsheviks, would not necessarily stop at western Anatolia. In Moscow’s eyes there was a danger that the Greeks would ‘try to create the Great Armenian–Byzantine state’ in eastern and northern Anatolia which ‘could serve as a gable to hold on the fire of imperialism’ on the borders of Soviet Russia.7 In the light of these developments it was natural for the Bolshevik regime to try to establish close contacts with those elements in Turkey who were opposed to the Allied scheme in their native lands.

The first signs of an actual step to initiate relations between Turkish nationalists and the Bolsheviks can be traced back to early 1919. During the first half of 1919, a number of telegrams and reports, which were sent to Chicherin from south Russia and Transcaucasia, described the situation in Constantinople and Anatolia in great detail. There is a Narkomindel report dated 20 April 1919 about the severe measures taken by the Allies in Constantinople against the Turkish communists and the leading nationalists. The report states that ‘in Constantinople alone the Allied police arrested 300 Turkish communists’. It continues with the observation that all such acts of repression increased anti-Western and pro-Soviet sentiment among the Turkish population.8 The first
actual contacts between the Turkish and Soviet sides were established in the Crimea, which was at the time like an isolated island between the British-controlled Caucasus and the Ukraine, which had been invaded by the French. In the Crimea, a government had been established under the premiership of General Sulkevitch at the end of January 1918 under the protection of the Germans (who at that time had occupied the region). Following the defeat of the Central Powers the entire situation in the Crimea was totally changed. On 16 November General Koch, commander of the German troops in the Crimea, had notified the Crimean Tatar nationalists that he would no longer support their government. A new government was formed, which had established contacts with General Denikin and the Allies. However, the control of the Allies and that of the White forces in the Crimea remained very limited, and the activities of the pro-Bolshevik groups continued almost intact.

As part of the Bolshevik agitation campaign, a group of Turkish communists arrived in the Crimea from Moscow on 22 January 1919. These communists, led by Mustafa Subhi, were the leading members of the Centre of All Russian Muslims, which had been established in Moscow after the October Revolution in 1917. Subhi had been organizing socialist propaganda and agitation in Moscow through a Turkish paper called *Yeni Dünyay* (New World). He and his comrades organized a bureau of Muslim communists in the Crimea and started to coordinate communist activities geared towards Anatolia, and began shipping men and propaganda material across the Black Sea. When Denikin attacked the Crimea on 23 April 1919, the group moved to Odessa. The same day *Izvestiia* ran a report on the local opposition movements to the Allied presence in Anatolia and acclaimed it as ‘the beginning of the first Soviet revolution in Asia’. The Turkish communists arrived in Odessa in early May and from there, according to Subhi’s account, went in two separate groups to Turkey in the second half of May: one to Constantinople, the other to a Black Sea port of Anatolia. This date actually coincides with Kemal’s landing at Samsun on 19 May 1919. A few days later, on 25 May, Kemal went to the neighbouring town of Havza and, according to several Turkish sources, there he met a Bolshevik delegation. Since there are no other details about the meeting one can only speculate on the members of the Bolshevik delegation. But as the date of the meeting quoted by the Turkish accounts coincides with the possible date of arrival of the Turkish communists as mentioned by Subhi, it seems likely that this Bolshevik delegation might be the group of Turkish communists sent from Odessa by Subhi.

On 12 June Kemal went to Amasya, an inland town 100 miles south of Samsun, from where he sent a telegram to Karabekir describing the situation and the contact with the Bolsheviks. The main emphasis of Kemal’s telegram was the possibility of a particular use of the antagonism between the Bolsheviks and the British. He was not proposing Soviet–Turkish cooperation at this stage, but rather emphasizing the threat that such cooperation would pose to the British. From his headquarters at Erzurum, an important trading centre in north-east Anatolia 300 miles from Samsun, Karabekir sent a positive reply to Kemal. His advice was for Kemal to continue contacts with the Bolsheviks by all possible
means. He was, however, very concerned not to take an open pro-Bolshevik position and advised Kemal to be cautious about British propaganda. The best approach, according to Karabekir, would be to maintain contact with the Bolsheviks at a personal and unofficial level for the time being and not to give the impression that the Turks were desperate for Soviet help.¹⁷

The issue of contacts with the Bolsheviks was on the agenda of the first historical meeting of Kemal with two other prominent national leaders in Amasya. At this meeting, Kemal, Rauf Orbay, former naval minister and Ottoman delegate to Mudros, Ali Fuat Cebesoy, commander of the 20th Army Corps in Ankara, and Refet Bele,¹⁸ the highest-ranking member of Kemal’s own staff, signed a protocol on 21 June.¹⁹ The protocol, known as the Amasya Proclamation (*tanim*), was soon approved by Kazim Karabekir. With the Amasya Proclamation the principles of national resistance were drawn up in an attempt to unite ‘all individual and regional efforts . . . into one channel’.²⁰

Soviet–Turkish relations stayed on the agenda throughout the year and were discussed in much detail at the two conferences of great importance for the early stages of the national movement: the Erzurum Congress in July/August 1919 and the Sivas Congress a month later.²¹ These two congresses brought together various local resistance centres from all over the country and formulated the basic aims of national resistance as the preservation of territorial integrity and national (*milli*)²² independence. Armed action was not ruled out against the occupying forces if necessary.²³ The congresses of Erzurum and Sivas were also fundamental in preparing Mustafa Kemal’s career as self-appointed leader of the national struggle. By keeping his relations balanced with different parts of the movement, and alloying himself with his influential political and personal friends (Karabekir and Ali Fuat were the most important), Kemal gradually emerged as an obvious choice to lead the struggle.²⁴ He soon established businesslike contacts with the other local, religious and military leaders. He was appreciated for his mind, his energy and his political vigour. Kemal was elected as the chairman and directed the discussions in both Erzurum and Sivas congresses.²⁵

While the Turkish nationalist leadership was busy discussing and formalizing the possibilities and the prospects of a relationship with the Bolsheviks to provide support for the Turkish resistance movement in Anatolia, another contact was established through a different channel. The main architect of this link was Enver Pasha, Turkey’s flamboyant wartime leader, still influential yet somewhat quixotic. With the other leading Unionists, he had fled from Turkey immediately after the conclusion of the armistice and ended up in Berlin among a small colony of Turkish political refugees towards the end of 1918.²⁶

Enver held a number of discussions with the Soviet emissary Karl Radek, who was in prison in Berlin.²⁷ The main theme of these discussions was to create an anti-Entente alliance between Turkey, Soviet Russia and Germany. Several high-ranking German military officers also participated. Enver Pasha, determined to fight what he called ‘the second phase of the war’, identified the conflict in Turkish lands as an opportunity to create a powerful front against the Allies.²⁸ We know from the Turkish sources that Enver Pasha went to Moscow a year later
in mid-1920 and continued his contacts there for an ambitious Soviet–German–Turkish alliance. Very little is known about the results of these talks and there has been a great deal of speculation regarding the significance of the whole project. But a number of Soviet documents indicate that Enver Pasha played an important role in the Bolsheviks’ approach to the Anatolian movement during its first three years – 1919 to 1921.

There exists, for example, a Narkomindel letter written in April 1921 to the Central Committee of the RCP(B) which states that ‘Enver has already showed great sacrifice for the realisation of the Turkish–Soviet relations’. However, the most important evidence we have of this phase of Turkish–Soviet–German relations consists of a letter to the Narkomindel from Berlin, written by Major Tschunke. Fritz Tschunke, as a military expert, played a central role in the military relations among the three countries. Tschunke’s letter, dated 14 July 1920, states that an agreement had already been reached in Moscow according to which military and political authorities in Germany had agreed to provide material assistance to the anti-Entente struggle in the region. The letter asks Narkomindel about the practical conditions of delivery by saying that the Germans were ready to dispatch the military material through the Turkish Black Sea port of Trabzon, about halfway between Samsun and Batum, or directly in Petrograd.

It is of course difficult to assess the real significance of such an agreement on the basis of Tschunke’s letter. It would not be very erroneous, however, on the basis of a number of other references to the case, to assume that such an understanding did play an important role in the realization of Soviet–Turkish cooperation in terms of financial and military help to the Anatolian struggle. In addition to these a number of eyewitness accounts emphasize the fact that German money and armaments (which had come through Russia) had a crucial impact on the Turkish national struggle.

In this way, through a couple of channels, connections were established between two anti-British forces in the region. There was a mutually shared expediency, which brought two forces together with the common aim of undermining British designs in the region. Britain’s decision to withdraw from the Caucasus came at the point when both the Russian Bolsheviks and the Turkish nationalists started to seek further means of collective action in order to strengthen their respective positions against British power. The British decision to withdraw from the Caucasus (partly by choice, partly of necessity, and partly against their will) was a tactical political retreat from the more expensive of British objectives. They sought to play safe by securing their positions in the lands of Turkey rather than a costly confrontation with the Bolsheviks. A firm-handed policy in Turkish affairs would facilitate a quick settlement and the country could be isolated from the potentially dangerous events of the Caucasus and south Russia, and perhaps could act as a positive catalyst in their affairs. The Caucasus, therefore, provided a convenient means/arena in which to put this cooperation into practice.

The Caucasus acquired a critical status in the Bolshevik strategy from mid-1919 onwards. Britain’s intensified involvement in Turkey and its announced intention of withdrawing troops from Russia provided an opportunity for the
Bolsheviks to consolidate their power within the Caucasian lands of the former Russian Empire and to fortify Russia’s sensitive southern flank against the tightening British grip in the Black Sea and the Turkish Straits. The positive steps towards an alliance with the Turks provided an extra bonus in the Bolsheviks’ Caucasian campaign, enabling them to mobilize a significant part of the Turkic–Muslim population of the Caucasus to their side.

**A strong wind blows from the East**

The East is a revolutionary cauldron capable of putting a revolutionary torch to all of Western Europe.

(Sultan-Galiev in 1920)\(^{38}\)

Despite increasingly close links and expectations, there was an alarming reason which reinforced Ankara’s suspicion about the intentions of the Soviet government in this period. It was related to the increased activities of local communists and pro-Soviet propaganda in Anatolia.

In the encouraging atmosphere of friendship between the Bolsheviks and Turkish national movement, left-wing activities gained momentum in Anatolia. Among these the Green Army Association (Yesil Ordu Cemiyeti) occupies an important place. The Green Army Association was founded in Anatolia in the spring of 1920 ‘to liberate Asia from the penetration and occupation of European imperialism’. According to its constitution, the Green Army Association was an anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist and anti-militarist organization, and aimed to establish a socialist union in the world of Islam by modifying the Russian Revolution.\(^{39}\) The founders of this Islamic communist organization were initially on friendly terms with Mustafa Kemal. However, when Ethem the Circassian joined the organization it was regarded as a possible threat to Mustafa Kemal’s authority. Ethem was one of the most prestigious leaders of the early period of the Turkish national resistance, and his powerful rural guerrilla movement, Kuva-yi Seyyare, undertook most of the active resistance in Anatolia up until late 1920. The political wing of the Green Army Association set up a group among the deputies of the Grand National Assembly in Ankara, called the People’s Group (Halk Zumresi). The political programme of the People’s Group was an eclectic mixture of pan-Islamism and egalitarian populism. This prompted a hostile attitude from Mustafa Kemal. In a letter dated 14 September 1920, to Ali Fuat Cebesoy, he identifies the People’s Group as a dangerous enterprise.\(^{40}\)

Another organization was founded in the summer of 1920 in Ankara named the Illegal Turkish Communist Party. This was a strongly pro-Bolshevik organization and some Turkish communists recently returned from Russia took an active part within its ranks. According to some accounts Sherif Manatov,\(^{41}\) the Soviet representative in Anatolia, played a major role in the formation of this party.\(^{42}\) Within a couple of months of its existence the party began to search for new outlets in order to broaden its base and to acquire a powerful position. As a
first move it became an officially recognized legal party, renaming itself the People’s Communist Party (THIF) on 7 December 1920.43

At this point Mustafa Kemal staged a cunning venture. On 18 October 1920, he instructed some of his close associates to set up an official communist party (TKF) in Ankara, and through this party applied to join the Komintern. Although the Komintern rejected this application, it was obviously an act geared to secure Bolshevik help, albeit in an unconventional way with a puppet party. The ideology of the TKF was drawn from a weak theoretical argument based on an equivocal difference between Bolshevism and communism. The official party identified Bolshevism as an exclusively Russian experience; therefore it did not claim to be Bolshevik. On the other hand, although it defined itself as communist, this was a very peculiar type of communism aiming for a ‘unique Anatolian regime’ which was not to be based on class struggle but would organize, instead, rich and poor together to fight the foreign oppression. It can be argued that this typical populist jargon was far from communism but used the label ‘communist’ for the sake of its emotional appeal to the Soviet Union.44

However, by far the most well-prepared and well-connected communist movement was the Moscow-supported Communist Party of Turkey (TKP) organized and led by Mustafa Subhi ever since. In 1919 and 1920, Mustafa Subhi acted as the head of the propaganda bureau of the Third International in Turkestân.45 Subhi’s group participated in the Baku Congress of September 1920, promoting the Communist Party of Turkey as a significant force in the anti-imperialist fight in the world of colonies and semi-colonies.

Between 1 and 7 September 1920, the First Congress of the Peoples of the East met in Baku, capital of Soviet Azerbaijan. Some two thousand delegates from more than twenty Asian peoples convened there, to discuss and define with the Bolshevik leaders and delegates of the Western proletariat a common strategy against imperialism and for world revolution. The Baku Congress was a highlight of the revolutionary period opened up by the October Revolution. Once more it stressed, for the national and anti-colonial revolutions, the necessity of a ‘double-revolution’ strategy (thus with the reaffirmation of the working class’s leading role) as the keystone that would really unite the struggles of the peoples of the East to those of the proletarians of the West.

The Congress of the Peoples of the East gave much concern to the British. The summons to the congress came from the Komintern and was first published in Izvestiia on 3 July. It was addressed exclusively to the ‘enslaved peoples of Persia, Armenia, and Turkey’. Turkish people were called to resist the Allied Powers who were controlling Constantinople and western Anatolia.

Peasants of Anatolia! The English, Italian and French governments have kept Constantinople under the fire of their guns; they have imprisoned the Sultan, have forced him to agree to the dismemberment of purely Turkish territory, and have handed over Turkish finances to foreign financiers, in order to facilitate the plundering of the Turkish people impoverished by six years of war.
Peasants of Anatolia! You are urgently called to the colors under Kemal-Pasha, in order to fight the foreign invasion, but at the same time we know that you are trying to form your own national party, your own peasants’ party, which would be able to continue the fight in the event that the Pashas should continue peace with the rapacious Entente.

The idea of convening a Muslim congress originated with A. Zeki Velidi Togan, a prominent Bashkir from Muslim Central Asia. Togan was in Moscow in 1919, and worked closely with Karl Radek before moving to Central Asia in spring 1920. To Radek, Moscow was the obvious choice for such a congress to rally the leaders of the Muslim East round the Bolshevist cause. Togan was in favour of choosing a place in the East – possibly in Central Asia. Baku was chosen mainly because it was already serving as a refuge for many communists of Armenian, Georgian, Persian, Turkish and other nationalities of the East. Because of its geographical location it was readily accessible to the Muslim peoples of Soviet Russia and the Iranians, as well as to the Turks and the Arabs from the South.

Ordzhonikidze and Zinoviev were chosen by Lenin as the main organizers of the Congress, with help from those Bolsheviks who had some experience with the Eastern affairs. Thus Anastas Mikoyan, Nariman Narimanov and Mir Said Sultan Galiev made up the ‘Orgburo’, which fixed the rules of participation for the delegates.

Not all the communists were in favour of convening a Muslim congress with the aim of increasing the prestige of Bolshevism among the peoples of the East. Prominent Bengali communist M. N. Roy, in his memoirs published in India after his death, made it clear that he opposed the idea of the Baku Congress. He argued with the Bolshevik leaders that it could only serve as a means of agitation, which alone was not enough to bring about a revolution in the East. He recalls in his memoirs:

Lenin smiled indulgently on my cussedness; Zinoviev was angry at the audacity of the upstart crossing his will; Radek ridiculed my precocious seriousness. It might not yield any lasting results, but why forgo the fun of a picturesque show which was sure to give the then British Foreign Secretary, Lord Curzon, some sleepless nights.

The high command of the Bolshevik leadership must have shared Radek’s humorous view and official consent was given to the Congress, which opened on 1 September 1920. A total of 1,891 delegates were present. Of these, 1,273 were said to be communists, 226 non-party, and only 55 were women. The Turks were the largest national group. In addition to 235 Turkish, 192 Persian, 157 Armenian and 100 Georgian delegates specifically summoned by the Komintern, there were also 8 Chinese, 8 Kurds and 3 Arabs.

The essential aim of the Congress was proclaimed to be to initiate an anti-imperialist platform among the Eastern nationalities. The importance of support to national liberation movements like Mustafa Kemal’s was reiterated many times. It is interesting that the spirit of a united front against “the foreign
imperialist yoke’ was further strengthened by a declaration from the isolated figure of Enver Pasha, and an enthusiastic speech given by the official representative of the Ankara government.54

The Baku Congress approved in principle the issuing of an ‘Appeal to the Peoples of the East’. This was a document obviously drafted for use as an instrument of propaganda throughout the Muslim world. It was directed entirely against Britain, the power regarded by the Komintern as the one great empire which had emerged from World War I with the strength and intention to dominate the ‘oppressed’ peoples of the East. (See Appendix 1).55

Anti-British agitation rose to its highest level with the last meeting of the Baku Congress of the Eastern Peoples, when the twenty-six Baku commissars were commemorated as victims of British imperialism. A funeral ceremony was organized that day with the participation of all the delegates together with the families of those twenty-six Baku commissars who had been killed two years before.56 Party and state figures from Azerbaijan, delegates to the Congress and representatives of the Komintern delivered anti-British speeches in memory of the commissars.57

When the Baku Congress ended on 8 September it was decided that it would meet in subsequent years and a permanent centre would be established for the organization of communist activities in the East. Neither of these decisions was, however, fulfilled.58 Carr claims that the reason for this failure may have been related to the commitments the Soviet government undertook with the signing of the Anglo-Soviet Trade Agreement in March 1921.59 If one may take Carr’s analysis further, it might not be an exaggeration to say that the whole episode of the Baku Congress may well have been designed to put pressure on the British government to sign a trade agreement with Moscow in the first place.

The proceedings of the Baku Congress were watched anxiously by the British through their contacts among the delegates. As anticipated by Radek, the Congress did indeed give Curzon some sleepless nights.60

Immediately after the Baku Congress, on 10 September 1920, the First General Congress of Turkish Communists met in Baku under the leadership of Subhi.61 Seventy-four delegates participated in the Congress, 51 of whom were identified in the documents of the Congress as from Constantinople and Anatolia. The foremost aim of the Congress was to unite various Turkish communist groups under the Subhi’s Communist Party of Turkey.62 This Congress has been recognized by the official histories of the Communist Party of Turkey as its founding conference. Given the increasing pressure of the Allied occupation in Anatolia and the impressive rise in the self-confidence and determination of Subhi’s party, it was not surprising that the party approved to shift the centre of its activities to Anatolia (see Appendix 1).63

Murder in the Black Sea

This is why we say to the Turkish communists today, notwithstanding the persecution they are suffering: ‘Your job as defenders of the independence
On 28 January 1921, Mustafa Subhi and 14 leading Turkish communists were murdered off the coast of Trabzon when they were forced to return to the Soviet Union only one month after their arrival in Turkey. This tragedy dashed the earlier hopes of Turkish communists based on the close relationship established between the young Soviet state and the recently formed Turkish nationalist government in Ankara. The atmosphere of optimism had inspired and encouraged the leaders of the TKP to initiate the organization of a legal communist movement in Anatolia, a project drowned in its infancy in the cold and dark waters of the Black Sea in January 1921. This incident marked an unfortunate beginning with long-lasting effects on left-wing movements in Turkey: a long and almost uninterrupted period of persecution and repression which continued until the 1990s.

On the other hand, the close relationship established between the Soviet state and Mustafa Kemal’s government in Ankara long characterized the history of the two countries and seems not to have been seriously affected by the murder of Moscow-based Turkish communists. The supply of material and diplomatic aid to the Turkish nationalist government from Moscow continued undisturbed by the murder of the communists in the Black Sea.

How could the young Bolshevik state support a bourgeois–nationalist government and steadfastly overlook that government’s bloody suppression of fellow communists? How could it ignore the Black Sea incident in its relations with Ankara? One should look for an explanation in the unique factors of the historical moment, in the sensitive and very complex instabilities of the post-war international conjuncture.

The Baku Congress and the increased activities of Subhi’s group with respect to Anatolia predictably became a source of serious concern in Ankara. The slow proceeding of the negotiations in Moscow was interpreted in the light of these increasing activities of the Turkish communists. Mustafa Kemal, in a letter to Ali Fuat on 14 September 1920, expressed his bitter feelings towards the Bolsheviks for organizing the Communist Party of Turkey and aiming ‘to make a social revolution’ in Turkey.

In the same letter Kemal added that if the Soviets saw any prospect of communist success in Turkey, they would not initiate material aid to the Ankara government. What if the Soviets declared that they would maintain contacts with the Ankara government through the Communist Party of Turkey? Kemal remarked that ‘communist organizations in Turkey were therefore completely against the interests’ of the Turkish national movement and had therefore to be ‘brought to a halt and kept at a distance whatever the cost’. Indeed it was Kemal’s firm belief that there had never been any potential for a Bolshevik-type revolution in Turkey, and never would be in future. Yet the problem at that particular time, when Ankara was expecting the essential material support from Moscow, was to
demonstrate to the Soviet government that this belief was well-founded without damaging the close relationship and putting the Soviet help in jeopardy.

Since the official Turkish documents of this period are still closed and in the personal accounts of the leading personalities of the Turkish national movement, the question of Turco–Soviet relations is treated as hardly more than a footnote, there is very little information regarding the inner discussions of the Turkish nationalists. What is known is that at this point Mustafa Kemal plotted a shrewd and cunning venture. On 18 October 1920 he instructed some close associates to set up an official communist party (TKF) in Ankara and through this party applied to join the Komintern. Although the Komintern refused this application, it was obviously an act geared to secure Bolshevik help – albeit in an unconventional way with a puppet party. The official party identified Bolshevism as a completely Russian experience; therefore it did not claim to be Bolshevik. On the other hand, although it defined itself as communist, it was a very peculiar type of communism aiming for a ‘unique Anatolian regime’ which was not to be based on class struggle but would organize rich and poor together to fight the foreign oppressors. It was couched in populist jargon under the tag of ‘communism’ to enhance its possible emotional appeal to the Soviet state.

On 31 October, in a telegram addressed to Ali Fuat, Kemal repeated his belief that communism was not a feasible option for Turkey. He then went on to explain why he proceeded to set up an official communist party:

this movement [communism] was being diffused in our country from internal and external sources and aiming at various goals, and unless necessary measures were taken, the peace and unity of the Turkish people would be put in jeopardy. Thus it was concluded that the wisest step would be to get some reasonable friends to form a communist party under the guidance of the government.

It is obvious from the above statement that an official party was a convenient way to keep any dubious political activity under control and at the same time capitalize on any potential public sympathy towards the Soviet state. By taking this measure Kemal at first achieved a significant degree of success. The Green Army Association disbanded itself and Ethem the Circassian was persuaded to join Kemal’s official party. His paper Yeni Dünya (New World) became the official organ of Kemal’s official communist party. However, this agreement did not last long.

Towards the end of the year, mainly as a reaction to the efforts of the Ankara government to reorganize the rural guerrilla forces loyal to Ethem under a regular army, Ethem rose up against Kemal. Meanwhile Yeni Dünya, now the official paper of Kemal’s party, began openly to criticize the campaign of the government against Ethem and railway workers were called out on strike to stop the transport of troops to quell Ethem’s rebel forces. In late 1920 and early 1921 the owner of the paper and his close associates, as well as many other socialists, who were charged with being connected to Ethem, were duly arrested.
While all this was happening in Anatolia, the leader of the Moscow-supported Communist Party, Mustafa Subhi, and some other leading figures of the party, left Baku and set out for Ankara to implement their decision to transfer activities of the party to Anatolia. It was sheer bad timing. The group entered Turkey in late December, but could not proceed further than Trabzon on their pre-determined trip to Ankara. On 28 January Mustafa Subhi, his wife, and 14 other leading communists were put in a boat and sent back to Batum by sea *en route* to Baku. Immediately after they had embarked, another boat left the harbour and overtook the first one. Following this all that is known is that no one on the first boat survived.73

According to a Komintern investigation report, a certain Osman Agha, from the Giresun area, was personally responsible for the murder of the Turkish communists, in what is known as the ‘Black Sea incident’. He was one of the influential brigand leaders in the Black Sea region and loyal to Mustafa Kemal. Osman Agha and his men were said to have conducted attacks against the Armenian and Greek villages on the eastern Black Sea coast under the directives of the Ankara government.74

The Ankara government categorically denied any involvement in this brutal plot and insisted that this was a maritime accident. According to Tuncay some extant telegrams (found in the Archives of the Institute of the History of Turkish Revolution) show that there was a direct link between the plotters of the murder, the Kemalist governor of Erzurum, and Kazim Karabekir.75 In the early days of January, 1921, while the group was still in Kars, Karabekir sent a number of telegrams to Hamit Bey (the governor of Erzurum) and ordered that the group be directed to Trabzon after Erzurum for deportation. Hamit Bey, on 16 January, informed Mustafa Kemal of this decision. Kemal’s confirmation was received on 18 January.76

The available documents confirm beyond doubt that the Ankara government played a substantial role in the ‘Black Sea incident’. Karabekir and Hamit Bey – one the most prominent nationalist commanders, the other a very important local representative of the Ankara government – conspired not to let Mustafa Subhi into Anatolia. Mustafa Subhi and his group were directed to Trabzon, where they were put on a boat for Batum.77 The telegrams confirm that Mustafa Kemal himself was fully aware of this arrangement. However, the respective roles of Mustafa Kemal, Karabekir and Hamit Bey in bringing about the fatal end of the Turkish communists is not clear. There exist no documents or any conclusive evidence as to who masterminded the final touch. Whether murder was inclusive in the plan drafted by Karabekir and Hamit Bey remains a mystery. The actual nature of the arrangement confirmed by Mustafa Kemal is also obscure and open to speculation. The TKP and other sources close to the party kept accusing Mustafa Kemal for the murder of the founders of the party.78

When the news arrived in Moscow, the RCP(B) forwarded an official statement to party members only. Basically it explained how the Turkish communists had been killed. The central theme of the statement, however, was the dangers of left-wing, arbitrary and adventurist initiatives.79 Although the statement did not
connect this accusation with the case directly, the implication was clear. Moscow did not share the optimism and the decision of the Turkish communists to go ahead on their own and move the party activities to Anatolia.

In 1921, Sultan-Galiev\textsuperscript{80} indicated that in 1918 and 1919 Subhi had had to work in the Soviet Union under adverse political conditions. ‘For a long time, he was obliged to work in an atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion. This terribly depressed him.’\textsuperscript{81}

The ‘Black Sea incident’ did not have a serious impact on Turco–Soviet relations. It was noted and put aside by both sides in an almost statesmanlike fashion. The experience is, however, significant and rich in lessons. The murder of the Turkish communists in the early days of 1921 represents the first example of the failure of a peculiar Soviet dilemma in the East – to support the anti-communist leadership of national liberation movements and at the same time to sponsor and organize the local communist movements to overthrow them via the Komintern. When the Kemalist leadership openly started to root out all communist activities in Turkey the Soviet government chose to continue its official policy of cooperation with Ankara, regardless of the fate of the local communists loyal to Moscow.\textsuperscript{82}

Indeed at the same time as the conspiracy against the Turkish communists was thickening, Moscow was expecting to meet a new Turkish delegation for the continuation of the discussions that had reached deadlock in September 1920. On 20 January 1921 (only eight days before Mustafa Subhi and his associates were drowned in the dark waters of the Black Sea) the Turkish delegation was authorized to depart for Moscow. This was a large delegation which contained four groups of advisers – plenipotentiaries headed by Yusuf Kemal, Minister of the Economy; military advisory group led by Staff Major Saffet (Arikan); political advisory group consisting of representatives from the Caucasus; and the study group headed by Dr Tevfik Rüştü (Aras).\textsuperscript{83}

Less than a month after the ‘Black Sea incident’ the official talks between the Turkish delegation and the representatives of the Soviet government began on 26 February 1921. The negotiations were conducted on two separate subjects, one dealing with political matters and the other involving questions of military assistance. These were smoothly brought to a successful conclusion within a few weeks.

The Turco–Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Brotherhood was signed in March 1921; in its preamble, it committed both countries to ‘the struggle against imperialism’, and consisted of 16 articles\textsuperscript{84}, the principal provisions of which have been summarised as follows:

- The treaty gave Turkey both Kars and Ardahan. On the other hand Turkey accepted to hand over the suzerainty of Batum to Georgia. Mutual provisions were made for the exchange of populations in the ceded parts.
- The Soviet government accepted the abolition of capitulations and neither party was to recognize treaties imposed by force on the other party.
- Moscow recognized the Ankara government with all the territories claimed in the ‘National Pact’.

\textit{The opening act} 27
With a view to guaranteeing the freedom of the Straits and their free passage for commercial purposes to all countries, both parties decided to entrust the final elaboration of the regime of the Black Sea and the Straits to a special conference of delegates of the littoral states.

Both parties agreed to accord the most favoured treatment to the citizens of each party residing on the territory of the other.

The Soviet government accepted to undertake all the necessary steps to secure endorsement of this treaty by the Transcaucasian Republics, in separate treaties which they were to conclude with Turkey, of such stipulations of the present treaty as relate directly to them.

Each of the contracting parties agreed to take steps to prevent subversive propaganda by Soviet citizens in Turkey and vice versa. It was further agreed not to allow on their respective territories the formation of groups that would lay claim to the role of government in the country of the other party.

As requested by the Soviet side, the issue of financial and military aid to Turkey was not included in the text of the treaty. This was a measure not to undermine their treaty with the British. It was agreed during the negotiations that the amount and the nature of the Soviet financial and military aid should be finalized through the exchange of secret letters and that these letters should be considered an indispensable part of the treaty of friendship.

On the nature and amount of Soviet material aid there is widespread obscurity. In his speech Mustafa Kemal makes no reference to Soviet aid. Halil Pasha, the first semi-official representative of the Ankara government in Moscow, was quoted as affirming that he had handed over to Cavit Bey, the division commander at Karaköse (a small town near Erzurum), some 100,000 Turkish liras’ worth of gold bullion in May 1920 which was given to him by the representatives of the Soviet government.

Cebesoy writes in his memoirs that Yusuf Kemal, on returning from his first Moscow mission headed by Bekir Sami, brought back to Ankara 1 million gold rubles in September 1920. It is further claimed that following the treaty of March 1921, Yusuf Kemal brought to Turkey 400,000 gold rubles and while he was in Moscow sent 100,000 gold rubles to the Turkish agents in Germany with Staff Major Saffet for the purchase of war materials. According to Selek, on the other hand, Major Saffet was given 1 million gold rubles, ten times as much as the amount quoted by Cebesoy. There is no definitive information about the fate of this money, which was sent to Germany. Selek claims that Major Saffet tried to increase the available money to purchase more weaponry, and used this money on the stock exchange. Instead of increasing it he lost it all.

Sevket Süreyya Aydemir maintains that the Ankara government had requested from the Soviets 10 million gold rubles each year for the continuation of what they called the War of Independence and that during 1920 approximately 5 million gold rubles were sent to Turkey. According to Aydemir, from 1921 to 1922, 10 million gold rubles were also received.
According to Karal, Soviet sources confirm the delivery of the following amounts of financial aid to Turkey: in September 1920, 1 million gold rubles and 200.6 kg of gold were brought to Erzurum by Consular I. Upmal–Angarskii. Following the treaty in April 1921, Yusuf Kemal received 4 million gold rubles. During May and June 1921, Major Saffet was given 1.4 million gold rubles. In November 1921, General Mikhail Frunze (commander-in-chief of Soviet forces in the Ukraine) brought with him to Trabzon 1.1 million gold rubles. In May 1922, Soviet Ambassador Aralov brought with him to Ankara 3.5 million gold rubles. Karal further states that the Minister of Finance, Hasan Fehmi, gave to Ambassador Aralov a receipt for the full 10 million gold rubles upon the latter’s delivery of the last instalment.93

A British intelligence report dated 21 November 1921 cites the following amounts of assistance received by the Kemalists from Moscow during the period March 1920 to October 1921: 20 poods of gold (about 50,000 sterling) as the first instalment of a projected loan of 50 million gold rubles in July 1920, 2 million gold rubles in November 1920, 40 million gold rubles, plus 1 million gold rubles sent to Turkish agents in Germany in April 1921; and finally, 500 okes of gold (about 90,000 sterling) in September 1921.94

The Soviet accounts do not contain a full list, and the documents in the archives do not provide a totally consistent picture. According to some documents, an agreement reached with Turkey during the period the Moscow Treaty was signed, assigned a sum of 10,000,000 gold rubles to Turkey.95 Of this sum, 5,400,000 rubles were transferred to Turkey in instalments in April, May and June of the same year. Another 1,100,000 gold rubles were transferred to the Turkish government at the close of 1921.96 On 29 December 1921 and 29 April 1922, the Soviet government turned over to the Turkish Consul at Novorossisk a large amount of mines, artillery, rifles and other weapons. In 1922 Turkey was given equipment for a cartridge-manufacturing plant. On 3 May 1922 the Soviet government transferred to Turkey 3,500,000 gold rubles which was the last instalment of the 10 million ruble loan.97

The information gathered from the Soviet archives and various Turkish accounts supports the view that the money sent from Moscow to the Turkish nationalists never exceeded 10 million gold rubles.98 The main disagreement, however, seems to be related to the nature of the agreement: while many Turkish accounts claim that the Bolsheviks promised to give 10 million rubles per year, the Soviet accounts insist that this was the total sum they agreed to pay.

The Turco–Soviet Treaty of Friendship has been the subject of much controversy and comment. For the Ankara government it was considered a major diplomatic achievement which secured a favourable position on its eastern frontiers. It strengthened its diplomatic and military position. Soviet historians claim that this treaty gave the Kemalists greater international prestige than ever before.99

For Soviet Russia the treaty established in general its borders with Turkey in the Caucasus. It was also anticipated that this treaty would increase the prestige of the Soviet regime in the East, and disperse suspicions among the Muslim population of the Caucasus. A few days after the signature of the treaty, in a speech
delivered in Moscow, Lenin commented that ‘a few days ago we signed a peace agreement with the Turks, which alone will rid us of interminable wars in the Caucasus’. Despite the general affirmative terms of the treaty as a whole, it cannot be said that it indicated total trust on both sides. Article XV stated that Russia would facilitate an understanding with the Transcaucasian states, yet in fact the Soviet government was not at this time too enthusiastic about extending the agreement in this way. Chicherin, in his telegram to Mamia Dmitrievich Orakhelashvili, Chairman of the Georgian Revkom in Tiflis, urged those republics not to enter into any dealings with Turkey yet and to await directives from Moscow. It was not until October 1921 that Turkey was able to effectively settle her eastern borders. By this time the Turks had fought a decisive battle against the Greek army near the Sakarya river in central Anatolia, which was considered as firm evidence of their authority in the eyes of Moscow. The extremely cautious nature of the rapprochement becomes most clear in article VIII, where both parties warn off the propagandists of the other.

Still, on a more general level, the treaty with Turkey, together with similar treaties with Persia on 26 February and with Afghanistan on 28 February, constituted a further stage in the process of accommodation by which relations between the Bolsheviks and the outside world were consolidated on a governmental basis. Moscow regularized relations with its immediate neighbours, which was considered as the foundation stone for a Soviet security system built upon close relations with key states in sensitive border zones.

A British spy in Ankara

It was early 1921. The setting was Ankara, capital of the nationalist Turkey. Kemalist authorities arrested an India-born British citizen named Mustafa Saghir, who had gone out to Ankara as a delegate of the Peshawar Khilafat Conference to express Indian Muslims’ sympathy for the cause of the Turkish national movement. He was tried on a very serious charge of espionage. During the proceedings of that trial, Mustafa Saghir confessed: he described in detail the scheme of pro-British propaganda being carried out by British agents in Istanbul and Anatolia. The accused further gave the names of some prominent English officers who were the chief parties in that scheme. He also mentioned a special committee charged with assassinating Mustafa Kemal. The Kemalist authorities reported that important documents and other evidence, incontestably establishing the guilt of the accused, had come into their possession, and this made them able to uncover the British spy. However, they declined to give any further details. They did not say how that information reached their hands. At the end of the trial Mustafa Saghir was found guilty and immediately executed.

Mustafa Saghir was a young man, of average height and handsome, who had arrived in Istanbul in early 1921. He spoke perfect Turkish and English. In Istanbul he was staying in the Kroker Hotel, near the English Palace in Tepebasi. He managed to establish close relations with a number of prominent Turkish
officers who supported the resistance movement in Anatolia. Saghir soon came to be known as an anti-imperialist Indian Muslim who had come to Turkey to provide support to Mustafa Kemal’s movement. Saghir was arrested by the British authorities in Istanbul and remained in prison for 17 days. Soon after he was released the nationalist elements helped him to move to Ankara, where he was welcomed as a hero and placed on the top floor of the Hurriyet (Freedom) Hotel.

During his two weeks in Ankara, Mustafa Saghir met a large number of key nationalist leaders, including Mustafa Kemal. He presented himself as the leader of the Indian Muslims and produced a number of letters of support allegedly from the Muslims of India. Two weeks after his arrival in Ankara and when he was at the top of his popularity Saghir was suddenly arrested by the nationalist intelligence. During his ten days interrogation he admitted that he was a British spy sent to Ankara with the specific aim of murdering Mustafa Kemal and stopping the Turkish nationalist movement.

Following Saghir’s execution the Ankara government passed his last letter to the British consulate. In this letter he said: ‘I always remained loyal to the British government. During my court case I provided no information which was significant and sensitive to the British government. I kept my loyalty to the British and Indian Empire until my last breath. I am leaving my brother, who is at school, to the mercy of the British government’.105

Later in May, Mr Rattigan from the British High Commission in Constantinople sent a confidential telegram to the British Foreign Office saying that ‘Mustafa Saghir was indeed a spy, and his execution cannot therefore be regarded as peculiarly monstrous in itself’.106 So far this is quite straightforward.

However, some of the documents released in Moscow following the end of the Soviet regime bring another dimension to the case. They indicate that it was the Soviet intelligence who tipped off the Ankara government to find out the British plans regarding the activities of Mustafa Saghir. They further indicate that the documentary evidence about Mustafa Saghir was given to the Turks even before he arrived in Ankara.107 Interestingly enough, in June 1921, in the House of Commons, one MP, Mr Ormbsby-Gore, asks the Foreign Office whether there was a Soviet connection in the whole affair of Mustafa Saghir or not. The Foreign Office representative declines to answer. And the debate ends at that point.108 It is clear that the British were suspicious that the Turks might have been tipped off by Soviet intelligence.

Now, why is this case important, and apart from the unfortunate fate of a secret agent, what does it tell us regarding post-war international relations in the region? First of all, this incident shows how deeply the Soviets were involved in the events of post-war Turkey. And, second, it gives us an idea of how intelligence work played a part in the conduct of international relations in the Near East.

In this period, there were Soviet missions and representatives in a large number of centres in Turkey and the Caucasus. Ankara, Trabzon, Erzurum, Tiflis, Batum, Baku and Erivan are the major centres. Soviet missions in those places consisted of personnel from not only Narkomindel but also from Komintern and
other formations, including the Tcheka\textsuperscript{109} and the Soviet Military Intelligence (GRU).\textsuperscript{110}

In this context the latter should be singled out. The formation of the Soviet Military Intelligence started with the creation of the Eastern Front of the Red Army in June 1918. Within the Eastern Front a registrational intelligence department was formed. The agent network for the Eastern Front was first formed on the basis of underground organizations of Bolsheviks and the local communist parties. Subsequently the network grew, and played an important role in the campaigns of the Eastern Front during the Russian Civil War. Towards the end of 1918, a superior organ of the Soviet Military Intelligence, namely ‘Registrational Directorate of the Field Staff’, was created.\textsuperscript{111}

The GRU established a network of agents all over Turkey and the Caucasus, including the Allied-occupied cities such as Constantinople and Izmit. The agent network of the GRU came mainly from two sources: former prisoners of war and the Komintern contacts. Turkish lands became a kind of training school for the later activities of the Soviet intelligence network. The first chief of the Soviet Military Intelligence was Simon Ivanovich Aralov, a rather well-known name in Turkish history as Moscow’s first official ambassador in Ankara.\textsuperscript{112}

From 1921 onwards Aralov was personally responsible for the intelligence operations in Turkey. In particular, during the Lausanne Conference he informed Moscow about the intentions, inner discussions and the contacts of the Kemalists. Due to Aralov’s precise and close observations and high-level contacts, including ministers in the Ankara government,\textsuperscript{113} the Bolshevik Central Committee was able to follow the events closely, and able to form realistic expectations regarding the settlement on the Turkish Straits.\textsuperscript{114} For instance, even before the Conference officially started to discuss the Straits question, the Bolsheviks had known that the result was unlikely to be in their favour.\textsuperscript{115}

Following the Lausanne Treaty, the Turkish authorities accused Aralov of helping in the illegal activities of Turkish communists. Soon afterwards he was called back to Moscow. However, he continued to follow the events in Turkey closely until 1936, when he was dismissed from all posts. Next year he was arrested, and spent three years under interrogation. In 1941 he was back in the GRU. In 1946 he was arrested again, and spent ten years in a concentration camp. On his liberation he was appointed deputy to the chief of the GRU. In 1957, however, he was again dismissed, and lived on quietly until his death in 1969.

