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Military Guardians, 1960–1980

GOVERNMENT BY JUNTA

Rather than the election victory of May 1950, it was the period that followed the military coup of 27 May 1960, which marked the beginning of a new phase in Turkey's political, social, and economic life. Few of the 38 officers who constituted the military junta came to power with any preconceived notions of Turkey's political future. Such men as Colonel Alpaslan Türkeş (1917–97), who went on to play an independent political role as leader of a neo-fascist party, had their own radical agenda. Most simply followed the lead of the intelligentsia, to reform the country's politics in keeping with the needs of the times.

The aims of the junta were explained in the radio broadcast announcing the coup on the morning of 27 May 1960.

Honourable fellow countrymen! [announced Colonel Türkeş] ... Owing to the crisis into which our democracy has fallen, in view of the recent sad incidents, and in order to avert fratricide, the Turkish armed forces have taken over the administration of the country. Our armed forces have taken this initiative for the purpose of extricating the parties from the irreconcilable situation into which they have fallen ... [and will hold] just and free elections as soon as possible under the supervision and arbitration of an above-party administration ... [They will hand] over the administration to whichever party wins the election.

This initiative is not directed against any person or class. Our administration will not resort to any aggressive act against individuals, nor will it allow others to do so. All fellow countrymen, irrespective of the parties to which they may belong, will be treated in accordance with the laws.

Most of the officers wanted to return to their barracks after holding 'just and free' elections and restoring power to the politicians. However, their plans changed when some law professors from the universities were called in to advise them. The 38 officers who formed the National Unity Committee (NUC) represented a broad coalition of factions in the armed forces. The reason why the Committee was so large was precisely because any number of secret factions claimed to be involved in the coup and wanted to be represented. Those left out of the junta were disgruntled and became an element of instability in the armed forces, and attempted to carry out coups during the next three years.

The NUC, having no plan of its own, took the advice of academics and formed a commission to prepare a new constitution. Professor Sıddık Sami Onar, professor of law and rector of Istanbul University, chaired the commission. Soldiers had captured political power, but it was intellectuals who turned the 27 May movement into a revolution, a 'revolution of the intellectuals'. The ideas that the Onar Commission put forward were not original; they had been in circulation since the mid-fifties when it was understood that there could be no true democracy under institutions inherited from the single-party period. Responding to the DP's autocratic rule, the opposition began to formulate reforms for when they came to power. The RPP promised to amend the constitution and establish a bicameral parliament, so that the upper house could monitor the legislation passed by the lower chamber. The Republicans made a number of promises: a constitutional court to test the legality of laws; proportional representation so as to prevent parliament being dominated by one party; the right to strike for the unions; the right to unionize for state employees; to repeal anti-democratic laws; and to establish a neutral bureaucracy.

The Onar Commission adopted most of these ideas; it also claimed that the DP had lost its legality because it had failed to respect the constitution and other institutions such as the press, the

armed forces and the universities. Therefore their removal from power by the junta was quite legal. The professors legitimized the coup and allowed the junta to stay in power.

NATIONAL UNITY COMMITTEE: INTERIM GOVERNMENT

Having legitimized the coup, the commission recommended that the NUC create a new state structure and institutions before holding elections and restoring power to the civilians. It proposed a new constitution, a new electoral law, and new laws and institutions that were in keeping with Turkey's place in the democratic world. The NUC became the interim government legalized by a provisional constitution in June 1960. It began to exercise sovereignty on behalf of the Turkish nation, until an assembly had been elected under the new constitution. It held legislative power directly and executive power through the cabinet appointed by the Head of State, who was also Chairman of the NUC. Only the judiciary functioned independently of the junta.

There was much factionalism within the NUC. General Cemal Gürsel (1895–1966) was chosen as president, head of state, prime minister, and commander-in-chief, simply because he was amiable and without ambition and therefore stood above the factions. There were two factions that struggled for power: the moderates supported the Onar Commission's proposals and wanted to restore power to civilians; the radicals, mainly lesser officers, including Colonel Türkeş, wanted to retain power and restructure the Turkish state and society more radically than Professor Onar's proposals. They spoke of creating a 'new culture' and a populist political system without parties, akin to Nasser's Egypt.