**Budu Mdivani**

A Turkish socialist, Nizamettin Bey, former war correspondent of the left-wing newspaper *Yeni Dünya*, went to the Soviet embassy building in Ankara to hide following the closure of the paper by Kemalist authorities. Soon afterwards, the building was stormed by plain-clothed Turkish policemen and Bey was demanded from the embassy staff. The new Soviet representative in Ankara, Budu Mdivani, refused to give him to the Turkish police. As soon as Moscow was
informed about the incident, Chicherin instructed Mdivani to give the Turkish socialist to the Turkish authorities; Mdivani rejected this too.\textsuperscript{116}

Mdivani explained his reasoning in his letter to Narkomindel: ‘it is against my principles . . . I could not possibly give someone to the police, especially if that person is associated with the very ideology of my state . . . and in future too, I will never voluntarily give a political suspect to the police, I submit such a person only to my own government . . .’\textsuperscript{117}

The incident between Mdivani in Ankara and Narkomindel in Moscow gives some idea about the difficult relationship between Moscow and its representatives in the region. This relationship was, in this period, more problematic than previously thought. In the early years of the young Bolshevik state most of the Bolshevik representatives, emissaries or activists in different localities were more inclined to use their own initiative than simply implement decisions sent from Moscow. It was a time when the romantic ideals about the socialist future, international solidarity and endless sacrifices for the sake of revolutionary struggle were still dominant sources of motivation for a large number of Bolshevik activists. Therefore, what we see as the representatives of the Soviet state in the regions were more likely still ‘professional revolutionaries’, very much more independently minded than classical diplomats. This is why Chicherin tried to follow and control every single issue very closely. In his daily telegrams to the local Soviet representatives Chicherin asks about every single detail, and sends his specific and definite instructions.\textsuperscript{118}

From such incidents, however, it should not be concluded that Chicherin, as the head of Narkomindel, was opposed to the revolutionary agitation and propaganda in Turkey and preferred official diplomatic relations alone. Although he came from an aristocratic background, and was rather a latecomer to the ranks of the Bolsheviks, his sympathies were entirely with the Bolshevik ideology and leadership. He was a keen internationalist and shared most of the enthusiasm of the party leaders regarding the world socialist revolution.

However, he believed that the young Soviet state could best achieve its aims by exploiting the differences among the capitalist powers, and also among the leaders of the bourgeois liberation movements in the East. To this end, he pursued a policy of traditional diplomacy with a jargon of revolutionary politics, with all its illegal components.\textsuperscript{119}

Another case from this period exemplifies how this conventional diplomacy in disguise manipulated unofficial revolutionary activity. The document is Chicherin’s letter to the Central Committee on the publication of two anti-British Turkish papers in Moscow in April 1921. Former Ottoman War Minister Enver Pasha, with whom the Bolsheviks had been collaborating since 1919, brought a proposal to Narkomindel about the publication of two Turkish newspapers in Moscow, one for the population of Turkey, and the other for the wider Muslim world. The aim of the papers was described as to promote the idea that the Soviet state was the true friend of Muslim people in their struggle against ‘British imperialism’. 
However, this was only one month after the Anglo-Soviet Trade Agreement of March 1921. According to the agreement, the Soviet government had promised to refrain from conducting outside of its boundaries any propaganda direct or indirect against the institutions of the British Empire.\textsuperscript{120}

Chicherin says, in his letter, that he was in favour of accepting Enver’s proposal to publish the papers in Moscow. The Anglo-Soviet agreement did not say anything about propaganda within the boundaries of the Soviet state; it only prohibited propaganda outside Russia. Therefore, he said there was nothing wrong in publishing the papers in Moscow. He also adds that he will arrange the distribution of the papers in Turkey and in the other Muslim countries, including the British Empire, using the local non-Russian communists and Muslim activists. Chicherin lastly states that he does not have full trust in Turkey’s flamboyant wartime leader, Enver.\textsuperscript{121} Therefore he wants a reliable communist, someone who understands Turkish, to be ordered to watch the papers and report the contents of them regularly.\textsuperscript{122}

The Bolsheviks’ assistance to the Turkish national movement against the British-led Allied bloc in the Near East was shaped from the beginning by the same pragmatic approach. First, it was the Turkish side that demanded support from the Soviets against the British and their Allies. Although the Bolshevik Politburo regarded Britain as the principal obstacle to the spread of the Soviet power in the East, they were very reluctant to bind themselves in an openly anti-Western struggle. As they thought that the Soviet state needed a long period of peace to consolidate its power in the lands of the former Russian Empire, and to restore the economy, it would not be wise to engage in open military conflict with Britain.

Lenin documents clearly verify that, with regard to the aid to the Kemalists in Turkey, both the Politburo and Narkomindel emphasized that they would dispatch arms and other military equipment as well as money to Ankara, but they were never in favour of an agreement about a joint action against Britain. They also demanded an assurance from the Turks that the Soviet help should be kept secret from the Allies.\textsuperscript{123}

This careful attitude of Moscow is related to a major question: what were Soviet foreign-policy goals? In practical terms, Soviet foreign policy consisted of two principal components: first, foreign policy was to help secure and consolidate socialist revolution and the Soviet state in Russia; and second, foreign relations were to contribute to the defence of the Soviet state against economic, ideological and military opposition from the capitalist powers.

The Soviet state in this period approached both Britain and Turkey, under the guidance of the above-mentioned principles. Moscow was sincerely interested in obtaining \textit{de jure} recognition from the British government. They hoped that it would give the Bolsheviks greater respectability abroad and reduce the possibility of renewed military action against the Soviet state. They also believed that official recognition would increase the prospects for trade and economic recovery.

However, the Bolsheviks also regarded Britain as the greatest menace and the bastion of capitalism. They considered British intervention in Turkey as a major
source of threat to the Soviet state. This was the central theme in their dealings with Turkish affairs. By helping the anti-British forces in the region, the Bolsheviks expected to diminish, or at least to counter-balance, the British influence in Turkey. They also regarded their link, and possible prestige in Turkey, as a useful tactical device to bring pressure to bear on the British government. Thus they hoped to improve their bargaining position significantly.

Then, what about the so-called ‘world revolution’! Didn’t Bolshevik foreign policy aim at world revolution? One can safely claim that at least regarding Turkey it did not. There were a few short intervals in Soviet–Turkish relations when expectations among the Bolshevik leaders and eastern experts were relatively high, rather optimistic regarding a more powerful Soviet influence in the region. But they never considered a Soviet state in Turkey as a serious possibility. The reports and articles of M. Pavlovich, Moscow’s leading Eastern expert, may best exemplify this approach. Although they are high in spirit, nothing revolutionary in practice was anticipated in Turkey.124

The support given to local communists and the activities of the Bolshevik agents in Turkey hardly aimed at revolution. For instance, when the Kemalists were in a much more independent position in 1922, after their decisive victory over the Greeks, the Bolshevik Kavburo (Caucasian Bureau) sent a secret report to Moscow. The report states that the recent victories of the Kemalists gave an immense impetus to Muslim–nationalist activities in Transcaucasia and Transcaspia. This was considered as paralysing the authority of the Bolsheviks there. Therefore, the Kavburo urges that the only remedy would be to increase pressure on Ankara by intensifying communist propaganda in Turkey. The expectation was not a revolution in Turkey, but just putting pressure on the Turkish government to counter-balance increasing Turkish–Muslim influence in the Caucasus and Central Asia.125
In the 1920s, as the new Soviet state appeared to have retreated from an active revolutionary path to ‘socialism in one country’, the Bolshevik Party also adopted a less ideological approach in its relations with the rest of the world. Lenin, ever the practical leader, became convinced that socialist revolution would not break out in the developed West in the near future, and realized that his government required normal relations with the Western world to survive. Not only were good relations important for national security, but the economy also required trade with the Western industrial countries.

In April 1922, the Soviet Commissar of Foreign Affairs, Georgii Chicherin, confronted these difficulties by negotiating an understanding with Germany, the other pariah state of Europe, at Rapallo, Italy. In the Treaty of Rapallo, Germany and Soviet Russia agreed on mutual recognition, cancellation of debt claims, normalization of trade relations and secret cooperation in military development. Soon after concluding the treaty, the Soviet Union obtained diplomatic recognition from other major powers, beginning with Britain in February 1924. Although the United States withheld recognition until 1933, private American firms began to extend technological assistance and develop commercial links beginning in the 1920s.

The Soviet leadership continued the ‘Soviet Eastern Policy’ against the non-Western world, promoting all kinds of opposition among the indigenous populations to imperialist exploitation. Moscow also pursued an active policy in China by aiding the rise of the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang), a non-Marxist organization committed to reform and national sovereignty. After the triumph of the Nationalists, a debate developed among Soviet leaders concerning future relations with China. Stalin wanted the Chinese Communist Party to join the Nationalists and infiltrate the government from within, while Trotsky proposed an armed communist uprising and forcible imposition of socialism in that country. The Politburo of the Russian Communist Party even voted for the nationalist Kuomintang to be admitted to the Komintern with only Trotsky voting against it. All these initiatives, however, came to nought when in 1926 the Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek ordered the Chinese communists massacred and Soviet advisers expelled. It took nearly two decades for the Chinese Communist Party to recover from this defeat.

After Lenin’s death in 1924, two conflicting schools of thought developed in party debates concerning the future of the Soviet Union. Left-wing communists
believed that world revolution was essential for the survival of socialism in the economically backward Soviet Union. Trotsky, the primary proponent of this position, called for Soviet support for ‘permanent revolution’ around the world. As for domestic policy, the left-wing communists advocated the rapid development of the economy and the creation of a socialist society. In contrast with these communists, the right wing of the party, recognizing that world revolution was unlikely in the immediate future, was in favour of the path already opened by Lenin’s New Economic Policy (NEP). Following the ravages of the First World War and the Russian Civil War, with the brutal measures of ‘war communism’, the Soviet economy was on its knees. In this post-revolutionary period, industrial production almost came to an end, and food production in the countryside was falling to starvation levels. The NEP aimed at encouraging the peasants to produce food for a controlled market economy, and to restore the Soviet economy amid economic chaos and severely damaged infrastructure. This policy of gradual development achieved some rapid and spectacular results, with the economy stabilized by significant increase in industrial production and return to pre-war output levels in most sectors in 1922 and 1923.

Against this backdrop of contrasting views of the Soviet future, leading figures of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) — the new name of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik) adopted in December 1925 — competed for influence. Stalin’s position appealed to the common sense of rank-and-file Bolsheviks and to their greater interests in matters at home rather than the revolution abroad, and through this chaos he gradually consolidated his power base and had, by 1927, gradually eliminated all his opponents.

Soon after assuming control of the party, Stalin oversaw a radicalization of Soviet state policies, including the forced collectivization of agriculture and a heavy-handed offensive against traditional practices in Central Asia. On 8 March 1927, in celebration of International Women’s Day, mass meetings were held at which thousands of frenzied participants, chanting ‘Down with the Paranja!’ tore off their veils, which were then drenched in paraffin and burned. Party agitators led marches of unveiled women through the streets, instigating the forced desecration of public quarters and sanctified religious sites. On 8 March, the campaign appeared to be a success, but on 9 March hundreds of unveiled women were massacred by their kinsmen and this violent reaction grew in strength. The debacle of International Women’s Day was repeated in 1928 and 1929 with the same disastrous consequences, exacting an extremely high toll on the party cadre.

A radicalization of Soviet foreign policy complemented Stalin’s aggressive domestic policies. To heighten the urgency of his demands for modernization, Stalin portrayed the Western powers, particularly France, as warmongers eager to attack the Soviet Union. Similarly, the diplomatic isolation practised by the Soviet Union under Stalin seemed ideologically justified by the approaching Great Depression; world capitalism appeared destined for destruction. Thus, to aid the triumph of communism Stalin resolved to weaken the moderate social democrats of Europe, the communists’ rivals for working-class support.
The Sixth Congress of the Komintern in 1928 adopted a resolution aimed to strengthen the world communist movement and its solidarity with Soviet foreign-policy objectives. It was claimed that the period of capitalist stabilization was over and that the final crisis of capitalism was at hand. Now, the national bourgeoisie was regarded as a reactionary element, an ally of imperialism and a bitter enemy of the revolutionary movement, and accordingly social democrats were considered as ‘social fascists’. This new line remained official Soviet policy until 1934.2

The dynamics of Soviet foreign relations changed drastically after Stalin recognized the danger posed by Nazi Germany. From 1934 through 1937, under the pressure of the economic failure in agriculture and foreign threats from Germany and Japan, policy changed again and the Soviet Union tried to restrain German militarism by building coalitions hostile to fascism. Within the international communist movement, at its Seventh Congress in 1935 the Komintern adopted the ‘popular front’ policy of cooperation with socialists and liberals against fascism, thus reversing its line of the early 1930s. In 1934, the Soviet Union joined the League of Nations where Maksim M. Litvinov, the Commissar of Foreign Affairs, advocated disarmament and collective security against fascist aggression. In 1935, the Soviet Union concluded defensive military alliances with France and Czechoslovakia, and from 1936 to 1939 it gave assistance to the anti-fascist camp in the Spanish Civil War. The menace of fascist militarism to the Soviet Union increased when Germany and Japan signed the Anti-Komintern Pact in 1936. But the West proved unwilling to counter German provocative behaviour, and after France and Britain acquiesced to Hitler’s demands for Czechoslovak territory at Munich in 1938, Stalin abandoned his efforts to forge a collective security agreement with the West. Convinced now that the West would not fight Hitler, Stalin decided to come to an understanding with Germany.3

In Turkey, a new Turkish nation-state emerged in 1923 from the ruins of the Ottoman Empire. Following the departure of the last Greek soldiers from Anatolian soil on 15 September, and the evacuation of eastern Thrace by the Greek army, the Lausanne Conference opened on 20 November. While the Lausanne Conference maintained suspense over the conclusion of peace, the year 1923 was a time for the establishment of the basic institutions of a new Turkey. During this year, Mustafa Kemal developed his critique of economic backwardness of his country and its Islamic culture, and concluded that it would be necessary to adopt Western culture and achieve Western standards of political and economic management.

A comprehensive settlement was eventually reached at Lausanne in July 1923 that negated the Treaty of Sèvres. The question of oil-rich Mosul was left to the League of Nations, which in 1925 recommended its retention by Iraq. The Lausanne Treaty also provided for an international regime for the Straits, but Turkey would recover complete control of the Straits by the 1936 Montreux Convention. On 29 October 1923, Turkey was declared a republic and Mustafa Kemal was elected its first president. The Caliphate was finally abolished on 3 March 1924, and all members of the Ottoman dynasty were expelled from Turkey. Legal reforms were introduced to bring Turkey on a par with modern
Western states, and established for the first time a system of laws based entirely on capitalist property relations. Kemalist reform policies were defined by a firm belief that the new regime should substitute all aspects of traditional Islamic culture with Western culture. Most of the reforms were designed to disestablish the institutional and functional strength of both orthodox and folk Islam. Although Kemalist reformism was accepted at the centre, there was considerable resistance to it at the periphery.

There was an oppressive one-party system in Turkey during most of the interwar period. The TKP was very weak and inactive, but provided the only opposition during those years. The conflicting tendencies in Turkish society found their reflection in different factions within the single party, the Republican People’s Party (CHP), each trying to woo the ‘Eternal Chief’, Atatürk, or the ‘National Chief’, İnönü. The Kemalist elite made sincere efforts in this period to pursue an independent foreign policy, keeping the great powers at a distance and preserving good neighbourly relations with the Soviet Union.

The Turkish communists considered the Kemalist ruling party as a bourgeois reformist party that was the lesser evil under the circumstances. It thought that if the Kemalists were expelled from power, reactionary forces would regain rule and inevitably bring the country once again under imperialist tutelage. This would leave Turkey as a link in the ‘cordon sanitaire’, or chain of satellite states with which imperialism had encircled the Soviet Union. In those days, the one and only missing link in that chain was Kemalist Turkey, and preventing the closure of the chain was considered an urgent international task. The Komintern and the TKP had identical views on this issue.

However, there was a strong tendency within the TKP for a more uncompromising stand against the Kemalist regime. Most of the leading Turkish communists shared the belief that the Kemalist policy of capitalist development through the creation of a Turkish national bourgeoisie would sooner or later collapse, leaving the largest section of the so-called national bourgeoisie to fall into the lap of imperialist monopolies. The TKP did not fail to emphasize this inevitability in its agitation and propaganda, but this did not prevent the party from struggling for a united national democratic front against imperialism and its local collaborators.

In 1923, Bukharin would argue that Turkey, ‘in spite of all persecutions of communists, plays a revolutionary role, since she is a destructive instrument in relation to the imperialist system as a whole’.4 Yet, it was very difficult in 1920s’ Turkey to distinguish between ‘progressive bourgeoisie’ and ‘right-wing collaborators of imperialism’. With Stalinism on the rise in Moscow, Turkish communists proved unable to develop an independent and effective policy in this period.

The 1925 Kurdish Revolt and the beginning of illegality for the communists

‘The unfortunate thing about a despotism is not that it does not love people, but that it loves them too much and trusts them too little’.5
The authority of the young Turkish regime was continuously challenged in this period by various forces within the country. The old religious establishment found itself in opposition to the new secular measures, and other elements in Turkish politics opposed them from a non-religious position. For many members of the opposition, it was not worth passing from constitutional monarchy to absolutist republic, and most of the military leaders who had played a decisive role in the ‘war of independence’ were now in opposition to Mustafa Kemal.

In this period, the most important resistance to the regime came from the Kurdish minority. When the Turkish Republic was created, its citizens were faced with an identity problem. The population was predominantly Muslim because most of the non-Muslim population of Anatolia had fled Turkey as a result of the conflicts between 1913 and 1923; the transfer of populations agreed to at the Lausanne Conference completed this process. The population of the new Turkish state was, however, ethnically still very mixed, with the Kurds being the largest minority group.

The Treaty of Sèvres had created the autonomous Kurdistan, but in the meantime a new state was taking root. On 23 April 1920, the Turkish Grand National Assembly had been established as a parallel legislative body to the Assembly of the Ottoman Empire, and the new Turkish state did not recognize the Treaty of Sèvres, leaving the Treaty in limbo. First, Prime Minister Ismet Inönü had presented the country to the League of Nations as the ‘land of Turks and Kurds’. With the Treaty of Lausanne, signed on 24 July 1924, providing an alternative to the Treaty of Sèvres, the territory of the Republic of Turkey to a large extent covered the territory of the Kurdistan of the Treaty of Sèvres. The Turkish representative declared at the Lausanne negotiations, ‘the Kurds and the Turks are essential components of the Republic of Turkey . . . the government in Ankara is the government of the Turks as well as Kurds’. But the Treaty in fact made no mention of Kurds, and this was the last time the Kurdish identity was officially recognized.

On 29 October 1924, the Grand National Assembly accepted a new constitution and declared Turkey a republic. The constitution forbade the use of Kurdish in public places, and law 1505 made it possible for the land of large landowners to be expropriated and given to the new Turkish settlers in Kurdistan. The word ‘Kurdistan’ was omitted from all educational books and Turkish geographical names were gradually substituted for the Kurdish equivalent throughout the country. All these events contributed to the already existing dissatisfaction among the Kurds with the new secular regime in Turkey.

The first Kurdish uprising since the proclamation of the republic of Sheikh Said occurred in February 1925. This uprising, which expressed Kurdish national goals, was led largely by the deeply religious Nakshbandi order and its sheikhs, based on their traditional position and the high esteem in which the Kurdish population held them. While the Sheikh Said rebellion was basically nationalist in nature, its mobilization, propaganda and symbols were those of a religious rebellion. Eventually, it took a full-scale military operation to put it down.

The rebellion gave the leaders of the Turkish republic an opportunity to silence the domestic opposition. It created and provided a means whereby most serious
subsequent opposition to government policies, or comprehensive disagreement with its progress, created the possibility that the disaffected groups would be labelled as traitors. In March 1925, a new government came to power under Ismet İnönü. On the next day, the new government concluded a parliamentary vote on the notorious Law for the Maintenance of Order (Takrir-i Sükun Kanunu). This marked the definitive establishment of the one-party regime in Turkey and, at the same time, itinerant extraordinary tribunals known as Courts of Independence (İstiklal Mahkemeleri) were re-established. They had already raged during the war, and they now operated for two years sentencing 600 people to death.9

Soon after the Kurdish rebellion was suppressed, the opposition party was closed, and its leading members arrested. Eight leading newspapers also were closed and a number of journalists put in prison. It was in this atmosphere that the social reforms were undertaken, starting with the ‘hat revolution’ in August 1925. Hat Law was introduced and the traditional turban, or fez, was replaced by a hat – dress in Ottoman society had been a mark of social as well as official status. Without his turban and gown, a Muslim cleric was a nobody. This provoked a series of reactions from the traditional sections of the society. Following the adoption by the assembly of the law mandating the wearing of hats, 25 November 1925, a series of explosions occurred in various places in Anatolia. Between 15 and 20 people eventually lost their heads for wishing to cover them as they saw fit.

The 1920s witnessed a number of rebellions all over Anatolia. The Kemalist regime adopted harsh measures against any sort of opposition, and a sizeable section of the Kurdish population was forcefully transferred from the traditional Kurdish areas to western Anatolia. Thousands of people, Kurds, Islamic leaders and religious activists, communists and trade union activists, and even some of Mustafa Kemal’s former close associates, were taken to the court; a number received death sentences. Executions were carried out in public, and the bodies of those hanged were displayed in Ankara’s main square. It was by such ruthless measures that the Kemalist regime succeeded in keeping the opposition under control.

The TKP’s work among the Kurdish people was almost negligible. The party and those intellectuals close to the party line considered the 1925 rebellion as completely isolated from progressive forces in other countries and the world revolutionary working-class movement in particular. The possible success of a Kurdish uprising was considered to be a change in the balance of forces in favour of imperialism, particularly British imperialism. This line was indeed the official line presented by the Komintern regarding the 1925 rebellion. But the inhuman methods used by the Kemalist regime in crushing the revolt were considered as tragic manifestations of the chauvinist policies implemented by the Turkish government.

The Kurdish uprisings … were led by feudal chiefs and could not readily be qualified as progressive national liberation movements. Nevertheless, it was the ruthless application of the policy of forced assimilation, denying the existence of the Kurdish national community within the boundaries of the repub-
lic combined with the oppression and exploitation of the peasantry all over the country that paved the way to those uprisings.10

On 5 March 1925, Orak Cekic, one of the leading journals of the TKP, printed an article that deplored the Kurdish rebellion and denounced Sheikh Said as the puppet of British imperialism. It went on to advocate land reform:

The thing to do is not just to suppress the rebellion and to punish its leaders, but also to abolish the feudal order in the east. The problems of ownership of land should be solved and the land should be redistributed for the benefits of the peasants.

This was the final number of the journal to appear before it was suppressed.11

The official attitude of the Turkish communists towards the Kurdish rebellion remained more or less the same, and was repeated in later articles. The following, published in 1986 by Adem Kalfa, is a clear example of this position:

These uprisings were completely isolated from progressive forces in other countries, the world revolutionary working class movement in particular … Success for any of these uprisings would be a change in the balance of forces in favour of imperialism, British imperialism in particular.12

Nazim Hikmet: poet of revolution

Communism comes by way of the heart. The heart is within the province of poetry.13

Despite its heavy losses, the TKP continued to exist in deepest secrecy, but its membership included a number of prominent names, such as Nazim Hikmet, one of the most important figures in twentieth-century Turkish literature. ‘I never returned to the city of my birth’, Nazim recalled in a late poem.14 He was born on 15 January 1902, in Salonika, the birthplace of much revolutionary thought in the Ottoman Empire. Nazim was from an aristocratic background and a cosmopolitan family. His father was a government official in the foreign service, and his mother was a painter of Polish and Huguenot descent. Both her grandfathers were illustrious commanders in the Ottoman army, with revolution and adventure running through both their life stories, and his paternal grandfather was also a Pasha, who practised mysticism, and a Sufi.

Nazim was sent to Galatasaray Lisesi, a French high school, and then later to the naval academy. He was in Istanbul as the First World War was ending and the Allied forces were poised to carve up what was left of the Empire. Occupying forces were already entering the capital while Mustafa Kemal was busy setting up an alternative government in the city of Ankara. This was the movement that inspired Nazim’s early poetry and that he was so anxious to join. In late 1920, an
invitation finally came to Nazim from Halide Edip, the famous writer and activist and a woman sergeant on the Western Front. Thus, at the age of 18 he and another close friend, also a poet, set out for Ankara on the first day of 1921.

As the railroad had by then been seized by the Allied Occupying Powers, the journey had to be made by boat and then by foot over treacherous mountain passes. On the way, in Inebolu, they came into contact with a group of Turkish Spartacists, also on their way to join the Turkish resistance in Ankara. It was through this group that Nazim was first introduced to the revolutionary ideas.

In Ankara they met Mustafa Kemal, who on learning that they were poets advised them to ‘write poetry with a purpose’. They were not sent to the front line, but to teaching posts in the small town of Bolu. Finding themselves and their assigned roles somewhat ineffective, their imaginations drifted towards becoming part of the revolutionary Soviet state, and in the autumn of 1921 they made their way across the newly redrawn border to the new Soviet state of Georgia.

It was in Batum that Nazim Hikmet made the decision to join the recently founded Communist Party of Turkey, TKP. The minutes of a branch meeting of September 1921 record that they were delegated to work for the literary section of the revolutionary journal Kızıl Sendika (Red Trade Union). Later, in his autobiographical novel, the Romantics, Nazim Hikmet recalls how he decided to be a member of the party:

You must decide, my son, I say to myself, you must decide. […] What can you give to Anatolia, what can you give? Everything […] Your freedom? Yes! How many years will you be able to stay in prison for this cause? All my life, if necessary! But you love women, you enjoy the good life. […] If you become a communist, you might end up being drowned like Subhi.

In 1921, Nazim Hikmet went to Moscow to attend the newly established Communist University for the Toilers of the East. Here, students were privileged to witness the brief, incredibly dynamic Russian renaissance of the arts that occurred right after the Revolution. Nazim was introduced to the Futurist poet Mayakovsky, the influential Meyerhold and avant-garde theatre.

After a year in Moscow, Nazim returned to Turkey where the Independence War had been won in late 1922 and the Turkish Republic declared by Mustafa Kemal. It was not until his second visit to Moscow that Nazim found an opportunity to pursue his experiments in the theatre, establishing a new company and becoming its resident poet and playwright. Nazim’s short play about the murders of Mustafa Subhi and his comrades, 28 Kanunisani (28 January), was staged in 1924 in a workers’ club in Moscow and reviewed by Pravda.

Hikmet’s first poems appeared in the 1920s, even though he had begun to write earlier. In Moscow, he was introduced to a poem by Mayakovsky and although he did not understand Russian the free-flowing lines fascinated his imagination. Hikmet showed Mayakovsky’s influence in his early poems, but he never used completely free verse. More typically, Hikmet’s poems exhibited a
changing metre and irregular use of rhymes. Hikmet also combined traditional Turkish poetry with avant-gardist trends, which deeply influenced Turkish literature in the 1920s and 1930s. Hikmet left Moscow in December 1924 to attend the Second Congress of the Communist Party of Turkey, which was planned for January 1925 in Istanbul.

Sefik Husnü’s Aydinlik and the Komintern

The Second Congress of the TKP was held in Sefik Husnü’s house in Istanbul in January 1925. Like Hikmet, Sefik Husnü was also born in Salonika, but 15 years before Nazim. He studied medical science at the Sorbonne in Paris, where he graduated in 1912. His early articles were published in Berlin in 1918 in the journal Kurtulus, which was managed by the Turkish Spartacist group located there. When he returned to Istanbul, he founded Turkiye Isci Koylu Sosyalist Firkasi – Workers’ and Farmers’ Socialist Party of Turkey – in Istanbul, and started to publish Kurtulus in September 1919 as the monthly organ of the party. From September 1919 to February 1920, five issues of Kurtulus appeared, in which Husnü wrote many articles concerning Turkish social, economic and political issues and analyzed the roles of the workers and peasants within a Marxist framework.

When the British forces occupied the Ottoman capital on 16 March 1920, they stopped the publication of Kurtulus, together with many other journals and newspapers. After the murder of Mustafa Subhi and other TKP leaders in January 1921, the main communist activity in Turkey was led by Sefik Husnü’s group in Istanbul. This group started another journal, Aydinlik, in June 1921 in Istanbul, which showed a keen interest in the first Turkish Economy Congress that met in Izmir between 17 February and 4 March 1923. Some of the points first promoted in the pages of Aydinlik were expressed by some workers at the Congress, and a few of them were even accepted and included in the final document.

Members of the left-wing intelligentsia wrote most of the articles in Aydinlik, but occasionally the journal also published the writings of a literate working man or woman, such as Yasar Nezihe. Nezihe was born in Istanbul in 1882 and grew up in very difficult circumstances. Her father had been an out-of-work municipal worker who had scraped a living until he died of typhoid. Her mother had passed away when Nezihe was just six and thereafter she was raised by an old, illiterate aunt. Despite her father’s opposition, she went to a local hoca who taught her the rudiments of reading and writing. She married three times, and had three children from her third marriage, but none of her husbands was able to support her. She worked day and night to put her son through school, pursuing a variety of jobs that were available to women. She did embroidery work for the Society for the Protection of Children and the Red Crescent, worked in the Oriental Goods store and in the Mint.

Yasar Nezihe published several pieces in Aydinlik in the 1920s, among which were two poems to celebrate May Day in 1923 and 1924. The following is from the latter:
Oh workers!
May Day is your day of freedom
March forward.
There is light [Aydinlik, the name of the communist paper] to lead you
The workshops are silent as though the world sleeps
The exploiters shake, in fear
Today the Red Flag spreads its inspiration
Opening the path to liberation tomorrow

... What a sweet thought is liberation from exploitation!
Always be united and show your strength!
Don’t abandon unity if you want victory
You are no plaything in the patrons’ hands
Raise your head and make them bow before you.22

Yasar Nezihe was not the only worker active in this period. The years following the establishment of the new Turkish Republic in 1923 witnessed a wave of workers’ activities in Istanbul and Anatolia. In particular, in 1923 there was a large number of strikes, demonstrations and May Day celebrations. During the summer of 1923, 12,000 miners at Zonguldak and Eregli went on strike with demands concerning job security. In August, Istanbul Bomonti beer-factory workers struck as a result of dismissals that followed from an earlier action in March. Among many other workers’ actions, the October strike of the Sark Demiryollari (Eastern Railways) workers is of particular interest, as it was discussed in Parliament, with the Minister of the Economy, Mahmut Esat, receiving severe criticism for his tolerant policies towards workers’ demands. Later, he was compelled to resign.23 Police and the gendarmerie also blocked the 1924 May Day celebrations in Istanbul and arrested the organizers. In July, Istanbul tramway workers clashed with security forces while protesting over a dismissal. All through the summer and autumn of 1924, strikes broke out in Istanbul by Ortakoy tobacco warehouse women workers, Eastern Railways workers and Istanbul municipality workers.

After the notorious repressive Law of the Maintenance of Order in March 1925, the regime tried to control the working-class organizations and actions more effectively through the use of force. However, in the second half of the 1920s and in the 1930s significant protests, strikes and workers’ celebrations continued, and the May Day celebrations were particularly well organized throughout the country, generally under strict and illegal conditions, which resulted in clashes with the police and several thousands of arrests.

During the inter-war period Sefik Husnü and his group played a leading role in the communist movement in Turkey. The rank and file of the party consisted mainly of workers from Istanbul, the principal industrial centre where the working class concentrated. Sefik Husnü played an important role within the Eastern Europe section of the Komintern. During this period, he was a member of the Komintern’s Executive Committee, and the famous Bulgarian communist Georgi
Dimitrov worked as his assistant in the Eastern Europe section. Husnū was arrested, together with Dimitrov, in Berlin by the Nazi government and accused of responsibility for the Reichstag fire.\(^{24}\)

Even though Aydinlik, the main journal of the party, supported the new Kemalist regime against the feudal elements in the country and against Western imperialism, and presented this as the only correct position for the Turkish Left in this period, the group soon found itself continuously targeted by the regime. Even so, Sefik Husnū continued to write articles that painted the new Turkish regime as one of democratic, anti-imperialist forces. During the Fifth Congress of the Komintern, which met in Moscow on 17 June–8 July 1924, this line of the Turkish communists was severely criticized.\(^{25}\) Polish delegate D. Z. Manuilski made an open attack against the stance of Aydinlik. The Fifth Komintern Congress revolved around the international response to the defeat of the German Revolution in 1923, and it was at this Congress that Zinoviev first characterized social democracy as a wing of fascism – ‘social fascism’. One of the key goals that emerged from the Congress was the move to ‘Bolshevize’ the communist parties outside of the Soviet Union. From this point on, the Komintern became a means of imposing the party line and organization of the Russian party on those in every country. This shift at an organizational level was soon to be codified at the theoretical level by Stalin as he and his clique developed the theory of ‘socialism in one country’.

It is in the light of this shift in the new policy of the Komintern towards social democracy that one should look at Manuilski’s criticism of Aydinlik. At the twenty-fifth session of the Congress, Manuilski made a speech on national and colonial questions, and presented the stance of Aydinlik as an example of the continuation of the social chauvinism of the Second International. He stressed that the official journal of the TKP, Aydinlik, was making a serious mistake by printing articles in full support of the policies of the Turkish bourgeois government.\(^{26}\) Husnū, in his speech on 1 July, responded to Manuilski’s criticism by saying: ‘Comrade Manuilski stressed only one side of the situation …, and presented a wrong picture on the line of the Turkish Communist Party’. Husnū then presented a long and detailed analysis of the situation in Turkey, and insisted that the stance of Aydinlik was in line with the Marxist policy towards the anti-imperialist and anti-colonial national bourgeoisie originally drawn up by Lenin in the early 1920s.\(^{27}\)

After the 1925 Congress, the TKP was faced with mass detentions. Even though the Communist Party press supported government policy against the Kurdish rebellion, after 1925 all party journals, Aydinlik, Yoldas (Comrade) and Orak Cekic (Sickle and Hammer), were shut down. Sefik Husnū and 480 other members of the group were arrested in 1927, in various towns, brought before the independent tribunals and imprisoned.\(^{28}\) Released in April 1929, Husnū went into exile in Europe.

On 5 August 1929, Atatürk spoke, for the first time equating communism with treason. In response, in 1929 the TKP journal Kommunist started to describe the Kemalist regime as ‘a bourgeois–feudal regime which had left all its earlier anti-
imperialist claims’. Another TKP magazine, *Inkilap Yolu* (Revolutionary Path), provided a detailed account of Kemalist oppression from the 1925 Kurdish rebellion onwards. The party’s 1931 programme called for a direct attack on the Kemalist government, which it condemned root and branch. The party also argued with the syncretic efforts of a group of former communists who, through the periodical *Kadro* (Cadre), from 1932 to 1935 wanted to enhance Kemalism with selected borrowings from Soviet experience. In 1934, Dimitrov, Kuusinen and Manuilski attended a special plenum of the CC of the TKP on behalf of the Komintern (see Appendix 2).

The Seventh (and last) Congress of the Komintern in 1935 witnessed a major debate between Sefik Husnü and a number of delegates from the Arab countries of the Middle East. Under the pseudonym ‘Comrade Ferdi’, Husnü delivered a long speech in French on 31 July 1935 in which he not only discussed the situation in Turkey, but also talked about the situation in the neighbouring Arab countries to the South. The Seventh Congress then introduced a platform that offered new strategy against fascism, war and exploitation.

Political debate in the party was vivid and alive during these years of illegality and heavy pressure by the regime. In the period 1928 to 1938, the position of the TKP towards the Komintern, as well as towards the regime in Turkey, led to many struggles and conflicts within the party. As a result of these internal struggles, Nazim Hikmet was temporarily dismissed from the party in 1930.

Following the Seventh Komintern Congress in 1935, the TKP assumed a more conciliatory attitude toward the Kemalist government, seeking to court the ‘progressive’ wing of the regime. This shift led the Turkish communists to concentrate on extending their influence into key institutions of the state, especially in infiltrating literary and artistic circles, as well as establishing contacts within the army. In 1938, a communist cell was discovered in the naval academy, and the following year Nazim Hikmet was sentenced to 28 years’ hard labour for organizing communist cells on the cruiser *Yavuz*. Another important figure of the TKP who was sentenced to prison in the same so-called navy trial was Dr. Hikmet Kivileimli, and other members of the party were also accused of ‘promoting the army to rebellion against the regime’ (see Appendix 3).
4 The Second World War years

When German troops invaded Poland, the Soviet Union was ill prepared to fight a major war. Although military expenditures had increased dramatically during the 1930s, and the standing army was expanded in 1939, Soviet weaponry was inferior to that of the German army. The time gained through the pact with the Nazis was critical to the development of Soviet defences, particularly after German forces had with little resistance overrun much of Western Europe by the summer of 1940. To strengthen its western frontier, the Soviet Union quickly secured the territory located in its sphere of interest: Soviet forces seized eastern Poland in September 1939, entered Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in October 1939, and seized the Romanian territories of Bessarabia (later incorporated into the Moldavian Republic) and northern Bukovina (later added to the Ukrainian Republic) in June 1940. Only Finland resisted Stalin’s programme of expansion, first by refusing to cede territory and then by putting up a determined defence against the Red Army invasion in November 1939. Although the Soviet Union finally won its original demands in March 1940, the Soviet–Finnish War – also known as the Winter War – pointed out grave deficiencies in Soviet military capabilities that Hitler undoubtedly knew about.

As the European war continued, and the theatres of conflict widened, Hitler began to chafe under his pact with the Soviet Union. The Nazi dictator refused to grant Stalin a free hand in the Balkans, and instead moved the German forces deeper into Eastern Europe and strengthened his ties with Finland. Hitler thus prepared for war against the Soviet Union under a plan that he officially approved in December 1940. Stalin, however, still believed that the Soviet Union could avert war by not offending Germany. The Soviet Union continued its regular shipments of resources to Germany and maintained its armed forces officially at a low stage of readiness. Stalin tried to use this time to intensify Soviet military build-up, and major new weapons, such as the T-34 tank and the Katusha rocket launcher, were developed, and new defence plants were built deep in the interior, far away from the western borders.

Despite Stalin’s efforts to appease Hitler, Germany declared war on the Soviet Union just as 180 German divisions swept across the border early on the morning of 22 June 1941. The German blitzkrieg nearly succeeded in defeating the Soviet Union within the first months. Soviet forces, caught quite unprepared, lost
whole armies and vast quantities of equipment to the German onslaught in the first weeks of the war. By November, the German army had seized the Ukrainian Republic, begun its siege of Leningrad, and threatened the security of Moscow itself. The Great Patriotic War, as the Soviet Union calls this phase of the Second World War, thus began inauspiciously for the Soviet Union.

By the end of 1941, however, German forces lost their momentum. Harsh winter weather, attacks from bands of partisans, and difficulties in obtaining supplies over long distances restricted German movements. At the same time, after recovering from the initial invasion, the Red Army launched its first counter-attacks against the invaders in December. To ensure the army’s ability to fight the war, the Soviet authorities evacuated thousands of factories and key personnel from the war zone to the interior of the country, where the plants began producing war material.

After a lull in active hostilities during the winter of 1941–42, the German army renewed its offensive, scoring a number of victories in the Ukrainian Republic, Crimea and southern Russia in the first half of 1942. Then, in an effort to gain control of the lower Volga River region, the German forces attempted to capture the city of Stalingrad (present-day Volgograd) on the west bank of the river. Here, Soviet forces put up fierce resistance even after Hitler’s determined actions to take the city had reduced it to rubble. Finally, Soviet forces led by General Georgii K. Zhukov surrounded the German attackers and forced their surrender in February 1943. The Soviet victory at Stalingrad proved decisive; after losing this battle the Germans lacked the strength to sustain their offensive operations against the Soviet Union.

After Stalingrad, the Soviet Union held the initiative for the rest of the war. By the end of 1943, the Red Army had broken through the German siege of Leningrad and recaptured much of the Ukrainian Republic. By the end of 1944, the front had moved beyond the 1939 Soviet frontiers into Eastern Europe. With a decisive superiority in troops and weaponry, Soviet forces drove into Eastern Germany, capturing Berlin in May 1945. The war with Germany thus ended triumphantly for the Soviet Union.

In gaining this victory, the Soviet government had to rely on the support of the people, and to increase popular enthusiasm for the war, Stalin changed his domestic policies to heighten patriotic spirit. Nationalistic slogans replaced much of the communist rhetoric in official pronouncements and the mass media, active persecution of religion ceased, and in 1943 Stalin allowed the Russian Orthodox Church to name a patriarch after the office had stood vacant for nearly two decades. In the countryside, authorities permitted greater freedom on the collective farms. Harsh German rule in the occupied territories also aided the Soviet cause. Nazi administrators of conquered Soviet territories made little attempt to exploit the population’s dissatisfaction with Soviet political and economic policies. Instead, the Nazis preserved the collective-farm system, systematically carried out genocidal policies against Jews, and deported others (mainly Ukrainians) to work in Germany. In these circumstances, the great majority of the Soviet people fought and worked on their country’s behalf, thus ensuring the regime’s survival.
The war with Germany also brought about a temporary alliance with the two greatest powers in the ‘imperialist camp’ – Britain and the United States. Despite deep-seated mistrust between the Western democracies and the Soviet state, the demands of war made cooperation critical. The Soviet Union benefited from shipments of weaponry and equipment from the Western Allies, and at the same time, by engaging considerable German resources, the Soviet Union gave the United States and Britain time to prepare to invade German-occupied Western Europe. In order to allay the misgivings of its Second World War allies, the Soviet Union officially dissolved the Komintern in 1943, and replaced it with the International Department.

Relations began to sour, however, when the war turned to the Allies’ advantage. The postponement of the European invasion to June 1944 became a source of irritation to Stalin, whose country meanwhile bore the brunt of the struggle with Germany. Then, as Soviet armies pushed into Eastern Europe, the question of the post-war order increased the friction within the coalition. At the Yalta Conference in February 1945, Stalin clashed with President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill over his plans to extend Soviet influence to Poland after the war. At the same time, however, Stalin promised to join the war against Japan, 90 days after Germany had been defeated, thus breaking the neutrality pact that the Soviet Union had concluded with Japan in April 1941. The Red Army entered the war in East Asia several days before Japan surrendered in August 1945, and with all common enemies defeated, little remained to preserve the alliance between the Western democracies.

The end of the Second World War saw the Soviet Union emerge as one of the world’s two great military powers. Its battle-tested forces occupied most of post-war Eastern Europe. The Soviet Union won island holdings from Japan, and further concessions from Finland (which had joined in the German invasion in 1941), in addition to the territories the Soviet Union had seized as a consequence of the Nazi–Soviet Non-Aggression Pact. But these achievements had been bought at a high cost. An estimated 20 million Soviet soldiers and civilians perished in the war, the heaviest loss of life of any of the combatant countries. The war also inflicted severe material losses throughout the vast territory that had been included in the war zone. The suffering and losses resulting from the war made a lasting impression on the Soviet people and leaders that cannot be overlooked.

Turkish ‘neutrality’

During the Second World War Turkey was faced with military threats from Germany and the Soviet Union. Britain, Germany and the Soviet Union all brought strong pressure to bear on Turkey to follow a policy in keeping with their interests. The Turkish government sustained its non-belligerent status in the form of a precarious neutrality, and took great care to avoid being drawn into the conflict by one side or the other. Turkey’s geo-strategic location over the crossroads of three continents provided a unique position, and as a result Turkey was able to
achieve its principal aim of staying out of the devastation which surrounded the country.

At the outset of the war, there was a three-sided rivalry between the Soviet Union, Germany and the Allies for the friendship of Turkey. The Turkish government received economic and military assistance from Great Britain, France and the United States, mainly because they were the more distant and least menacing of the rival great powers, and had foreign-policy objectives most closely related to those of Turkey. At the same time, the British and French tolerated Turkey’s receipt of military material from Germany. On the basis of this understanding, the Turkish government managed to manoeuvre itself into a position where it had a formal and explicit Treaty of Mutual Assistance with Great Britain, as well as a Friendship and Non-Aggression Pact with Germany.

Not only did Turkey stay out of the conflict, but it was able to influence both warring camps in its favour, profiting from both British and German trade and aid. All through the war, Turkish statesmen followed a consistent foreign policy based on a realization of Turkey’s geo-strategic importance for the Great Powers. This policy consisted of a set of realistic possibilities, limitations, advantages and handicaps that constantly guided the Turkish decision-makers. Turkish statesmen understood the fact that Turkey, which emerged from the Greek–Turkish war of 1918–22, was a poor and tired country. They realized that an extended period of peace was necessary for Turkey to heal its wounds, and they based their policy on the principle of ‘Peace at Home, Peace Abroad’. Sir Percy Loraine, the British ambassador to Turkey, pointed out that the Turks had wearied of war and ‘in their settled policy there is no room for adventure’.

The consistent goal of the Turkish leaders was the survival and continuity of Turkey as a sovereign independent state. This created a sense of extreme caution and a readiness to use every opportunity to Turkey’s benefit, and Turkish foreign policy during the Second World War was a pragmatic synthesis of the experiences and convictions of the governing elite. Leaders such as President İnönü, his Foreign Minister Sukru Saracoğlu and Numan Menemencioğlu, Secretary-General at the Foreign Ministry, employed a distinctly pragmatic approach in their decision-making.

The Turkish government was an authoritarian one-party regime during this period, centred on the power of the President, the Cabinet, and the Grand National Assembly. The power structure was extremely hierarchical and authoritarian. President İnönü was the absolute ruler of an Assembly that had absolute power. When war broke out, almost all power of the Assembly to approve state policy was shifted from the Assembly to the Parliamentary group of the Republican People’s Party (CHP), led by President İnönü. İnönü fully controlled the instrument of government, and all diplomatic correspondence and cables were transmitted immediately to him. He carefully considered each move and avoided taking radical steps that might have involved Turkey in the war in any way. Turkish neutrality, as guided by İnönü, was essentially a policy of waiting.
Inönü relied on advisers and placed some importance on putting on a show of legitimate democratic procedure. Yet he effectively held the monopoly of real power when it came to the decision-making process. Menemencioglu and Saracoglu would present decisions before the Assembly already knowing that it was not a question of approval but of obtaining a ‘rubber stamp’. Inönü considered close relations with the Allied Powers, especially Great Britain, as something of a necessary evil. When the events progressed beyond the predicted, Turkish foreign policy had to be adjusted accordingly. Opportunism became the main objective in the day-to-day running of Turkish foreign affairs.

Numan Menemencioglu was considered the brain in the shaping of Turkish foreign policy during the war. He was regarded as a brilliant intellect and a top class diplomat. British ambassador Knatchbull-Hugessen described him as ‘quiet and retiring, but very intelligent and efficient, friendly-mannered’. Menemencioglu came to be the most prominent among the ministers, and he kept tight control on the workings of the Ministry. Menemencioglu’s first aim was, like İnönü’s, to keep Turkey out of the war. To accomplish this, he was prepared like his President to employ the most pragmatic of means. It was this pragmatism that led to his identification as ‘pro-German’ in British circles. He saw nothing inherently wrong with keeping his options open by moving into a closer relationship with various warring powers. Also, he was not bothered by criticism that his dual policy was morally wrong in maintaining an alliance with Great Britain and a friendship pact with Nazi Germany. This was his way of maintaining what he called Turkey’s ‘active neutrality’. This dubious neutrality was designed to safeguard Turkey’s integrity while preventing either Germany or the Soviet Union from becoming over-powerful and threatening. In many instances, as when the British accused him of being pro-German, it was simply a case of his not being pro-British enough to satisfy their requirements. Menemencioglu succeeded in keeping the Germans guessing as well as the British suspecting. Indeed, from the very outset and even before the actual outbreak of war, Menemencioglu was against Germany having a dominant influence in Turkey. Yet he also saw the game of international power balances as the most reasonable path and an opportunistic foreign policy as the least harmful for Turkey.

At first, the British felt that they had the legitimate right to ask Turkey to summon all its strength and join in the fight for what they considered to be a common cause. The Turks on the other hand saw no reason to endanger their very existence, which had cost them so dearly, in what was primarily a war of the European Powers’ own making. They aspired to no territorial gain and wanted no substantial revision of their international position. All Turkey could achieve by entering the war would be to serve as a battleground for the warring Great Powers. Menemencioglu summarized the Turkish position by saying that ‘we are egoists and fight exclusively for ourselves’.

There were, of course, real structural reasons for this pragmatic foreign policy, apart from the inclination of leading policy-makers. On the eve of the Second World War, Turkey was still an extremely underdeveloped and economically weak country. In 1938, there existed very few industries in the true sense of the
word and Turkey in 1939 was still a largely rural society, with 70 per cent of the population engaged in agriculture. According to the 1940 census, Turkey had a population of 17,820,950, of whom 13,475,000 lived in villages. Before the war, the leaders of Turkey had already realized that their policy of self-sufficiency had proved impossible and that foreign money and assistance were unavoidable and indeed the only answer to Turkey’s underdevelopment.

The emergence of Hitler and the economic expansion of Germany coincided with a period when Turkey was in need of finance and technical assistance. For the Nazis in the 1930s, economic relations came to have a primary importance, and economic influence was a lever for political domination. In the mid-1930s, Germany set about transforming the Balkans into its economic hinterland. By 1937, Germany supplied 78 per cent of Turkish wool yarns and tissues, 69.7 per cent of its iron and steel, 61 per cent of its machinery and apparatus and 55.4 per cent of its chemicals. In return, Germany took 75 per cent of Turkey’s new wool and 70 per cent of its new cotton and chrome.

In 1939, Germany was still receiving half of all Turkish exports, and nearly all Turkey’s exports were agricultural raw materials. Germany was the only country willing to buy Turkish agricultural produce on a large scale, as much of this produce was of lower quality than that usually demanded on the world market. In purely economic terms Germany was Turkey’s natural market and trading partner and Turkey thus developed an overwhelming economic dependence on Germany. As for Britain and France, they could purchase agricultural raw materials on more advantageous terms from their colonies and other long-standing trading partners. Another difficulty for the Allies was the limited number of routes for Turkish trade. The rail link with Europe passed entirely into German hands early in the war, and after the Germans occupied Greece they came to control all trade through the Straits.

This heavy dependence on Germany created an increasing weariness in the governing circles of Turkey, and by the mid-1930s Turkish leaders were attempting to bring Turkey’s economic policy more into line with close relations with Britain. They sought to gain assistance and relief from growing German economic domination. To this end, on 27 May 1938 the Anglo-Turkish credit agreement was signed for £16 million, £6 million of which was for armaments, the other £10 million for capital goods. When war broke out, the leaders of Turkey recognized that they were in no position to get involved in a total war, and there was no planning for a war economy. Rather, the Turkish leadership tried to make the best of the situation, attempting to draw the most favourable bargain possible from each side.

Chrome was the most important commodity involved in Turkey’s economic relations with both Germany and Great Britain, and it was particularly important to Germany’s war industry. Chromium, derived from chromite ore, is an essential element for the manufacture of stainless steel and refractory brick, and according to American experts Turkish chromite was valued by Germany because there were no fully adequate sources within German territory. The Germans made every effort to hasten the delivery of the urgently needed
chromite by making available as many as 117 locomotives and 1,250 freight cars, and German merchant ships gained access to the Black Sea as a result of Turkey’s liberal interpretation of its monitoring responsibilities in the Straits under the terms of the 1936 Montreux Convention.\(^{18}\)

The Allied countries, especially Britain and the United States, were not so desperately in need of Turkish chrome as was Germany. Yet minimizing Turkey’s contribution to the German war economy was a basic objective of joint US–British wartime economic strategy and they adopted a programme of preclusive purchases of Turkish chromite and other minerals, and withheld certain supplies from Turkey to ensure Turkey’s ban on exports of similar items to Germany. On the entry of Italy into the war on 10 June 1940, the export of all goods to Mediterranean countries was made subject to export licence in the UK and Commonwealth countries. However, an exception was made for Turkey to avoid pushing it into the camp of the Axis Powers, and export licences and navicerts continued to be issued for Turkey.\(^{19}\)

The programme of preclusive buying of Turkish strategic materials was introduced by the British government in 1940, and chromite was obviously the most significant commodity in this programme. Foodstuffs were purchased as well to supply the British population in the dire wartime conditions. In addition, the British were obliged to purchase other goods, such as dried fruits and tobacco, as a condition of obtaining access to Turkish chromite. Lack of transport proved a severe handicap for the British as two of the most important chrome-producing centres were in northern and south-western Anatolia, areas from which it was impossible for British ships to lift the ore. The only ports open to British ships were Mersin and Iskenderun, both along the Turkish Mediterranean coast, and transport by rail and sea to these ports was very limited.

Concerns on the Allied side increased when Germany concluded the Clodius agreement with Turkey in October 1941. According to the agreement Turkey would provide Germany with various important raw materials, including chromite. Turkey promised to supply Germany with 90,000 tons of chrome in 1943 and 1944 in return for 18 million liras’ worth of war materials.\(^{20}\) This agreement improved Germany’s economic prospects in Turkey considerably. As a whole, Turkish politicians who followed this carefully balanced policy managed to sell chromite and copper to both Germany and Britain at a premium price, and in return received the arms and assistance they needed to develop Turkey’s defences from both sides.

Britain and the United States accepted Turkey’s neutrality early in the war in view of its military and economic weakness, and they undertook to explore the possibility of rendering economic and military assistance to keep Turkey neutral until it could join the Allies. The British authorities realized that the Turkish government regarded ‘German military strength as irresistible and to be overawed accordingly’.\(^{21}\) Because of traditional British interests in the eastern Mediterranean, Britain took the lead throughout the Second World War in relations with Turkey. Under the alliance with Great Britain, Turkey received rearmament assistance and was not subjected to the formal restrictions of rationing quotas.\(^{22}\)
After the tide of war turned in favour of the Allies with major victories in North Africa and at Stalingrad, the issue of aiding Turkey and inducing it to enter the war became more important to the Allied leaders, and they put increasing pressure on Turkey to join them. The Turkish leaders, however, refused the Allies’ request to enter the war, or even to use Turkish air bases. This was partly related to the level of military assistance, which the Turkish leaders still considered to be very limited and unsatisfactory, and partly because they claimed that Germany and Bulgaria would probably retaliate by attacking Turkish territory in Europe and its coastal cities. The Turkish leaders appeared to be genuinely concerned about their defensive strength. In the face of pressure from the Allied Powers, they took the firm view that on balance Turkey had more to gain than to lose by remaining neutral. Also, as the Soviet forces took the offensive against Germany, a growing apprehension of Turkey’s big and powerful neighbour began to colour its whole position with respect to the war, and Turkish leaders desired more than ever to keep out of it. This persistent attitude caused serious concern on the Allied side, and as a result in February 1944, Britain withdrew its military mission and halted the further flow of military supplies.

For a time, Turkey managed to carry on both British and Soviet friendships simultaneously. Turkey only gradually drifted away from the Soviet Union after the unexpected Nazi–Soviet Pact of August 1939. By 1939, although the Soviet Union was no longer ‘the only pebble on the Turkish beach’, relations were still good. The British appreciated the value of Turkey as a possible connecting link with the Soviets, but the news of the Nazi–Soviet Pact was received in Turkey with surprise and apprehension. The Pact certainly disturbed and surprised Turkish policy-makers deeply, and Turkish foreign policy entered a new phase with Turkey isolated from the two important Western powers. Both Germany and Great Britain used Turkish wariness of the Soviet Union for their own ends: Germany used the Soviets to frighten the Turks away from a more active cooperation with Britain, and the British sought to convince Turkey that they were its only hope of avoiding Soviet intimidation.

The French collapse and the closing of the Mediterranean to ordinary commerce also came as a severe shock to Turkey, complicating its relations with the competing Great Powers. It confirmed Turkey’s insistence that they wanted no part in the European conflagration, because they saw the French defeat as the destruction of the delicate power balance in the Mediterranean. This event seemed to justify the Turkish leaders’ political cynicism and assured them that their policy of ‘neutrality’ was the right one.

As war raged all over the world in the aftermath of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the German penetration deep into the Soviet Union, the Turks moved towards stricter neutrality and told both sides that this was also in keeping with their interests. Towards the end of the year, and with the beginning of Allied ascendancy, they shifted their policy gradually in favour of the Allies. As the fortunes of war swung against the Germans, and the Allied leaders seemed to be in agreement that Turkey should be brought in, the Turkish leaders emphasized that Germany might still strike at the Straits for a ‘prestige victory’. For
Turkey, 1943 represented the most critical year of the war, and with Allied gains pressure mounted on Turkey to fulfil its obligations. On the other hand, even though the Axis Powers were on the defensive, they were still within easy striking distance of Turkey.

Throughout the war, İnönü and the other foreign-policy-makers of Turkey had been taking a calculated gamble. This gamble was based on one of the most basic foundations of Turkish foreign policy: Turkey’s vital strategic location, and it was hoped that any short-term falling out with Britain would be remedied after the war when the British would realize that a friendly Turkey was a geopolitical necessity for the empire.

From 1940 until the very eve of the Allied victory, Turkish outward policy remained what Prime Minister Saracoglu frequently termed ‘alliance with Britain and friendship with Germany’. Turkish foreign policy was determined upon neutrality, the opportunist extraction of maximum material, and political benefits from the warring sides. İnönü and his ministers manoeuvred among the British, American, German and Soviet pressures, playing one side against the other. As a result, Turkey’s international reputation was damaged, even if keeping out of the war was regarded as a great success in the eyes of its leading politicians, who had a clear memory of the way the Ottoman Empire had allowed itself to be used as a German tool during the previous war, and the disasters that had brought upon their country. But in February 1945, Turkey declared war on Germany and Japan as a largely symbolic show of support for the Allies: no Turkish troops engaged in battle. Overall, despite this careful policy of ‘neutrality’, the country was essentially on a war footing with all its able-bodied men mobilized and the economy subject to shortages, black markets, war profiteering and huge government budget deficits.

**Struggle against fascism and single-party dictatorship, 1943–46**

According to Turkish official history, although Turkey had a policy of ‘neutrality’ during the Second World War, the government officially interned some people who were close to the Hitler regime, and many people, most of whom were scientists fleeing the regime in Germany, were accepted as refugees in Turkey. However, some recently discovered documents present a very different picture.

During the Second World War in Turkey, a large number of individuals, including many members of the ruling elite, were strongly sympathetic to the racist policies of Nazi Germany. Some people, including Turkish citizens, were handed over to the Nazis and killed in Nazi concentration camps. Hitler’s seizure of power strengthened nationalistic tendencies in Ankara, and German officials directed an intensive propaganda campaign in Turkey throughout the war, allocating sizeable sums of money for this purpose. Some representatives of the Hitler regime had organized their supporters, especially within the army. In December 1942, the German Ministry for Foreign Affairs sent 5 million German
gold marks to their Ambassador in Ankara, Franz von Papen, for their ‘Turkish friends’.

In documents found later, Alparslan Turkes is named as one of the people who had connections with the German Nazi regime. Turkes was a young captain during the war years, who was yet to make his mark in Turkish extreme-right politics. As soon as Germany was defeated, Turkes and his friends were arrested and tried, not because they had established relationships with Nazis, but because they had formed a ‘Turanist’ organization in 1944. They were found not guilty by the Court in 1947, which found that ‘an organization, based on an idea which is not considered to be criminal, is not a crime either’.

The formation of a new government in 1943 led by Saracoğlu was a turning point. This event represented the increasing influence of big landowners and the merchant class, with the former gaining in economic power under war conditions, especially in relation to the scandalous rise in prices of agricultural products. Many of the merchants too were war profiteers, as they piled up fortunes in the black market that had prospered due to the stagnation of industry and foreign trade in the wartime. Military victories of the German armies in the early years of the war were also an important factor in favour of the right-wing faction with the RPP, which backed the Saracoğlu government.

‘Saracoğlu was a trustworthy friend of the Nazis’, and was one of those who considered German victory as a fait accompli. His government took certain steps in preparation for a Nazi victory, including wide-ranging anti-Soviet and anti-communist propaganda started in the media. Until that point, anti-Sovietism was kept under control or even prohibited by the unofficial government censor. For many Turkish nationalists, fascism was welcomed as a means of resisting the menace of Russian communism, and chauvinist agitation coupled with an anti-minority campaign reached its peak. A special capital levy law was enacted and applied to the minorities for the purpose of dispossessing them of their means of livelihood, and non-Muslims who could not pay the levy were sent by the thousands to concentration camps set up in eastern Anatolia.

Chief of Staff Marshall Feyzi Cakmak was one of the principal proponents of a pro-German realignment in Turkish foreign policy. He belonged to a generation of Turkish officers who had been trained in imperial Germany before the First World War, and had fought alongside German units in the war against Allenby’s army in Palestine. At this time, the RPP opened wide its doors to right-wing elements and so underwent a change in the composition of its membership. The reformist faction was forced to retreat, which reflected the changes introduced by the Saracoğlu government. In October 1941, two Turkish generals, Ali Fuad Erdem and Huseyin Erkilet, were sent on a mission to the German military headquarters in East Prussia, where they were tremendously impressed by their meeting with Hitler, and on their return they reported to President İnönü that ‘all that was left to Russia was its snow’.

In parallel with all these political changes, the labour legislations and the working conditions for the labourers were subjected to drastic new measures. Martial law, passed by Parliament on 22 May 1940 and published in the Resmi
Gazete (Official Gazette) on 25 May 1940, enforced a series of restrictions that curtailed the right to gather, demonstrate and organize. Further severe restrictions were imposed on the press. To oversee this legislation, martial courts were established by the government and martial rule was immediately put into effect in all industrial cities, including Istanbul and Kocaeli. Martial rule lasted way past the end of the war, until 23 December 1947, and all these measures served as a vehicle to intensify the oppression imposed on the working class and the left-wing activists. Through these measures, a group of 30,000 to 40,000 people – black marketers, profiteers and hoarders – enriched themselves through wartime profiteering. This group comprised military personnel who black-marketed army stocks, as well as importers and a group of industrialists.

This small group of hoarders, black marketeers, and their contacts in the civil and military bureaucracy, using the wartime conditions and extreme exploitation, multiplied their assets and holdings. Under the aegis and protective eye of the state and the ruling party, the RPP, these nouveaux riches increased their economic wealth and attempted to translate this economic strength into political benefits. Soon after the war, they would establish their own political organization, the Demokrat Party (Democratic Party).

All these developments changed the tenor of the employer–employee relationship. Whereas most of the workers did not see the state as exploiting them, they saw the private entrepreneur as belonging to the other camp, as their exploiter. This shift would also cause an essential change in the character and perceptions of the working class in the post-Second World War era that shifted the political context in which the TKP was acting to a wider more popular level.

During the war years, the TKP carried out propaganda activities against the war and fascism through a number of journals, including Ses (Voice, 1939), Yeni Edebiyat (New Literature, 1940), Yurt ve Dunya (Homeland and World, 1941), and Adimlar (Steps, 1943). Taking into consideration the recent changes in politics and society, and in parallel with the changing priorities of Soviet foreign policy, the TKP discussed and determined a new political line in the summer of 1943. That line found its expression in a declaration of the Political Bureau that later came to be called ‘the 1943 Platform: Struggle Front Against Fascism and Profiteering’. The 1943 Platform claimed that the regime in Turkey, and the ruling party, the RPP, had now become the principal representative of the interests of the most parasitic and reactionary forces in the country, and that the overthrow of the government was the revolutionary task facing the party and all progressive forces in Turkey.

During the night of 18–19 May 1944, some communists tried to hang a huge banner between two minarets of the Süleymaniye Mosque in Istanbul. The writing on the banner was SARACOGLU IS A FASCIST, and the signature was ‘the Coalition Against Fascism and War-profiteering’, a campaign initiated by the TKP. Following this incident, the police started mass arrests of the communists and other left-wing activists, and organized a violent raid on the central office and the printing house of the progressive daily, Tan (Dawn). A large number of university students were arrested in Istanbul, all accused of being members of the
Ileri Gencler Birliği (Union of Progressive Youth), a TKP-led youth organization among university students. Also a number of lecturers, who were accused of being pro-communist, were dismissed from their posts in the universities.38

Stalin: the ‘new’ Tsar decides to take the Straits

The emergence of the Turkish Straits as an important factor in the dynamics of great power rivalry is closely related to their strategic location. Consisting of the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmara and the Bosphorus, the Turkish Straits lie at the junction of the key strategic and maritime routes that served for centuries to combine the commercial activities of the West with the natural reserves of the East. For most of modern history the main contenders were Britain and Russia.

The deepening imperial conflicts were reflected in the attitude of the powers to the status of the Straits, where both had interests at stake which they believed essential for their state. In the first place, command of the Straits was believed to lead to the domination of the Ottoman Empire, a prize which neither Britain nor Russia would concede to the other. On the other hand, the Straits involved part of or access to the major commercial and naval sea-lanes of both states and this represented a strategic logistics problem.39

Traditionally Russia sought to achieve two goals on its southern flank: to prevent any hostile attack from the rear through the Black Sea, and to keep open its only exit to warm waters. From a military standpoint, it was a point of weakness, for free access through the Straits would allow other powers to attack the Russian southern shore. On the other hand, the Straits was the economic key to its house, being the commercial outlet for the natural reserves of the Caucasus and the grain of the Ukraine.

With Britain as the dominant power in the Mediterranean, Russian entry through the Straits would mean a danger for British power in the regions of the eastern Mediterranean, the Middle and Near East. If a Russian fleet could freely enter the eastern Mediterranean, this would have made the British position vulnerable. Russian control in the Straits was also considered harmful to the safety of British lines of communication with her Asian empire, in particular with India. In turn, the reward for Britain was egress to the north. Thus the Black Sea was considered the most effective point where British naval supremacy could be brought into play against Russia. That is why the British sought an assurance that it could pass through the Turkish Straits if necessary.

The Treaty of Hunkar Iskelesi, signed between Russia and the Ottoman Empire in 1833, represented the furthest advance ever made by Russia towards solving the problem of the Straits in its own favour to the exclusion of other influences. This treaty opened the Straits to Russian warships, and according to a secret article of this agreement, the Ottoman government agreed to close the Straits of the Dardanelles to any foreign warship in case of war. This secret article provided complete security for Russia in the case of war by conferring on it the status of a Turkish ally and allowing the passage of Russian warships.40
However, the Turkish position underwent a fundamental change during the First World War. The Ottoman Empire, on 12 August 1914, in allowing the German battlecruiser *Goeben* and the light cruiser *Breslau* to pass up the Dardanelles and to take refuge in the Golden Horn, violated the Straits Convention. The subsequent closing of the Straits, even to commerce, and the following Gallipoli campaign convinced the British government that the geographical position of the Ottoman Empire placed in its hands an immense opportunity for obstruction.

Later, at the Conference of Lausanne, which settled the affairs of the post-First World War Turkey, the competition between Britain and Russia, two powers chiefly concerned in the region from at least 1830s onwards, was explicit. It was around the control of the Straits that British concerns came into direct opposition with those of Soviet Russia. As in the previous century, the question of the Straits was once again a point of contention between two countries at Lausanne.

On the question of the Straits, Lenin preferred a minimalist approach. Russian rulers throughout the nineteenth century had thought in terms of expansion, of access to the Mediterranean. Now, however, Moscow wished only to be left in peace and protected against possible attacks on its southern coast. In a newspaper interview given early in October 1922, Lenin described the programme of the Soviet government as ‘the closing of the Straits to all warships in times of peace and war’. This was considered essential for the security of the Soviet state.

The Turkish delegate in Lausanne was ready to back up the British proposal in the Black Sea against the Soviets. The Soviets were left out, as they could not succeed in persuading the Turkish delegation, but after further discussions, the conference resolved that with regard to the Straits, freedom of passage would be established for merchant ships in peace or war. Furthermore, freedom of passage would also be granted to all warships in time of peace.

A major danger to the Soviet Union during the inter-war years was that it would be strangled by being cut off from access through the Straits, the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, which form the only sea passage linking the Black Sea with the Mediterranean. Russia had been twice attacked through the Straits, and almost one half of Soviet sea-borne trade passed through them. The rules governing the use of the Straits were therefore for good reason the subject of continual discussion for two centuries.

The Conference of Montreux in 1936 recognized Turkish sovereignty and affirmed the principle of free navigation, to be regulated by a convention. The Montreux Convention provided for complete freedom of commercial navigation in peacetime, and in peacetime small warships would be allowed to pass through the Straits, subject to limitations on the total tonnage of warships that non-Black Sea powers were allowed in the Black Sea at any time, and on the duration of the stay of warships in the Black Sea. In wartime different conditions would regulate the use of the Straits.

The Montreux Convention represented a compromise that acknowledged the views of each party but that was relatively favourable to the Soviet Union. It ensured that no enemy fleet more powerful than its own Black Sea fleet could
threaten its coasts and shipping. It also permitted Soviet vessels to pass into the Mediterranean. Nevertheless, the Convention was not wholly satisfactory for it still permitted foreign warships to navigate the Black Sea, and imposed limitations on the size of vessels that the Soviet Union could send into the Mediterranean, and on the number that it could pass through the Straits at any time. But the greatest disadvantage was that it gave the Soviet Union no direct control over the use of the Straits, thus making the Soviet Union utterly dependent upon Turkish goodwill.

Conclusion of the Four-Power Non-Aggression Pact, or Saadabad Pact, in July 1937 between Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan and Turkey further estranged Turkey from the Soviet Union. But the conclusion of this pact was greatly assisted by British diplomacy. In the post-victory euphoria, the first Soviet move to test Turkey’s will came on 19 March 1945, when Foreign Minister Molotov gave notice of Moscow’s intention to denounce the 1925 Treaty of Friendship and Non-Aggression with Turkey. On 7 June 1945, Molotov told Selim Sarper, the Turkish ambassador in Moscow, that in return for renewing the treaty, the Soviet Union would demand a new Straits convention negotiated solely between Turkey and the Soviet Union. This would provide for the free passage of Soviet warships through the Straits, their closure to non-Black Sea states, the establishment of Soviet bases at the Straits, and the retrocession to the Soviet Union of the eastern provinces of Kars and Ardahan that had been returned to Turkey in 1921.

Of these proposals, the Soviet plan for the establishment of Soviet bases seemed easily the most dangerous, since it threatened to establish a military presence that could be used to secure Soviet control over the whole of Turkey. This suspicion was reinforced when Molotov hinted that the kind of treaty relationship the Soviet government favoured with Turkey would be similar to those it was in the process of establishing with Poland and other Eastern European states. Ankara immediately rejected the first two demands, and indicated that any amendment to the Montreux Convention would require approval from other states parties to that Convention. This triggered a vociferous anti-Turkish campaign in the Soviet media, amplifying territorial claims against Kars and Ardahan, two provinces of eastern Turkey. Alarmed by the situation, Turkish authorities approached London and Washington in search of diplomatic support to counter Moscow. At this point, the Turkish government urgently sought to bring the US position on the Straits into harmony with Turkish views and to involve the United States in the defence of Turkey against the Soviet Union. To this end, the Inönü government decided to enhance its relations with Washington, emphasizing Turkey’s geopolitical position threatened by Soviet Russia.

In December 1945, in reaction to the territorial claims put forward by two prominent Georgian professors in Moscow, Acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson gave private assurances to the Turkish government. This was perceived by Turkish officials as ‘the first concrete proof of effective US interest in Turkey’.

A more crucial development came from the US administration at the beginning of 1946. As a result of increasing concern about Soviet actions in Iran and
elsewhere, President Truman formulated a much tougher approach towards the Soviet Union. On 3 January 1946, he was writing ‘there isn’t a doubt in my mind that Russia intends an invasion of the Black Sea Straits to the Mediterranean. Unless Russia is faced with an iron fist and strong language another war is making.’ This was soon crowned by a symbolic gesture as the body of Turkish ambassador Münir Ertegün, who had died in Washington, was returned to Turkey aboard the US battleship *Missouri* in April 1946. Reaction in Turkey was so ecstatic that some still refer to the *Missouri* episode as ‘the beginning of the love affair between Turkey and the USA’.

Unimpressed, or perhaps provoked by the turn of events, the Soviet government sent a strong note to Turkey on 7 August 1946, reiterating its demands for participation in the administration of the Straits and joint control of the waterway. This time, Ankara sought more confidently to coordinate its response with those of the American and British governments. On 19 August, Washington sent a reply firmly backing the Turkish stand, stressing the need for Turkey to maintain sole control over the Straits, and rejecting the idea of a regime administered exclusively by Black Sea powers. After that, Soviet pressure on Turkey eased considerably, and in the autumn of 1946 Moscow unofficially informed London that it deemed it premature to call a conference on the Straits. This entire episode led directly to Turkey’s commitment to the Western Alliance, and thereby became a major setback for Soviet designs in the region.
After the Second World War, the Soviet Union and its Western Allies soon parted ways as mutual suspicions of the other’s intentions and actions flourished. Eager to consolidate influence over a number of countries near the Soviet Union, Stalin pursued aggressive policies after the War, which provoked strong Western reactions. In particular, the United States responded with equally aggressive steps intended to contain Soviet expansion in what has come to be known as the Cold War.

On Friday, 21 February 1947, the British Embassy informed the US State Department that Britain was unwilling to manage the Eastern Mediterranean region because it could no longer afford to provide financial aid to Greece and Turkey. American policy-makers had been monitoring Greece’s crumbling economic and political conditions, particularly with the rise of the communist-led insurgency known as the National Liberation Front, or the EAM/ELAS. The United States had also been following events in Turkey, where a weak government faced Soviet pressure to share control of the strategic Dardanelle Straits. When Britain announced that it would withdraw aid to Greece and Turkey, the responsibility for their support passed to the United States.1

In a meeting between Congressmen and State Department officials, Under-Secretary of State Dean Acheson announced what would later become known as the ‘domino theory’. He argued that more was at stake than Greece and Turkey, for if those two key states should fall, communism would probably spread south to Iran and as far east as India. Acheson then concluded that not since the days of the Roman Empire had such a polarization of power existed. The stunned legislators agreed to endorse the programme on the condition that President Truman stress the severity of the crisis in an address to Congress and in a radio broadcast to the American people.

In an address to a joint session of Congress on 12 March 1947, President Truman, in what was aptly characterized as the ‘Truman Doctrine’, asked for $400 million in military and economic assistance for Greece and Turkey. It was this doctrine that would guide US diplomacy for the next 40 years. As Truman declared, ‘it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures’. This aid to Greece and Turkey requested by a Democrat President and endorsed
by a Republican Congress began a long and enduring bipartisan Cold War foreign policy. However, the Truman Doctrine historians have raised troubling questions concerning its origins, long-term consequences, and its reflection of the relationship between domestic and foreign policy. However these questions might be resolved, the Truman Doctrine signalled America’s post-war embrace of global leadership and ended its longstanding policy of isolationism.2

Mindful of the numerous invasions of Russia and the Soviet Union from the West throughout history, Stalin sought to create a buffer zone of subservient East European countries, most of which the Soviet Red Army had occupied in the course of the war. Taking advantage of its military occupation, the Soviet Union actively assisted local communist parties in coming to power, and by 1948 seven East European countries had communist governments. The Soviet Union initially maintained control behind the ‘iron curtain’ through troops, security police and its diplomatic service. However, unequal trade agreements with the East European countries also permitted the Soviet Union to gain access to valued resources.3

In Greece, even though the communists were immensely popular, when the US and British military stepped in the Soviets stood aside and provided no support to the party. When the communist government was crushed, thousands of its supporters were brutally killed, and aided by the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) the American-supported Greek monarchy established an extremely repressive regime that acted through the newly created internal security agency known as the infamous KYP.4

Elements of history, culture and ideology combined to shape Soviet policy in the eastern Mediterranean during this period. The policy originated with core Soviet interests that reflected geography as much ideology and power politics. Eastern Europe was considered a buffer zone by Soviet rulers, as well as a base and political laboratory – a military and ideological buffer zone against the West that protected socialist power and Soviet influence over the rest of Europe, and a laboratory for the testing of Soviet ideological claims of internationalism and proletarian dictatorship.5

Soviet actions in Eastern Europe helped increase Western hostility towards their former ally, but the Western powers could do nothing to halt the consolidation of Soviet authority in the region short of going to war. However, the United States and its allies had greater success in halting Soviet expansion in areas where Soviet influence was more tenuous. British and American diplomatic support for Iran forced the Soviet Union to withdraw its troops from the north-eastern part of that country in 1946, and Soviet efforts to acquire territory from Turkey and establish a communist government in Greece were thwarted as a result of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, which generally helped to reduce Soviet influence among participating West European nations.

In this early Cold War period, tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union became especially strained over the issue of Germany. At the Potsdam Conference in July–August 1945, the Allied Powers had confirmed their decision to divide Germany and the city of Berlin into zones of occupation, with
the eastern sectors placed under Soviet administration until such time as the Allies would permit Germany to establish a central government. Disagreements between the Soviet Union and the Western Allies soon arose over their respective occupation policies and questions of reparations. In June 1948, the Soviet Union cut off the West’s land access to the American, British and French sectors of Berlin in retaliation for steps taken by the United States and Britain to unite Germany. Britain and the United States responded with the support of an airlift intended to keep the beleaguered sectors supplied until the Soviet Union lifted the blockade in May 1949. Following the Berlin blockade, the West and the Soviet Union divided Germany into two countries – one oriented to the west, the other to the east. The crisis also provided the catalyst for the Western countries in 1949 to form the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a collective security system designed to use conventional armies and nuclear weapons to offset Soviet forces where necessary.

On the Soviet side, the Komintern, which was dissolved in 1943, was replaced in 1947 by the Communist Information Bureau (Kominform), as a coordinating centre ‘to ensure the communist parties of the world would fight the imperialist enemy together rather than separately’. It included as members the communist parties of Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, France, Hungary, Italy, Romania, the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. At the same time, in Europe the Soviet Union gained a new satellite nation in the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) as it lost its influence in Yugoslavia. The loss in Yugoslavia reflected how the local communists had come to power without Soviet assistance when their leader, Josip Broz Tito, refused to subject the country to Stalin’s control. Tito’s defiance led the Communist Information Bureau to expel the Yugoslav party from the international communist movement in 1948, and, in order to guard against the rise of other independent leaders, Stalin purged many of the chief communists in other East European states.

In July 1947, the US quarterly *Foreign Affairs* published an anonymous article entitled ‘The Sources of Soviet Conduct’, which offered what would soon become the basis for the US policy toward the Soviet Union. What it offered was a policy of containment that would remain as a fundamental feature of US policy for the duration of the Cold War. The author, soon revealed to be George Kennan, was a senior State Department official, who opposed continuing to appease the Soviets and argued for a firm policy that would oppose any further expansion of communist power.

Two months after Kennan’s article was published, Soviet Politburo member and Leningrad party boss Andrei Zhdanov issued a report to the first conference of the Kominform. In the report, Zhdanov stressed the ideological differences between the Soviet Union and the United States, and argued for the need to contain ‘the imperialist camp’.

The fundamental consequences of the Second World War on the international scene and on the position of individual countries had entirely changed the political landscape of the world, giving rise to a new alignment of political forces. The more the war receded into the past, the more distinct became the two major trends
in post-war international policy, corresponding to the division of the international political forces that represented the imperialist and anti-socialist camp on the one hand, and the anti-imperialist and socialist camp on the other. The principal driving force of the imperialist camp was the United States, with Britain and France as its primary allies. This camp was also supported by colonial powers, such as Belgium and Holland, and by countries with reactionary anti-democratic regimes, such as Turkey, Greece and other politically and economically dependent countries, such as the Near Eastern and South American countries and Nationalist China.

In Asia, the Chinese communists led by Mao Zedong and assisted by the Soviet Union achieved a crushing victory over the Chinese Nationalists in 1949. Several months afterwards, in 1950, China and the Soviet Union concluded a mutual defence treaty against the ‘imperialist powers’ of Japan and the United States. Tough negotiations over concessions and aid between the two communist countries served as an indication that China, with its independent party and enormous population, would not easily become a Soviet satellite, even though for a time their relations appeared particularly close. Elsewhere in Asia, the Soviet Union pursued a vigorous policy of support for national liberation movements, especially those in Malaya and Indochina, which respectively were still colonies of Britain and France. Thinking that the West would not defend the Republic of Korea (South Korea), Stalin encouraged the Soviet-equipped forces of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea) to invade South Korea in 1950. But forces from the United States and other members of the United Nations came to the aid of South Korea, provoking China, with Soviet encouragement, to intervene militarily on behalf of North Korea. Although the Soviet Union avoided direct participation in the conflict (which would not end until 1953), the Korean War inspired the United States to strengthen its military capability and to conclude a peace treaty and security pact with Japan. Chinese participation in the war, on the other hand, even though it involved serious risks and high costs, strengthened China’s independent position in relation to the Soviet Union.9

In the early 1950s, Stalin, now an old man, apparently permitted his subordinates in the Politburo – enlarged and called the Presidium by the Nineteenth Party Congress in October 1952 – greater powers to act within their respective spheres of power. Indicative of the Soviet leader’s waning strength, Secretary Georgii M. Malenkov delivered the political report to the Nineteenth Party Congress in place of Stalin. Although the general secretary took a smaller part in the day-to-day administration of party affairs, he still maintained his animosity toward potential enemies. In January 1953, the party newspaper announced that a group of predominantly Jewish doctors had murdered high Soviet officials, including Zhdanov. Western historians speculate that the disclosure of this ‘doctors’ plot’ may have been a prelude to an intended purge directed against Malenkov, Molotov and secret police chief Lavrenty Beria. In any case, when Stalin mysteriously died on 5 March 1953, his inner circle, that had feared him for years, secretly rejoiced.
During his quarter-century of dictatorial control, Stalin oversaw impressive developments in the Soviet Union. From a comparatively backward agricultural society, the country had been transformed into a powerful industrial state. But in the course of that transformation, millions of people had been killed and Stalin’s use of extremely brutal and repressive controls had become an integral function of his regime. Even some Turkish communists, who were living in exile in the Soviet Union, were among the victims of Stalin in the purges.\textsuperscript{10} The question of how the system shaped by Stalin would be maintained or altered would remain of vital concern to Soviet leaders for years after his death.