The factional struggle lasted until 13 November, when the moderates ousted fourteen of the radicals and exiled many of them to embassies abroad. The purge of 'the fourteen' was welcomed by the bourgeoisie which disliked their collectivist radicalism, but it angered serving junior officers and cadets and created instability in the armed forces. Some officers who had been active in the 1960 coup, but had been kept out of the NUC, began to conspire again. One, Talat Aydemir, attempted two coups that were aborted, the first on 22 February 1962 and the second on 20/21 May 1963. The days of

military coups from below were over. The military coup of 27 May 1960 was the first and the last successful military intervention made from outside the hierarchical structure of Turkey's armed forces.

THE 'SECOND REPUBLIC'

Active officers saw the danger of intervention from below or 'outside the chain of command' and took measures to prevent such occurrences in the future. They formed the Armed Forces Union (AFU) in 1961, a body that included all ranks and which monitored activities throughout the military. Within a short time, the AFU had become the arbiter of political power and the guarantor of the new constitution. Meanwhile, a new constitution had been written and put to a referendum on 9 July 1961. It received a lukewarm reception and almost 40 per cent voted against the constitution. People feared the return of the RPP and single-party rule, even although the new election law guaranteed proportional representation and therefore a multi-party parliament.

The 1961 constitution was radically different from its predecessor. There was now a bicameral parliament, with the lower chamber (the National Assembly) of 450 deputies, who were elected every four years by a system of proportional representation. The Senate consisted of 150 members, elected for a term of six years by a straight majority vote, with one-third retiring every two years. All the members of the NUC were made life senators, while the president nominated 15 senators. The two chambers in joint session constituted the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (GNAT). The assembly elected the president for a term of seven years, from among its own members, by a two-thirds majority. Cemal Gürsel was elected the first president of the Second Republic. He appointed the prime minister, who chose the rest of the cabinet. The cabinet was responsible to the assembly.

The Constitutional Court became one of the most controversial institutions of the Second Republic. It reviewed the constitutionality of legislation and sent back many measures, much to the annoyance of conservative governments. The guarantees of freedom of thought, expression, association and publication contained in the constitution were as important as the new institutions. The state became a 'social state' promising 'social and economic rights', with provisions

for the State to plan economic development so as to achieve social justice, and individuals to have the right to own and inherit property and have the freedom of work and enterprise.

The military high command was also given a role in government. Article III created the National Security Council (NSC) which consisted of ‘the Ministers provided by law, the Chief of the General Staff, and representatives of the armed forces’. The president (himself a retired general) or, in his absence, the prime minister, presided over the NSC. Its function was to assist the cabinet ‘in the making of decisions related to national security and co-ordination.’ The term ‘national security’ was so broad and all-embracing that the generals were able to interfere in virtually every question before the cabinet. In March 1962, the powers of the NSC were increased even further, and the chief of general staff became virtually autonomous of the minister of war because Article 110 made him responsible to the prime minister.

The armed forces were given autonomy and were recognized by the civilians as partners and guardians of the new order they had just created. The generals soon became a vital part of Turkey’s political and socio-economic life. The pay and living standards of officers were increased substantially so that they were no longer affected by inflation. Retired generals were sent as ambassadors or were appointed directors of corporations and banks. In this way they were integrated into the system!

The military entered the world of business and industry in 1961, when the Army Mutual Assistance Association (generally known by its Turkish acronym OYAK) was created. Capital was generated by the contribution of ten per cent of officers’ salaries and then invested in some of the most lucrative ventures in the economy. OYAK functioned as another corporation managed by civilian managers and technocrats, but it was attached to the ministry of defence. It provided loans and other benefits to its members and sold goods at discounted prices to soldiers and their families, in supermarkets called ‘army bazaars’. This service was another hedge against inflation. OYAK has continued to expand and diversify so that it is now to be found in virtually every area of the economy from automobile production to insurance and banking; it is sometimes described as the ‘third sector’ of the economy, along with the state and private sectors.

The military had become the guardians of a system of burgeoning capitalism rather than such abstractions as the 'nation' or 'Kemalism', though the rhetoric of the past has been retained. The principal concern was with maintaining stability and to intervene whenever that was threatened, no matter where the threat came from. But the generals disliked movements of the Left for they threatened the system; but they were equally hostile to parties of the Right if they were the source of instability. While they were in sympathy with parties whose free market ideology they shared, the generals no longer allied themselves to specific parties or their leaders; parties and leaders now wooed the generals.