Stalin died without naming an heir and none of his associates had the power to immediately claim supreme leadership. The deceased dictator’s colleagues initially tried to rule jointly through a collective leadership, with Malenkov holding the top positions of Prime Minister (renamed the Chairman of the Council of Ministers from the Council of People’s Commissars in 1946) and for two weeks only as General Secretary. Beria, the powerful head of the security forces, who plotted a coup in 1953, challenged this arrangement. However, Beria’s associates in the Presidium, essentially Khrushchev, ordered Marshal Zhukov to arrest him and Beria was tried by a kangaroo court in December 1953 and secretly executed. Beria’s death significantly reduced the great power of the secret police, which thereafter came under the strict control of the party, as did the other state security organizations.

After Beria was executed, the struggle for succession became more opaque. Malenkov found a formidable rival in Nikita S. Khrushchev, who had been elected First Secretary – Stalin’s title of General Secretary had been abolished – by the Presidium in September. From a peasant background, Khrushchev had served as head of the Ukrainian party organization during and after the Second World War, and was a member of the Soviet political elite during the Stalinist era. The rivalry between Malenkov and Khrushchev surfaced publicly in a contest between Malenkov’s support for the increased production of consumer goods and Khrushchev’s more conservative support for the development of heavy industry. After a poor showing by light industry and agriculture, Malenkov resigned as Prime Minister in February 1955. The new Prime Minister, Nikolai A. Bulganin, had little influence or real power, leaving Khrushchev as the most important figure within the collective leadership.

At the Twentieth Party Congress in February 1956, Khrushchev further consolidated his power within the party by denouncing Stalin’s crimes in a dramatic ‘secret speech’. Khrushchev revealed that Stalin had arbitrarily liquidated thousands of party members and military leaders, which had contributed to the initial Soviet defeats in the Second World War, and had established a pernicious ‘cult of personality’. With this speech, Khrushchev not only distanced himself from Stalin and from Stalin’s close associates, Molotov, Malenkov and Lazar M. Kaganovich, but also from the dictator’s policies of terror. As a direct result of the ‘de-Stalinization’ campaign launched by the speech, the release of political prisoners that had begun in 1953 was accelerated and some of Stalin’s victims posthumously rehabilitated. Khrushchev later intensified his campaign against

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Stalin at the Twenty-Second Party Congress in 1961, even winning approval to remove Stalin’s body from the Lenin Mausoleum where it had originally been interred (see Appendix 4).

De-Stalinization, and with it the change of leadership in Moscow and most of the Eastern European countries, had important repercussions for the social, economic and political order in the communist world. The new Soviet leadership began to pursue a more tolerant policy, and in 1955 Khrushchev and Malenkov visited Belgrade and apologized to Tito for expelling Yugoslavia from the Kominform. In Hungary, the Soviet leadership moved to end the Stalinist practice of placing the offices of both Prime Minister and General Secretary in the hands of one man, Matyas Rakosi, who was head of the Hungarian party at the time. All of these and similar steps initiated a series of new trends, with Stalinist uniformity in the managing of political and economic systems giving way to an increasing diversity, marking the end of the worst excesses of the police terror. De-Stalinization also encouraged artists and intellectuals to speak out against the abuses of the former regime, and although Khrushchev’s tolerance of critical creative works vacillated during his years of leadership, the new cultural period, known as the ‘thaw’, represented a clear break with the repression of the arts under Stalin.

After the Twentieth Party Congress, although he still faced opposition Khrushchev continued to expand his influence. Khrushchev’s rivals in the Presidium, spurred by reversals in Soviet foreign policy in Eastern Europe in 1956 that potentially threatened economic reforms and the de-Stalinization campaign, united to vote him out of office in June 1957. In response, Khrushchev demanded that the question be put to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) (the name of the party had been changed from the All-Union Communist Party to the CPSU at the Nineteenth Party Congress in October 1952), where he enjoyed strong support. The Central Committee over-turned the Presidium’s decision and instead expelled Khrushchev’s opponents – Malenkov, Molotov and Kaganovich, whom Khrushchev had labelled the ‘anti-party group’. In a departure from Stalinist procedure, Khrushchev did not order the imprisonment or execution of his defeated rivals, but had them placed in relatively minor offices. Khrushchev then moved to further consolidate his power by removing Marshal Zhukov, who had helped Khrushchev squelch the ‘anti-party group’, from the office of Defence Minister, presumably because he feared Zhukov’s influence in the armed forces. Khrushchev became Prime Minister in March 1958 when Bulganin resigned, thus formally confirming his power over the state as well as in the party.

Despite his rank, Khrushchev never exercised the dictatorial authority of Stalin, nor did he ever completely control the party, even at the peak of his power. His attacks on members of the ‘anti-party group’ at the Twenty-First Party Congress in 1959 and the Twenty-Second Party Congress in 1961 suggest that his opponents still retained support within the party. Khrushchev’s relative political insecurity probably account for some of his more grandiose pronouncements, as, for example, his 1961 promise that the Soviet Union would attain communism by
1980. His desire to undermine opposition and mollify critics explained the nature
of many of his domestic reforms and the vacillations in his foreign policy toward
the West.

Almost immediately after Stalin died, the collective leadership began alter-
ing the conduct of Soviet foreign policy to permit better relations with the
West and new approaches to the non-aligned countries. Malenkov introduced
a change in tone by speaking out against nuclear war as a threat to civilization.
Khrushchev initially contradicted this position, saying that capitalism alone
would be destroyed in a nuclear war, but later adopted Malenkov’s view after
securing his top position. In 1955, to ease tensions between East and West,
Khrushchev recognized permanent neutrality for Austria, and met with
President Dwight D. Eisenhower in Geneva, Switzerland, later that year. At
that meeting, Khrushchev confirmed Soviet commitment to ‘peaceful coexis-
tence’ with capitalism. This was reflected in a shift in the Soviet approach to
developing nations, where Soviet influence in India and Egypt, as well as in
other Third World countries, began in the middle of the 1950s. In following
the established Soviet policy of shunning governments while supporting local
communist parties, Khrushchev tried to win the goodwill of their national
leaders.

With the gains of the new diplomacy came reversals as well. By conceding the
independence of Yugoslavia in 1955 as well as by his de-Stalinization campaign,
Khrushchev provoked unrest in Eastern Europe, where the Stalin-era policies
weighed heavily. In Poland, riots brought about a change in communist party
leadership, which the Soviet Union reluctantly recognized in October 1956. A
popular uprising against Soviet control then broke out in Hungary, where the
local communist leaders, headed by Imre Nagy, called for a multi-party political
system and withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact, the defensive alliance founded by
the Soviet Union and its East European satellites in 1955. The Soviet army
crushed the revolt early in November 1956, causing numerous casualties.
Although the Hungarian Revolution hurt Soviet standing in world opinion, it
demonstrated that the Soviet Union would use force, if necessary, to maintain
control over its satellite states in Eastern Europe.

Outside the Soviet sphere of control, China grew increasingly restive under
Chinese Communist Party chairman Mao Zedong. Chinese discontent with the
new Soviet leadership stemmed from low levels of Soviet aid, feeble Soviet sup-
port for China in its disputes with Taiwan and India, and the new Soviet doctrine
of peaceful coexistence with the West, which Mao viewed as a betrayal of
Marxism–Leninism. Against Khrushchev’s wishes, China embarked on a nuclear
arms programme, declaring in 1960 that nuclear war could defeat imperialism.
The dispute between militant China and the more moderate Soviet Union esca-
lated into a schism in the world communist movement after 1960. Albania left the
Soviet camp and became an ally of China, Romania distanced itself from the
Soviet Union in international affairs, and communist parties around the world
split over orientation to Moscow or Beijing. The monolithic bloc of world com-
munism had shattered.
Soviet relations with the West, especially the United States, seesawed between moments of relative relaxation and periods of tension and crisis. For his part, Khrushchev wanted peaceful coexistence with the West, not only to avoid nuclear war but also to permit the Soviet Union to develop its economy. Khrushchev’s meetings with President Eisenhower in 1955 and President John F. Kennedy in 1961, and his tour of the United States in 1959, demonstrated the Soviet leader’s desire for fundamentally smooth relations between the West and the Soviet Union and its allies.

In the post-Second World War period, the long-term Soviet goal was to reduce British, and later, US influence. Until Stalin’s death in 1953, Soviet activity in the Third World was limited. Khrushchev recognized that the number of independent Third World states was increasing because of post-Second World War decolonization, and he pictured these states as moving on to the non-capitalist path of development and progressing quickly toward the achievements of Soviet-style socialism. The new Soviet leadership, following the early lead designed by Lenin in the 1920s, was more and more interested in the ‘colonial peoples’ in Africa and Asia, considering them serious potential allies in the bipolar confrontation. In this regard, Cuba’s entry into the socialist camp in 1961 was a significant coup for the Soviet Union.

Soviet relations with Turkey were poor during the Stalin period because of Soviet territorial claims against Turkey. These claims encouraged Turkey to join NATO in 1952. Renouncing elements of Stalinist foreign relations, the new leadership in Moscow did not ignore Soviet–Turkish relations, and worked to improve the situation beginning in the mid-1950s at the end of the Stalinist era and the start of the so-called Khruschev thaw. During sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in December 1955, Khrushchev signalled this new approach by acknowledging that ‘it is known when Kemal Atatürk and Ismet İnönü were at the top of Turkish leadership we had very good relationships with Turkey but later on they were darkened. We can not say that it happened only due to Turkey; there were inappropriate statements made on our side which darkened these relations’.11

On 1 May 1960, a U-2 high-altitude reconnaissance plane was shot down by Soviet forces and captured near the city of Sverdlovsk. The US government at first said the plane was collecting meteorological data along the Soviet–Turkish border and flew off course. However, the Soviets also captured and arrested the pilot, Francis Gary Powers, which presented proof that the plane was part of an American espionage campaign. Upon examination by experts of all data at the disposal of the Soviet side, it was established that the intruder aircraft belonged to the United States, was permanently based in Turkey and was sent through Pakistan into the Soviet Union with hostile purposes. The government of the Soviet Union made an emphatic protest to the US government, cautioning that ‘in connection with aggressive acts of American aviation and warns that, if similar provocations are repeated, it will be obliged to take retaliatory measures, responsibility for the consequences of which will rest on the governments of states committing aggression against other countries’.12
Turning Turkey into a ‘Little America’

Following 27 years of one-party rule, the popular desire for change in Turkey was irresistible. In January 1946, a right-wing party, the Democrat Party (DP) headed by C. Bayar and A. Menderes, was established, and subsequently became the main focus of opposition to the ruling party, the CHP. The general elections in July 1946 gave the DP 62 seats out of 465 in the assembly, demonstrating the appeal of the new party. Although the DP represented the interests of private business and industry, it also received strong popular support in rural areas. Later in 1946, several left-wing parties were launched as well. The TKP itself established two socialist parties: the ‘Socialist Workers’ and Peasants Party’, founded by Sefik Husnü, and the ‘Socialist Party of Turkey’, founded by Esat Adil Mustecaplioglu. However, both parties were closed by the Kemalist CHP government only six months after their launch, and founders of both parties were arrested and imprisoned.

The 1947 Trade Union Law paved the way for the slow but steady growth of a labour movement that developed in parallel with the multi-party system. As defined in the law, the principal goal of unions was to seek an improvement in the social and economic conditions of union members. However, unions were initially denied the right to strike, or to engage in political activity. Despite these limitations, labour unions gradually acquired significant political influence.

In the May 1950 general election, about 88 per cent of an electorate, or about 8.5 million people, voted, returning a huge DP majority. Four hundred and eight assembly seats went to the DP and only 69 to the CHP, thus ending the CHP’s unbroken dominance since the founding of the republic. Replacing İnönü and naming Menderes as Prime Minister, the new Assembly also elected Bayar President. As expected, the economic policies of Menderes’s government reduced reliance on state management by encouraging private enterprise and foreign investment in industrial development. This led to a very positive reaction by the United States, as shown in the remarks of Under Secretary of State George McGhee’s observation that ‘The elections of 14 May 1950 mark a turning point in Turkish history. They should be considered as the free expression of the people’s will and the confirmation of Turkey’s progress towards democratic development.’ Secretary of State Acheson added, ‘US determination to continue our policy of supporting Turkey’, while Acting Secretary of State James E. Webb declared that the US intended to continue ‘very friendly and close relations with Turkey’. In return, Adnan Menderes, the new Turkish Prime Minister, would prove to be a reliable and loyal ally of Washington.

As soon as he came to power Menderes announced that he was going to turn Turkey into a ‘little America’. With the new US Truman Doctrine that encouraged underdeveloped countries to become US satellites, Washington and Wall Street began making loans to Turkey. However, the interest on these loans grew to be much greater than the principle, and soon threatened to become an avalanche of debt.
Under Menderes, Turkey also became the front-line state in NATO’s southeastern flank and Washington’s major regional military ally against the Soviet Union. Many American military bases and intelligence stations were established in Turkey during this period, all aimed at the Soviet Union, and one of Menderes’s first acts was to send Turkish soldiers to support the US war effort against North Korea.

The Menderes government at the beginning was very popular, relaxing the restrictions on Islam and presiding over a booming economy. In the May 1954 election, the DP increased its parliamentary majority, and taking its election victory as a mandate to make sweeping changes, it began to reform the civil service and state-run enterprises. Soon, however, the economy began to fail and the government introduced censorship laws in an effort to stop the critics and dissent, and opposition generally, including some actions of the CHP. One of the key aspects of this repression by the DP was to launch a harsh anti-communist campaign. As the country was opened to US hegemonic influence, anti-communist hysteria was stirred up and Sefik Husnî, the leader of the TKP, together with many other party activists, was arrested and put in prison.22

The main opposition party, the CHP, concentrated its attacks on a government-sponsored law that limited freedom of the press. Tension increased further several months before the scheduled October 1957 election when the press law was tightened and additional restrictions were imposed on public assembly. The government argued that this legislation was required to prevent ‘irresponsible journalists’ from inciting disorder. The inability of the two main political parties to cooperate in the assembly brought the parliamentary process to a standstill as months passed. When a tour of central Anatolia by CHP leader İnönü in early 1960 became the occasion for outbreaks of violence along his route, the Menderes government reacted by suspending all political activity and imposing martial law. On 28 April 1960, police fired on students in Istanbul who were demonstrating against government policies in defiance of martial law, and several were killed. The following week, cadets from the military academy staged a protest march in solidarity with the student movement, bringing an element of the armed forces into confrontation with civilian authorities.23

Turkish troops in Korea and suppression of communists at home

Inscribed on a South Korean monument are the following words:

On October 17, 1950, Turkey dispatched army units to defend the freedom of Korea and the peace of the world. From that time until the Korean Armistice was signed in 1953, the Turkish forces fought valiantly in the Battles of Kum-ri, Wawon, Shillim-ri, Uijongim, Yonch’on, T’oegyewon, Kumhwâ and Hansullim. They suffered 717 dead, 2,246 wounded and 167 missing in action. Even after the war, the Turkish troops remained in Korea until July 1966.24
The Korean War broke out a little more than a month after Menderes came to power. On 25 June 1950, North Korean forces crossed the 38th parallel and launched an all-out armed invasion of South Korea. The UN Security Council condemned the attack as a threat to peace, and recommended that UN members come to the aid of South Korean forces. Subsequently, a unified UN Command was established to repel North Korean aggression and restore peace to the region.

The true origins of the Korean War begin during the final stages of the Second World War. The Allies had declared in December 1943 that Korea was to become ‘free and independent’, and it was agreed that the Soviet Union was to occupy the northern section of Korea, down to the 38th parallel, and that US forces would occupy the area below that. On 11 August 1945, the US military presented General Order No. 1 – unconditional surrender – to Japan. To prevent the Soviets from capturing all Japanese forces then in Korea, and thus controlling the entire nation, the order stipulated that all Japanese forces north of the 38th parallel would surrender to the Soviet Union, while all Japanese forces in the south would surrender to the United States. On 6 September 1945, before the US troops arrived, the South Korean people established a People’s Republic of Korea. This government was elected by several regional governing committees who had been administering food distribution and keeping order. Two days later, US troops began pouring into Korea and immediately smashed the newly formed South Korean government, and led by Lieutenant General John R. Hodge, the US military established itself as the government. The Soviet Union responded several months later, in February of 1946, by installing a civilian North Korean government. A civil war essentially began between the two sides when the Soviets and United States met near the border.

The war that followed would last for eight years, but in the beginning it was limited to frequent border fights along the 38th parallel. By December 1948, the Soviet military had completely withdrawn from North Korea, but the US military stayed in the South until June 1949, replacing its own military government with a civilian one. In October 1949, the US Congress agreed to pour $50,570,000 into the South Korean military over a span of three years, with $330,000,000 of economic aid for the same period. Border clashes between the two sides became more intense as the South Koreans gained in strength, with nearly 2,500 armed incursions across the border in 1949. On 25 June 1950, the front lines were broken by the North, and by August the North had won the entire peninsula, primarily with help from guerrilla fighters in the South, who had been resisting Japanese and then US military occupation for decades.

On 15 September 1950, US General Douglas MacArthur counter-attacked against the Korean army with overwhelming military force at Inch’on, and by 26 October 1950 the US military had defeated the Korean army and was approaching the border with China. Poised for payback after their recent loss of the war in China, MacArthur urged the US government to attack China and take out two communist powers at one time. As the US military waited for political authorization, China counter-attacked in overwhelming numbers and with incredibly fierce fighting and great loss of life drove the United States back to the 38th parallel by
January of 1951. This fighting continued with little interruption for two years during which unspeakable atrocities were committed by both sides: the United States indiscriminately massacred civilians suspected as guerrilla fighters, while North Koreans killed many captured US soldiers outright.

At this point, MacArthur demanded that the US military be allowed to use atomic weapons across all of China, and denounced the US President for not allowing him to do so. As a consequence, President Truman sacked MacArthur, and by June of 1951 the Soviet Union began negotiating a peace with the UN. The cease-fire lasted until 25 July 1953, when an armistice was signed, but the war had by then inflicted 3,000,000 deaths, half of them being civilian. After the armistice, the United States poured in enormous sums of money to rebuild South Korea to make it a capitalist showcase, while the North began withdrawing from the rest of the world.

As a side effect, the Korean War contributed significantly to the remilitarization of Europe and an intensification of the Cold War. As the war reached its peak, agreements banning military groups in Germany were no longer enforced, and West Germany was allowed to set up its own General Staff, camouflaged under the name ‘Blank Office’. Supported by Bonn and the United States, a network of ex-Nazi officers was organized to help redevelop Germany’s military. The man chosen for this remilitarization was Dr Werner Naumann, a man with connections to the old Nazi Party Propaganda Ministry, the SS, the Wehrmacht and the Bruderschaft. Naumann, who remained a devoted Nazi, was credited as the guiding spirit behind most Nazi organizations and publications that arose in the 1950–51 period.

On 25 July 1950, the Menderes government in Turkey announced its decision to send a 4,500-man brigade to Korea. For the first time in modern Turkish history, the country’s armed forces were going to take part in a conflict outside their borders. Public opinion in Turkey greeted the news with great enthusiasm: newspaper headlines celebrated with headlines proclaiming ‘We are sending troops to Korea!’ , ‘Turks are coming’ , ‘Turkey will accomplish its mission’ , ‘One of the most exciting days in Ankara’ , ‘Our decision welcomed in Washington and London’ , etc. Reading between the lines, it’s not difficult to see why – a knee-jerk reaction against communism, a long-sought sense of identity with the West, and last but not least a revival of historic military instincts. At the same time, the dormant ‘Russia phobia’ in the Turkish psyche flared up and other articles began to warn against ‘the red menace next door’. Countering this propaganda campaign, Soviet radios repeatedly broadcast that ‘the decision to send troops was jointly reached by the Turkish elite and the military clique upon the orders of the American collaborationists’, and that Turkey ‘was openly planning to go to war’. One year later, when asked by a reporter about the reasons for bypassing the opposition while sending troops to Korea, Menderes replied: ‘It is because we have realized that the interest of our country lay with long term risk-taking and our keeping the initiative in foreign policy. We could not leave America alone in her struggle for the free world.’

Korea became a catalyst in accelerating Turkey’s integration to the Western security system. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which offi-
cially came into being in April 1949, which originally envisaged a membership restricted to Western European states, had at first no provisions for Turkish membership. As a result, Turkish political leaders were anxious about a possible renewal of Soviet harassment as well as reduction of American aid. In this context, the Korean War encouraged Turkey’s ‘socio-psycho-historical quest for Western identity’, as well as a rapprochement with the United States. Turkey submitted an application for NATO membership through the American, French and British ambassadors in Ankara in August 1950. In response, NATO invited Turkey and Greece to take part in joint military planning for the Mediterranean area. Later, on 15 May 1951, Washington proposed to its NATO partners that Greece and Turkey be accepted as full members, and four months later, in September 1951, the NATO Council of Ministers meeting at Ottawa adopted a unanimous statement that

the security of the North Atlantic area would be enhanced by the accession of Greece and Turkey to the North Atlantic Treaty, agreed to recommend to the member governments that, subject to the approval of national parliaments under their respective legislative procedures, an invitation should be addressed as soon as possible to the Kingdom of Greece and the Republic of Turkey to accede to the Treaty.

At that point, the Turkish brigade had already been fighting in Korea for almost a year. In November 1951, Russian ambassador A. Lavrishov sent to M. S. Agaoglu, Turkey’s Vice-Premier a strong statement reflecting Soviet concerns. The statement observed that NATO had nothing to do with the self-defence interests of states that were NATO members, adding that

nobody intends to attack these States. On the contrary, this Bloc pursues aggressive aims, and cannot serve the cause of peace and international security. … The Bloc is an instrument of aggressive imperialism led by the United States. Air and naval bases are being set up in Turkey with the help of the US, and military aerodromes are being set up as close as possible to the Soviet frontier. The Soviet Union cannot remain indifferent to such acts.

The 5,090-man Turkish brigade that went to Korea sailed there on board the US ships Mac Rea, General W. Haan and Private Johnson at the end of September 1950. They had not fought for 28 years, or since the end of the Turkish–Greek war in 1922, and they had never fought away from home. During the war, of the more than 25,000 Turkish soldiers who fought in Korea, more than 10 per cent were reported as casualties. The move to deploy the first 5000 Turkish soldiers to Korea was followed by the staging of the mass trial of communists in Turkey. Nihat Sargin, one of the future leaders of the TKP, was sentenced to 3 years and 9 months for criticizing
the government’s decision to send troops to Korea, and on 15 July 1951 Nazım Hikmet was stripped of his Turkish citizenship, exactly one year after he was released from prison by a declaration of the Turkish parliament ‘for spreading communism by publication, and thus serving the government of the Soviet Union’.

The 1950s was also a time during which subservience to the United States became the law of the land, and Anatolia became the site of American military bases from one end to the other. Relations with the United States developed rapidly under the government of the DP, making Turkey a satellite of the American Cold War empire. Starting in 1952, special bilateral agreements were concluded between Turkey and the United States. Some of these were ratified by the Turkish parliament, with others negotiated only through concerned ministers or the Turkish Army’s General Staff, but many remain secret to this day (see Appendix 4).

**Turkish ‘contra-guerrillas’ and ‘revolution by radio’**

During the 1950s, US concerns were that the Soviet Union, through the activities of the local communist parties, would conquer the world. The CIA and the Pentagon came up with a plan to establish secret resistance groups within various countries that would fight back against the predicted communist take-over. These groups were called ‘stay-behind’ organizations, little cells of paramilitary units that would take on the communists behind enemy lines. To coordinate all these clandestine groups, a ‘Super-NATO’ organization was set up under the control of the CIA in all the NATO countries. The headquarters of this organization was in Brussels and was named the Allied Coordination Committee (ACC). Secret meetings were held annually in which delegates from all the member countries took part. The official purpose of the organization was ‘to organize resistance using irregular warfare methods in case of a communist occupation’. The organization had at its disposal special funds and weapons depots, and was not answerable for its activities under the laws of the individual member states. The organization’s branch in Italy was called ‘Gladio’, in Germany ‘Anti-Communist Assault Unit’, in Greece ‘Hide of the Red Buck’, and in Belgium ‘Glavia’. This ‘Super-NATO’ also set up branch organizations in non-NATO countries, such as Austria and Switzerland. The United States funded these stay-behind groups for decades, even though there was no communist take-over in any of these countries. However, some of these cells eventually did take up arms against left-wing dissidents and members of the local communist parties in their own countries.

Probably one of the most powerful of these covert action groups was set up in Turkey, following Turkey’s membership of NATO.

Turkey became a member of NATO on 4 April 1952. A secret clause in the initial NATO agreement in 1949 required that before a state could join, it must have established a national security authority to fight communism through clandestine citizen cadres. This ‘stay-behind’ clause grew out of a secret committee, set up at US insistence in the Atlantic Pact, which was the forerunner of NATO. As in all other NATO countries, a contra-guerrilla centre was established in Turkey in
September 1952, to work against the threat of a ‘communist occupation’. It was called the ‘Institute for War Research’, and was housed in the same building in Ankara that housed the US aid organization JUSMAAT.39

The goal of this organization, especially in the neo-colonial countries, was not limited to ‘combat[ing] the external communist threat’. Under these ‘stay-behind’ programmes, anti-communist elements, often overtly fascist, were recruited, armed and funded, supposedly as a bulwark against Soviet aggression. Some had links to organized crime, and many were involved in terrorist incidents aimed at undermining the left opposition in general. There are also claims that the CIA employed wanted Nazis and fascists in setting up contra-guerrilla groups in an effort to improve its tactics. And, as in all other NATO member countries, the public and parliament were not informed about the existence of these groups – only the few who took part in setting them up knew about them. The 1959 military accord between the Turkish and US governments envisaged the use of the contra-guerrillas ‘also in the case of an internal rebellion against the regime’.40

Although it was revealed through the ‘Gladio’ affair in Italy in 1990 that such secret organizations also existed in other member states of NATO, and that they maintained close contacts with these countries’ secret services and had been involved in a series of murders and bomb plots, the Turkish military and state authorities continued to deny the existence of any such organization in Turkey. Only after ex-CIA chief William Colby revealed that ‘there is also such an organization in Turkey’ did the Turkish authorities withdraw their claim that there was no Turkish Gladio. On 3 December 1990, General Dogan Beyazit, President of the Harekat Dairesi – Operation Department of Turkey’s General Staff – and General Kemal Yilmaz, Commander of the Ozel Kuvvetler, or Special Forces, issued a press statement. In it they revealed that the title of the special NATO organization in Turkey was Ozel Harp Dairesi – Special Warfare Department – and that its task was ‘to organize resistance in the case of a communist occupation’.41

The leader of the 12 September 1980 coup, Kenan Evren, wrote in his memoirs that Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel had written to him in the 1970s about of his wish to engage the Special Warfare Department to deal with civil unrest.42 Demirel denied this, but Bulent Ecevit, Prime Minister during the 1970s, revealed that ‘As Prime Minister I first became aware of its existence in 1974 through requests from Semih Sancar, chief of the General Staff, for money for secret payments to the Special Warfare Department. I was shocked’.43 Investigative journalist Ugur Mumcu, who lost his life as a result of a bomb placed under his car on 24 January 1993, well documented the activities of these Turkish contra-guerrillas, and it was later claimed that Mumcu was murdered by those elements active in the Turkish contra-guerrillas.44

The founding aim of the department was ‘In the case of a communist occupation or of a rebellion, to use guerrilla methods and all possible underground activities to bring an end to the occupation’. The special war methods that were taught, supposedly for the prevention of a communist occupation, included, among others, ‘assassinations, bombings, armed robbery, torture, attacks, kidnap,
threats, provocation, militia training, hostage-taking, arson, sabotage, propaganda, disinformation, violence and extortion’. Textbooks by US contra-guerrilla experts were translated into Turkish, and these special war methods were thereafter introduced into Turkey. Some of these include: ‘U.S. Army FM 31/16’ (contra-guerrilla operations), ‘U.S. Army Special Warfare School’ (contra-guerrilla tactics and techniques), ‘FM 31/20’ (special forces operational techniques), ‘FM 31/21 Special Forces Operations’ (ST urban assignments, 31/21 guerrilla warfare and special forces operations), ‘FM 31/21 A. Special Forces Operations (U)’ (special forces secret operations). The Turkish contra-guerrillas established many schools in Turkey, in which they received their training – in Ankara, Bolu, Kayseri, Buca near Izmir, Canakkale and, since 1974, in Cyprus, ‘In the mountain commando school in Bolu, green berets (Delta Forces) who fought in Vietnam also got their training’.46

Selected elements of the Turkish contra-guerrillas, together with the generals, were all trained in contra-guerrilla schools in the United States. During their training, contra-guerrilla forces were taught about social problems in their countries and shown films that portrayed communists as aggressive and subversive. They learned how to handle explosives under the supervision of green berets in Matamoros, near the Mexican border, and they were taught how to kill, stab or strangle somebody silently, etc. Turkish officials were also trained at the Escuela de los Americas, the notorious School of the Americas in Panama, which is attached to the US base Southern Comfort, and connected to the US Police Academy near Washington, and the Schongau and Oberammergau bases in Germany.

The first significant action carried out by the Turkish contra-guerrilla after its foundation was the bombing in 1955, in Thessalonica, Greece, of the building where Atatürk was born. Claiming that the house had been bombed by Greeks, the government, with the assistance of its supporting press and the contra-guerrilla, tried to incite the Turkish public against Greek and other non-Muslim minorities living in Turkey. Between 6 and 7 September, hundreds of houses, shops, schools and churches, mostly belonging to Greeks, were burned and looted. Similar though rather less uncontrolled disturbances occurred elsewhere in Turkey wherever there was a Greek presence, especially at Izmir where the families of Greek officers serving at NATO Regional Headquarters were evacuated. Three people were killed and 30 injured. The attacks were conducted in an extremely organized and well-prepared manner.47

In 1955, the Cyprus problem was the most important ‘national issue’ in Turkey. At the end of August 1955, a conference was arranged in London between Turkey, Greece and the United Kingdom – the other parties involved – to determine the status of Cyprus. Turkey’s security and intelligence leaders planned an activity to demonstrate the sensitivity of this problem within the Turkish community. The newspaper Istanbul Express on 6 September 1955 published the news of the bombing of Atatürk’s birthplace in Thessaloniki, Greece. Student protests started the same day and the protests spread: the Turkish police not only tolerated the destruction, but also discriminated in how they protected
various Western embassies. In some cases, guards were stationed around some European legations even before the violence began. However, only a single policeman appeared at the British residence, and he shortly drifted off. Army troops meanwhile remained on the side streets, and when they did enter the main avenues, did nothing to restrain the looters. The brunt of the damage was sustained by Greek business premises and residential areas in old Istanbul, but the damage also extended to Greek centres along the Bosphorus, and Greek churches, with the Panayia, one of the oldest Byzantine structures, being gutted.\footnote{48}

The government immediately declared that communists were responsible for the violence, and a witch-hunt against them began. Many people known to be close to the Turkish Communist Party, including Nihat Sargin, were again arrested or placed under police supervision. Years later, however, it was discovered that the events had been planned by elements controlled by the Turkish intelligence services and contra-guerrilla groups, and that the bomb had been planted by 21-year-old Oktay Engin, an agent who was later Governor of Nevsehir, a Turkish province, in 1992.\footnote{49}

As the dust settled, officials in the British Foreign Office entertained no doubt that Menderes and Zorlu ‘knew all about the business’ from the start, even if the riots had gone beyond what was originally intended. Their political purpose was to demonstrate unequivocally the seriousness of Turkish claims over Cyprus.\footnote{50} In this way, the actions were directed principally against Greece but were a vivid reminder to the British as well. Thus the riots in Istanbul and Izmir were a necessary coda to the London conference.

The British response to the riots was mixed from the start. Some in Whitehall criticized the Turkish authorities, while others welcomed the fact that the Greeks were being given ‘a taste of their own medicine’ — the phrase then in vogue. One even greeted the burning down of the ancient Panayia as the welcome liquidation of a ‘major eyesore’. The most telling reaction was that of British Prime Minister Macmillan who, when advised by his own officials, as well as Ambassador Bowker in Ankara that the United Kingdom should ‘court a sharp rebuff by admonishing Turkey, omitted to do so’. Instead, a note of distinctly mild disapproval was dispatched to Menderes. There was no doubt that the Turkish outburst had been an embarrassment, not least with the United Nations, but also had its uses, as Macmillan was quick to grasp.\footnote{51}

Soon after the 6–7 September events another campaign was started, this time in Cyprus, to decimate the communists there. In mid-December, AKEL and many left organizations were banned, all left publications were prohibited, and some 140 people, mostly communists, were arrested and sent to the concentration camps and prisons.\footnote{52} During this repression, the activities of the Communist Party of Turkey were run from abroad and mostly limited by propaganda activities, mainly conducted through radio broadcasts from East European socialist countries, including Turkish-language programmes that were organized from Hungary, Bulgaria and East Germany. In January 1955, the Turkish Service of Radio Budapest invited Nazim Hikmet to start a series of broadcasts on literature and political themes, where a small group of Turkish communists, including

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Vartanyan, were running similar programmes. This phase of Turkish communist radio broadcasts came to an abrupt end with the Hungarian uprising of 1956. In March 1958, a new Turkish-language radio station was established in Leipzig, Bizim Radyo (Our Radio), run by the TKP. Bizim Radyo existed until the end of the socialist system in Eastern Europe, and played an important role in propaganda activities directed by the communist movement in Turkey.

Nazim prepared a number of programmes for Bizim Radyo that supported Khrushchev’s reformist policies. The main thrust of the programmes in this period was anti-American and anti-NATO, and Bizim Radyo advocated a ‘united front’ policy against Western imperialism. In a broadcast on 16 July 1959, Nazim said, ‘as you know, dear listener, the NATO organization is an American barracks. … we want to have a voice not within an American barracks but throughout the whole world as a free nation, peace-loving and independent’. This approach reflected TKP’s attempt to arouse public opinion against American imperialism and ‘its agent Menderes government’. TKP’s Bizim Radyo broadcast for several hours every day, sending out a strong and clearly audible signal, which was never blocked.
The chief feature of our epoch is the emergence of socialism from the confines of one country and its transformation into a world system. (Khrushchev, 1956)1

Khrushchev’s foreign policy aimed at the containment of capitalism, which he regarded as already having lost ground to communism. During the late 1950s and early 1960s, Khrushchev wanted to demonstrate to Soviet conservatives and militant Chinese that the Soviet Union was a firm defender of the socialist camp. Thus, in 1958 Khrushchev challenged the status of Berlin. When the West would not yield to his demands that the western sectors be incorporated into East Germany, in 1961 he approved the erection of the Berlin Wall around those sectors. Then, to protect national prestige, he cancelled a summit meeting with US President Eisenhower in 1960 after Soviet air defences shot down a US U-2 reconnaissance aircraft over Soviet territory.

Eventually, mistrust over Soviet military intentions hobbled East–West relations during this period, with the West fearing that the Soviet lead in space technology and build-up of the Soviet military represented an emerging ‘missile gap’ in favour of the Soviet Union. By contrast, the Soviet Union felt threatened by a rearmed Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), by the US alliance system encircling the Soviet Union, and by the West’s superior strategic and economic strength. To offset US military advantages and improve the Soviet negotiating position, in 1962 Khrushchev began to install nuclear missiles in Cuba, but agreed to withdraw them when US President Kennedy ordered a blockade around the island. After coming close to war over the missiles in Cuba, the Soviet Union and the United States took steps to reduce the nuclear threat. In 1963, the two countries established a ‘hot line’ between Washington and Moscow to reduce the likelihood of accidental nuclear war, and in that same year, the United States, Britain and the Soviet Union signed the Limited Test Ban Treaty, which prohibited the atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons.2

Throughout his leadership, Khrushchev tried to carry out reforms in a range of areas. His early concern with the problems of Soviet agriculture had attracted the attention of the collective leadership, who introduced important innovations
in this area of the Soviet economy. The state encouraged peasants to grow more on their private plots, increased payments for crops grown on the collective farms, and invested more heavily in agriculture. In his dramatic ‘virgin land campaign’ in the mid-1950s, Khrushchev opened to farming vast tracts of land in the northern part of the Kazakh Republic and neighbouring areas of the Russian Republic. Even though in some years they produced excellent harvests, these new farmlands also turned out to be susceptible to drought. Other innovations offered by Khrushchev also proved counter-productive, including his plans for growing maize and increasing meat and dairy production, and his reorganization of collective farms into larger units produced confusion in the countryside.³

Khrushchev’s industrial and administrative reforms created even greater problems. In a politically motivated move to weaken the central state bureaucracy, Khrushchev did away with the industrial ministries in Moscow in 1957 and replaced them with regional economic councils. Although he intended these economic councils to be more responsive to local needs, the decentralization of industry led to disruption and inefficiency. Khrushchev also attempted to reorganize the party by decentralizing the party structures in 1962: organizing them along economic rather than administrative lines. The resulting division of the party apparatus into industrial and agricultural sectors at the oblast level and below contributed to the disarray, and alienated party officials at all levels. Symptomatic of economic difficulties generated by these reforms was the abandonment in 1963 of Khrushchev’s special seven-year economic plan (1959–65) two years short of its completion.⁴

By 1964 Khrushchev’s prestige was in decline in a number of areas. Industrial growth slowed, while agriculture showed no new progress. Abroad, the split with China, the Berlin crisis and the Cuban missile fiasco hurt the Soviet Union’s international stature, and Khrushchev’s efforts to improve relations with the West antagonized many hardliners in the Soviet military. Lastly, the 1962 party reorganization caused turmoil throughout the Soviet political chain of command. In October 1964, while Khrushchev was vacationing in the Crimea, the Presidium voted him out of office and refused to permit him to take his case to the Central Committee. Khrushchev retired as a private citizen after his successors denounced him for his ‘hare-brained schemes, half-baked conclusions, and hasty decisions’. Yet, along with his failed policies, Khrushchev should also be remembered for his public disavowal of Stalinism and the cult of personality, and his relatively more liberal attitude towards the international communist movement. During the Twenty-First Party Congress, on 27 January 1959, he formulated Moscow’s new attitude to the other communist parties, declaring that ‘All communist parties are independent and their work proceeds from the concrete circumstances of the country in which they are situated’.⁵ Writers were ‘allowed, indeed encouraged, to exhibit the evils of the Stalin period … [and] authoritative Soviet critics … urged writers to lend their talents to the “rehabilitation” of those who “tragically perished” in the “period of the personality cult”’. Khrushchev even approved publication in 1962 of Alexander Solzhenitsyn’s One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich, which was a harsh indictment of bureaucratic Soviet life.⁶
After removing Khrushchev from power, the leaders of the Presidium, which by then had been renamed the Politburo in 1966 by the Twenty-Third Party Congress, and the Secretariat again established a collective leadership. As was the case following Stalin’s death, several individuals, including Aleksei N. Kosygin, Nikolai V. Podgorny and Leonid I. Brezhnev, contended for power behind a façade of unity. Kosygin accepted the position of Prime Minister, which he held until his retirement in 1980. Brezhnev was made First Secretary, which may have been viewed as an interim appointment by his fellows.7

Born to a Russian worker’s family in 1906, Brezhnev became a protégé of Khrushchev early in his career, and through Khrushchev’s influence he rose to membership in the Presidium. As his own power grew, Brezhnev acquired a coterie of followers whom he as First Secretary (the title reverted to General Secretary after April 1966) gradually manoeuvred into powerful positions. At the same time, Brezhnev slowly demoted or isolated possible contenders for his office. During the Khrushchev years, he supported Khrushchev’s denunciations of Stalin’s arbitrary rule and the cautious liberalization of Soviet political and cultural life. He succeeded in elevating Podgorny in December 1965 to the ceremonial position of Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, the highest legislative organization in the government, thus eliminating him as a rival. But Brezhnev’s rise was very gradual, and only in 1971, as Brezhnev succeeded in appointing four close associates to the Politburo, did it become clear that his was the most influential voice in the collective leadership.8

The years after Khrushchev were notable for the stability of cadres in the party and state apparatus. By introducing the slogan ‘Trust in Cadres’ in 1965, Brezhnev won the support of many bureaucrats wary of the constant reorganizations of the Khrushchev era and eager for security in established hierarchies. The corollary to this stability was the ageing of Soviet leaders, with the average age of Politburo members rising from 55 to 68 from the 1960s to the 1970s, which meant that the Soviet leadership became increasingly conservative and ossified.9

Conservative policies characterized the regime’s agenda in the years after Khrushchev. Upon assuming power, the collective leadership not only reversed such Khrushchev policies as the division of the party, but also halted de-Stalinization and made positive references to the dead dictator. In contrast to the relative cultural freedom tolerated during the early Khrushchev years, Brezhnev and his colleagues continued the more restrictive line of the later Khrushchev era. The leadership was unwilling or unable to employ Stalinist means to control Soviet society, but instead opted to exert repressive tactics against political dissidents. Persecuted dissidents during this time included writers and activists in outlawed religious, nationalist and human rights movements, and in the later stages of the Brezhnev era the regime tolerated popular expressions of anti-Semitism. Using the study of ‘developed socialism’, the study of Marxism–Leninism served as a means to bolster the authority of the regime, rather than as a tool for revolutionary action.10

Khrushchev’s successors were also anxious to re-establish Soviet primacy in the community of communist states by undermining the influence of China.11
Although the new leaders originally approached China without hostility, Mao’s condemnation of Soviet foreign policy as ‘revisionist’, and his competition for influence in the Third World, soon led to a decline in relations between the two countries. Sino-Soviet relations reached a nadir in March 1969 when clashes broke out over a small disputed island on the Usuri River, located along the boundary between the Soviet Union and China. As a consequence, the Chinese, intimidated by Soviet military strength, agreed not to patrol the border area claimed by the Soviet Union.12

The Turkish Communist Party consistently supported the Moscow line in the Sino–Soviet dispute during this era. On 27 August 1963, the Central Committee of the TKP held a special meeting, at which the Turkish party expressed unreserved support for Moscow’s Open Letter of 14 July 1963 to the Chinese Party, and this position set the Turkish Communist Party’s line thereafter.13

Under its collective leadership, the Soviet Union again used force in Eastern Europe, this time in Czechoslovakia in 1968. Reform-minded elements of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia had begun rapidly to liberalize their rule, loosen censorship and strengthen Western ties. In response, Soviet and other Warsaw Pact troops entered Czechoslovakia and installed a new regime. A few months after the brutal Soviet response to socialist humanism in Czechoslovakia, Brezhnev told a meeting of the Polish United Workers’ Party that when a transition to socialism takes place anywhere the Soviet Union considers that transition to be irreversible, and he pledged to back up that view with force. This was what in the West came to be called the ‘Brezhnev Doctrine’, or ‘doctrine of limited sovereignty’. Although the Soviet leaders maintained that there never was such a thing as a ‘Brezhnev Doctrine’, until the mid-1980s most observers in both the East and West believed that Brezhnev’s statement constituted a fundamental principle of Soviet policy towards the Soviet satellite states. The ‘Brezhnev Doctrine’ threw into doubt the possibility of creating ‘socialism with a human face’, and it appeared that any changes that undermined the dominant position of ruling communist parties would be met by Soviet force, as they had been in 1956 and 1968.14

Soviet influence in the developing world expanded somewhat during this period. New communist or Marxist governments having close relations with the Soviet Union rose to power in several countries, including Vietnam, Ethiopia and Nicaragua. In the Middle East, the Soviet Union vied for influence by backing the Arabs in their dispute with Israel, and after the June 1967 War the Soviet Union rebuilt the defeated Syrian and Egyptian armies. Later it suffered a setback when Egypt expelled Soviet advisers from the country in 1972 and subsequently cultivated a closer relationship with the United States. The Soviet Union, however, retained its ties with Syria and continued to support Palestinian claims for their right to an independent state.15

Soviet relations with the West first improved then deteriorated in the years after Khrushchev. The main international issue confronting the United States at the time was its war in Vietnam, which extended from 1964 through the first half of 1975. This war polarized public opinion in the West and deeply divided the
political elite, both in the United States and the rest of the Western world. Perhaps as nothing else did, the war in Vietnam shaped the views of ordinary US citizens for generations to come. In 2005, more than 30 years after the end of the conflict, a witness to the events told me of his still very strong impressions of the Vietnam War with the following words:

In the spring of 1967, I watched a US Air Force recruiting video as part of a senior high school civics class. The video showed clips of Air Force pilot training, including pictures from the cockpit as the plane soared through clouds and rolled down over for a wide-angle view of a quilted patchwork of small farms in a middle-American landscape. As a young man in that time, I was very aware of several looming realities in my life. I would be leaving high school with an uncertain future. I wanted to go to college, which would cost a lot more money than I had as a poor working-class kid in San Francisco. I also would soon be turning eighteen, which meant that I would have to register for military draft. I had, of course, heard of the war in Vietnam – it was on the television news every night, and while there were a lot of violent images the newsreaders were constantly assuring us that the war would soon be over.

On returning to San Francisco that summer, I made a special effort to be seen in my uniform. The person that I most impressed was my close, lifetime friend Randy. He was a year younger, in his last year in high school and filled with many of the same dilemmas that I had had the previous year. He asked a lot of questions about my experience in the Air Force, and I answered them all only with positive comments.

In mid-April 1969, about six weeks before I was scheduled for assignment to a combat role, I received a call from Randy’s younger brother, Larry. It was among the most difficult moments of my life. Larry very quietly and simply told me that Randy had been killed in combat a few days earlier. He said that he didn’t blame me, because he knew that I would never wish Randy any harm, but that he blamed their father who had pressured Randy into joining as the ‘manly’ thing to do.

Over the years, I managed to finish my university education, did well and completed several advanced degrees, including, ironically, a law degree. I now enjoy a freedom to think differently and to follow my conscience. I am blessed with good health and the company of good and thoughtful friends. When I see young men, and now increasingly young women, caught in a web of dilemmas that come with being young in a time of war, I see and hear and think of Randy those many years ago. I’ve intentionally avoided the Vietnam memorial in Washington, D.C. because coming upon his name carved in that cold stone is still too painful to contemplate. But in some ways I’m still trying to ‘save’ Randy, and I made a promise to him on that difficult day in April 1969 that I would find out why he and so many other Americans and Vietnamese died during those times of torment. I have some of the answers now but I am still looking for the rest.
The death toll for the Vietnamese people rose to over 3 million. In a campaign that involved the wholesale carpet bombing of the country, the American army unleashed 15 million tons of bombs and munitions on Vietnam, more than was dropped by all sides during the Second World War.\textsuperscript{18}

In 1973, the US army, suffering from deep and painful wounds, withdrew from Vietnam, tacitly acknowledging that the Vietnamese people had defeated the most significant imperialist power in the world. The corrupt pro-American dictatorship of General Nguyen van Thieu that Washington left behind boasted of a 700,000-strong army that collapsed, virtually without a fight. The victory of the Vietnamese people represented the culmination of a 30-year struggle in which they had confronted not only American intervention, but that of Japanese and French imperialism before it.\textsuperscript{19} As a result, the pace of détente began to quicken.

In the mid-1960s, Turkey began acting independently of American policy as a result of a number of setbacks in Turkish–American relations. US President Kennedy decided to withdraw the Jupiter missiles from Turkey in the wake of the Cuban missile crisis, which was generally considered in Ankara as part of a secret deal between Washington and Moscow,\textsuperscript{20} and in 1964 the Turkish government received what was considered a humiliating letter from US President Johnson, which warned Turkey not to use US weapons in Cyprus and that if its involvement there provoked a Soviet military response, Turkey could not count on US support.\textsuperscript{21} The Soviets took advantage of the strain to deploy a cruiser and two destroyers through the Straits,\textsuperscript{22} and Soviet naval aircraft began operating in the region on a regular basis.\textsuperscript{23} Increasing Soviet naval strength in the eastern Mediterranean remained the most striking feature of relations in the region during the 1960s.

### The 27 May 1960 military coup

On 27 May 1960, Turkish army units under the direction of Chief of General Staff Cemal Gursel seized the principal government buildings and communications centres, arresting President Bayar, Prime Minister Menderes, and most of the DP representatives in the Grand National Assembly, as well as a large number of public officials. Those arrested were charged with various crimes, ranging from abrogating the constitution and instituting a dictatorship.\textsuperscript{24} The coup was accomplished with little violence and was accepted rapidly throughout the country. The government was replaced by the Committee of National Unity (CNU), composed of the 38 officers who had organized the coup, which acted as supreme authority in appointing a cabinet, which initially consisted of five officers and 13 civilians, to carry out executive functions. The number of civilians in the cabinet was later reduced to only three, and General Gursel temporarily held the positions of President, Prime Minister, and Defence Minister.

It is now known that Turkish intelligence services knew about the secret preparations for the coup, and had passed this information to the CIA through the intelligence network within NATO before the information was made available to
the Turkish government.\textsuperscript{25} It has been claimed that the activities of the Turkish intelligence services were directly controlled by the CIA, which was directing most of its operations against real and potential pro-Soviet communist threats in Turkey.\textsuperscript{26}

The 1960 coup occurred against a backdrop of deep economic crisis, and the rapid escalation of tension between the government and opposition threatened to erupt into civil war. Soon after coming to power in 1950, Menderes built on the liberalization measures that followed Atatürk’s death in 1938 to relax laws that restricted the role of minorities and Islam. Confronted with strong Kemalist opposition, the government repeatedly passed legislation designed to restrict the ability of the press to print material designed to damage the political or financial prestige of the state, or belittling persons holding official positions.

The first serious economic crisis broke out in 1958, as a combined financial and foreign debt crisis. The foreign trade deficit had reached 60 per cent of the total exports, which made it impossible to import materials needed by industry. In this environment, investments decreased sharply and the economy shrunk, with social expenditures reduced to a minimum. The situation deteriorated to the point that Turkey could no longer repay its foreign debt.\textsuperscript{27} During that same year, a number of significant events in the Middle East strongly influenced Turkish political psychology. On 14 July, King Faisal and Premier Nuri as Said of Iraq were assassinated during an uprising. The day after the Iraqi Revolution, the United States landed troops in Lebanon using one of the US bases in Turkey. The principal domestic effect of the Iraqi Revolution was to infuse in the DP government a fear of revolution, pushing them toward an increasingly complete dictatorship in an effort to prevent it. Turkish newspapers appeared with blank columns for the first time, reflecting legislation issued under pressure from the DP leadership aiming at restricting press statements by the opposition.\textsuperscript{28}

By 1959, growing hostilities between government and opposition supporters polarized public opinion and led to violent clashes. In April 1960, a series of large-scale student demonstrations paralysed university campuses, and on 28 April, during the demonstration in Istanbul’s Beyazit Square, a student leader, Turan Emeksiz, known as the head of the TKP’s organization among university students, was killed and the police injured 16 other students.\textsuperscript{29} Martial law was imposed in Istanbul and Ankara on 1 May, but the internment of demonstrators in detention camps failed to restore the peace.\textsuperscript{30}

In January 1961, soon after the coup, a constituent assembly was formed which included the CNU. This interim administration created a new constitution, which after much debate was ratified in May and presented to a popular referendum in July. With the constitution, Turkey emerged as a so-called second republic. The new constitution included a number of significant departures from the 1924 constitution but continued to represent the main principles of Kemalism. It was endorsed by 60 per cent of the electorate, but the large vote in opposition was a setback to the CNU because it demonstrated that support for the DP continued, particularly in small towns and rural constituencies.\textsuperscript{31}
The trial of some 600 former government officials and DP functionaries began in October 1960 on the island of Yassiada in the Bosphorus. Of those tried 100 were found guilty, and 15 were sentenced to death. As a partial response to public pressure for compassion, the death sentences of former President Bayar and 11 others were reduced to life imprisonment, but Menderes and two former cabinet ministers were hanged.32 The military continued to dominate Turkish politics until October 1965, and although a series of governments held office during this period, all were directly controlled by the military regime. When free elections were once again held in 1965, a centre-right party – Adalet Partisi, or Justice Party – came to power that was in some way merely a continuation of the Democrat Party.33

A brave new beginning: a legal socialist party, 1961–71

The 1960 military coup and the adoption in 1961 of the most democratic and liberal constitution in Turkish history marked the beginning of a new democracy in the country. For the first time in decades suppressed ideological and political trends were permitted to take part in the political life of the country. All sections of the society began to set up organizations.

Within this new atmosphere of democracy and opening, the ban on Nazim Hikmet’s works was lifted in 1964. Hikmet, who had been living in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries since 1950, had shared the Soviet Union’s 1950 International Peace Prize with Pablo Neruda. Nazim had died and was buried on 3 June 1963 in Moscow. Just a few months before his death, Nazim wrote a poem in which he bade farewell to the neighbours in his Moscow apartment building:

I mean you must take living so seriously that even at seventy, for example, you will plant olives – and not so they’ll be left for your children either, but because even though you fear death you don’t believe it, because living, I mean, weighs heavier.34

The year 1960 marked an important turning point for the development of the working-class movement in Turkey. After the 1960 coup, workers in Turkey acquired for the first time the right to form trade unions as well as the right to strike, and a new period was opened for general democratic rights with the coming of relative democratization in both political and social life.35 Some leaders of the Istanbul trade unions took the opportunity in February 1961 to establish a legal socialist party, the Turkish Labour Party, Turkiye Isci Partisi –TIP. This party became the first mass party in the history of the Turkish Left, and differed from earlier socialist parties mainly in that it was formed not by intellectuals but by representatives of the workers.36

The platform of the TIP called for the redistribution of land, nationalization of industry and financial institutions, the exclusion of foreign capital, and urged closer cooperation with the Soviet bloc countries. At first, the legal socialist party
attracted the support of only some trade union leaders and leftist intellectuals.\textsuperscript{37} In its first year of existence, the party did very little as its leaders lacked experience and had no clear-cut political views. Only in February 1962, with the election of a new leadership under the prominent Istanbul lawyer Mehmet Ali Aybar, did the party become more active. In addition to trade unionists, the new leadership now included lawyers, academics, publicists and teachers. Party branches soon emerged in many towns and cities.\textsuperscript{38} In 1964, the First Congress of the TİP approved the party programme, which the leadership defined as the non-capitalist path of development.\textsuperscript{39}

In the October 1965 parliamentary elections, the party won nearly 270,000 votes – 3 per cent of the total, and gained 15 seats in the Turkish Parliament, by taking advantage of the more democratic system then available. Encouraged by their success, the party leadership decided to shift the general direction of the party from the struggle for democratic transformation to the attainment of socialist goals, and thus the promotion of the non-capitalist path was replaced by the call for the struggle for socialism. Following the 1965 elections, Aybar provided the following definition of the party: ‘The TİP is a socialist party which aims at establishing a socialist system in the place of a capitalist one, by organizing the working classes and at leading them to victory’.\textsuperscript{40}

The Second Congress of the TİP was held in November 1966 in Malatya, where Aybar stated that modern Turkey ‘faced two interconnected problems: the renewed struggle for independence and the building of socialism’.\textsuperscript{41}

The events in Czechoslovakia during August 1968 had a great effect on the members of the TİP. The Soviet invasion led to fierce debates within the party and then to an internal crisis. Aybar protested against the occupation of Czechoslovakia and made comments highly critical of the Soviet Union. He argued that Turkish socialists should not limit themselves to the study of the works of Marx and Lenin, but acquire a better understanding of the wider socialist thought by studying Kautsky and Rosa Luxembourg. Such statements were severely criticized by other leading party members, and in particular by Behice Boran and Sadun Aren.\textsuperscript{42} The Third Congress of the party, in November 1968, was dominated by this issue, and it became apparent that three factions had formed: one was Aybar’s group, the most powerful and influential at that time, another being the Aren–Boran group, which was supported by about one-third of the delegates, and a third, calling itself the Proletarian Revolutionaries, which supported ideas of the national democratic revolution.\textsuperscript{43}

The proletarian revolutionary faction adhered to the idea of the national democratic revolution publicized by Mihrı Belli. Belli maintained that Turkey had lost its political and economic independence and had become dependent on the Western countries, particularly the United States. On the other hand, he argued that feudal forces were in power in Turkey, hindering its social and economic development. A real independence, he concluded, could be achieved only through an anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution, which he termed a ‘national democratic revolution’.\textsuperscript{44}
The general election of 1969 exerted a major effect on the TİP. Unlike the 1965 elections, these elections were based on a majority system rather than on proportional representation. In the elections, the party lost 35,000 of the votes it had won in the 1965 election, and under the new majority system it was allocated only two seats in Parliament, and thus lost the right to form a parliamentary faction.45

The Communist Party of Turkey supported the legal socialist platform represented by the TİP unconditionally, and many members of the TKP took an active part in the organization of the legal socialist party. The majority of the leaders and key members of the TİP were either members of the TKP or sympathizers to the line of the TKP, and Bizim Radyo consistently supported the activities of the TİP.46 In relation to the general political atmosphere in the country, Bizim Radyo remained sceptical about the prospects for real radical reforms through Parliament. The government was accused of being an American puppet brought to power by American imperialism,47 and in an official statement the TKP claimed that Turkish Premier Süleyman Demirel was about to establish fascism and an open military dictatorship in Turkey.48 The TKP took the line that to be truly democratic Turkey should detach itself from NATO and join the group of non-aligned states led by Tito and Nehru.49

The TKP consistently supported Moscow in the affairs of world socialist movement. In August 1963, the TKP hailed the nuclear-test-ban treaty as a victory for the policy of peaceful coexistence, and castigated the Chinese communists for seeking to provoke war. In connection with a meeting of 19 communist and workers’ parties in Moscow in March 1965, the TKP reiterated this line, calling for restoration of unity in the international communist movement under the leadership of the Soviet Union.50

The 1968 generation in Turkey

If there was a single moment … after 1945 which corresponds to the world simultaneous upheaval of which revolutionaries had dreamed after 1917, it was sure 1968, when students rebelled from the USA and Mexico in West to socialist Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, largely stimulated by the outbreak of May 1968 in Paris, epicentre of a continent-wide student uprising. It was global, not only because the ideology of the revolutionary tradition, from 1789 to 1917, was universal and internationalist … but because for the first time, the world, or at least the world in which student ideologists lived, was genuinely global. The same books appeared, almost simultaneously, in the student bookshops in Buenos Aires, Rome and Hamburg (in 1968 almost certainly including Herbert Marcuse). The same tourists of revolution crossed oceans and continents from Paris to Havana to São Paulo to Bolivia. The first generation of humanity to take rapid and cheap global air travel and telecommunications for granted, the students of the late 1960s, had no difficulty in recognising what happened at the Sorbonne, in Berkeley, in Prague, as part of the same event in the same global village.51
The year 1968 was a turning point in Turkey as well as in the world generally. It marked a period in which the crystallization of social classes, and the social and political activism made possible by the new freedoms enabled by the 1961 constitution, joined with the energy and demands of university students striving for knowledge.

The 1960s witnessed a growing level of anti-American and anti-NATO sentiments, which in some respects was the mirror-image of the formerly widespread anti-communism. The years between 1965 and 1971 witnessed significant developments for the Turkish Left, with the legal socialist party, the TİP, winning a large following in universities as increasing numbers of students and intellectuals turned to socialism as an ideology that provided a solution to the serious social and economic problems confronting Turkey.

Fikir Kulüpleri – Idea Clubs – were the leading student organizations. The first had been established in 1958 in the Faculty of Political Science in Ankara University. In the 1960s, the clubs spread to other universities and were merged into a federation – the FKF, or Fikir Kulüpleri Federasyonu. By then, the number of Fikir Kulüpleri rapidly increased in Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir, and even in Erzurum, and in 1966 and 1967 the members of the clubs won all the elections among the student institutions, thus becoming the official representatives of Turkey’s university students. student activism continued to gain momentum in 1967, developing within the framework of academic requests and becoming increasingly politicized with the worsening political and economic instability that affected Turkey.

The 1968 student movement grew relentlessly and rapidly. In April, most of the student organizations and progressive movements got together in an attempt at ‘revolutionary cooperation’, trying to build a common front against imperialism, reactionary sectors of society under the idea of ‘national democratic revolution’. As soon as the news came about the events in Paris, a ‘No to NATO’ week was organized. Although many protests took place in May, June was the month of the Turkish 1968, and a series of university occupations followed. The first occupation happened in Ankara on 10 June, and two days later a second occupation took place in Istanbul, and the boycotts and occupations soon spread to the other universities in the country. On the fifth day of the boycotts, ITU (Istanbul Technical University) student leader Harun Karadeniz declared that the basic demand of the movement ‘is not a reform in education, but education revolution’:

Although we live in very different geographical areas, our goals, our struggles, desires, our friends and enemies are the same. We are the youth which will strengthen the struggle against imperialism in different parts of this earth. One day we will meet in a better and more beautiful world.

From 10 June to 18 June, every day witnessed occupations and boycotts in the universities. Finally, in early July, the boycotts and occupations ended. However,
Turkish students gained great self-confidence from these experiences and became fully aware of their strength.

In early July it was announced that the Sixth Fleet of the US Navy was planning a visit to Istanbul harbour. The events started with the arrival of the Sixth Fleet on the morning of 15 July, and during the following two days participants from the 1968 student movement harassed the US soldiers wherever they went. On Wednesday, the tension increased, and that night police attacked the student halls of residence of ITU. Dozens of students were wounded, and one of them, Vedat Demircioglu, went into a coma and died seven days later, which shocked student activists throughout Turkey.

On the afternoon of 17 July, thousands of students began marching to Dolmabahce, where the Sixth Fleet was anchored. Once there, they attacked the soldiers and officers of the Sixth Fleet and a number of them were thrown into the sea. This action against the US Sixth Fleet became the symbol of the anti-imperialist spirit and of ‘1968’ in Turkey.

The events continued the following year around the so-called Komer incident. Komer was a CIA specialist famous for his work as a director of the ‘pacification program’ in Vietnam. In 1969, Komer was appointed as US ambassador to Turkey, and the rector of the ODTU (Middle Eastern Technical University), Kemal Kurdas, invited Komer to the university. The ODTU was an American-modelled university, formed with US help, with the intention of creating a university that was sympathetic to the US and the Western capitalist system. Yet the ODTU had become a symbol of anti-American sentiment in Turkey, and played a central role in the 1968 movement. When Komer came to the ODTU on 6 January 1969, student anger exploded and Komer’s car was vandalized and burned.

During early 1969, the leading youth organization, the FKF, took the name of Dev-Genc, or Federation of the Revolutionary Youth of Turkey. During its brief existence, Dev-Genc served as an umbrella organization for several revolutionary youth groups, and was usually led by university students. The association was started in Ankara and spread to other universities as a hybrid formation that was part student movement and part revolutionary association. Meanwhile, a fascist, extreme right-wing student movement became more and more aggressive as a reaction and opposition to left-wing student activism.

Most of the right-wing students were organized under the umbrella of ‘Fighting Associations against Communism’ in this period, but indeed controlled and trained by Türkes’s ‘Grey Wolves’. Between 1968 and 1970, this reactionary movement had been growing under the protection of the right-wing government of the Justice Party. At the universities, attacks by fascist, anti-communist and extreme nationalist groups increased, with the police doing nothing to prevent them. The fascists, organized under Alparslan Türkes in the CKMP and later MHP, or Nationalist Movement Party, were being trained in contra-guerrilla camps since the summer of 1969, with the number of training camps rising to 45 during 1969.

Türkes came to personify the ultra-nationalistic and authoritarian nature of the Turkish extreme Right. Deeply involved in the military intervention of 1960,
Türkes, and a minority group among the officers who had seized power, were expelled from Turkey by the military for alleged ‘authoritarianism’. After returning to Turkey in 1963, Türkes resigned his commission and entered politics. By the end of July 1965, he had succeeded in taking over the leadership of a medium-sized conservative party, the Republican Peasants and Nation Party, whose name was changed in 1969 to the more suitable Nationalist Action Party, or the Nationalist Movement Party.

Türkes’s inflammatory rhetoric and confrontational tactics increased the party’s profile above what the polls alone justified. He organized the party on military lines and indoctrinated party activists. The party’s paramilitary arm, the notoriously violent ‘Grey Wolves’, disrupted left-wing student activities and initiated physical attacks on political opponents. On 20 February 1968, Cetin Altan, a deputy and a member of the TİP, was violently beaten by more than one hundred members of the Justice Party MPs in Parliament for describing Nazim Hikmet as a ‘great poet’. Symbolically, for the socialist movement this event represented the fading of the reliability of the parliamentary system.

On 16 February 1969, the largest anti-imperialist mass protest in Turkey was held, with 30,000 people marching towards Taksim. Extreme right-wing groups, controlled by the Turkish contra-guerrilla organization, organized a number of provocations and attacks during this event. The police attempted to break up the first demonstration, but several thousand protesters were able to continue towards Taksim, while the rest were driven away in another direction. Incited and directed by the contra-guerrillas, civic fascist gangs attacked several thousands of demonstrators with knives and sticks. During this confrontation, two workers, Ali Turgut and Duran Erdogan, were murdered, in what was the first and largest contra-guerrilla attack against a mass action that later became known as ‘Bloody Sunday’.

In September 1969 Taylan Ozgur, a leader of the ODTU students, was shot dead on the street by plain-clothes policemen, and soon after fascist gangs shot Mehmet Cantekin in the Engineering Faculty in Istanbul University. The ruling Justice Party immediately started proceedings to close associations led by left-wing or revolutionary students. But in response to the increasing fascist attacks, the followers of Dev-Genc started to form armed groups, and as a result the violence rapidly escalated.

**Revolutionary trade unions**

When TİP was founded, the Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions, Türkiye İşçi Sendilari Konfederasyonu, or Türk-İş, was the only trade union confederation in Turkey. Türk-İş itself was founded by government initiative in 1952 to serve as an umbrella group, and the confederation mostly functioned as an agency through which the government could restrain workers’ wage demands. The 1961 constitution under article 46 granted the right to organize unions among ‘those who work’, and article 47 provided ‘workers’ with the right to strike and bargain collectively. The term ‘those who work’ was important because it suggested that
civil servants were allowed to unionize, and civil servant unions, particularly the Confederation of Teachers Unions of Turkey (TOB-DER), were effective pressure groups.

When the Adalet Partisi came to power in 1965, it inherited the politics of the banned DP and those forces opposed to the constitution of 1961, and the right-wing politics of the government affected the Türk-İş leadership and its policies. In this period, the union had extensive links with various organs of the US government and trade unions, and US influence on the union was visible in its adoption and implementation of a claim of ‘non-partisan politics’. However, there was a small but influential group within the Türk-İş that opposed ‘non-partisan politics’, and it was this position that led a group of 12 unionists, most of them members of the Türk-İş, to found the TİP in 1961.

Following new legislations in 1963, it quickly became apparent that the state-controlled confederation, Türk-İş, was unable and unwilling to support the rising demands and militancy of Turkey’s workers. A new generation of workers and union activists were more critical about the kind of unionism that was servile to the state under the guise of ‘non-political unionism’, and they sought to open a new channel for the trade union struggle. The conflict between this left-wing trend and the leadership of the Türk-İş culminated in a split, and in February 1967 four unions – Maden-İş, Lastik-İş, Basin-İş, and Gida-İş – were expelled from Türk-İş and founded a new confederation, DİSK, or Confederation of Revolutionary Workers’ Union, as an alternative trade union confederation.

Immediately after its foundation, DİSK became a centre of attraction in the union struggle all over Turkey, and also became of interest to left-wing activists working within the working classes of Turkey. As DİSK became stronger, workers belonging to Türk-İş began leaving it to become members of the DİSK. During 1969, when university students were active against the US Sixth Fleet, an increasing number of workers, mostly under the leadership of this new, revolutionary trade union confederation, participated alongside with revolutionary students. Factory occupations occurred throughout 1969, and in some cases the police and the right-wing gangs attacked the workers. For instance, during an occupation by the Gamak workers in Istanbul, one worker, Serif Aygun, was killed by the police.

Both Türk-İş and the government tried to suppress DİSK, whose independence and militancy were perceived as a threat. Intending to curb DİSK’s power, the government introduced an amendment to the Unions Law in 1970 that prohibited unions where they represented less than one-third of the workers in a particular workplace. The government explicitly and publicly admitted that the amendment was going to be used to wipe DİSK out of existence. However, large-scale workers’ protests of 15–16 June 1970 erupted in response to the proposed amendment, and on 15 June DİSK called for a protest against legislation. DİSK would have been pleased if 20,000 had turned up, but instead, spontaneously and from all quarters of Istanbul and Izmit – the cradle of the modern Turkish working class – over 150,000 workers demonstrated. The police tried to hold them back,
and then called in the army, and the authorities raised the bridges over the Golden Horn to try to stop the march. But women in the lead of the demonstration breached the defences. There was one clash where a policeman and two workers were killed, and more than 200 were injured, with many more arrested. But the workers broke into police stations to free their comrades. Even though there was no looting or other violence, martial law was declared that prohibited the people from leaving their homes and imposed a virtual curfew. This curfew was to last for two months in an attempt to suppress all workers’ protests.\textsuperscript{76}

The military coup of 1971

\begin{verbatim}
Zulüm sı˘gmaz iken köye şehire
Bize mezar oldu kan Kızıldere
Yavuklu yerine çıplak mavzere
Sarıldık ey halkım unutma bizi!
\end{verbatim}

It was in 1968 that the multi-party system began to fail. The AP government had never welcomed socialist and communist opposition, but had tolerated a relatively liberal atmosphere because the Left had not yet been seen as a serious threat. Following the events of 1968, the liberal climate was quickly brought to an end, with the government openly supporting illegal extreme right organizations to combat the ‘communist threat’.

Demirel’s turning a blind eye, and even providing support to the crimes of the extreme Right, was probably the main factor in the rapid dissolution of the multi-party system. But at the same time, the use of a very heavy-handed approach to all activities of the Left by the government produced a lack of confidence in the system, which was reflected in a very low turnout for the 1969 general elections. At that point, the Demirel government’s majority in the Assembly dissipated as factions within its circle of supporters regrouped in new political constellations. Some former AP members deserted the AP in 1971 to form the more right-wing Democratic Party. Other, more liberal AP members, dissatisfied with Demirel’s concessions to the Right, defected from the party and sat as independents. As a result of these shifts, the Demirel government lost its parliamentary majority.\textsuperscript{78}

Occupation of land by peasants, factories by workers, and campuses by students continued to follow one after the other. Fights between ideologically opposed groups, as well as clashes between leftist students and workers on one side and security forces and right-wing gangs on the other, grew and blood was regularly spilt in street violence. In May 1969, high court members staged a protest, marching in their robes through the streets of Ankara. In November, students of the Police Academy collectively boycotted classes, and faced with mounting problems and rapidly escalating discontent, the ruling party had succumbed to the crisis and on 11 February 1970, 41 AP parliamentarians voted with the opposition to defeat the budget and forced their own government to resign. After much arm-twisting and behind-the-scenes dealing, Demirel convinced
enough of the opposition to return a vote of confidence and just managed to form a new cabinet in March 1970.79

During this political crisis, the economic situation continued to deteriorate, which required that the government resort to severe measures in an effort to control the crisis. Large tax increases were imposed and the Turkish currency was devalued drastically.80 Events reached a dangerous level in early 1971, when the first politically motivated bank raid took place in January, and left-wing guerrillas a month later abducted an American serviceman stationed in Turkey, and then another four American military personnel were abducted at gunpoint by left-wing groups in early March.81 In these circumstances, the chief of staff and commanders of the Turkish Armed Forces delivered a memorandum on 12 March 1971 ordering the resignation of the government and its replacement by one that could impose state authority and provide security and stability. Thus, the army brought the second Turkish experience in multi-party democracy to an end.82

The military regime of 12 March 1971 used martial law to round up thousands of left-wing students and workers who were mostly members of the DISK. Most of these were dreadfully tortured, and activities by trade unions and the youth associations were banned. The leftist movement was completely disintegrated and the organizations scattered during this period, and three leaders of the youth movement – all university students of about 20 – were charged with violating the constitution and hanged.83

The contra-guerrillas also played an important role during the 1971 coup. Ziverbey House in Istanbul/Erenkoy was rumoured to be a contra-guerrillas’ torture centre, and generals working with the contra-guerrillas who took people to this centre told their victims for the first time that they were prisoners of the Turkish contra-guerrillas. Interrogations were carried out by contra-guerrilla specialists, most of whom had been trained by the CIA, who murdered or permanently injured hundreds of people. Journalist Ugur Mumcu, who was arrested shortly after the coup, wrote later that his torturers told him, ‘We are the contra-guerrilla. Even the president of the republic cannot touch us’. General Kenan Evren, the leader of the 1980 military coup and the President of the republic after 1980, acknowledged that the contra-guerrillas were involved in clandestine activities in that period, including the murder of Mahir Cayan and eight other left-wing militants at Kizildere in 1972.84

Significantly, the military coup of 12 March 1971 came in the aftermath of the events of 15–16 June, and some of the measures taken by the military regime were aimed directly at trade union activism. The constitution was amended in such a way that union rights were curtailed seriously, with the most important being the amendment of article 46 to limit the right to unionize only to those ‘workers’ rather than ‘those who work’. In this way, civil servants were deprived of the right to unionize.85

The leaders of the coup replaced Demirel with a civilian technocratic ‘brain cabinet’ under Nihat Erim. Yet, far from creating a new popular consensus against the ‘left-wing terror’, the army’s repression after March 1971 succeeded in generating more widespread resistance from all sections of society. The harsh meth-
ods used by the army antagonized even those who were at first supportive of the coup. For example, in order to keep meat prices under control the army ordered the arrest of butchers, and in an effort to impose some sort of militaristic order they forcefully shaved a few hippies and closed traditional and often very popular coffee shops.

The military regime also contributed to the process of increasing polarization within the main political parties, especially the traditional party of the Kemalist regime, the CHP. While the party’s leader and Turkey’s elder statesman İnönü welcomed the military intervention, the young and dynamic section of the party under the emerging leadership of Bülent Ecevit was critical of the military regime. Ecevit presented himself as the ‘people’s hope’ and challenged the authority of İnönü, eventually forcing him to step down. Finally, as a consequence of the 1973 elections – the first after the military coup – Ecevit’s CHP became the largest party, but short of an absolute majority. Nevertheless, the CHP organized a coalition government in partnership with Türkes’s extreme-right National Salvation Party, the MHP, which was the beginning of a series of unstable coalition governments in Turkey’s politics.
7 The 1974–80 period

Shortly after his cult of personality began to take root in the Soviet Union in the mid-1970s, Brezhnev began experiencing periods of ill health. After his first stroke in 1975, Politburo members Mikhail Suslov and Andrei Kirilenko assumed some of Brezhnev’s functions for a time. After another bout of poor health in 1978, Brezhnev delegated more of his responsibilities to Konstantin Chernenko, a long-time associate, who soon began to be considered as the heir apparent. Brezhnev’s rule was damaged not only by his ill health, but by economic problems and various scandals involving his family and close political allies.

As a result of improved Soviet relations with the West, a period of détente, or relaxation of tension, emerged in 1974 as the two superpowers established a ceiling on the number of offensive weapons that could be held by either side. The crowning achievement of this era of détente was the signing in 1975 of the Helsinki Accords, which ratified the post-war status quo in Europe and bound the signatories to respect basic principles of human rights. ‘Helsinki Watch Groups’ were formed in many Soviet cities after the accords were signed, but more often than not state repression limited their effect as dissidents continued to be sent to prison or forced to leave the Soviet Union.

This period of détente also provided the Soviet Union with an unprecedented opportunity to acquire Western technology, especially in the field of arms manufacturing. It increased the production of high-tech weaponry and weapons deployments, with the result that by the end of the 1970s it had achieved parity or even superiority in strength compared with the United States. This was, however, at the expense of the Soviet domestic economy, in which at least 15 per cent of the gross national product was devoted to military spending. Defence determined key decisions on the economy, encouraging the development of weapons-related industries, but putting serious strains on investment and resources and curtailing domestic consumption.

During this period, the Soviet Union continued to denounce the NATO Alliance in an attempt to weaken Western unity. Although a second Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) agreement was signed by the Soviet President Brezhnev and US President Carter in Vienna in 1979, following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan the Carter administration withdrew the agreement from consideration by the US Senate. This effectively brought the era of détente to an end.
In response to the Soviet involvement in Afghanistan, the United States also imposed a grain embargo on the Soviet Union and boycotted the Summer Olympics in Moscow in 1980.

The Soviet Union made significant gains in the Middle East, the most significant of which came when an Islamic revolution, led by the Ayatollah Khomeini, overthrew the pro-American regime of the Shah of Iran in 1979. Khomeini was hardly pro-Soviet, but his victory in Iran, which replaced the pro-American Shah with a militantly anti-American regime, significantly weakened American influence in the area. For Washington, the downfall of the Shah of Iran brought home how fragile the American grip was over its closest allies in the Middle East. The subsequent prolonged crisis over the American hostages detained in Tehran was a painful reminder of the limits of American power.

After the fall of the Shah, the United States became preoccupied with the Soviet threat in the Third World. As Western-sponsored regimes fell to popular radical movements in Vietnam, Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Iran, Nicaragua and South Yemen, the panic increased. For the United States, it was easier to explain these as the result of the Soviet threat rather than admit that they were the direct consequence of the decline in Western colonial control of these countries. The Soviet Union greatly benefited from this wave of Third World radical anti-Western revolts, but most of them developed on the basis of indigenous conditions rather than through Soviet intervention. Carter’s ‘State of the Union’ message in 1980 was a clear evidence of this increased concern about the third world, and asserted the right of the United States to intervene militarily in the Middle East.¹

The Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan was probably the most significant issue in Soviet foreign policy in this period, because it ended the comfortable harmony of the Brezhnev era between the Soviet government and the Muslim peoples of the world. The intervention came as the result of a complicated process of trying to support a pro-Soviet regime in the face of strong Islamic opposition in that country. Even before the intervention, the more than 5,000 Soviet troops in Afghanistan provided support to the government in its fight against the rebels.² The Soviet intervention first started as a defensive operation in response to US assistance to Afghan rebels. But the increased presence of the Soviet army merely led to a stand-off with the rebels and an extremely damaging and violent conflict.

The war in Afghanistan caused a significant rise in anti-Soviet feeling among Muslims in the Middle East.³ Following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the supreme religious leader of Iran, Khomeini, issued a strong statement attacking Islamic communists and particularly the TUDEH (Iranian Communist Party), saying:

Most regrettably, at times it can be seen that due to the lack of the proper and precise understanding of Islamic issues some people have mixed Islamic ideas with Marxist ideas and have created a concoction which is in no way in accordance with the progressive teachings of Islam …⁴
The war in Afghanistan also produced a new, tensely defensive and extremist nationalism in the early 1980s within the Soviet Union. A number of cultural societies, such as Pamiat and Otechestvo, which had originally concerned themselves with the preservation of ancient monuments, developed anti-Semitic, anti-Islamic and neo-fascist tendencies.\(^5\)

Turkey and the Middle East played an important role in Soviet foreign policy in this period. Termination of the British colonial and protective role in the region by the early 1970s created a military power vacuum in the Middle East, and a 1978 political agreement signalled a thaw in Soviet–Turkish relations.\(^6\) From the Soviet point of view, the improvement in Soviet–Turkish relations was a welcome reward for a generation of patient diplomacy. The failure of the United States to sympathize with Turkey’s 1974 actions in Cyprus had led to the US arms embargo on Turkey.\(^7\) Economic assistance in this period represented the largest programme of Soviet aid to any non-communist Third World state, and from the Turkish point of view it reflected an acknowledgement of that state’s dissatisfaction with the West.

1973: a great leap forward

After the military coup of 1971, the Left in Turkey was strongly repressed, with the only legal socialist party, the TİP, banned from July 1971. Ideologically and politically there were two main tendencies among the left after 1971: the traditional pro-Soviet Left tendency, led by the TKP, that aimed at organizing among the working-class and trade union movement, and followed the line of the official CPSU; and the revolutionary populist tendency, which was organized among the student, youth and petty bourgeois layers of towns and provinces. The political line of this second tendency was reflected in Maoism and urban guerrilla activism.

The suppression of the TİP and other left-wing organizations gave a natural advantage to activities of the TKP, as many leading left-wing organizers were either killed, put in prison, or forced to escape abroad – Mahir Cayan and his friends were killed in Kizildere; Deniz Gezmis, Yusuf Aslan and Huseyin Inan were sentenced to death and hanged; Ibrahim Kaypakkaya, the leader of the Maoist TKP/ML (Communist Party of Turkey/ Marxist–Leninist), was killed in Diyarbakir prison under torture; the leading cadre of another important Maoist group, Proleter Devrimci Aydinlik (Proletarian Revolutionary Enlightenment), were put in prison for long terms; all leading members of the TİP were sentenced and put in prison; and the two leading ideologues of the Turkish communist movement, who were critical of the TKP, had to leave Turkey.