ECONOMIC REFORMS

While resolving political issues inherited from the DP decade, the NUC was forced to lay new foundations for the economy. The Democrats had pursued a haphazard economic policy that brought about growth rather than development; the NUC opted for a policy that would bring about development and growth. To accomplish this ambitious task they created the State Planning Organization (SPO), whose principal function was to supervise the economy according to a five-year plan. The SPO was created in September 1960, and was included in the new constitution. It was an advisory body, chaired by the prime minister and therefore influenced by the party in power. Moreover, the plan had to be approved by the cabinet and the assembly before it could be implemented; as a result, the entire process of planning became political and ideological. Under coalitions and neo-Democrat governments that ruled once multi-party politics were restored, Article 41 of the Constitution became a dead letter. It promised that 'Economic and social life shall be regulated in a manner consistent with justice and the principle of full employment, with the objective of assuring for everyone a standard of living befitting human dignity.' Such promises did not suit Turkey's nascent business/industrial community, who had become politically influential. Rather than the 'social state' promised by the 1961 constitution, they wanted a state that would discipline and control the workers; they believed that the right to strike or collective bargaining was a luxury for a country at Turkey's stage

of development. For the moment, capital and labour were forced to coexist, but the coexistence came to an end in March 1971, when the military intervened in order to resolve the contradiction in favour of capital.

Meanwhile the five-year plan was launched in 1963, and Turkey embarked on a path of rapid industrialization based on the model of producing goods it had formerly imported. Goods such as automobiles, refrigerators, televisions, etc. were usually made in collaboration with such foreign firms as Ford or Philips; Turkish capitalists were not entrepreneurs who would risk creating anything original which could compete on the world market. They were concerned about making quick profits. They refused to permit structural change by allowing state economic enterprises to reorganize and become efficient competitors. They wanted the state to subsidize the private sector as in mixed economies. There was no land reform, no taxing of farm incomes, or measures to increase productivity. But despite the lack of structural reform in both sectors, the economy grew at the SPO's target rate of 7 per cent. The world economy was favourable, as it had been in the early fifties. There was a demand for Turkish workers in Germany, undergoing its 'economic miracle'. Export of labour helped Turkey in two ways: with employment, as peasants left the land, and with foreign exchange, as workers sent back remittances to their families in German marks. Turkey's economy soon became dependent on these remittances.

Despite the plan, economic expansion remained lopsided. The agrarian sector failed to grow as fast as the planners hoped, while the urban sector grew rapidly, but more in construction and services than industrial production. With low export earnings, the economy depended on the savings of Turkish workers in Europe. When the European economy entered a downturn in the early 1970s, the impact on Turkey was severe.

The planners had succeeded in transforming Turkey's economy and society within a few years. Turkey was no longer predominantly agrarian, with a small state-run industrial sector, as it had been in the 1950s. By the end of the 1960s, there was a dynamic private industrial sector, which contributed as much to the gross national product (GNP) as agriculture. But by 1973, industry had overtaken agriculture.

CHANGING SOCIETAL STRUCTURES

Industry led to urbanization as Anatolian peasants settled in shanty towns in and around the major cities. By the sixties, there was a small working class that became active politically, led by a class-conscious leadership free to act under the new constitution. Workers had acquired the right to bargain collectively and to strike, but they continued to be led by the conservative Confederation of the Workers' Union of Turkey (Türk-İs). This confederation, organized with the advice of the American Federation of Labour–Congress of Industry Organizations (AFL–CIO), chose to be 'non-political' and called only for economic gains. But in 1967, a few unions affiliated with Türk-İs broke away and formed the Confederation of Revolutionary Workers' Unions (DİSK). Their demands were both political and economic and they had the support of the recently founded Workers' Party of Turkey (WPT).

The bourgeoisie had also grown, both in size and in confidence, during the sixties. In the past it had relied exclusively on the governing party to further its cause. But in 1971, it found its own pressure group, the Association of Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen (TÜSİAD), which has played an important political role ever since. Consumption patterns changed as more goods became available, and the introduction of radio (in the fifties) and television in the seventies transformed social and political life. Both radio and television were important for the success of smaller political parties with limited financial resources, as they could appeal directly to voters through their broadcasts.