In this new atmosphere, the first practical steps taken to fill the gaps created by the oppression were the emergence of a new type of communist youth movement. Sosyalist Gençlik Orgutu (Socialist Youth Organization) had originally been established as the youth branch of the TİP, but when TİP was closed some leading members of this organization that were close to the TKP
started to organize themselves in small illegal cells called ‘Egitim Gruplari’ (Education Groups), after similar cells that had existed in Lenin’s Russia before the Bolshevik Revolution. The Egitim Gruplari thus offered the first steps towards the popular reorganization of the TKP in the 1970s.\(^8\)

Not surprisingly, the party saw 1973 as its year of progress. During this year, the TKP began to reorganize as an underground party within Turkey. At a 1973 meeting of the Politburo and cadres from the 1968 youth movement, it was decided to draft a new programme and statutes. The party leader, Yakup Demir (Zeki Bastimar), had been inactive for some time due to illness. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union made Ismail Bilen, who had lived abroad since 1935, General Secretary of the TKP following Yakup Demir’s death in 1973.\(^9\) A Central Committee publication, Atilim (Progress), was also established and began to publish in January 1974, and a radio station, TKP’nin Sesi (the Voice of the TKP), started broadcasting from Leipzig.\(^10\)

This was a ‘great leap forward’ for the TKP, and even without legal status it enjoyed a rapid and improving popularity all around the country. The principal reason was that, besides its tightly structured illegal organization, it had also created a broad legal mass movement on its periphery that was able to greatly influence the trade union movement by soon occupying almost all key positions in the leadership of DİSK. Between 1970 and 1980, numerous members of this illegal TKP managed to be elected to the executive committees of many unions, professional organizations and other legal mass organizations. There also were many legal youth, teacher, technical, apprentice and women’s organizations, with tens of thousands of members, that were founded directly under the party’s control. Added to this, of course, were hundreds of secret party cells composed of workers in factories all over Turkey.

At the same time, other legal and illegal socialist parties formed, but none of them had such a significant effect on the workers’ movements as did the TKP. Between 1970 and 1980, the growth in the working-class movement was unprecedented and socialist ideas were rapidly spreading among workers. Under the direction of the TKP, DİSK for the first time organized a mass rally in 1976 to celebrate May Day. The celebration had been prohibited for the past 50 years, but at least 200,000 people joined the rally and openly shouted the name of the illegal TKP – ‘TKP’ye Ozgurluk’ (Freedom to the TKP). Soon after, the trade-union movement organized strikes that were the most prolonged in the history of Turkey. The most militant DİSK union, Maden-İş (the Union of Metal Workers), started the strikes, which covered 120 factories in the private sector and involved 40,000 workers, which lasted 11 months. The strikes produced a parallel solidarity movement, organized around the youth movement, the movement of labouring women, intellectuals, apprentices and young workers, who kept watch around the strike tents during the long months of the strikes. This meant that the strikers’ families were not isolated and left to themselves, but were offered support from groups representing a major part of Turkish society (see Appendix 6).
Cyprus and the Turkish communists

On the morning of 20 July 1974, when the Turkish invasion of Cyprus was announced, Henry Kissinger was in San Clement, California, where President Nixon had his vacation residence. It was late in the afternoon as Kissinger telephoned the President, CIA Director William Colby, his British counterpart James Callahan, and other State Department officials in Washington.

Kissinger was trying to secure a strategy that would avoid a war between Greece and Turkey by negotiating after the successful landing of Turkish forces on the island. For this to succeed, Greece could not get involved in resisting the Turkish invasion and treat the situation as one that merely concerned Cypriots.

According to the testimony of commander Nikolopoulos, at 6:00 a.m. on 20 July, when it became evident that there were Turkish landing operations, he appealed to the Commander of the Armed Forces, Gregorios Bonanos, in his capacity as the information officer, asking him to give the order to mobilize his fleet. Bonanos replied, ‘Turks are attacking Cyprus, but we are Greece’. William Colby, Director of the CIA, knew the position of the Junta leadership, holding that developments in Cyprus did not concern Greece, and Colby explained this to Henry Kissinger in a telephone conversation at 7:35 a.m. on 20 July. In that same conversation, Colby also told Kissinger that the Turks would not occupy the entire island, and would advance only as far as Amohostos. The capture of Amohostos occurred 24 days later, on August 14. The following are the details of this conversation:

KISSINGER: What do you think their objective is? They don’t want the whole island, right?
COLBY: No, no. What they want is Kyrenia and Amohostos and a line between the two.
KISSINGER: So, only the northeast quarter.
COLBY: Yes. So, say approximately [unintelligible] from Larnaca and up, since they are advancing they will be in a position to bargain.
KISSINGER: What do you think the Greeks will do?
COLBY: The local Greeks will fight and there are several reports of bombing in Kyrenia. Primarily the National Guard will put up a fight. It depends on how much power the commanding officers have.
KISSINGER: They will fight.
COLBY: We will have a very undesirable situation in Cyprus. To be honest, the Greeks are a little far off. Their air force is too far away to be deployed. They won’t be able to do much from there.
KISSINGER: Even from Rhodes?
COLBY: Excuse me?
KISSINGER: Even from Rhodes?
COLBY: Their central air base is back in Greece, near Athens.
KISSINGER: What is the relative strength of the two armies?
COLBY: The Turks number around 300,000, and the Greeks around 100,000. But most of the Greek forces are located further North, in Thrace. If there
were to be any kind of conflict, it would be there, up in the northern region, near Thessaloniki.

KISSINGER: Do you have any good ideas for what we should do?

COLBY: I believe that the most important thing is to convince the Greeks not to fight, to say we’ll negotiate and discuss what should happen.

KISSINGER: Alright.

COLBY: Their basic stance is that it concerns the internal affairs of Cyprus. You know, they will save face by saying, ‘That was a local issue. It isn’t Greece’.

KISSINGER: Yes, alright. Thank you.

COLBY: In a way they will be able to say, ‘Yes it was a big mistake on that island, but we are above that’. I believe that the most important thing is that we should keep it limited to Cyprus and not let it advance from there.\(^{11}\)

The advocates of Soviet–Turkish rapprochement were heavily handicapped by the Cyprus problem. The situation had been kept under control for some time by the February 1959 Treaties of Zurich and London, which adopted a compromise providing for an independent bi-communal state under the guarantorship of Turkey, Britain and Greece. However, by mid-1963 there were increasing attempts by the Greek Cypriots to invalidate this formula and achieve the Greek nationalist goal, *enosis*, of annexing Cyprus to Greece. In November 1963, Archbishop Makarios, then President of Cyprus, announced that he would no longer honour the constitutional provisions giving special rights to the members of the Turkish Cypriot community. To impose this *fait accompli*, some Greek Cypriot armed groups started attacking the Turkish Cypriot community during the last days of 1963.

During this period, the TMT (Turk Mudafaa Teskilati or Turkish Defence Organization) and the EOKA (Ethniki Organosis Kyprion Agoniston or National Organization of Freedom Fighters) resorted to several successful and provocative actions designed to undermine the Republic of Cyprus.\(^{12}\) Bombs were planted and exploded on both sides, with the most significant being the bombing of the law office of Denktas, the leader of the Turkish Cypriot community, at the Sarayonu in 1962. There was no major damage, but the Turkish Cypriot leader Denktas and the Greek Cypriot leader Georgadjis agreed on the bombing suspects when they arrived on the scene, saying ‘This was done by communists’. Georgadjis, however, was more cautious, saying ‘Turkish communists’.\(^{13}\)

At this same time, electoral support for the pro-Soviet Communist Party of Cyprus, AKEL, began to grow, and the Republic of Cyprus became one of the founding members of the Non-Aligned Movement, which was known to have a close relationship with the Soviet Union. Together, these caused increasing concerns for the West.

The Soviet Union can seize power in a democratic manner only in one country, that is Cyprus. After independence communist influence increased, the unemployment rate rose high. According to the forecasts of some diplomats,
In March 1964, the Turkish government told Britain and the United States that unless Greek attacks were stopped, Turkey would consider intervention in Cyprus according to the terms of the existing treaties. In early June 1964, a decision to intervene militarily and land on Cyprus had emerged within the Turkish government. On 5 June, the US administration responded to the Turkish government of Prime Minister İsmet İnönü in a letter signed by US President Johnson with the following points: first, by resolving to immediately intervene in Cyprus militarily Turkey had failed to consult the United States regarding its foreign affairs as was required; second, since the intervention would result in the partitioning of the island it would contravene the terms of the guarantee treaties; third, according to the 1947 Turkish–American agreement, weapons supplied by the United States could not be used for purposes not approved by it; and finally, if as a result of such action the Soviet Union should intervene in Turkey, it would not be realistic to expect the NATO Alliance to function. As a result of the pressure applied through this letter, the Turkish government abandoned its plan for a landing on Cyprus. However, on 8–9 August 1964 Turkish planes bombed the Greek Cypriot positions for two days, killing 33 and injuring 230 Greek Cypriots. Both the United States and Britain remained silent about the bombing.

Four months after the Johnson letter, and for the first time since the Second World War, a Turkish foreign minister, Feridun Cemal Erkin, visited Moscow. Soon after, in January 1965, Turkey withdrew from the Multilateral Force, a shipborne force equipped with Polaris missiles and charged with responding to nuclear attack. As a result of these developments, Turkey stopped being a well-behaved ally who promptly and enthusiastically fulfilled all the demands of the West, and particularly the United States. During the same month, Gromyko declared that the Soviet Union would support an agreement that would permit Cyprus to exist as an independent state in which the rights of both Greek and Turkish communities to live in peace would be respected. This was very close to the official Turkish position regarding Cyprus, which was recognized by the Turkish Premier Demirel in 1967, who observed that ‘the Soviet view on Cyprus is fairly close to ours’.

In 1974, a fascist coup in Cyprus, backed by the Greek junta in Athens, attempted to annex Cyprus to Greece. When the British government refused to intervene, the Turkish army invaded on the orders of the Turkish coalition government led by Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit. The ‘people’s hero’ thus became a ‘national hero’ too. The Soviet Union stood aside, not wanting to see enosis, which would strengthen NATO and weaken the Left in Cyprus.

The unilateral 1974 Turkish intervention was considered necessary by the Turkish government because collective action had proved impossible. In their first foreign-combat operations since the Korean War, Turkish troops landed on
Cypriot soil with the professed aim of protecting the Turkish minority population against the Greek-inspired coup led by Nikos Sampson. Against determined resistance by the lightly armed Greek Cypriot National Guard, Turkish troops occupied the northern third of the island, but the Turkish intervention force, which initially consisted of some 40,000 soldiers and 200 tanks, was subsequently reduced to a garrison of 30,000 troops. It greatly outnumbers the Greek national forces on the island supplemented by the Greek Cypriot National Guard, and can be reinforced by Turkish troops within hours, if necessary.21

Under the 1960 Treaty, Turkey could re-establish the conditions guaranteed by the basic articles of the 1960 Constitution. The coup d’état was, of course, ipso facto unconstitutional, and Makarios himself admitted that it was an attempt to extend Greek dictatorship to the island. Therefore the Turkish intervention was first generally welcomed by the world, including within Greek democratic circles, and eventually led to the overthrow of the military regime in Athens and of Sampson in Cyprus. Launched with relatively few troops, the Turkish landing had limited success at first, with most of the island’s Turkish-Cypriot enclaves occupied by the Greek forces. After securing a satisfactory bridgehead, Turkish forces agreed to a cease-fire on 23 July 1974, the same day that a civilian government under Karamanlis took office in Athens and the Sampson coup collapsed, with Glafcos Clerides becoming the Acting President in the absence of Makarios.22

A conference of the guarantor powers, including Greece, Turkey and Britain, met in Geneva on 25 July. Meanwhile, Turkish troops extended their positions, as Greek forces occupied more Turkish-Cypriot enclaves. A new cease-fire line was agreed, and on 30 July the powers agreed that the withdrawal of Turkish troops from the island should be linked to a ‘just and lasting settlement acceptable to all parties concerned’.

The declaration also spoke of ‘two autonomous administrations – that of the Greek-Cypriot community and that of the Turkish-Cypriot community’. At the second Geneva Conference on 9 August, Turkey pressed for a federal solution to the problem against stiffening Greek resistance. While Turkish Cypriots wanted a bi-zonal federation, Turkey, under American advice, submitted a cantonal plan involving the separation of Turkish Cypriot areas from one another. For security reasons, Turkish-Cypriots did not favour cantons. Each plan embraced about 34 per cent of the territory.23 The Turkish Foreign Minister, Turan Gunes, presented these plans to the conference on 13 August. Clerides wanted 36 to 48 hours to consider the plans but Gunes demanded an immediate response. The Greeks, the British and the Americans who were in close consultation, regarded this as unreasonable. Nevertheless, the next day, the Turkish forces extended their control to some 36 per cent of the island. They were afraid that delay would turn international opinion strongly against them if Greek tactics were given a chance, and they were determined to come to the rescue of greatly threatened Turkish Cypriots whose enclaves were still occupied by Greek forces. Up to 160,000 Greek Cypriots went to the South when the fighting started, and some 50,000 Turkish Cypriots moved to the North in 1975.24

The 1974–80 period
Turkey’s international reputation suffered as a result of the effort by the Turkish military to extend its control to a third of the island. The British Prime Minister regarded the Turkish ultimatum as unreasonable, since it was presented without allowing adequate time for study. In Greek eyes, the Turkish proposals were submitted in the full awareness that the Greek side could not accept them and reflected the Turkish desire for a military invasion of Cyprus. The Greek side had been conciliatory in recognizing Turkish ‘groups’ of villages and Turkish administrative ‘areas’, but they stressed that the constitutional order of Cyprus should retain its bi-communal character, based on the coexistence of the Greek and Turkish communities within the framework of a sovereign, independent and integral republic. In contrast, the Turkish proposals offered only geographic consolidation and separation, and a much larger measure of autonomy for that area, or those areas, than the Greek side could envisage.

In February 1975, the US Congress imposed an arms embargo on Turkey, arguing that US-supplied military equipment had been used illegally during the Cyprus operation. In June, Turkey confirmed that 20 US installations in Turkey would be subject to a ‘new situation’, unless negotiations were opened on their future status. US President Gerald Ford urged Congress to reconsider the arms embargo, citing the damage it would do to vital US interests in the eastern Mediterranean. Angered by the defeat of a measure to lift the embargo, offered the following month in Congress, the Turkish government announced the abrogation of the 1969 defence cooperation treaty with the United States and placed US installations, which were mainly communications and monitoring stations, under Turkish control. This action, however, did not affect the US aircraft squadron based in Incirlik, then under NATO command.25

President Ford later signed legislation in October that partially lifted the embargo, and allowed the release of arms already purchased by Turkey. In 1978 US President Jimmy Carter succeeded in persuading Congress to completely end the embargo, although an amendment to the Security Aid Act required periodic review of conditions as a prerequisite to continued military assistance. Shortly thereafter, Turkey allowed the reopening of US installations under Turkish supervision as a new defence cooperation pact was negotiated.26

Most of those on the Turkish Left adopted a nationalistic attitude towards the Turkish operations in Cyprus. The fact that military regimes collapsed in both Greece and Cyprus helped Turkish nationalism to disguise its true interests for some time behind the façade of anti-fascism. The fact that the Soviet Union supported the Turkish intervention, at least in the early stages, encouraged the TKP and other pro-Soviet socialists that were trailing behind Ecevit’s Social-Democratic party. All trade unions, including the pro-TKP DISK, supported this nationalist madness and initially backed Ecevit. DISK even launched a campaign for its members to donate one day’s wages to the state, and a small group of communists within and outside the TKP who described the Turkish army’s ‘Operation Peace’ as an ‘invasion’ were labelled as ‘traitors’.27
May Day 1977 and ‘deep state’

Following its successful May Day celebration in 1976, the Revolutionary Confederation of Labour Unions (DİSK) organized a May Day demonstration in the following year as well, to be held in Taksim Square in Istanbul. Demonstrators filled the square, and the crowds flowed into the surrounding area. In Besiktas, hundreds of thousands of people had gathered in the early morning hours to march to the rally. By the time the DİSK General Chairman, Kemal Turkler, delivered his May Day speech, all the roads leading into the area were still full of people marching, and it was nearly 7 p.m. before the last contingents were able to reach the Taksim area.28

The DİSK General Chairman was about to finish his speech when snipers on surrounding buildings started firing at the crowd. First there was stillness, and then a deadly pandemonium broke out and the crowd of 500,000 fled in panic. People who had been lying in ambush inside buildings in the vicinity of the meeting area, in the Intercontinental Hotel – now The Marmara Istanbul – and in the Water Authority building rained bullets down on the crowd with automatic weapons. As the gunfire spread, armoured personnel carriers went into action and noise bombs and the sound of the automatic weapons suddenly turned the meeting area into a battlefield. Thousands of people lay down where they were, while others running to escape were shoved into corners and crushed by the armoured vehicles.29 Then, automatic weapons fire from a white Renault was turned on thousands of people who were fleeing down Kazanci Yokusu, a street that intersects Taksim square, while a truck parked in the middle of the narrow street blocked the road. Those who were fleeing were squeezed together, piled up one on top of the other, and many of them either suffocated or were crushed.30 Sukran Ketenci, one of the writers from the Cumhuriyet newspaper, described what she saw in the aftermath:

Two armoured vehicles hurriedly entered the area from the Taskisla road. They moved in a searching manner that drove the crowd, which was already squeezed together, towards the speakers’ platform. I saw quite clearly a woman in a light-coloured dress fall under the vehicle.31

Altogether, 36 people died, hundreds were wounded and 453 were arrested. While some said that the incident was a provocation by right-wing militants from Türkes’s Grey Wolves, carried out under the direction of the CIA-controlled Turkish contra-guerrillas, the police and right-wing press advanced the idea that the incident had been sparked by extreme leftists. However, evidence presented in court painted a different picture. Police charged 98 people arrested at random with responsibility for the massacre, but none of them were involved and all were acquitted. While the judge called upon the authorities to renew the investigation and prosecute those genuinely responsible, successive military-dominated regimes suppressed the case. During the trial, the hotel workers union, (Oleyis)
Branch Chairman Ali Kocaman had the information which he had received from hotel personnel placed in the minutes:

Three days earlier, the third, fourth and fifth floors of the Intercontinental Hotel were emptied and no one was allowed on the floors, which were under police control. Americans had come and stayed on these floors that hotel staff were not allowed to enter. After the incident, these people checked out of the hotel.

In 1987, former Deputy Prime Minister Sadi Kocas answered questions put to him in an investigative article that appeared in the Hurriyet newspaper on 8 May. Kocas related the following:

It was not one incident which occurred on May 1. Ever since 1968–69 and the 1970s, there were a series of at least seven to eight incidents a year. There were those who arranged this. There were those who wanted to stir things up internally and externally. The counter-guerillas are an organization made up of a number of people who say ‘We are counter-guerillas against guerillas.’ These are accountable to themselves as guerillas or commandos but they get their authority from an official office. What is that office? Perhaps the president and the head of the General Staff are in command, I can’t know, but definitely it is part of the National Intelligence Agency. I know these names and some of these high-level people who were carrying out these works were being discussed. According to what I remember, they were working for MIT [the secret service]. They were the ones who were giving the orders for the basic crimes.

On 7 May 1977, Bulent Ecevit, who was later to become Prime Minister, attracted little attention with his statement at a meeting in Izmir, where he offered, ‘The finger of the counter-guerillas was in the May Day incidents’.

According to article 102 of the Turkish Penal Code (TCK), the case expired after 20 years, due to the statute of limitations following the May Day massacre, no one was allowed to use Taksim Square for a May Day celebration, and May Day was no longer officially recognized as a holiday. After the 12 September 1980 coup, May Day celebrations continued to be banned for eight years.

‘Communist police’ – towards a civil war, 1978–79

The POL-DER [Police Association] does serve an ideology that is prohibited by law; it is the slave of a party and it is destructive and separatist. An organization which makes a ceremony of respect to the ‘martyr of the revolution’ in their general congresses makes statements with the mouth of Bizim Radyo [Our Radio, radio of the illegal Communist Party of Turkey] and the Communist Party of Turkey calls the police of the state the police of the people, …
One of the main features of the 1970s was the division of the state apparatus by political polarization. This polarization was among the key factors in evaluating the tragic events in Kahramanmaraş in 1978. The most powerful employee organizations of this period were the TOB-DER (Teachers Union Association of Turkey) and the POL-DER (the Police Association), both leftist and controlled by the pro-Soviet elements close to the Communist Party of Turkey. The TOB-DER was among the best-organized, best-known leftist organizations in Turkey, defining its political platform as progressive, democratic and patriotic.

For the Police Association (POL-DER), the turning point was its General Congress of 17 May 1975. During that congress, the board of directors of the association was changed and a new one was elected that included famous policemen who were labelled by the rightist press as members of the TKP. In the Second Congress of the POL-DER, on 12 June 1976, the existing management was re-elected, and after that the rightist policemen resigned from the POL-DER and founded the POL-BIR (Idealist Policemen’s Union).37

All rightist media, political parties and other associations began a full-fledged political campaign against all leftist organizations in the late 1970s, particularly targeting TOB-DER and POL-DER. At the same time, the militant fascist groups targeted individual members of these organizations and a large number of key members were attacked and some were killed.

The Kahramanmaraş Massacre began with the assassination on 21 December 1978 of two leftist teachers who were working at Kahramanmaraş Industrial Trade High School (Endustri Meslek Lisesi), Mehmet Yuzbasioglu and Haci Colak. On the next day, their funeral, organized by TOB-DER, was attacked near Ulu Mosque by 10,000 people. The following day, the rightist press condemned the TOB-DER and POL-DER for organizing the funeral of two leftist teachers. As a result, the rightist-conservative Sunni masses of the city of Kahramanmaraş attacked the members of the security forces throughout the events. On 23 December, an imam harangued the people from the top of an official vehicle owned by the Technical Department of Kahramanmaraş Municipality, saying ‘My Muslim brothers, do not dread, just hit and destroy. Worthless communist policemen tortured your children. Muslim Turkey’s, Kahramanmaras’s hero children, take our revenge on the communists’.38

On 24 December, the crowd attacked a neighbourhood, predominantly inhabited by Alawites, destroying and burning 210 houses and 70 workshops and murdering 111 people. The offenders were Sunni Turks led by fascist gangs (controlled by Türkes’s ‘Grey Wolves’) who were allegedly backed up by the local authorities. During this pogrom, dozens of innocent women, children and men were murdered, based on the hate nourished by the fascist gangs against Alawites.39 The army was from the beginning welcomed by these same people with the slogans such as, ‘The Army is with us’. After some time, however, these people declared that the Turkish army could be regarded as ‘communist’ if it did not cooperate with them. Then, when they did not see its cooperation they cried, ‘Communist soldier!’40

There was some truth in this slogan as the lower cadres of the army were also divided along political lines. Some authors regard this division as the main rea-
son why the army waited until 12 September 1980 to undertake its coup. The right–left divide was considered as a problem and an internal struggle with the participation of young officers was feared if the army acted too soon in taking power. This political divergence showed itself in the protests against the massacres in Kahramanmaras, with students from the Harbiye (Military Academy) spontaneously protesting against the massacre when they observed a minute of silence for the victims of the massacre and then shouted anti-fascist slogans before the showing of a movie at the academy.

The ongoing political conflict did not stop after the declaration of martial law on 26 December. Adana became the scene of political violence in 1979, primarily due to the trial of the Kahramanmaras events which was held there. The assassination of the chief of police in Adana, Cevat Yurdakul, on 28 September 1979, brought the division to a peak, and on 28 and 29 September the Adana police stopped work, despite orders from the Martial Law Command, adopting slogans such as ‘Down with martial law’ and ‘Long live revolutionaries’.

Trying to stir up religious hatred among Sunnis against the Alawites was not a new tactic by Turkey’s fascists, but merely followed a pattern from earlier years. What was different with the massacre of 24 December 1978 in Kahramanmaras was that this event was well planned and prepared in advance, rather than being an exploitation of spontaneous local issues. It was later stated that explosives were sent to the scene of the crimes by the retired army captain Ali Ceviker, who was later caught with the same explosives. After the military coup on 12 September 1980, a search of the MHP central headquarters revealed plans and notes for the massacre that had been stored there. In a report given to the Interior Ministry, it was claimed that the murderers who had taken part in other attacks against the left-wing targets, one of whom was also accused of murdering the DİSK President Kemal Turkler), had all stayed in Kahramanmaras before and during the events.
Brezhnev died on 10 November 1982, shortly after watching the traditional Bolshevik Revolution parade. During his time in power, the Soviet economy stagnated and the much-needed reforms had to wait until after his death. Years of heavy spending on the defence and aerospace industries, undertaken at the expense of agriculture and other sectors of the economy, had taken their toll, leaving ordinary Soviet citizens to wait in long lines to get basic necessities and sending economic productivity and the Soviet standard of living into a slow but steady decline.

Between Brezhnev’s death and Gorbachev’s ascent to power, Soviet foreign policy stagnated. Brezhnev’s immediate successor, Yuri Andropov, saw the signs of decline more realistically than anyone since Lenin and acknowledged the existence of deep structural problems. Unfortunately, he died suddenly without the opportunity to leave a lasting mark of his own, and the ageing Konstantine Chernenko, who briefly followed, had little impact on the situation. However, following in Andropov’s footsteps, Mikhail Gorbachev saw the problems of the Soviet system in a much more realistic manner, and with more time and energy he undertook to translate a new realism from theory into practice.

Mikhail Gorbachev was born in 1931, the son of Russian peasants in Privolnoye, a village of 3,300 people about 100 miles north of Stavropol in South-Western Russia. He was the first General Secretary of the Party to start his career after Stalin’s death, and unlike Brezhnev’s, Andropov’s and Chernenko’s, he didn’t benefit from Stalin’s purges. Trained in law and appointed to a party position in Stavropol District, Gorbachev heard Khrushchev’s 1956 speech criticizing Stalin’s extremism as it was read to him and other party workers. This speech made a strong impression on the young Gorbachev, and its message to reform communism became the guiding vision during the rest of his political life. Bright, articulate, intellectually curious and hard-working, loyal and well liked, he worked his way up the Soviet political hierarchy. He became a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in 1971, and was appointed Party Secretary of Agriculture in 1978. He became a candidate member of the Politburo in 1979, and a full member in 1980. Over the course of Yuri Andropov’s 15-month tenure as General Secretary, Gorbachev became one of the Politburo’s most highly active and noticeable members. After Andropov died and Chernenko
became General Secretary in February 1984, Gorbachev appeared as his likely successor. When Chernenko died on 10 March 1985, the following day the Politburo elected Gorbachev General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party. At the time of his accession, Gorbachev was the Politburo’s youngest member.

By his own admission, Gorbachev, at the same time that he was elected General Secretary, inherited an enormous backlog of problems. The heavy emphasis on building military strength throughout the Cold War had drained Soviet resources and substantially damaged the domestic economy, leaving a stagnant Soviet economy with little response to the challenge of US President Reagan’s Strategic Defense Initiative, or as it was more popularly called ‘Star Wars’ programme. In addition, there also were numerous and intractable external difficulties, ranging from the collapse of détente to a stalemate in the Soviet–Afghanistan War.

Gorbachev’s basic goal was to arrest this decline, and his immediate efforts focused on revitalizing the stagnant Soviet economy after its years of drift and low growth. To this end, he called for rapid technological modernization and increased productivity. When these initial steps failed to yield tangible results, in 1987–88 Gorbachev moved to deeper reforms of the Soviet economy and political system. His policy of glasnost, or openness, allowed greater freedom of expression and access to information, with the press and broadcasting authorities given an opportunity for unprecedented openness in their coverage of political events and criticism of the Soviet leadership. Gorbachev’s policy of perestroika, or restructuring, represented the first modest attempt to democratize the Soviet political system, with multi-candidate contests and secret ballots introduced for some elections to party and state posts.

Censorship of literature was also eased, and previously banned works began to appear on store shelves, including ‘Requiem’, Anna Akhmatova’s poem about Stalin’s terror. The collection Requiem was a literary monument to the victims of Stalin’s Terror, with a central core consisting of ten short, numbered poems. The first reflected the arrest of her husband Nikolai Punin and other close friends in 1935. But the poems primarily dealt with the author’s experiences and her agony following the arrest of her son Lev Gumilev in 1938. The tenth poem moves from contemporary Russia to the scene of the Crucifixion, and its wails of grief reflect the voice of others who had suffered loss during the Terror.2

No foreign sky protected me, no stranger’s wing shielded my face.
I stand as witness to the common lot, survivor of that time, that place.3

Andrei Sakharov, one of the most outstanding members of the Soviet dissident movement and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, was also freed from internal exile and allowed to return to Moscow in 1986. Sakharov initially praised Gorbachev as a ‘dynamic leader’, but later became critical of him, insisting that his reforms should go much further. He died in Moscow on 14 December 1989.4

From the beginning, Gorbachev encouraged improved foreign relations and trade with the developed states of the West, and he signed an agreement with US
President Reagan in December 1987, in which both countries agreed to destroy all existing stocks of intermediate-range nuclear missiles. Then, in 1988–89 he ordered the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, ending their nine-year occupation. By mid-1988, Gorbachev began arguing that Soviet control in Eastern Europe violated the principle of genuine communist internationalism, and that the East European governments should be left to govern as they wished, without the fear of outside interference. This clear refutation of earlier Soviet policy toward the ‘near abroad’ meant that the Soviet Union foreswore any legitimate resort to force to maintain communism in Soviet satellite countries, thus replacing the ‘Brezhnev Doctrine’ with Gorbachev’s own so-called ‘Sinatra doctrine’ – that they could ‘do it their way’.

The military coup of September 1980

In Turkey, the 1980s began with a shock not only for the communists, but also for the wider left, liberal and social-democratic constituency. All political parties, trade unions and other professional and youth organizations, including all student unions in the universities, were targeted. The fractured political scene and poor economic performance that had characterized Turkey had led to mounting violence between ultra-nationalist gangs and left-wing activists in the streets of Turkey’s cities. A paralysed Parliament and increasing death toll were enough to prompt a military coup – Turkey’s third coup in 20 years – on 12 September 1980.

After the coup, the Constitution and Parliament were abolished and all parties were closed, the party leaders were arrested, the DİSK was shut down, unionists were arrested, and all the collective agreements signed by unions were cancelled and workers’ wages were frozen despite an inflation rate of 130 per cent. State-owned industries and services were privatized, the currency devalued and state expenditures for welfare, health and education drastically reduced. These and many other measures were demanded by the IMF, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank to ensure the repayment of loans previously made to Turkey. Before the coup, attempts to impose such conditions had been rebuffed by the mass demonstrations and strikes organized by the trade unions. But after the coup the military dictatorship, led by General Kenan Evren, arrested tens of thousands of people who were then tortured, with hundreds killed, hanged and disabled, and the country was silenced. Here are some approximate figures:

- Some 30,000 people were reported arrested in the first few weeks after the coup; the majority of them were tortured.
- Over 50,000 people were forced to migrate to European countries as political immigrants.
- 700 death sentences were demanded, 480 of them sentenced to death, 216 were suspended by parliament, 48 were hanged.
- Documented deaths as a result of torture: 171 people.
In October 1982, the Chief of the General Staff’s Office announced that 204 people had died in custody.

Cancellation of citizenship: 14,000 people.

23,607 associations were banned.

The following account represents the experience of a young female professional who was arrested and tortured for 49 days following the military coup, which was similar to the experiences of thousands more Turkish citizens in the early 1980s:

It was 17 March 1982. Three undercover policemen entered my office to arrest me. I was taken blindfolded into a car. Over the next 49 days the blindfold was only removed during a few hours a day that I spent alone in my cell. Immediately after my arrest, in the building of the Istanbul Police Force’s First (Political) Department, around ten policemen asked me to take my shoes off. I did. Then they forced me onto my back, and my feet were raised into some stocks, and then the soles of my feet were beaten sharply with thick plastic sticks. The room was so noisy: they were all shouting and swearing . . . .

This beating and other methods of physical and psychological torture were followed by sexual abuse for the rest of her captivity at the police torture centre in Istanbul (see Appendix 6).

After the coup, the National Security Council (NSC) was established as the new political power. The parliament and government formed in accordance with the 1961 Constitution were dissolved, and the legislative and constituent powers were transferred to the NSC. The new constitution, the third for the young republic in 60 years, was rife with hero-worship and cults of personality. Resembling some of the constitutions of communist and theocratic regimes, it also contained dogmas and imposed unnecessary limits on personal and group liberty.

Two main arguments were advanced by the military regime to legitimate their intervention. A legal argument was made based on article 35 of the Internal Service Act of the Turkish Armed Forces, which stated that ‘the duty of the Armed Forces is to protect and safeguard the Turkish land and the Turkish Republic as stipulated by the Constitution’. The second argument was made that the coup was justified in the name of restoring order and stability, that the intervention was in compliance with the wishes of the nation, that it took place after all warnings remained unheeded, and that the Turkish Armed Forces as a last resort fulfilled their duty.

An incident occurred one year before the coup, that was presented as an example of the lawlessness and chaos in Turkey during that period. The annual opening ceremony of the Middle Eastern Technical University in Ankara was scheduled to take place in August 1980. Every year, one week before the beginning of the new academic year in September, a ceremony was organized in
the university’s football stadium in which all staff, students and key state officials and high-ranking officers in Ankara participated. A band normally played the Turkish national anthem while the whole stadium stood in respect. That year, a small group of students, most of whom were members or followers of the TKP, refused to stand, choosing instead to sing the *Internationale*, the communist anthem. This led to a huge debate within the communist movement and was cited frequently in the right-wing media as evidence of the communist disrespect that existed in Turkey’s higher-education institutes. In his account of the incident, Kenan Evren, leader of the military coup, even claimed that ‘the communist sang the International . . . this small number of armed militants . . . had established their control over the student body’.9

In fact, the incident appears to have occurred spontaneously. One of the participants, an undergraduate and member of the small TKP group in the university, recalls that day as follows:

There was definitely a much larger presence of the state and army officials that year, as if they were telling us that ‘look we are controlling even one of your most Leftist universities’. Those other leftist groups who were controlling the student union came and told us that they don’t need any incident that day, because all those high-ranking members of the state were watching us. There was no plan or even no discussion among us on what to do. Probably because of all that oppressive presence of the high-ranking members of the army and the state bureaucracy, I suddenly felt that we MUST be doing something, responding all this heavy challenge. When I asked the other comrades sitting close to me that ‘lets not stand during the national anthem’, they all seemed to have thought the same thing. We kept sitting during the national anthem. Some others joined us as well. When the military band finished playing the national anthem, a few of us stood and started to sing the International. Many more joined us. That’s how it happened: in a very spontaneous way. There was no planning.10

After the military coup in September 1980, an extensive campaign of persecutions and arrests was launched against all democratic movements, and particularly the TKP, with thousands of TKP members arrested or sentenced to prison on the basis of articles 141 and 142 of the Turkish Penal Code.11

**The end of the Party**

The heavy oppression that followed the military coup pushed all communist and left-wing activities under ground, encouraging many leading communists who were not yet imprisoned to leave the country. The means used by the military to suppress the Left easily created the impression that the Left could not offer any effective opposition because it was itself deeply divided among dozens of parties, groupings and factions. Even among the pro-Soviet Left, there were at least three parties and many more factions that spent most of their energy
fighting one another. Many of the journals that were published by various groups and tendencies were primarily aimed at converting the supporters of the other, drawing the Left further and further away from reality and creating an introverted world of crippled politics. Thus it was not surprising that in the early 1980s a lively debate broke out among various sections of the Turkish Left, but mainly among the political migrant circles in West European cities, concerning political cooperation and ideological education. At the same time, leaders of the TKP also were evaluating the new situation after the coup, and discussing potential cooperation with other Marxist–Leninist and pro-Soviet sections of Turkish Left.

More than any internal debate, it was Gorbachev and perestroika during this period that eventually affected developments within the TKP. The ‘new political thinking’, Gorbachev’s foreign-policy counterpart to domestic perestroika, was radically different from previous Soviet foreign policy. In many respects, the ‘new political thinking’ had direct implications for the world communist movement because it insisted that military means alone would not achieve security, and therefore a wide range political means had to be considered, including political cooperation with other left-wing and even social-democratic parties and movements, as essential alternatives. Thus the leaders of the TKP organized their Fifth Congress in Moscow in October 1983, during which they approved a new programme and new statutes, and closely followed developments in the Soviet Union with a keen interest. Most of the new policies of Gorbachev found a sympathetic voice in the leading cadre of the TKP.

The European Parliament Resolution of 23 October 1985 stated that ‘recognizing that a political democracy cannot yet be considered to exist in Turkey while major political parties remain unrepresented in the country’s parliament, while leading political figures were excluded from active political life, while the Turkish Communist Party remains under a total ban.’ In line with the ‘new political thinking’, the TKP and the Workers’ Party of Turkey (TİP) – which were reconstituted in 1974 – announced at a press conference in Brussels on 7 October 1987 that they were going to merge under the name of Turkıye Birlesık Komunist Partısı, or TBKP – United Communist Party of Turkey.

The general secretaries of both parties, Haydar Kutlu and Nihat Sargin, returned from political exile to Turkey on 16 November 1987 in order to legally set up the TBKP. However, they were arrested immediately upon their arrival and detained until April 1990, leaving the 1988 founding Congress of the TBKP to be held abroad. In January 1990, a group of founders applied for legal status of the TBKP, and while waiting for a decision from the Anayasa Mahkemesi, or Constitutional Court, the legal Congress of the TBKP was held in Ankara. The Congress decided to merge with some other left parties and groups in a united party later called Sosyalist Birlik Partisi, or Socialist Union Party, in line with the similar developments in the Soviet-satellite states of Eastern Europe. On 22 July 1991, the Constitutional Court made a decision which in effect prohibited the legal communist party, TBKP.
Communism in Turkey in retrospect

Although the people who created such movements were often few in number, they articulated the dissatisfaction of millions. Inequality, hunger, poverty and exploitation – to these perennial features of the human condition socialism offered a response. It promised labouring people dignity and freedom, women equal pay for equal work, and national minorities rights in the state. By making these promises, it drew attention to major problems that capitalist liberal democracies had not adequately resolved.\textsuperscript{14}

For most of this period, the TKP was weak and entirely dependent on political and financial support provided by Moscow, and was always controlled by elements responsive to Moscow. Its peculiar existence was subject to the priorities of Soviet foreign policy, and leaders of the Turkish party expressed little independence in making their own decisions or judgements to gain control of the domestic situation. Within Turkey, the communist movement had no significant organic link with the workers and peasants, at least until the second half of the 1970s – only after the reorganization campaign in 1973 did the party take significant steps to influence the trade-union movement and the wider left-liberal agenda in the country. Even then, the party leadership remained strictly within the boundaries of Soviet foreign-policy requirements, frustrating thousands of militants and party activists who were trying to fashion effective responses to the increasingly radical demands of the workers, peasants and students in the country.

For the Soviet Union, a socialist revolution in Turkey was never an option. The Soviet leadership had always approached Turkey as a security concern measured against the dominant role played by the British Empire in the Near and Middle East after the First World War. When the United States took the place of the British as the dominant regional superpower and leader of the capitalist world, the Soviet leadership focused all its efforts on counter-balancing the increasingly close links between the United States and Turkey, and the American-sponsored efforts to erect anti-Soviet ‘collective security’ agreements in the region became a particular concern.

In the course of 74 years of Soviet history, security considerations dominated Soviet behaviour in international affairs, and similarly became the primary dimension of Soviet policy towards Turkey. Thus the Soviet leadership pursued a reasonable, pragmatic and non-ideological policy towards Turkey, and instruments of Soviet policy towards Turkey were those traditionally used by great powers in their relations with lesser powers – economic, technical and military assistance, trade, diplomacy, propaganda, and the use of military force, or at least the threat of it. Of these, economic and technical assistance were particularly important, and from the mid-1960s onwards the Soviet Union became one of Turkey’s principal trading partners.

The overall goal of Soviet policy was to increase Soviet influence in Turkey at the expense of the Western powers – mainly the British Empire before the
Second World War, and the United States thereafter. When Turkey became a member of the Western alliance system and increasingly dependent on the hegemonic control systems of the US global empire, Soviet policy began to look more like a desperate effort to limit the extent of US influence in the country. In this wider framework, direct Soviet influence over the communist movement in Turkey was important, first, as a means of diplomatic pressure, and second, Turkish communists provided Moscow with vital information on the fast-changing situation in the country. The Soviet leadership was using its close control over the Turkish party in order to put pressure, when required, on the Turkish bourgeois government, as well as on Western capitalist states. That is why some official statements by the Soviet leadership attempted to create the impression that the communist movement in Turkey was a powerful political factor, even though in their internal discussions they admitted that the Turkish party was very small and ineffective. In this way, Turkish communists were useful as conduits for Soviet propaganda that duly reported to Moscow on the local political situation.