The process of monopolization under large corporations in partnership with foreign capital began to undermine local and much smaller enterprises, simply because they were unable to compete. This led to bankruptcies and the closure of thousands of workshops, threatening the livelihood of millions. Meanwhile, new patterns of consumption caused inflation and a demand for higher wages and salaries. All these changes in Turkey's economy and society aggravated an already unstable political situation when the NUC restored multi-party politics in 1961.

The 1961 Constitution provided the people of Turkey with a greater degree of political freedom than they had ever enjoyed since the creation of the Republic. The new state was described as

a ‘social state’; it gave greater civil rights than ever before, autonomy to the universities and the right for students to organize associations, and workers enjoyed the right to strike. In this environment of political freedom, workers and leftist intellectuals united to form a socialist party, the WPT, and provided an ideological alternative to the debate on political life framed in the past on Kemalist terms.

THE FORMATION OF NEW POLITICAL PARTIES

The 1961 Constitution and new laws had changed the political structure, but not the underlying structures. The DP had been dissolved; many of its leaders who were put on trial for violating the Constitution were imprisoned, and three ministers – Prime Minister Menderes, Finance Minister Polatkan and Foreign Minister Zorlu – were executed. The Democrats remained popular at a grass-roots level and the neo-Democrat parties that were formed in 1961 depended on that vote bank. In the 1961 elections, the Justice Party (JP) and the New Turkey Party (NTP) won 48.5 per cent of the vote between them (34.8 and 13.7 per cent respectively). İnönü’s RPP won only 36.7 per cent, insufficient votes or seats in the assembly to form the government. As the generals would not permit a neo-Democratic government, İnönü was asked to form the first of three coalitions which governed Turkey from November 1961 to 1964.

These years were marked by political instability and it was only the threat of military intervention that kept the coalition together. The Justice Party gained strength, especially under the leadership of Süleyman Demirel (1924–), becoming the most popular party after the local elections of November 1963. When the third İnönü coalition resigned on 12 February 1965, because it had failed to win a vote of confidence, Demirel was ready to take charge. The last coalition was led by an Independent elected on the JP list and Demirel therefore ruled by proxy. The role of the coalition was to lead Turkey to the election of 1965; this brought the Justice Party to power and restored a semblance of stability.

The Justice Party was founded in February 1961 and was initially led by a retired general, Ragıp Gumüşpala, who had the trust of the armed forces. He was expected to keep the neo-

Democrats in check. When he died in June 1964, the party chose Süleyman Demirel, the least controversial candidate, as chairman. He was an engineer and a technocrat, who came to the top because the NUC had eliminated the top layers of DP leadership after the coup. Coming from a modest rural background, he was able to appeal to ordinary people, especially the Anatolian migrants of the shantytowns who were able to identify with him as someone who had succeeded by his own talents.

THE NEW POLITICS AND THE WIDER WORLD

Political life in the sixties was dramatically different from what it had been in earlier decades. The country had been politicized and the 1961 Constitution provided a new framework for ideological discourse. For the first time a Left emerged that challenged politics as usual, especially Turkey's foreign policy. The country no longer felt isolated and became conscious of what was happening in the world around, especially as students could now read left-wing Marxist literature, which was widely available, even in small towns. Conservative forces, alarmed by these trends, began to organize against the Left, describing their fight as a struggle against Moscow's communism.

Politics in Turkey were influenced by the cold war and events in the Middle East. Policymakers in Washington had been alarmed by the rise of nationalism in the Middle East and Asia and concluded that nationalism was as great a threat to Western interests as communism. Consequently, in November 1958, the US government issued an internal document – National Security Agency document 5820/1 – arguing that Islam could be used as an antidote to nationalism and communism. After 1960, many Turkish nationalists began to criticize US policy and their government's unquestioning loyalty to it. The NUC continued to reaffirm Turkey's commitment to NATO, and during the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962, İnönü stood by Washington, despite the Soviet nuclear threat. But Turks learned that the Kennedy Administration had bargained away the Jupiter missiles in Anatolia in its negotiations with Moscow. Soon after, it was revealed that in case of war with the Soviet Union, NATO planners had decided that much of Anatolia, apart from Istanbul and

western Anatolia, was expendable! Turkey's foreign relations had become a major factor in everyday politics.

THE CYPRUS QUESTION

The crisis with Greece over Cyprus in the winter of 1963/4 brought the situation to a head. The Menderes government became embroiled in the Cyprus question wherein the Greek-Cypriot national movement sought independence from Britain and union with Greece. Initially, Ankara and the Turkish Cypriots – about 20 per cent of the island's population – supported Britain and the status quo. By 1955, when Britain's hold was weakening, Ankara asked that Britain return the island to the Turks from whom she had acquired it in 1878. Both Britain and Turkey were convinced that Greek Cypriots would prefer British to Turkish rule! When the Greeks found that proposal unacceptable, Ankara proposed partition; since that too was out of the question, Ankara proposed and pressed for partition in 1957. After prolonged negotiations, in 1959, the parties agreed to the creation of a republic in Cyprus, with Britain, Greece, and Turkey agreeing to guarantee the constitutional rights of the Turkish-Cypriot community. On 15 August 1960, the Republic of Cyprus came into being with a Greek-Cypriot president (Archbishop Makarios) and a Turkish-Cypriot vice president (Dr Fazıl Küçük).

President Makarios found the power-sharing constitution unworkable and said he would not be bound by the 1960 treaty guaranteed by Britain, Greece, and Turkey. Violence broke out on the island between the two communities in late 1963 and on 13 March 1964, İnönü, as one of the guarantors, threatened unilateral action unless there was an immediate cease-fire. Makarios rejected İnönü's note, though he lifted the siege from Turkish districts and hostages were released.

In Turkey, nationalist passions were aroused and there was overwhelming support for military intervention, as everyone believed in the justice of the Turkish cause. In January 1966, the publication of a letter from President Johnson to Prime Minister İnönü (sent in June 1964) created a furor throughout the country. İnönü was told that the Turks could not use arms provided by Washington without US consent, and he issued a warning that NATO would

not come to Turkey's aid 'against the Soviet Union if Turkey takes a step which results in Soviet intervention without the full consent and understanding of its NATO allies.'

Anti-American demonstrations followed, to the extent that visits by the US Sixth Fleet to Turkish ports became virtually impossible. The demonstrations continued until the military intervention of 12 March 1971. The nationalists and leftists began calling for a non-aligned Turkey, and even the government asked the foreign ministry to re-examine the country's foreign relations in light of the prevailing world conditions. After due consideration, the foreign ministry proposed turning more to a Europe which was then in the process of forming a common market and political union. The Turkish general staff decided to create a division independent of NATO to be used when 'national interest' required, as in Cyprus.

Anti-Americanism polarized society into a conservative Right and a nationalist and radical Left, sometimes described as neo-Kemalist. The Left viewed the US as the leader of the capitalist world upon which Turkey had become dependent. They interpreted Turkey's history since 1919 as a struggle for independence against imperialism – independence that the sultan had been willing to abandon merely to remain in power. After the Second World War, both the RPP and the DP had betrayed Kemalism by accepting the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, joining NATO and the Baghdad Pact, and making Turkey an appendage of the West. Recent events had shown that such a policy was against the national interest and therefore had to be abandoned. Such was the criticism of students' clubs in the universities, the Workers' Party, and the unions. The RPP was influenced by some of these radical ideas and responded by adopting what was described as a 'left-of centre' political line and adopting the slogan that 'this order must change'.

The Right was alarmed by these radical nationalist ideas and attacked them as communist propaganda. It turned to Islam – as the US National Security Agency had suggested in 1958 – as the 'antidote to communism'. The 'Association to Combat Communism', founded in 1962, exploited Islam as an ideological tool against the Left. This trend continued throughout the 1960s, encouraged by money from Saudi Arabia, where an organization

known as the 'Union of the World of Islam' had been founded to combat nationalism and communism. Turkey's provincial lower middle classes also used Islam to mobilize support for their cause in response to such internal developments as rapid industrialization and the growth of monopolies that undermined local crafts and commerce.

The Justice Party had come to power in 1965 and had to deal with these new forces. Its leader, Süleyman Demirel, symbolized the new face of capitalism intimately associated with the US. He had spent a year in the United States as an Eisenhower fellow and was then employed by a US multinational construction company engaged in Turkey. He and his policies were therefore an easy target for attacks from the Left and the religious Right, which described him as a freemason. By the late sixties, Demirel's position had become virtually untenable. The Cyprus question remained unresolved, with Turkish-Cypriots besieged in their enclaves or emigrating to Britain and Australia. Students and workers became more militant, and anti-Americanism increased along with US involvement in Vietnam, the pro-Washington 'Colonels' coup' in Greece in April 1967, and the Arab-Israeli war of June 1967. The last two events consolidated US hegemony in the eastern Mediterranean and weakened Turkey's role in the region.