The Soviet Union was able to influence the communist movement in Turkey primarily through financial aid and propaganda support. This influence was very strong most all the time, which explains why the TKP was extraordinarily loyal to Moscow’s policies on almost all key issues. Even after the party started, for the first time, to enjoy mass support among the workers in the second half of the 1970s, this loyalty to Moscow and Soviet foreign policy requirements stopped the Turkish party from providing realistic and radical alternatives to the increasingly fragile political situation in the country. This also was the time when many leading activists on the Turkish Left, including some within the TKP, came to the realization that there can be no revolution or radical structural change in the country without popular support, and that demands for change must come from below, and be realized and managed by popular representatives, and not imposed from outside. That is probably why the most effective slogan of the Turkish Left at all times has been ‘Bagimsiz Turkiye’ – Independent Turkey. These conclusions essentially still determine the Turkish Left’s agenda at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

In September 1992, I was in Moscow, visiting Nazim Hikmet’s grave in the cemetery outside the Novodevichy convent, where the most celebrated Russian poets, writers, musicians and politicians are buried; Kollontai, Mayakovski, Ostrovski, Bulgakov, Gladkov, Gogol, Tolstoy, Chekhov, Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Kropotkin, Konchalovski and Eisenstein are Nazim’s neighbours. There was a large black granite stone that marks Nazim’s grave, with a full-size drawing of Nazim on it, inspired by his early poem ‘The Man Walking Against the Wind’. Under the drawing, it says ‘Naim Hikmet, leading poet and communist from Turkey’. I thought that Nazim’s grave, very well located and respectable, symbolizes the tragic and troubled history of Turkish communism; a well-deserved respect for their consistent sacrifices and bravery in representing the ideals of communism, but remote from the reality of the land in which they were trying to establish a just system.
Appendix 1  Baku Congress of the Peoples of the East

Appeal of the Congress of the Peoples of the East to the Workers of Europe, America and Japan:

Workers of Britain, America, France, Italy, Japan, Germany and other countries! Hear the representatives of millions of toilers of the East! Listen to the sorrowful voice that speaks to you from the enslaved countries of Asia and Africa, from Turkey, Persia, China, Egypt, Afghanistan, Bukhara and Khiva! We have been silent for many years, for many decades. You have not heard our voice and no one had told you of us, how we live, how we suffer under the rule of those who were also your masters. Your masters, the European and American factory owners, merchants, generals and officials, broke into our peaceful villages and towns, plundered us for centuries, took from us what our labour had created and sent all this off to Europe, so as to embellish their lives, embellish their homes, with the work of our hands, of our ancient culture. They made slaves of us.

While we had previously had to pay tribute to our own rich men, to the landlords, slaveowners, sultans, emirs, khans and maharajas, now the whip of the European slaveowners was also laid across our backs. We were forced to labour on the plantations of the European capitalists. Our sweat was poured out so that they might obtain at a cheap rate the rice, tea, sugar, tobacco and rubber they wanted. Our children were born and died in bondage. If it suited the interests of your bosses and ours, they parted child from mother, wife from husband, and drove them from one country to another. They told you that they were spreading European knowledge and science in our countries, but in fact what they spread was opium and vodka, so that the Asian and African slave, when sorrow welled up in his heart, might more easily forget his intolerable life, and would not dare to lift his chained hands against his enslaver.

Your bosses, the European capitalists, supported our own enslavers and made them their guard dogs to watch over us. But when the whip of the local ruler was not enough, they sent in guns and destroyed the independence of our countries, subjecting us to their laws and their governors, making slaves of us in the full sense of the word. They said that the aim of their colonial rule was to train us for future independence, but they fought against nothing so hard as against the spread of knowledge among us toilers of the East. They had prisons and barracks
enough for us, but they did not build schools in which the children of Asia might learn what the white men had discovered that was great and good. They looked upon us as inferior races, they forbade us to sit in the same railway carriage that white men travelled in, they forbade us to live in the same quarters as white people, or to eat at the same table with them.

You have not seen our wounds, you have not heard our songs of sorrow and complaint, you believed your own oppressors when they said we were not people but cattle. You, who were dogs to the capitalists, saw us as your own dogs. You protested in America when Chinese and Japanese peasants, evicted by your capitalists from their villages, came to your country in search of a crust of bread. Instead of approaching them in a fraternal way in order to teach them how to fight along with you for the common cause of emancipation, you denounced us for our ignorance, you shut us out of your lives, you did not let us join your unions. We heard that you had formed Socialist parties, that you had formed an international workers’ association, but these parties and this International had only words for us: we did not see its representatives come amongst us when the British shot us down in the streets of Indian cities, when the united forces of the European capitalists shot at us in Peking, when in the Philippines our demand for bread was answered by the American capitalists with lead. And those of us whose hearts were athirst for the unity of the working people of the whole world stood on the threshold of your International and looked through the grille, and saw that although in words you accepted us as equals, in fact we were for you people of inferior race.

Six years ago the great slaughter began. The capitalists of the whole world quarrelled amongst themselves as to which of them should have most slaves, which of them should grab most land in Asia and Africa. You, the workers of Europe and America, saw this robbers’ war as your own war, a war for the independence of your countries, although you owned no part of these countries, although the land which you soaked in your sweat belonged not to you but to your exploiters, your bosses. You helped your factory-owners and bankers to force us to take part in this war, which was a war against you and against us. The bayonets of European soldiers forced Moroccan and Algerian peasants to die on the battlefields of Flanders, Normandy and Champagne, from bullets, cold and disease, they forced the peasants of India to die in the sands of Mesopotamia and Arabia, and the fellahin to carry out hard labour in the wilderness for the British expeditionary force fighting against the Turks. They make Indian peasants act as pack-camels carrying shells on their backs for the white soldiers in Mesopotamia. For the gold of the European capitalists Chinese and Annamite workers were sold to Russia and France, to dig trenches under a hurricane of fire, the trenches in which you died, and to toil to the point of exhaustion in arms factories, making shells that killed you.

Our blood and sweat merged in a single stream with yours, but even on the field of battle, dying in the dead of night, yearning for his homeland, the coloured man was not seen as your brother, but regarded as a savage slave, whose death caused no-one to sigh or shed a tear. But in our homes, beyond the rivers, seas
and mountains, the wives of our fallen husbands and the children of our fallen fathers, the breadwinners, wept for those they had lost.

The war is over and now your masters and ours, who waged this war under the banner of justice and democracy, the banner of emancipation for the oppressed peoples, have thrown off the mask. In the cities of India the bayonet, the sabre and the machine-gun rule. In Amritsar your General Dyer was able to shoot down peaceful Indian citizens with machine-guns, and order them to crawl on their bellies. But in the British Parliament not one workers’ MP got up to demand that this murderer be sent to the gallows.

In Mesopotamia the British capitalists keep 8,000 Indian soldiers, brothers of the victims of Amritsar, and force them to subdue the Arabs, so that the Arab people may be deprived of their only wealth, the petroleum of Mosul. In Smyrna, Greek soldiers who have been hired by the British capitalists run berserk, massacring Turks. In Southern Anatolia the French bayonet rules. In Syria the jackboot of a French general has kicked over the newly erected edifice of Syrian independence. For two million pounds sterling the British Government has bought the freedom of Persia from a handful of Persian traitors, so as to make that country a stronghold of British capital against the Persian and Russian working people. In Algeria, Tripoli and Annam, the absolute power of French generals prevails, just as before the war. In Northern China and in Korea Japanese gendarmes and officers are in charge, shooting and hanging anybody who dares so much as think of freedom. Out of the blood of the Asian and African workers and peasants shed in this war has grown not a tree of liberty but gallows for those who fight for liberty.

But through the creaking of the gallows, through the groans of those suffering under the whip, we hear new cries, we hear the voice of the workers who have risen arms in hand against their enslavers, we hear the roar of the cannon of the Russian workers’ and peasants’ Red Army, created by the workers and peasants of Russia who have risen in revolt. We hear that they have overcome the Russian capitalists and landlords, and in our hearts grows a great joy, a feeling of certainty that the humiliated and insulted working people are able to find sufficient strength in their breasts to put an end to the rule of bondage and establish the reign of labour and freedom.

We hear, through the roar of the guns in this just war which is being waged by the Russian workers and peasants, your voice, the voice of the workers of Germany, Austria and Hungary. We hear that you too have taken up arms, that you too have raised your hands against your enslavers. And although we know that your enemies have as yet been victorious over you, we are confident that the ultimate victory will be yours. We hear from the cities of Italy the voice of hundreds of thousands of workers who are confronting the bayonets of the Italian capitalist bandits.

We hear the voices of the French workers from behind the bars of the prisons into which they have been thrown by the government of the French rich, who fear their great wrath and tremble at the flame burning in their hearts. Our ears have been reached by the sound of the waves of the rising sea of the British workers,
beating against the cliffs on which stands the stronghold of British capitalism, that strangler of the peoples, that world-robber, that destroyer of peaceful lives! With profound joy, with profound inspiration we listen to these sounds, and there grows within us the belief that the day will soon come when our torments will cease, when our struggle will be united with yours. We believe that you will not fight for your own victory, your own liberation, alone. We believe that you will not cast off the chains from your own hands and feet while leaving them on ours. We believe that you will discard, like a dirty shirt, all that contempt with which our masters filled you towards the toilers of the East, striving to set the white workers against the coloured ones in order to be able the better to oppress both. Only a common victory of the workers of Europe and America and the toiling masses of Asia and Africa will bring liberation to all who have been hitherto working to make life better for a handful of rich men. If you were to free yourselves alone, leaving us in slavery and bondage, you yourselves would fall the next day into that same slavery and bondage, for, in order to keep us in chains and in prison, you would have to form, in the East and in the South, forces of prison warders and packs of bloodhounds to guard us, you would have to raise armies to keep us under an iron heel, you would have to give power over us to your generals and governors, and they, having tasted the sweetness of life without work, at the expense of our labour, and having learnt how to hold generations of coloured toilers in bondage, would soon turn their bayonets against you, and the wealth accumulated in Asia and Africa would be used to thrust you back into your previous slavery. If you were to forget us now you would have to pay for that mistake, you would have cause to remember our chains when you felt chains on your own hands. You cannot free yourselves without helping us in our struggle for liberation. The wealth of our countries is, in the hands of the capitalists, a means of enslaving you. So long as the British capitalist can freely exploit Indian, Egyptian and Turkish peasants, so long as he can rob them, so long as he can force them to serve in the British army, he will always have wealth enough, and executioners enough, to subdue the British workers. Without our revolt there can be no victory for the world proletariat over world capital. And just as you cannot wrest power from the hands of the capitalists without unity with us, so we are not in a position to hold this power in our hands unless we have unity with you. The capitalist countries of Europe do not produce enough corn and raw materials to provide food, clothing and footwear for their workers. Our countries, the countries of the East and of Africa, are rich in corn and in raw materials. This corn and these raw materials, without which the workers would die of starvation after their victory, they will be able to obtain if they are united with the toilers of Africa and Asia, if, by helping the toiling masses of Africa and Asia, they inspire the latter with confidence and love.

Unity between ourselves and you will signify invincible strength. We shall be able to feed and clothe each other, we shall be able to help each other with armies of warriors fired with the single idea of common liberation.

To this common struggle we have been summoned by the Third Communist International, which has broken with the rotten past of the Second International —
that International stained with our blood and yours, disgraced by its servility to imperialism, its betrayal of the interests of the toiling masses of the whole world. The Communist International has not only given us the slogan of a common holy war against the capitalists, but also summoned us to a congress in Baku, where workers from Russia, Turkey and Persia, and Tatar workers, worked for many decades for the capitalists while at the same time learning how to struggle together against their oppressors. Here in Baku, on the borders of Europe and Asia, we representatives of tens of millions of peasants and workers of Asia and Africa in revolt showed the world our wounds, showed the world the marks of the whip on our backs, the traces left by the chains on our feet and hands. And we raised our daggers, revolvers and swords and swore before the world that we would use these weapons not to fight each other but to fight the capitalists. Believing profoundly that you, the workers of Europe and Asia, will unite with us under the banner of the Communist International for common struggle, for a common victory, for a new life in common, based on fraternal aid between all toilers, we have formed here a Council for Propaganda and Agitation [sic], which, under the guidance of the Communist International, that union of our elder brothers in revolutionary struggle, will rouse the working masses of all colours, organize them and lead them to the attack on the fortress of slavery.

Workers of Britain, America, France, Italy, Japan, Germany and other countries! Listen to the voice of the representatives of the millions of the peoples of the East in revolt, who are telling you of their oath to rise up and help you in your fight, and who look for fraternal aid from you in our fight. Notwithstanding the centuries of bondage and enslavement, we turn to you with faith in your fraternal feelings, with confidence that your victory will mean the liberation of mankind, without distinction of colour, religion or nationality. Repay this confidence of ours in you with confidence that our struggle is not a struggle of darkness and obscurantism, but a struggle for a new and better life, for the development of the peoples of the East on the same foundations of labour and fraternity on which you want to build your life. May your ears be reached by the thunder with which tens and hundreds of millions of working people in Asia and Africa are responding to our oath, and may this thunder meet with response in the thunderclaps of our fight for the common liberation of all the toilers.

Long live the unity of the workers of all countries with the labouring masses of Asia and Africa! Long live the world revolution of all the oppressed!

Long live victory over the world of oppression, exploitation and violence! Long live the Communist International!

Chairman of the Congress: G. Zinoviev
Secretary: Ostrovsky

(Kommunistischesky Internatsional. No. 15, 20 December 1920.)

[http://www.marxists.org/history/international/comintern/baku/to-workers.htm]
Appendix 2  TKP Central Committee’s May Day Statement, 1930

Comrades,
On 1 May, stop working and organise celebrations out on the streets, in your houses, at factories, and demand:

1. an increase in your salaries, and a legislation to accept 8-hour working day;
2. the official acceptance of the May Day as a day of workers’ struggles;
3. the abolishment of all taxes (which were paid by the workers, peasants and poor people) and increase the taxes paid by the rich;
4. the transfer of all lands, controlled by the state and other official foundations, and of all feudal lands to poor peasants who work on land;
5. legal rights for workers, peasants and poor people to organise themselves and publish their own papers, and the right to demonstrate and organise strike actions;
6. the release of all communists from the police and army prisons all over the country;
7. acceptance of the TKP as a legal political party;
8. an immediate signing of an extensive cooperation agreement with the Soviet Union which was presenting the strongest defence against the harmful policies of Western imperialism.

Establish your own organisations to achieve the above goals!
Long live the Soviet Union, the steel-made castle of the world proletarian revolution!
Long live the Communist International, the leading director of the world revolution!
Long live the Communist Party of Turkey, the only political organisation in the country which defends the rights of workers, peasants and poor people!

[International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, F. 495, Op. 181, D. 262]
Appendix 3  Statement of the new policy of the TKP (on the fascist aggression in Europe), 1936

The independence of our country is under serious threat again. The main reason for this threat is the domination of Hitler fascism in Germany, and its dangerous policies and pressures upon the international situation, which is being brought to the edge of an imperialist fight by the provocations of German fascism.

As a result of the Montreux Conference, the region of the Straits has been left to the protection of the Turkish army, which increased the security of Turkey. However, the recent dangerous developments [in Europe] created a dangerous situation which is now threatening the independence of the country seriously, 15 years after the war of independence secured an independent Turkey.

All this requires us to focus with all our efforts on this vital issue, and together with all forces for independence, to work in an organised way for the continuation of peace against war and fascism.

Turkish people is aware of this dangerous situation and following the events with extreme concern. The strong and consistent opposition of the people against war and imperialist policies has forced the government to adopt a peace policy.

All organisations of workers, and ordinary people have to take this very serious international situation into consideration when deciding their policies.

It is clear to us that in order to achieve our revolutionary goals one day, we first have to secure the independence of our country and not to be made a colony of fascist imperialism.

Only after we have eliminated this danger it will be possible directly to continue our struggle to achieve a further level in our revolutionary struggle.

Down with reactionary policies and fascism!
Down with war and imperialist domination!
Long live the People’s Democratic Bloc!

15 August 1936
TKP Central Committee
[International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, F. 495, Op. 181, D. 291]
Communism in Turkey

Mr Scott Fox to Mr Eden (Received 10th December)

(No. 282. Confidential) Ankara
4th December 1951

Sir,

In his Top Secret letter 595/ 4/ 47G of 9th December, 1947, Sir David Kelly reviewed the state of the Communist Party and communism in Turkey. Although there have been few major changes in the situation since then, I propose in this despatch to try to summarise once again the information at our disposal and to try to bring it up to date.

2. The fact that so little material is available on the subject is due at least in some measure to the effectiveness of Turkish methods in dealing with this problem. Communism in Turkey has been underground for twenty-five years, although there was no mention of communism by name anywhere in either the Constitution or the Penal Code; but the latter, as amended by Law No. 5435 of 10th June, 1949, prohibited organisations with aims ranging from ordinary subversion to taking control of or suppressing any particular social class, or even ‘weakening national feeling in the country’. Another article of the code laid down punishments for anyone publishing articles or making propaganda in favour of such organisations. These laws were directed not only against communism, but also, and to an equal extent, against Right-wing and religious reaction. As reported in Ankara despatch No. 152 of 29th June, 1949, the passing of Law No. 5435 gave rise to apprehension as to the manner in which it might be used by an unscrupulous Government, but there is no evidence that unjustifiable use has so far been made of it. There is a considerable body of opinion in Turkey which considers that these legal provisions are inadequate in present-day conditions. To meet these criticisms, Government recently tabled a draft Bill more specifically directed against communism and providing for more severe penalties. This bill would have amended the relevant article of the Penal Code to read as follows: ‘Whoever attempts to form, under whatever nature or of whatever
character, organises and leads or inspires the formation of associations with the aim of establishing the domination of a social class over other social classes or of suppressing *by force* partly or entirely a social class, or of eliminating by force economic or social trends established in this country, will be sentenced to penalties ranging from eight to fifteen years’ hard labour’. Even this, however, did not go far enough to satisfy all sections of the Democrat Party, and a body of over 100 Deputies, headed by M. Sevkat Mocan, who is making a name for himself as an implacable enemy of communism, proposed a Bill providing for the death penalty for the leaders of Communist organisations. They also demanded the suppression of the words ‘by force’, arguing that no Communist Party would admit that it intended to achieve its aims by force, and that Communists would therefore escape through this loophole in the law. Rather surprisingly the Government, sensing the strength of opinion in the National Assembly, executed a *volte face*, and the Prime Minister intervened in the debate to say the Government accepted the suppression of the words ‘by force’. He did not believe, as some Deputies had claimed, that if these words were left out, the law would threaten any political party in Turkey aiming at social justice. Force and violence were not the essential preliminaries of communism, they came afterwards. If violence were made the test of communism, it would be impossible to punish a single Communist. As for other political parties, they had no reason to fear. Since their advent to power, the Democrat Party had never used the law to undermine freedom.

3. After this intervention by the Prime Minister, the Bill was sent back to the Justice Committee of the National Assembly for the suppression of the words ‘by force’. When it was returned, not only had this been done, but a clause had been added to the effect that the leaders of Communist associations would be punishable ‘by death’. This amendment also was accepted by the Government and the Bill was finally passed on 3rd December. A copy of the text of articles 141 and 142 or the Penal Code, as amended by the new law, is enclosed in this despatch.

4. The Turkish police and frontier authorities are particularly vigilant for signs of Communist activity, and the Security Police seem to have an efficient system for infiltrating into any group which they suspect of subversive intentions. Contacts with members of Soviet and satellite missions are very carefully watched, and little effort is made to hide the fact that close surveillance is exercised on the movements of the officials themselves. There thus seems to be little likelihood that any considerable Communist organisation could be built up inside Turkey at present without attracting the attention of the authorities.

5. The Turkish courts, while applying the law in its full rigour in proven cases, have shown reluctance to convict persons against whom evidence of genuinely subversive intentions, or of spreading propaganda of a subversive kind, is lacking. This insistence on really valid evidence, together with the vigour displayed by the courts in upholding their own independence and integrity, has recently been particularly valuable in checking a tendency among Turkish politicians to fling indiscriminate accusations of extreme Left-wing views at their
opponents and personal enemies; and the resulting altercations, strongly reminiscent of Senator McCarthy’s witch-hunts in the United States, have so far been confined to the gossips and interested organs of the press. It has also served to protect those who, while expressing Left-wing opinions, do not advocate subversive methods.

6. There is, however, one element in the Turkish judicial system, as it applies to the Communists, which is not in accordance with normal Western standards of justice: the fact that, once prima facie evidence of an offence against the security of the State has been presented, such cases are handed over from the civil to the military courts. These latter courts apply the same code of law as the civil courts in cases involving civilians. They do, however, tend to show greater severity; and, in that the judges must have less experience of dealing with non-military cases, the possibility of miscarriages of justice cannot be overlooked. Under the present Government’s ‘democratisation programme’ one of the points marked out for future attention is the transfer of responsibility for trying all such cases, in which civilians are involved, from the military to the civil authorities. In the present climate of public opinion, however, the Government are not likely to be in any hurry to introduce a measure which smacks of leniency towards the Communists.

7. Whilst, therefore, the State possesses wide powers which are capable of being abused, they have hitherto been used with moderation. Since the round-up reported in Sir David Kelly’s dispatch No. 600 of 20th December, 1946, there have been sporadic reports of arrests of Communists and Communist sympathisers. In May 1950 action was taken against a Communist group said to be centred in Ankara, with branches in Istanbul, Erzurum and Adana. In January of this year 200 persons were questioned in Istanbul and Ankara, and fifty were detained for investigation on charges of being either Communists or religious reactionaries. So far as I am aware, nothing startling emerged from any of the subsequent trials, which involved about twenty alleged Communists. A round-up which has just taken place has apparently produced more interesting results. The nine persons so far arrested, who have been committed for trial by a military tribunal, were apparently the would-be founders of the ‘Communist Party of the new Turkey’, led by Fuat Baraner and Tevfik Ilmen, who, like most of the accused, have previous police records for clandestine Communist activity. They had apparently had time for little more than the compilation of a party programme, which, if the press is to be believed, states as the aim of their policy the incorporation of Turkey as three ‘independent’ republics in the USSR. Their organisation is said to have been organised on a cell basis, the Turkish vilayets being grouped into regions for this purpose, the organisation in each region being independent of the rest.

8. The revelation of this conspiracy came at a fortunate moment for the promoters of the new draft Bill on communism. The National Assembly went into secret session on the subject on 19th November, when M. Naci Perkel, the Director-General of the National Security Inspectorate (in effect the Turkish Secret Service), was called upon to give evidence. He is said to have told the
Assembly that, while up to now there had been evidence from time to time of sporadic and disorganised Communist activity, for the first time an organised movement had now been discovered which was definitely in touch with the Soviets.

9. The acknowledged leaders of Turkish communism have had little better luck than the unknowns mentioned in paragraph 7. Of the leading Communists and fellow travellers mentioned in paragraph 4 of Sir David Kelly’s letter under reference, Sabahettin Ali was murdered in 1948 in obscure circumstances; Nazim Hikmet has escaped through the Iron Curtain (see Ankara Chancery’s letter 2191/ 5/ 51 of 26th June to Southern Department) and now harangues Bulgarian Turks on the benefits of their present lot under Communist regimes; while Zekeriya Sertel, former editor of the defunct crypto-Communist newspaper Tan, is being sought in connexion with the latest arrests, and is also suspected of having escaped abroad. Of the suspected fellow-travellers mentioned in paragraph 8 of the letter under reference, Arslan Humnaraci attended the last meeting of Communist Youth at Prague, calling himself the Turkish representative, and has now been deprived of his Turkish nationality, together with three of his colleagues at Prague. As for the rest, the known Communists are for the most part under lock and key, or rigid surveillance, while the doubtful cases have either passed out of sight or, sensing that times are not propitious, are keeping quiet.

10. It would be surprising if, in these circumstances, any Left-wing press had survived. In 1950 three periodicals were still appearing which, although subjected to police control, which occasionally resulted in the confiscation or buying-up of whole issues, still put across pallid versions of the Moscow line. These were Nuh’un Gemisi (‘Noah’s Ark’), a fellow-travelling publication; Gerçek, run by the son of Esat Adil Mustecabi, a Left-wing socialist long suspected of flirting with the Communists (see Ankara despatch No. 281 of 18th October, 1950); and Barış (‘Peace’), the organ of the Peace Lovers’ Union. Of these only the first survives, and appears with extreme irregularity. All were run by former associates of Sefik Husnü Deymer, long regarded as the leading Turkish Communist, who was released from prison under last year’s amnesty, and lives now under police surveillance. Nuh’un Gemisi continues to attack American policy and activities in Turkey as imperialist and the Western Powers as ‘warmongering’; but only the healthy insistence of the press on the right of publication, rather than any climate of opinion favourable to it, allows this paper to keep going. The émigré organisation, centred in Paris, known as the ‘Jeunes Turcs Progressistes’, has made attempts to get Cominform-type propaganda into the country, but has not had very much success. Rather more attention has been attracted by the ‘Turkish Association of the Friends of Peace’, a fellow-travelling organisation which supports Soviet peace propaganda. The leaders were prosecuted (and acquitted) last summer, and for the present the organisation seems to have been suppressed. Its president, a woman professor, called Behici Boran, was arrested in the last round-up.

11. Most of the propaganda seems to be directed towards the intelligentsia rather than the Turkish workers, who, on the whole, owing to their lack of edu-
cation and political consciousness, as well as their strong nationalism, offer an unpromising field, though occasional reports are received of Communist activities in industrial centres like Zonguldak. Mr. Sulzberger, of the New York Times, told the press when he was in Turkey last year, that there were about 5,000 Communists in Turkish intellectual circles. This was certainly an exaggeration; but it is probably true that there are fellow-travelling elements in Turkish intellectual circles and in the universities of Ankara and Istanbul in particular. This is on the whole supported by the evidence of the arrests which are made from time to time, the victims being usually of a comparatively high standard of education and sometimes connected with one or other universities. Left-wing elements probably exist also among the staffs of the village rural institutes. These excellent foundations are said to be hampered in their work by fear of being considered too ‘progressive’ and incurring denunciation by the reactionary village elders.

12. In the absence of active Communist organisations in Turkey, the main role of the Soviet and satellite missions seems to be the collection of information. Certainly they appear to be conducting little direct propaganda at present. The Russian Ambassador, Lavrichtchev, who arrived here in 1948, is a representative, unimaginative type of Soviet official, whose sole indiscretion has been to boast on one occasion in public of what the Red Army could do to Turkey if given the chance. In spite of all efforts by the Turkish police to obtain evidence, there are no signs, so far as I am aware, that Communist activity in Turkey is directed by the Soviet Embassy; although from time to time the press has reported attempts by Turkish Communists to contact them. Almost all the satellite Legations have had complete changes of staff in the last few years, and are now headed by fully communised officials who, apart from occasional trips round Anatolia which receive embarrassing attention from the press, appear to do very little to earn their keep. The Yugoslavs, who at one time used their Moslem officials to some effect in penetration various strata of Turkish life, presumably with the aim of getting information for the Cominform, are now moving freely in Western diplomatic circles here, and have nothing to do with their former satellite cronies.

13. Thus the evidence points to the conclusion that, deprived of their leaders, harried by the police and their informers, cut off from direct Soviet help and encouragement, and inhibited by a climate of public opinion increasingly hostile to anything bearing the taint of Moscow, the handful of active Turkish Communists who remain at large have very little chance of making any progress with the organisation of an integrated Turkish Communist Party. The police may, and do, leave known Communists at large who, by their movements and contacts, may afford an indication of other unknown sectors of disaffection; but once all has been learned that is to be learned about their activities, they are quickly rounded up and put out of harm’s way. But while they have no links to bind them in a sense of organisation and fellowship, such Communist sympathisers as there are could only work, in conditions of extreme danger and difficulty, in small isolated groups, and without direct guidance from any central source. So far as can
be seen, there is little likelihood of any change in this situation for some time to come.

14. I am sending a copy of this despatch to His Majesty’s Ambassador in Moscow.

I have, &c.
DAVID SCOTT FOX.

[From: Mr. Scott Fox to Mr. Eden, FO 424/ 291, No. 28, Public Record Office, London]
Appendix 5  Nazim’s poem on Hacioglu Salih, who died in a Soviet labour camp in 1954

Hacioglu Salih was one of the founding members of the Communist Party of Turkey. He came into conflict with the leadership of the party in the late 1920s, being denounced in 1927 as a Menshevik and expelled. Imprisoned in Turkey for being a communist, Salih made the Soviet Union ‘his second homeland’. After fleeing Turkey, Salih dedicated his professional skills (he was a veterinary surgeon) to the service of poor rural communities in the Soviet Union. In the late Stalin purges of 1949, he was denounced and deported with his wife to a labour camp. The conditions in the camp were so harsh that Salih died within five years. Nazim responds to Salih’s tragic end with one of his most outspoken poems, ‘Hacioglu Salih’, written in 1956 immediately after the Twentieth Party Congress.

Then, in 1949, in Moscow, one evening in March,
they came and fetched him,
exiled him to the Altay region.
He was not swept away by a landslide,
nor even by a slippery piece of earth.
But he had a stroke on his right side
at the age of sixty-seven.
For six years Hacioglu Salih
celebrated the anniversary of the revolution
surrounded by barbed wire and wolf hounds.
And he died one day in the spring
in a barracks for fifty people.
Tonight in Moscow we celebrated
the anniversary of the revolution,
reciting Marx
    Engels
    Lenin as we walked through the streets
    and Salih’s certificate of rehabilitation.

Appendix 6  A member of the TKP describes why he joined the Party in the 1970s

In 1974, I was a 16-year-old who was more interested in Western rock music than anything else. In Ankara, where I was living, there were many political groups active among the students. I had no idea which one was which. In the part of the city where we lived (Yenimahalle) there was a university student, a few years older than the rest of us. He was talking about organizing campaigns against the fascist attacks. Once he brought some posters and we all went out one night to stick them on the walls. My understanding of politics was still very limited then. Neither was I really interested. There was a local association, a kind of cultural organization, Yenimahalle Kultur Dernegi or YKD (Cultural Association of Yenimahalle), where my friends and I used to visit regularly and chat with other youngsters there. Still most of our discussions were more on the recent rock LPs than political issues. I even swapped some of my rock records with some others whom I met there. I also participated in some socialist reading sessions in the YKD where we discussed Stalin’s *Dialectical Materialism*. Because I generally loved reading, I was borrowing more and more books and left-wing magazines from the association and reading them very quickly. As a result of these readings I started to develop a kind of worldview based on a simple pro-Soviet understanding, i.e. there was a Socialist system centred on the Soviet Union.

Soon after I started to participate in the activities of a small left group called *Kurtulus* (Salvation) and started to follow their meetings and read their journals and magazines. All this interest and low-level activism lasted for about a year and a half until I started my university education, in the Beytepe Campus of the Hacettepe University, Ankara. Because the organization in which I actively participated in the activities (Kurtulus) was not really related to the pro-Soviet Communist Party (even though it implicitly advocated the idea of a socialist system around the Soviet Union), I started to look for the real Communist Party of Turkey. First I discovered one of party’s theoretical journals, *Urun Dergisi*. I soon realized that almost everything that I had read so far and all my discussions with others and still unanswered questions were leading me to the illegal TKP. Yet so far, I had no contact with the party, and had no idea how to! My only link was through my reading of the *Urun Dergisi* and occasional listening to the secret radio of the party, TKP’nin Sesi.
In 1976, there were two separate May Day rallies organized in Istanbul, one by the pro-TKP DİSK, and the other one by the reformist trade union Türk-İş. I decided to join the one organized by the DİSK, where I met, for the first time, some members of the IGD, the youth organization of the TKP. Soon after I was given the illegal organ of the Central Committee of the TKP, Atilim. I was so excited! There wasn’t anything substantial in it (it was just a two-page little paper), but the fact that it was illegal made it so important.

Still it took another two years until I managed to establish a link with some members of the Party. It was towards the end of 1978 that I was invited to join the Party (following a very intense few weeks of discussing almost about everything from Nazim Hikmet’s poetry to the Kurdish problem in Turkey, from the critical issues of the Socialist system to the ideal place of Turkey in a world which was deeply divided between two antagonistic systems.

[My interview with U.A., December 2004]
Appendix 7  Report of the International Labour Organization on those members of the DİSK kept in prison by the military regime in Turkey

Committee on Freedom of Association report
Turkey (Case no. 1029)
Public Services International (PSI)
Report No. 232
(Vol. LXVI, 1983, Series B, No. 3)
Complaint under articles 24 or 26 of the ILO Constitution

... COMPLAINTS PRESENTED BY THE WORLD CONFEDERATION OF LABOUR, WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS, THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS AND SEVERAL OTHER TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT OF TURKEY

COMPLAINT SUBMITTED BY THE GENERAL CONFEDERATION OF NORWEGIAN TRADE UNIONS, UNDER ARTICLE 24 OF THE CONSTITUTION, WITH RESPECT TO NON-OBSERVANCE OF CONVENTIONS NOS. 11 ON THE RIGHT OF ASSOCIATION (AGRICULTURE), 1921 AND 98 ON THE RIGHT TO ORGANISE AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, 1949, BY TURKEY

... (d) Interview with the DİSK detainees

42. The interview with the 13 members of the DİSK at Metris Prison was held in a small room opposite the office of the Prison Director, in the presence of a warden who at no time interrupted other than to indicate that time was up after 1 hour and 20 minutes.

43. The representative of the Director-General noted that the 13 members of the DİSK were properly dressed in civilian clothes, and that, although they were pale, they seemed to be in good health. Three of them wore glasses, most of them wore a wrist watch and some of them smoked throughout the interview. At no time did the presence of the guard seem to worry them or prevent them from openly and frankly answering the questions.

44. The representative of the Director-General informed the 13 detainees of ILO action in the cases concerning Turkey which had been examined by the Committee on Freedom of Association and he told them that the Committee had
recommended to the Government that the case be speeded up and that the death penalty should not be applied in the DİSK case. He also informed them of the protest he had filed with the Prison Director with regard to the limited time available for that interview and the presence of a witness.

45. Mr. Abdullah Bastürk, President of the DİSK, thanked the ILO on behalf of the 13 detainees, and said that they were aware that the ILO was closely following the case of Turkey. He added that of all of the UN agencies, the ILO, to whose principles the DİSK had always tried to conform, took pride of place in his eyes and that of his colleagues. He explained that of the 13 members of the DİSK present, eight were senior staff and others advisers, and all of them had spent 15 to 24 years of their life in the trade union movement.

46. Mr. Bastürk recalled that the activities of DİSK had led to the suspension of that organisation and the arrest of its members and that, in fact, they were perfectly legitimate and had nothing to do with the anarchy and terrorism with which the organisation was now being accused. DİSK was opposed to anarchy and terrorism. The essential aim of the authorities was to break its influence. The case and the accusations being levelled at the DİSK, which had always defended freedom and democracy, were totally devoid of any legal basis, and Mr. Bastürk stated that the constitution of the DİSK and the organisations affiliated to it were in keeping with the principles of the ILO and that they had been approved by the authorities. During their interrogation, he added, thousands of witnesses, all of whom had been threatened, had had to bear witness against the DİSK.

47. Mr. İsiklar, Secretary-General of the DİSK, explained that the accused could see their lawyers for only 20 minutes, twice a week. Eight or nine detainees saw their lawyer together, and communication actually took place by intercom, the parties to the discussion being separated by a sheet of glass. Mr. İsiklar continued by saying that the conversations could all be heard by the military authorities. The accused did not have access to their lawyer during the court hearings. All letters, and even petitions to the court, were censored and certain petitions never even reached the court. Mr. İsiklar said that the trade union officials did not have the funds to pay the lawyers who represented them. On this point, Mr. Bastürk stressed that the DİSK currently possessed some 250 million Turkish pounds but that, as that sum was under the control of administrators appointed by the State, it was not possible for the accused to avail themselves of it. The international trade union movement had sent them some funds – and they were extremely grateful for this – but that sufficed only to pay the travel costs of families who came to visit the prison.

49. Turning to the allegations of ill-treatment and torture, the 13 detainees pointed out that they had at no time been ill-treated at Metris. Various petitions concerning torture and ill-treatment, suffered by some of them during interrogations after their arrest at the end of 1980, had been submitted to the court, but some had been withdrawn from the files. There had been cases of torture on army
and police premises at the time of their arrest and, although this was no longer the case, living conditions at Metris were none the less unsatisfactory. For example, when a prisoner had to go to hospital, his hands were handcuffed behind his back.

50. Referring to the allegation that prisoners were being slowly intoxicated by toxic gases leaking into their cells, one of them explained that the building in which they were being held was located near to the main central heating system of the prison and that, in winter, the smoke given off by that system entered their cells through the windows, which the detainees wanted to leave open in order to have some fresh air. The prisoners explained that, in fact, fresh air was important because they were not entitled to more than 1 hour 40 minutes of exercise per week (2 × 40 minutes and 1 × 20 minutes), and that actually they had only 1 hour, as the 40 minutes spent before the court in connection with their trial was deducted from this time.

51. The detainees complained that they could not obtain a number of documents which were mentioned in the accusations brought against DİSK. Other documents, notes, articles and manuals had also been taken away from them on 14 August 1983. All of these documents were necessary for the preparation of their defence. Even the main Turkish newspapers to which they had previously had access, had not been available to them for the past three months.

52. One leader, and the founder member of the DİSK, Mr. Nebioglu, said that he had not yet met the new Prison Director, but that they had drawn up a list of all the questions which they would like to discuss with him as soon as it became possible for them to meet him – and they had already made an official request to that effect.

53. On completing the interview, Mr. Bastürk asked that the gratitude of all of the members of the DİSK be expressed to the Director-General and the Governing Body.

(e) Meeting with former detainees

55. The representative of the Director-General also met two former detainees, who were provisionally released, and for whom the death penalty was still being requested, and a third who was still threatened with a 5 to 15-year prison sentence. They told of the conditions under which they had been detained in 1980 and 1981, after having been arrested by the police or after having voluntarily given themselves up to the military authorities. They had been taken to police headquarters in Istanbul and locked up with five to eight other persons in a cell measuring 2 meters 20 by 1 meter 20. The cell was not lit and ventilation came through a small opening in the door which was kept covered. The only toilet available to 90 cells of this type could be used three times a day, but only for five minutes each time. There was only one bed per cell and it was practically impossible for them to sleep. They were held under these conditions for three to 15 days before they were brought before the military authorities. Some people, they said,
spent 90 days in such cells. However, apart from the frightful conditions in which they were held at the beginning, they said they had not been tortured. During the interrogations they were blindfolded and insulted. They did, however, know people with whom they shared a cell who had been severely beaten and also had been subjected to torture by electric shocks.

56. Before being brought before the military authorities, all detainees had to sign a written declaration which they were not allowed to read beforehand. Once they had been transferred, they appeared before the military prosecutor, by whom they were again interrogated and they were informed that they had been placed under arrest. Once they had appeared before a military court, they were interned in a military prison at Davutpasa in Istanbul. It was only then, and in some cases after many months had passed, that their families knew where they were. One of the three former detainees was released in January 1983, the other two in April 1983. They had all requested their release, but none of them were sure of the conditions under which such release would be granted. Before they were actually released, someone had to stand bail for them. However, since being released, they had not undergone any regular check. Only one of the three, who had good qualifications, had been able to find a job since being released. Another, although holding a university diploma, had been unable to find work, and it seemed that most of the persons released were still unemployed. Some employers discriminated against released detainees who had had anything to do with the DİSK.

57. The three former detainees had spent some time in the military prison at Davutpasa and then at Metris. All of them agreed that the conditions at the Davutpasa military prison were better than those at Metris where, they said, the cell was too small for 18 prisoners, and where the main problem was that the cell was near to the central heating system. They criticised the medical care and the fact that, if a prisoner was unable to pay for medicines, he had to wait about a week before he received any.

(f) Information provided by a lawyer for DİSK

58. The lawyer representing DİSK, whom the representative of the Director-General met at the same time as he met the former detainees, said that, of the 29 organisations affiliated to that confederation, 23 were being tried, and that the military prosecutor had asked for their dissolution in each case. Since September 1980, 2,000 members of the DİSK had been arrested and interned, and it appears from the 22 standard questions put to the trade union officials during their interrogation, that their arrest had very little to do with their trade union activities.

59. Many members of DİSK, including shop stewards, had to sign a declaration whereby, in order to obtain their release, they had to undertake never again to exercise any trade union activity. The DİSK lawyer explained that the former detainees had been discriminated against when they tried to find work after their release. Certain contracts, in fact, contained clauses forbidding former detainees to take up a job or rent commercial premises, and certain cases of discrimination had even been taken up to the Supreme Court, he explained to the representative of the Director-General.
(g) Second meeting with the DÎSK detainees

61. The second interview with the DÎSK leaders held at Metris Prison was held in the same room, in the presence of the same officer, during just over one hour. Mr. Isiklar told the representative of the Director-General that certain persons had indeed voluntarily turned themselves in to the military authorities, while others had been arrested by the police on the orders of the military authorities. He had himself gone into hiding, but had been subsequently arrested in Istanbul. He spent 52 days in the type of solitary confinement cell that the former detainees had described. During his interrogation, he had been beaten and subjected to electric shocks. For two days (25 and 26 October 1980), he was given nothing to eat or drink, after which he agreed to sign the declaration submitted to him. Because of the torture, he had decided to commit suicide, but had been prevented from doing so. He was also forced to sing the national anthem out loud several times over. Ill-treatment of this kind had been inflicted on many detainees and some of them had suffered mock hangings or had been hung by the wrists from a wall. One of the detainees said that he had been interrogated under the threat of a wild dog which the interrogators had had in the room with them. All the detainees said that they had been blindfolded during interrogation at police premises and that, although they had strongly suspected that there was military personnel present, they could not be sure.