The struggle between labour and capital became bitter, especially after students and workers in Paris almost succeeded in carrying out a revolution. These events were influential in Turkey; they encouraged the Left but showed the government the potential threats to its power. In 1967, some unions had already broken away from the pro-government and 'non-political' confederation (Türk-İş) and formed their own confederation (DİSK), which they described as 'revolutionary'. Türk-İş had been unofficially affiliated with the Justice Party, which enabled the government and employers to control the workers. Government and employers were alarmed by the workers' militancy and their growing strength at the expense of the docile Türk-İş. When they saw that they were losing control of the unions, they decided to act and regain control before it was too late.

POLITICAL FRAGMENTATION

As well as Leftist militancy, the government also had to confront a political Right that was fragmenting under the impact of socio-economic developments. Small enterprises throughout Anatolia owned by the traditional middle classes were unable to survive the competition of the large cosmopolitan corporations situated in the Istanbul-Marmara region. They felt that Demirel had betrayed them and given his support to the large holding companies. This resulted in their defection from the Justice Party after the 1969 election, thus weakening its electoral support. They began to turn to such small Rightist parties as Colonel Alparslan Türkeş's neo-fascist Nationalist Action Party (NAP), or the Reliance Party formed by Professor Turhan Feyzioğlu who left the RPP in protest at its left-of-centre programme, or the National Order Party (NOP) founded by Professor Necmettin Erbakan (1926–), or the Democratic Party formed by JP dissidents. Türkeş was an ultra-nationalist who claimed to be opposed to both monopoly capitalism and communism; Feyzioğlu was simply right of centre and had little to offer that was different from Demirel; Erbakan used 'Islamic' discourse to criticize the monopolies as lackeys of the Christian/Jewish West. Türkeş and Erbakan's parties acquired electoral strength only in the 1990s; until then they were not an electoral threat to the JP, but useful allies in coalition governments of the 1970s. As for the Reliance Party, it proved to be ephemeral and dissolved itself in the 1970s. But for the moment, the fragmentation of the Right became the major factor of political instability.

By the early 1970s, the situation in Turkey had become explosive. Student and working-class militancy, social and economic changes, growing political conflict, and the world situation proved to be a dangerous mix. There was a 'revolution of rising expectations' – expectations that were not being met for the majority of the people. There was widespread unemployment, aggravated by the end of the 'German economic miracle' that had siphoned off workers throughout the sixties. Population grew rapidly without the job market or the educational system capable of absorbing the younger population. Overcrowded schools and universities were ideal for recruiting militants for the Left and the Right, and these youths

played a crucial role in creating the political instability that led to military intervention on 12 March 1971.

Demirel had attempted to control the situation in the assembly by having the ‘national remainder system’ of the 1961 electoral law abolished in March 1968. This provision had permitted the Workers’ Party 14 seats in the 1965 assembly, and its representatives had played a very important role in the ranks of the opposition. The amendment had changed that and in 1969, the WPT won only 2 seats. The party’s leader, Mehmet Ali Aybar (1910–95), had warned the assembly that ‘if this law passes, unrest in the country will rise to another level ... you will be responsible for whatever befalls our democracy’. The Left, no longer having an outlet for expressing discontent in the assembly, vented their frustrations in the street, though the Workers’ Party itself did not encourage subversion or violence. The Left was convinced that Demirel had shut off the parliamentary road to reform and power; the only way forward was via a military coup, made in partnership with radical officers who were sympathetic to the idea of a ‘National Democratic Revolution’. This group became even more militant and espoused the ideas of Maoism and the Latin American urban guerrillas.

Demirel, having undermined the parliamentary Left, set out to destroy the political trade unions, led by DİSK, and to strengthen Türk-İş. The law the government wanted to amend would eliminate a union unless it represented at least one-third of the workers in a factory. That provision was expected to destroy DİSK. Workers – not only DİSK members – came out in protest against the law on 15/16 June 1970 and paralysed the Istanbul-Marmara region; the authorities shut down ferry services across the Sea of Marmara to prevent the protest from spilling over into European Istanbul. The Right described the protest as ‘a dress rehearsal for revolution’, and observers predicted that the military would intervene as civilians were unable to maintain law and order. Demirel had often complained that he found it impossible to govern with such a liberal and permissive constitution, suggesting that it had to be amended and made more authoritarian.

The generals were aware of the Left’s contact with radical officers. The National Intelligence Organization and military intelligence, both created in 1963, knew of the conspiracies in the

military from their moles. The press reported purges of officers in 1970 when 56 generals and 516 colonels were retired. There was a threat of intervention from officers outside the 'chain of command', and the senior generals decided to forestall it and appease the radicals by carrying out a reform programme of their own.

At the beginning of 1971, Turkey was in a state of turmoil. Leftist student militants robbed banks, kidnapped US servicemen, and attacked American targets. The Gray Wolves, neo-fascist militants linked to NAP, attacked professors who were critical of the government. There was constant strike activity and more work-days were lost between 1 January and the military intervention of 12 March 1971 than during any previous year. The Islamists became more aggressive and openly rejected Atatürk and Kemalism, infuriating the armed forces.

On 8 March, Demirel, unable to control the situation, lost the support of his party's group. This triggered the military intervention, for the generals rationalized that Demirel had to go now since even his party no longer supported him. Therefore on 12 March, five senior generals – the chiefs of general staff and the commanders of the army, navy, and air force – presented a memorandum to President Cevdet Sunay and the speakers of the two chambers. They demanded the government's resignation and the formation of a strong, credible cabinet, capable of implementing the reforms envisaged by the constitution. Demirel reluctantly resigned and his resignation cleared the way for an 'above-party' government that could pass the anti-democratic measures considered necessary to govern Turkey in turbulent times.

THE MEMORANDUM REGIME AND AFTER, 1971–1980

The coup of 12 March was thought by many to have been made by radical-reformist officers who supported the 1961 Constitution. The memorandum held the Demirel government responsible for Turkey's 'anarchy, fratricidal strife, and social and economic unrest', and called for a government – formed within the framework of democratic principles and inspired by Kemalist ideas – that would implement the reformist laws envisaged by the constitution.

But priority was to be given 'to the restoration of law and order' and that meant crushing the Left. The Workers' Party was

proscribed on the same day as the memorandum was issued, its leaders accused of carrying out communist propaganda and supporting Kurdish separatism. All youth organizations affiliated to the Dev-Genç (the acronym for the Federation of the Revolutionary Youth of Turkey) were closed down. Offices of such groups as the 'Ideas Clubs' in the universities, and branches of the Union of Teachers, and DİSK were searched by the police. Meanwhile, 'Idealist Hearths', NAP's youth wing, acted as vigilantes against leftists. The principal aim of this attack on the Left was to intimidate the workers and curb union militancy.

After Demirel's resignation, the new junta was undecided as to how they should exercise the power they had just seized. The Greek colonels' experience deterred them from taking over directly, and so they decided to act through an above-party civilian government and a conservative assembly. In Professor Nihat Erim, who described the liberal 1961 Constitution as a luxury for Turkey, they found a politician who would be acceptable to both the JP and the RPP. Professor Erim (1912–80), though a Republican in the 1940s, was able to work comfortably with the Democrats and later the Justice Party. He was an ambitious man and he was quite willing to collaborate with the military, though it cost him his life when the 'Revolutionary Left' assassinated him in 1980.

Erim formed a cabinet of managers and technocrats, designed to carry out the reforms proposed by the generals. His ministers came from the World Bank (Atilla Karaosmanoğlu), from OYAK (Özer Derbil), from the Turkish Petroleum Company (İhsan Topaloğlu), and the SPO (Şinasi Orel). There were also notorious anti-reformist ministers, but they were supported in the assembly. The Erim cabinet was unlikely to carry out democratic reform! First and foremost, he had to deal with outbreaks of terrorism by the so-called 'Turkish People's Liberation Army' (TPLA). It was said by some that behind the terrorists were dissident military officers, while others claimed that terrorism was the work of provocateurs from Turkey's intelligence service, agents who had infiltrated the Left, just as the FBI in America had infiltrated the Weathermen and the Black Panthers.