62. Mr. Bastürk said that even after he had been handed over to the military authorities he had heard people screaming and being beaten in the other rooms and he had seen the result of the blows that had been administered to the feet and of electrical torture. During his own interrogation by the military authorities between 27 October and 3 November 1980, he had been beaten and hit in the kidneys. He had been kept sitting on an iron chair for seven days and seven nights and constantly prevented from sleeping. Others had undergone similar treatment. He had complained to the court in a number of written petitions without the assistance of his lawyer. The detainees complained that their petitions had disappeared from their files and that no measures had been taken to look into the question of the torture to which they had been subjected.

63. They confirmed that they had been transferred to another cell but they complained that it was damp and said that they would be submitting their complaints on this and other subjects to the Prison Director when they were able to see him. The representative of the Director-General informed them that he had met the Prison Director and that he had asked him to receive them in order to discuss their complaints.

(h) Information provided by the Turkish authorities with respect to ill-treatment

64. During the mission, the military authorities declared that they would submit the information on the cases of torture alleged by the complainants to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs if they were requested so to do. Meanwhile, it appeared from official statistics available on 31 March 1983, that 604 complaints had been received concerning torture and ill-treatment, that 229 had been rejected
as being unfounded and that inquiries were being carried out into 305 cases, 47 of which were currently before the courts and that, in 23 other cases, the courts had handed down a decision. Of the total of 188 persons brought before the courts on charges of torture, 45 had been acquitted and 31 sentenced. Of these 188 cases, 45 involved military personnel at various levels, 125 members of the police at various levels and 18 members of the security forces and other categories of personnel.

65. The representative of the Director-General was given a copy of the decision adopted by the Council of State on 30 March 1983 in which the Council of State stated that the death of a student had definitely been caused by torture and granted 600,000 Turkish pounds in damages to the victim’s parents. The reasoning behind this decision, as stated, pointed out that ‘to beat and torture suspects... is a violation of the personal immunity guaranteed by the Constitution and constitutes a crime under the provisions of the Turkish Penal Code. Any act of this nature is a distortion of the security function’. The Council of State went on to say that ‘to beat and torture a suspect is neither compatible with human rights and liberties and, in particular, with the principle of personal immunity nor does it comply with the law. Such acts also constitute an administrative malpractice in that the administration has not trained its staff in the proper manner nor has it taken the measures necessary for avoiding the occurrence of such incidents. Consequently, the administration shall be bound to compensate third parties for any losses suffered as a result thereof’.

II. Questions concerning the new trade union legislation

66. In this respect, the representative of the Director-General met the Minister of Labour, Mr. Esener, and representatives of the Turkish Confederation of Workers’ Trade Unions (TURK-IS) and the Confederation of Turkish Employers’ Associations (TISK) and the Association of Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen (TUSIAD).

67. The representative of the Director-General met with representatives of employers’ and workers’ organisations. The Secretary-General of the TISK (Confederation of Employers’ Associations) said that in general he was satisfied with the new trade union legislation. However, the representatives of TURK-IS voiced many fears in this respect.

68. TURK-IS considered that it would be difficult, though not impossible, to restructure the trade unions as provided for in the amendments of 28 August 1983 to the Trade Union Act of May 1983. It would be convening congresses and would hold elections before the end of 1983.

69. Their criticism concerned mainly the centralisation of trade union structures which would lead to a reduction in the number of unions of which there were currently 800, the disappearance of federations and a reduction in the number of branches of activity, the difficulty that certain organisations would have in being entitled to negotiate collectively if they did not embody 10 per cent of the workers in the sector in question and 50 per cent of the workers in the place of work, the fact that the law entitled only persons employed under a work contract
to join a union, which, according to TURK-IS, excluded civil servants (especially as the Government was trying to increase the number of civil servants which would result in a loss of 300,000 to 500,000 members as far as TURK-IS was concerned), and the exclusion of the right of students and teachers to join a union. The union was also concerned about the obligation on a worker to obtain a costly notarised document in order to join or leave a union, the solidarity subscription to be paid by workers who did not belong to a union in order that they might benefit from collective agreements and especially the fact that it was impossible for a worker to be elected trade union leader if he had not worked in his sector of activity for at least ten years. TURK-IS hoped that section 37 of the Trade Union Act, according to which political activities are to play no part in trade union activities, the aim of which is to promote and develop the economic and social rights of their members, will not be interpreted in such a way as to include legitimate trade union activities under the heading of political activities. The union fears that section 28 of the Law on the international affiliation of unions and confederations might be interpreted in an arbitrary manner as might section 58 which provides for the dissolution of a union in retribution for all sorts of protests against the decisions of the legislative, executive and judicial powers.

70. Finally, TURK-IS recalled that strikes were forbidden for as long as martial law was in force and that as, in their opinion, martial law would be in force for some time yet, it was doubtful that the right to strike could be used very often. Furthermore, TURK-IS considered that the right to strike under the new Act was so limited that it was likely to remain inoperative.

71. During the discussions that the representative of the Director-General had with the Minister of Labour, the minister explained that on 28 August 1983 two new Acts, the purpose of which was to amend the Trade Union Act (No. 2821) and the Collective Bargaining Act (No. 2822) dealing with collective bargaining, strikes and lock-outs and adopted in May 1983, had been adopted. The latest amendments to the Trade Union Act were aimed at facilitating the task of the trade unions so that they could adapt their Constitution to the new legislation within the necessary deadline (i.e. before 1 January 1984). The changes made also concerned reduction in the number of branches of activity for which trade unions could be created. The chemical, petroleum and rubber industries were regrouped to make a single branch of activity as were banks and insurance companies. Other amendments concern the re-election of trade union leaders and the possibility of creating regional trade union chapters.

72. Amendments were made to the Collective Bargaining, Strikes and Lock-outs Act. The Minister explained that trade unions set up by branch of activity played the same role and had the same functions as the federations but that, in order to avoid the problem of federations embodying trade unions which themselves had legal personality, the Act provided for the creation of large unions incorporating regional agencies or branches which do not have legal personality. Collective bargaining will again take place once the trade unions have completed their reorganisation and as the currently applicable collective agreements expire. In response to the allegation whereby the amendment to Act No. 657 (the State
Personnel Act) would deprive trade unions of thousands of their members by making the workers in question civil servants, the Minister said he doubted that such an amendment would ever be adopted. Naturally, minor amendments could be made to that Act but, he explained, similar proposals had been made since 1963 without ever having been adopted.

E. Written information submitted by the Government

73. In a communication dated 23 September 1983 the Government also submitted the text of a Decree dated 5 September 1983 which amended the Decree on staff discipline in the police force and which made it possible to take disciplinary action against members of the police force in cases of ill-treatment and torture of those placed in their care. According to the Government, the disciplinary measures did not, of course, preclude non-disciplinary punishments, particularly the prison sentences for which the law provides in the case of abusive treatment of persons within police care.

Figure 1 The cover of the first issue of Novyi Vostok, 1922 (AVP–Moscow)
Figure 2  The cover of the book on the murder of the founders of the TKP, 28–29 January 1921, published in Moscow in 1923
Figure 3  Aydinlik, No. 21, May 1924

Figure 4  ‘The needle turns to the East. Don’t worry gentlemen. There is no anomaly here. Everything is in order.’ (Pravda, 30 January 1925)
Figure 5  Regarding the arrest and the court case in 1925 of a group of communists, including Nezihe Yasar Hanım (IISHT, Amsterdam, Tüstav: F. 495, Op. 181, D. 229)
Figure 6 Kommunist, the journal of the Central Committee of the TKP, 1929 (IISH, Amsterdam, Tüstav: F. 495, Op. 181, D. 260)

Figure 7 Kızıl Samsun, TKP Samsun City Committee, 1935 (IISH, Amsterdam, Tüstav: F. 495, Op. 181, D. 288)
Figure 8 A group of TKP leaders and activists, who were arrested in 1951, in Yildiz Military Prison (Iktidar, 1–15 January 1993, p. 15)

Figure 9 The document on the rehabilitation of Hacioglu Salih, issued by the Soviet government to his wife, Sünbül Sabiha, in February 1956 (M. Tunçay, Eski Sol Üzerine Yeni Bilgiler, Istanbul: Belge Yayınları, 1982, p. 211)
Figure 10 The car of the US ambassador, Robert Komer, was burned by the protesting students in ODTU (Middle East Technical University) in 1969 (Express, 12–19 March 1994, p. 2)

Figure 11 After he was killed in Kizildere in 1972, Mahir Cayan became a legendary figure and a symbol of revolutionary rebellion for several decades in Turkey (Halk Icin Kurtulus, 4 April 1998, p. 26)
Figure 12  May Day 1977, Taksim – Istanbul (Sanli l Mayis, Istanbul: Konuk Yayinlari, July 1977)

Figure 13  Special issue of the Iscinin Sesi on the protest of the TKP students in ODTU, 8 August 1979 (Iscinin Sesi, 3 September 1979)
Notes

1 Introduction

1 This autobiography, written in east Berlin on 11 September 1961, was translated by Randy Blasing and Mutlu Konuk in 1993, and can be found online at http://www.poemhunter.com/p/m/poem.asp?poet=8629&poem=60262.


7 Internal Party Report, RCP(B), 20 February 1921, Moscow, TsPA, Fond: 5, Op. 2, D. 2. (On 31 January 1951, however, Pravda vociferously attacked the murder of M. Subhi, ‘the true son of the Turkish people’.)


9 The tragic sacrifice of the local communists to the interests of Soviet foreign policy repeated itself on a much larger scale six years later in China. Convinced that China was entering its bourgeois–democratic revolution, Stalin favoured proletarian participation in a national bloc including peasants and bourgeoisie and urged the communists to enter this bloc, Kuomintang. But during his northward expedition in 1926–7, Chiang, the nationalist leader in China, slaughtered thousands of communists in Shanghai, expelled Soviet advisers, and soon ruled much of China.

10 From Zinoviev to Lenin, Trotsky, Radek and Bukharin, 14 November 1921; Moscow, TsPA, Fond: 5, Op. 3, D. 141.


12 The most important are those by Harris, Lipovsky, Quataert and Zürcher, and Spector.

2 The opening act

4 From the Director of Military Intelligence, 8 May 1920, E 4689/345/44, FO 371/5178, PRO, London.
6 Prawda, 9 November 1918.
7 Statement by Chicherin, 24 December 1920; Moscow, AVP; Fond: Reference about Turkey, Op. 3, Por. 2, Pap. 2.
8 Narkomindel, 20 April 1919; Moscow, AVP; Fond: Reference about Turkey; Op. 2; Por. 2; Pap. 2.
9 General Süleyman Sulkevich (1865–1920). A Lithuanian Muslim who had once served in the Russian army and during the war had commanded a special Muslim corps for the German forces in Romania.
11 J. Bunyan, Intervention, Civil War, and Communism in Russia, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1936, p. 58.
12 On 19 July 1918, for instance, before the conclusion of the war, the Ottoman representative in Moscow, Salih Kemal, had sent a letter of protest to Chicherin regarding the anti-Ottoman socialist propaganda in the pages of Yeni Dünya, published in Moscow. Chicherin, in his reply to the Ottoman representative on the same day, had stated that the journal Yeni Dünya was an independent organ of Muslim socialists, and the Bolshevik government did not intend to control or ban their rightful activities. (Chicherin to Salih Kemal, 19 July 1918; Moscow, AVP; Fond: Reference about Turkey, Op. 1, Por. 3, Pap. 1.)
13 Izvestiia, 23 April 1919.
14 Mustafa Subhi Kavgasi ve Düüsünceleri, pp. 70–1.
17 Karabekir, İstiklal Harbiniz, p. 47.
22 In order to attract as much support as possible among a mixed population of Turks, Kurds, Arabs, Lazs and Circassians, the nationalist leaders deliberately used the Arabic word ‘millet’ for nation, implying a religious community rather than an ethnic unity.
24 Halide Edib (Adivar) a prominent writer, feminist and supporter of the national movement, gives her account of why Kemal rose as the unquestionable leader of the national movement: ‘He was by turns cynical, suspicious, unscrupulous, and satanically shrewd…. Of course, one knew all the time that there were men around him who were greatly his superior in intellect, moral backbone, and far above him in culture and education. But though he excelled them in neither refinement nor originality, not one of them could possibly cope with his vitality. Whatever their qualities,
they were made on a more or less normal scale. In terms of vitality he wasn’t’ (Turkish Ordeal, London, 1928, p. 195).

25 On 19 September 1919, just a week after the Sivas Congress, Damat Ferit, the Prime Minister of the Ottoman government in Constantinople, gave an interview to a French wire service. Damat Ferit asserted that Asia Minor was falling into the hands of the Bolshevik-inspired groups. (Given by H. B. Paksoy, ‘US and Bolshevik Relations with the TBMM Government: First Contacts. 1919–1921’, The Journal of Sophia Asian Studies, XII (1994), pp. 218–19.)

26 On the night of 1 November, Enver, Cemal, Talat and five others left aboard a German submarine for Odessa. Enver apart, all of them were killed by Armenian assassins in 1920–1.

27 Karl Radek (Karl Sobelsohn) (1885–1939). He accompanied Trotsky to Brest–Litovsk. In November 1917 the Soviet government appointed him Assistant Commissar for Foreign Affairs. In April 1918 he was appointed Head of the Central European Department of Narkomindel. In this capacity he returned to Germany in 1918 and took part in the Spartacist revolt. After its failure he was imprisoned in Moabit prison, in Berlin, from February 1919 to January 1920. During these 11 months he played the double role of adviser to the leader of the German CP, Paul Levi, and semi-official representative of the Bolshevik government to German politicians and military chiefs. After his release in December 1919 he returned to Russia and worked in the Komintern.


31 From Chicherin to the Central Committee, 18 April 1921; Moscow, TsPA; Fond 5, Op. 2, D. 315.

32 Major Fritz Tschunke was later in the delegation to Soviet Russia, in the spring of 1921, sent by Sondergruppe R (a special unit within the German Ministry of War specifically intended to conduct military negotiations with the Soviets). He later supervised the coordination of the production of German war materials in Soviet Russia. (M. Smith, ‘The German General Staff and Russia, 1919–1926’, Soviet Studies, 8 (October 1956), pp. 125–32; K. Rosenbaum, Community of Faith, Syracuse University Press, 1965, pp. 69, 288.)

33 Tschunke (Berlin) to Narkomindel, 14 July 1920; Moscow, A VP; Fond: Reference regarding Turkey, Op. 3, Por. 4, Pap. 2.


35 From Chicherin to Stalin, 14 September 1921; Moscow, TsPA; Fond 5, Op. 2, D. 315.


37 I have not come across any direct evidence as to whether the British knew about that particular agreement or not. However, the British documents of the period clearly show that there was a general suspicion about German support both to the Bolsheviks and to the Turkish nationalists. In late 1919, Oliver Wardrop, the British representative in the Caucasus, mentioned in a telegram to Admiral de Robeck, the British High Commissioner in Constantinople, that Denikin provided strong evidence about the
role played by ‘German agents’ in the relations between the Kemalists and the Bolsheviks. (From Wardrop to de Robeck, 15 October, 1919; Cambridge, Churchill College Archive Centre; De Robeck Papers, DRBK 6/11.) Similarly The Times reported on 3 February 1920 that a number of organizations had been set up in Berlin with the intention of creating a united front including the Germans, Bolsheviks and Muslim Turkish militants. Karabekir told Mustafa Kemal in early February 1920 that Rawlinson had a strong suspicion about ‘a German–Russian–Turkish understanding’. (Karabekir, Istiklâl Harbümüz, p. 436.)


39 Y. Nadi, Cerkêz Ethem Kuveytleri’nin İhaneti, Istanbul, 1955, p. 11.

40 Cebesoy, Millî Mucadele Hatıraları, pp. 474–5.

41 Sherif Manatov was a Bashkir, the son of a mullah, and studied at the Polytechnic Institute of St. Petersburg and in Constantinople. In early 1917, Manatov was a right-wing nationalist, but later in the year he went over to the side of the Bolsheviks. Stalin rewarded him in January 1918 with one of the vice-chairmanships of the Central Commissariat for Muslim Affairs. In 1919, Manatov was sent to Ankara. His fate after 1920 is unknown. (A. Bennigsen, ‘Marxism or Pan-Islamism’, Central Asian Survey, VI/2 (1978), p. 64.)


43 Tunçay, Türkiye’de Sol Akımlar, p. 185.

44 Cebesoy, Millî Mucadele Hatıraları, p. 509.


46 The English translation of the invitation was given in the Weekly Summary of Intelligence Report issued by SIS (Constantinople Branch), for the week ending 2 September 1920; London, PRO; FO 371/ 5177, pp. 29–30.


51 Izvestiia, 21 September 1920; Pravda, 8 and 16 September 1920; Kommunisticheskii Internatsional, 14 (1920), col. 2941.

52 Tunçay, Türkiye’de Sol Akımlar, pp. 209–11.

53 Sorkin, Pervyi S’ezd Narodov Vostoka, p. 31.


55 Published in Kommunisticheskii Internatsional, II (20 December 1920), cols. 3141–50.

56 Shaumian and 25 other leading Bolsheviks from Baku were arrested and murdered on 20 September 1918. When the news of the massacre reached Moscow, the Bolshevik government accused British officers of being responsible for the death of 26 leading Bolsheviks in Baku. (Gökay, A Clash of Empires, pp. 30–5.)


58 Perhaps the only significant product of the Congress was the emergence of a special journal, Narody Vostoka. The first issue of this journal came out in Russian, Turkish, Persian and Arabic in October 1920 under the editorship of M. Pavlovich.

59 Carr, Bolshevik Revolution, III, p. 269.

61 The same agent who provided information about the Baku Congress gave the British SIS somewhat detailed information about the First Congress of Turkish Communists. (From the SIS, Constantinople Branch, 25 October 1920; London, PRO; FO 371/5178/E 13412/345/44.)

62 Mustafa Subhi ve Yoldasları (TKP publication), pp. 65–7.

63 Y. Demir, Yeni Çağ, 9 (September 1965), pp. 761–9. Yakup Demir (Zeki Bastımar) was the General Secretary of the TKP between 1951 and 1973.


66 Robert G. Wesson mistakenly states in his book Soviet Foreign Policy in Perspective (Homewood, 1969) that ‘He [Mustafa Kemal] also for a time was affiliated with the Comintern through a fake Turkish Communist Party’ (p. 75).


68 Cebesoy, Milli Mücadele Hatıraları, p. 509. It is not clear from Cebesoy whether he shared the wisdom of Kemal’s venture.


70 According to a British intelligence report from Constantinople, during November and December 1920 there were some secret negotiations going on between the Ankara and the Greek government, and Ethem might have been chosen as Kemal’s representative in these negotiations. Ethem’s revolt might, therefore, have been seen as a shield to disguise these secret dealings. (Weekly Report for week ending 8 January 1921, General Staff Intelligence, Constantinople; London, PRO; FO 371/6497.) Although this seems convincing, I have not come across any other account to support the existence of the above mentioned secret talks.

71 TBMM Zabit Ceridesi, VIII/1/1337, p. 227. Kandemir, Atatürk’ün Kurturdugu TKP, pp. 134–6. This information provided by Turkish sources is confirmed by a British Intelligence report: Weekly Report No. 97 for the week ending 4 December 1920. GHQ General Staff Intelligence (Constantinople); London, PRO; FO 371/6497.

72 According to one account only Mustafa Subhi’s wife Semiramis survived this tragedy. Yet there is no other available confirmation of this version. (A. C. Emre, ‘1920 Moskova’sinde Türk Komünistleri’, Türk Dünyası, 1 (December 1964), p. 151.)


74 Summary about Turkey, Near and Middle Eastern Department, Comintern, 10 May 1922; Moscow, TsPA; Fond: 5, Op. 3, D. 630.

75 Tunçay, Türkiye’de Sol Akımlar, pp. 235–6.

76 Ibid., p. 236.

77 Narkomindel Information Report summarizes the details of this deadly journey in January 1921; Moscow, AVP; Fond: Reference about Turkey, No. 722.

78 İnkılap Yolu, July–August 1930; Kızıl İstanbul, 7 February 1931; Kızıl İstanbul, 24 January 1932.

79 Internal Party Report, RCP(B), 20 February 1921; Moscow, TsPA; Fond: 5, Op. 2, D. 2.
Mirza Sultan-Galiev, born in the 1880s, was a Volga Tatar by origin and had been a leading communist activist since 1917. In the second half of 1918 he became a close collaborator of Stalin in the Commissariat of Nationality Affairs; in December of the same year he was promoted to the post of chairman of the Commissariat’s Central Muslim Military College. Sultan-Galiev favoured political autonomy for Muslim communists, advocating the establishment of a separate Muslim Red Army, and worked towards the creation of a large Soviet Muslim autonomous republic in the Volga–Ural region. He was arrested in 1923, and accused by Stalin of various nationalist-Muslim deviations. He was expelled from the Communist Party and disappeared in 1930.


Moscow, Moskova Hatiralari, pp. 102–3.

From Narkomindel to Politburo, 30 November 1920; Moscow, TsPA; Fond: 5, Op. 2, Ed. xp. 314.

Among the many accounts of the amount of military aid requested by Ankara from the Soviet government are Cebesoy, Moskova Hatiralari, pp. 144–5, 247–8; S. I. Aralov, Vospominanitii Sovetskogo Diplomata, Moscow, 1960, pp. 17–19; and Harris, The Origins of Communism, pp. 59–60.


Cebesoy, Moskova Hatiralari, p. 82.


This information (Ankara’s request) is confirmed by a Narkomindel letter to Stalin on 14 September 1921; Moscow, TsPA; Fond: 5, Op. 2, D. 315.

Aydemir, Tek Adam, II, p. 433.


London, PRO; FO 371/6537, E 13780/143/44.

This was indeed less that one-tenth of the sum demanded by the Turkish delegation. The Turkish delegation demanded 150 million gold rubles, which was considered by Narkomindel as a ‘pure exaggeration of the Eastern mentality’. (From Narkomindel to Stalin, 10 March 1921; Moscow, TsPA; Fond: 5, Op. 2, D. 315.) According to Cebesoy, on the other hand, the Russians agreed to pay 10 million rubles a year for the continuation of the war with Greece. (Moskova Hatiralari, pp. 265–70.)

On 20 September 1921 Chicherin wrote to Stalin that the Turks insisted on an additional sum of 50 million gold rubles in addition to the already agreed 10 million. There is no indication as to whether this was accepted. (Moscow, TsPA; Fond: 5, Op. 2, D. 315.)


The much greater amount given in a British intelligence report seems to be unfounded.

Professor A. Miller, prominent Soviet historian of Eastern affairs, writes that ‘from a practical point of view, the Moscow Treaty enabled the Turks to count on the
increased aid which, after the victory of the Soviet regime over the interventionists and White Guards, could now be extended in ever-growing quantities’. (A. Miller, *Ocherki Noveishei Istorii Tursii*, Moscow and Leningrad, 1948, p. 114.)


101 From Chicherin to Orakheloshvili (Tiflis), 30 March 1921; Moscow, AVP; Fond: Reference about Turkey, Op. 4, D. 10, Pap. 5.


104 *Islamic News*, 9 June 1921.


106 From Rattigan (Constantinople) to Foreign Office, 29 May 1921; London, PRO; FO 371/6470, p. 225.

107 Report from Soviet Intelligence Bureau in Trabzon, 6 June 1921; Moscow, TsPA; Fond: 64, Op. 1; Ed. 205.

108 1 June 1921; London, PRO; FO 371/6470, pp. 222-3.

109 Tcheka was established on 7 (20) December 1917 by the Council of Peoples’ Commissars. The name ‘Tcheka’ derives from the Russian initials of its abbreviated title – the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution and Sabotage. The organization has been through several name changes, and until quite recently it was called the KGB.

110 The Military Intelligence Organization, GRU, like the Tcheka, has passed through several name changes in its history; it was called ‘Registraupr’, and later ‘Razvedupr’.


113 Chicherin in his letter to Aralov (Ankara) states that due to the valuable information provided by Ismet Riza Nur, Minister of Health in the Ankara government.

114 From Chicherin to Aralov, 20 February 1923; Moscow, TsPA; Fond: 5, Op. 1, D. 1990.

115 Telegram from Aralov (Ankara) to Chicherin, 5 October, 25 November and 19 December 1922; Moscow, AVP; Fond: Near East, Op. 7, Por. 11.

116 Mdivani, this Georgian communist, is an interesting case. Later in 1922, he was accused of ‘national deviationism’ by the Central Committee of the Russian Party, and at the end of 1936 he was arrested and accused of conspiring, with a member of the Trotskyite opposition, Sergei Ivanovich Kavtaradze, to murder Stalin. Soon he was sentenced to death and shot.

117 From Mdivani (Ankara) to Chicherin, 23 January 1921; Moscow, AVP; Fond: Reference about Turkey, Op. 4, Por. 9, Pap. 5.

118 The following are just a few examples of this attitude: the telegrams from Chicherin to Guseynov (Baku), 9 March 1921; to Orakhelomvil (Tiflis), 30 March 1921; to Legran (Tiflis), 30 June 1921; Moscow: AVP; Fond: Reference about Turkey, Op. 4, Pap. 5, D. 10; and also From Chicherin to Aralov (Ankara), 30 October 1922; Moscow, AVP; Fond: Near East, Op. 7, Pap. 8, Por. 1.

119 For the details of Chicherin’s ideas see his *Stat’i i Rechi po Voprosam Mezdunarodnoi Politiki*, Moscow, 1961.

Enver, later in the summer of 1922, disappointed by the Bolsheviks, proceeded to Turkestan and attempted to organize the Muslim forces there. On 4 August 1922, however, he was killed after a battle with a Red Army regiment.

From Chicherin to Central Committee, 18 April 1921; Moscow, TsPA; Fond: 5, Op. 2, D. 315.

From Chicherin to the Politburo, 30 November 1920; Moscow, TsPA; Fond: 5, Op. 2, D. 314.


From Zinoviev to Lenin, Trotsky, Radek and Bukharin, 14 November 1922; Moscow, TsPA; Fond: 5, Op. 3, D. 141.

3 The inter-war years

1 http://www.icl-fi.org/english/womandrev/oldsite/BOL-EAST.HTM
2 http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1928/07_13.htm
3 http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/war/wwtwo/countdown_390830_wed_05.shtml
7 Hence, one extreme form of nationalism forced similar feelings from the other side. Nothing feeds a group’s nationalism more than the nationalism of another group. The nation-building process always involves the systematic over-valuation of the self and the systematic devaluation of the other. This practice makes mutual respect impossible. Respect involves an appreciation of the other for its own sake; it sees other groups as worthy of preservation and exploration. In the case of the Kurds in Turkey, the extreme policies adopted by the founders of the Turkish Republic from 1920s onwards left no other means to the Kurds except violent rebellion whenever possible. ‘Nationalism is negativity; nationalism is a negative spiritual category because it thrives on denial by denial’, writes Danilo Kis. (Danilo Kis, ‘On Nationalism’, in R. Ali and L. Lifschultz (eds), Why Bosnia? Writings on the Balkan War, Stony Creek, CT: Pamphleters’ Press, 1993, p. 127.)
11 Tunçay, p. 366.
12 Ibid., p. 283.
15 At the beginning of 1917, about 3,000 young workers from the Ottoman Empire were sent to various industrial centres in Germany to get training and work experience. Many of these workers got in touch with the German Spartacists, who exposed them to the ideas of Marx and Lenin. This group had founded the Türkiye İsci Ciftci Firkası (Workers and Farmers Party of Turkey) in Berlin, which published a left-wing paper, Kurtulus (Liberation).
18 Cited in Goksu and Timms, Life and Work of Nazim Hikmet, p. 46.
On 27 February 1933, the Berlin Reichstag, the seat of Germany’s parliament, was set on fire. Shortly after the fire began, the Dutch left-wing radical Marinus van der Lubbe was arrested at the scene of the crime, apparently as the sole culprit. Even before his identity was established, the Nazi leaders accused the German Communist Party (KPD) of having committed arson. According to Nazi propaganda, the Reichstag fire was intended as a signal for a communist uprising that had long been planned – a claim for which there was not a shred of evidence. In fact, the KPD leadership was neither willing nor able to organize such an uprising, so the Reichstag fire could not have been a signal for it. For the Nazis, who had been in power less than a month from 30 January 1933, the Reichstag fire was the excuse for a hitherto unparalleled persecution of Communist and Social Democratic workers, intellectuals and party leaders. On 28 February 1933 alone, just one day after the fire, thousands of persons active in or allied with the workers’ movement were arrested. All left-wing newspapers, including the Social Democratic daily Vorwärts, the Communist Party press and the German Trotskyists’ newspaper Permanente Revolution, were confiscated and banned. Two decrees put into effect only one day later, the ‘Decree on the Protection of People and State’, subtitled ‘against communist acts of violence endangering the state’, and the ‘Decree Against Treason of the German People and High-Treason Activities’, were used to annul practically overnight the essential basic rights incorporated in the constitution of the Weimar Republic. These so-called ‘fire decrees’ stayed in effect until the end of the Third Reich and formed the pseudo-legal basis for the entire Nazi dictatorship. The Dutchman, Marinus van der Lubbe, was charged with having set the fire as part of a Communist plot. Several Communist leaders, including Georgi Dimitrov and Sefik Husnü were charged with complicity. Van der Lubbe was sentenced to death; the others were found not guilty. For many years it was assumed outside Germany that the Reichstag fire had been carried out by the Nazis themselves as a propaganda manoeuvre to ensure the defeat of the communists and other leftist parties in the elections. However, later evidence indicated that Van der Lubbe alone set the fire, and that Hitler merely used it as a pretext to launch a campaign against the communists.

A total of 510 delegates, representing 49 countries, participated in this Congress. It was announced in the Congress that the membership of the Turkish Communist Party increased from 300 to 600 with an additional 350 candidate members between the Fourth and the Fifth congresses. Even with this increase the TKP was one of the smallest members of the Komintern. (J. Degras, Communist International, Frank Cass (1st edn), 1971, II, p. 94.)

Fifth Congress of the Communist International: Abridged report of Meetings held in Moscow – June 17th to July 8th, 1924, pp. 188–9 and 193.


Cumhuriyet, 27 November 1927.

Kommunist, 1929 (IISH, F. 495, op. 181, d. 260).

İnkılap Yolu, July–August 1930.

Yeni Cag, November 1975, p. 1083.

Kızıl İstanbul, no. 37, 1932; Orak Cekic, 20 December 1935.

Harris, Origins of Communism in Turkey, p. 436.
4 The Second World War years

2 FO 371/E2170/135/44.
4 Saracoglu was described by Knatchbull-Hugessen as ‘youthful and somewhat delicate in appearance; he has a genial character and is popular in Angora’ (p. 88).
5 In many ways, the Turkish regime of this period resembled the authoritarian regimes that sprang up all over southern Europe in this era, such as the regimes of Salazar in Portugal, Franco in Spain and Metaxas in Greece.
7 Weisband, Turkish Foreign Policy, p. 46
8 FO 424, No. 55, E 6203/6203/44, Enclosure in No. 55, p. 81, PRO, London.
9 Weisband, Turkish Foreign Policy, p. 52
10 Ibid., p. 53.
11 Ibid., p. 52.
12 Documents on German Foreign Policy, Series D, vol. XII, no. 231, p. 411.
16 S. Deringil, Turkish foreign policy, p. 26.
17 Weisband, Turkish Foreign Policy, p. 110.
21 From Sir S. Waterlow to Mr Eden, 8 January 1938 (Athens), FO 424/E 135/135/44, No. 2, PRO, London.
27 DGFP, D, vol. IX, no. 10.
28 From the beginning of the war, the Turkish authorities shared intelligence information with the British and later the Americans. Most of the reports sent by Turkish military attaches in Axis-controlled Europe were passed to the Allies. (R. Cossaboom and G. Leiser, ‘Adana Station 1943–45: Prelude to the Post-war American Military Presence in Turkey’, Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 34, No. 1, January 1998, p. 75.)
30 Ibid., pp. 117–18.
33 Weisband, Turkish Foreign Policy, pp. 247–9 and 250–1.
34 Ibid., p. 125.
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37 Yeni Cag, November 1975, p. 1083.
38 Son Havadis, 6 March 1975; Bayrak Gazetesi, 26 April 1978.
43 For the Turkish position see telegram from Ismet (Lausanne) to GNA (Ankara), 5 December 1922, Lozan Telgrafları, I, No. 82, pp. 167–70.
46 In his memoirs, Nikita Khrushchev suggested that the secret police chief, Lavrentii Beria, put the idea to Stalin as a fellow Georgian on the grounds that the territories demanded had been part of Georgia. In fact, Kars had been part of Armenia between 1918 and 1920. (W. Hale, Turkish Foreign Policy, 1774–2000, London: Frank Cass, 2000, p. 139.)
48 Bulgaria, France, Great Britain, Greece, Japan, Romania and Yugoslavia.
50 Erkin, cited by Harris, Troubled Alliance, p. 19.
51 The Shah’s pro-German policy in August 1941 produced a coordinated British and Soviet invasion, with the British army in the south and the Red Army in the north of Iran. The Soviet Union and Great Britain agreed in 1942 that they would evacuate Iran within six months from the end of the war. However, at the end of the war the Soviet Union manoeuvred for control of the oil in Iran’s north, occupying Kurdistand and Azerbaijan, which were at that time provinces of northern Iran. Some rebels in these provinces rebelled against their Iranian rulers in late 1945, supported by the Soviet troops. The British were out of Iran by March 1946. The Soviets, however, negotiated with Iran for the creation of an Iran–Soviet oil company, which Iran accepted. As part of the agreement, the Soviet Union was to return the provinces of Azerbaijan and Kurdistand to Iran. On 9 May, Soviet troops pulled out of Iran and Iranian forces moved into Iranian Azerbaijan and Kurdistand and severely punished the rebels. In this way, Stalin readily let the revolutions in those places fail in the interest of giving the Soviet Union access to Iranian oil.
54 Cited by Gönlübol, Olaylarla Türk Dis Politikası, p. 205.

5 The Cold War starts
Notes

2 http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cold.war/episodes/03/documents/truman/
12 http://cgi.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cold.war/episodes/08/documents/note/
17 Aydin, Turkish Foreign Policy, pp. 53–6.
18 Cited by Sander, p. 72.
20 Department of State Bulletin, 29 May 1950, pp. 869–70.
21 Yerasimos, Azgelismislik Surecinde Turkeiye, pp. 1396–403.
22 Ibid., p. 1653.
23 Aydin, Turkish Foreign Policy, p. 63.
25 http://homepages.stmartin.edu/Fac_Staff/rlangill/PLS%20310/Korea%201949-Isaac.htm; http://www.alternativeinsight.com/Korean_War.html
31 Harvey to FO, 2 September 1948, FO 371/72349, R 10421/3668/19; see also Karpat, Turkey’s Politics, pp. 336–7.
34 ‘Soviet Union warns Turkey’, the Hindu, 5 November 1951.
35 The Turkish General Staff concludes that the exact number of casualties was 3,277 (with 721 dead, 2,147 wounded, 175 disappeared and 234 POWs). http://www.koreanwar.org/html/units/un/turk.htm; http://www.history.navy.mil/books/field/ch9a.htm
37 Gece Postası, 16 July 1951.
38 Belgium, France, Holland, Greece, Italy and Germany have all acknowledged that they participated in the covert network,
39 This name, thought of by the CIA, was changed in 1965 to ‘Özel Harp Dairesi’, Special War Department, and once again in 1990 to ‘Özel Kuvvetler Komutanlığı’, Special Forces Command.
41 They further explained that this organization had fought in Cyprus in 1974 and against the PKK in Kurdistan in 1980. (Interview with the President of the Turkish General Staff Dogan Gures, Milliyet, 5–6 September 1992.)
42 Ibid.
43 Milliyet, 28 November 1990.
48 http://www.hellas.org/constantinople/ko55-br.htm
50 In 1955 the Turkish contra-guerrillas set up a secret organization called the Turk Mukavemet Hareketi (Turkish Resistance Movement). This organization carried out systematic provocations in Cyprus in order to prepare the conditions for the events of 1974. To prepare for the occupation of Cyprus, teams directed by Hiram Abbas and the Special Warfare Department established themselves in Beirut, from where they could organize activities in Cyprus (Özgür Politika, 2 September 2003).
52 http://kypros.org/Elections/AKEL.html; http://www.cypnet.co.uk/ncyprus/history/british/; http://countrystudies.us/cyprus/64.htm
53 IISH Collections on Nazim Hikmet, International Institute of Social History (Amsterdam), http://www.iisg.nl/collections/hikmet/collect.html
56 Ibid., p. 304.

6 The door opens
1 Khrushchev’s report to the Twentieth Party Congress, Pravda, 15 February 1956.
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8 http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/cold.war/kbf/Profiles/brezhnev/
14 Fowkes, The Rise and Fall of Communism in Eastern Europe, p. 142.
16 http://www.bartleby.com/65/vi/VietnamW.html
17 My interview with Y.E. in January 2005.
22 The Montreux Convention, still in force, permits transit by capital ships of Black Sea powers escorted by no more than two destroyers.
25 Ozkan, MIT’in Giz Tarihi, p. 216.
28 http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/july/14/newsid_3736000/3736391.stm; http://www.ozgurpolitika.org/2000/05/04/hab60b.html;
34 From ‘On Living’, http://www.poetryconnection.net/poets/Nazim_Hikmet/2369
37 Ibid.; Hale, Turkish Foreign Policy, 1774–2000, p. 150.
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38 S. Yerasimos, Azgelismislik Surecinde Turkiye, pp. 1680–2.
41 Ibid., p. 606.
43 Yerasimos, Azgelismislik Surecinde Turkiye, pp. 1675–91.
46 Irmak Gibi, pp. 43–4.
48 Bizim Radyo, 13 March 1967.
49 Goksu and Simms, Nazim Hikmet, p. 310.
50 Harris, The Origins of Communism in Turkey, p. 438.
54 http://members.lycos.co.uk/turkiyesolu/texts/millidemokratikdevrim.html
55 Cumhuriyet, 11 June 1968.
58 Hurriyet, 27 March 2003, http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/haber/0,,sid~1@w~356@ tarih~2003-03-27-m@nvid~248192.00.asp
60 Ibid., pp. 2102–3.
66 Feyizoglu, Turkiye’de Genclik, p. 543.
68 T. Maden-Is Sendikasi Egitim Dairesi, pp. 75–6.
70 http://www.ozgurpolitika.org/2005/02/12/allkosb.html
77 Uyar, ‘Her yer Bergama, hepimiz Bergamalıyız...’.
78 The 64.3 per cent rate is very low by Turkish standards. The AP garnered 46.5 per cent of the vote, a 6 per cent drop in its electoral support, while the CHP stagnated at 28.7 per cent. (Cem Erogul, ‘The Establishment of Multiparty Rule: 1945–71’, in Schick and Tonak (eds), Turkey in Transition, p. 135.
80 M. Sencer, Turkiye’nin Yonetim Yapısı, p. 125.
81 Yerasimos, Azgelmislik Surecinde Turkiye, pp. 1691–7.
83 Feyizoglu, Deniz, pp. 288–306.
84 Hurriyet, 26 November, 1992; Milliyet, 28 November 1990.

7 The 1974–84 period
2 Ibid., p. 238.
7 Hale, Turkish Foreign Policy 1774–2000, pp. 159–62.
8 Based on my March 2004 interview with Zulfikar Ozdogan, who was a member of the Socialist Youth Organization in Istanbul in 1970.
10 Irmak Gibi, pp. 43–4.
12 Like EOKA, TMT was strongly anti-communist and brought intense pressure to bear on Turkish Cypriot members of left-wing unions and clubs. Premises were burned down, some left-wing Turks were killed, and hundreds of Turkish-Cypriot members of the pro-communist labour organizations felt it necessary to leave and were in fact advised to do so for their own safety by their Greek Cypriot comrades. (http://www.cyprus-conflict.net/narrative-main.htm)
13 From the Republic of Cyprus Press and Information Office (PIO) Server at http://www.pio.gov.cy/
16 Ibid., pp. 231–3.
17 http://britains-smallwars.com/cyprus/UNFICYP.html
21 http://www.cyprus-conflict.net/loizos%20-%20war.htm
8 Finale: ‘Workers of the world, we’re sorry’


2 The earliest poem dates from 1935 and the remainder was written in 1938–40. The work was first published in 1963 in Munich and in Russia it appeared in 1987.

3 http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/aakhma.htm


6 www.tustav.org/SozluTarih/falaka.htm
7 Internal Service Act of Turkish Armed Forces, No. 211, 4 January 1961, in Resmi Gazete, 10 January 1961.
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