The state responded by declaring martial law in eleven of Turkey's 67 provinces and unleashing brutal repression. Urban

Turkey, including Istanbul and Ankara, and the south-east, the centre of Kurdish nationalism, were placed under martial law. Political life was totally paralyzed; all meetings and seminars of professional associations and unions were prohibited; two newspapers were suspended and bookshops were ordered not to sell publications proscribed by the authorities. Publications of the neo-fascist Right continued to circulate freely. Two prominent journalists, Çetin Altan, an ex-Workers' Party deputy, and İlhan Selçuk, a radical Kemalist, were taken into custody and tortured; this was the first sign of an impending crackdown on intellectuals. On 3 May, all strikes and lockouts were declared illegal, much to the relief of the Employers' Unions.

The abduction on 17 May of Ephraim Elrom, Israel's consul in Istanbul, aggravated the repression. The military regime was provoked and responded by imposing draconian measures against the Left, and power was placed in the hands of martial law authorities. Hundreds were taken into custody, including such famous authors as Yaşar Kemal and Fakir Baykurt. Torture became routine; rather than to extract information, it was designed to break the will of political prisoners so that they would give up politics. Repression failed to save Elrom; it might even have hastened his murder on the night of 21/22 May, when the authorities ordered a house-to-house search in Istanbul. Political repression under martial law became the order of the day for the next two years.

The government amended the 1961 Constitution, which the Right blamed for the country's problems. Virtually every institution of state and society was modified: the trade unions, the press, radio and television, the universities, the Council of State, the Constitutional Court, the assembly, the Senate and the Court of Appeal. The liberal rights and freedoms guaranteed by the 1961 Constitution were curbed so that – in Professor Erim's words – the amended constitution guaranteed 'that there is no going back to the period before 12 March'. The democratization of the sixties had proved too costly and the liberal constitution too great a luxury for a country that wanted to make rapid progress along the capitalist path.

The amendments were made without public debate and were supported by all parties. Only Mehmed Ali Aybar, who had been expelled from the Workers' Party before 12 March, became an

Independent deputy and protested in the assembly: ‘The proposed amendments of the Constitution are against the basic principle of our current democratic constitution; their aim is to proscribe socialism and for that reason cannot be reconciled with the contemporary understanding of a democratic regime.’ Erim agreed: the constitution was closed to socialism but not to social democracy.

The assembly and the Senate passed 35 amended articles and introduced nine new provisional ones. The Turkish state was no longer a ‘social state’; it had given up all pretence of establishing any kind of social justice. When there was the possibility of carrying out genuine reform, Demirel created a governmental crisis by withdrawing JP ministers from the cabinet. He was looking ahead. The military regime was transitional and would restore power to the parties by holding elections that he intended to win. Therefore it was important to retain the party’s popular base and not support reforms that would benefit only the major corporations. Eleven reformist ministers, who had fought to reform the economy, finally understood that reform was dead when Demirel’s former minister of finance was appointed to the cabinet in December 1971. They resigned in protest and Erim was forced to follow.

Erim’s second cabinet (11 December 1971–17 April 1972) became dependent on Demirel’s support and was unable to pass any significant reformist legislation. Apart from the constitutional amendments, Erim had accomplished little except a ban on opium cultivation, a decision made under severe pressure from the US; the decision was reversed in 1973 when party politics were restored. The next two cabinets, led by Ferit Melen and Naim Talu, were essentially caretaker ministries, whose function was to prepare the country for elections in October 1973. During this period, the social and economic problems remained unresolved and Turkey remained under martial law. But with the promise of elections, the mood of the country began to change. Since 1950, Turkish voters have taken elections very seriously as a way of expressing their hopes and discontent. But before the next election, the parties in parliament had to elect President Cevdet, Sunay’s successor. Since 1960, the presidency had mediated civilian–military relations and the president had always been a

military man, chosen by the generals. His election by the two chambers was considered a formality. In March 1973, when Sunay's term ended, the generals expected parliament to elect General Faruk Gürler, Commander of the Land Forces. Gürler had retired and was appointed senator from the presidential quota so that he could become a candidate for the presidency. But Demirel and Ecevit, leaders of the two largest parties in parliament, refused to collaborate. After much wrangling, the generals told the politicians to elect their own president, provided that he was acceptable to the armed forces. Finally, on 6 April 1973, parliament elected retired Admiral Fahri Korutürk as Turkey's sixth president. He was a military man and independent of the parties, but was known to be cosmopolitan and liberal, a senator who had opposed the creation of State Security Courts. His election was seen as a rebuff for the military.

THE GENERAL ELECTION OF 1973

By the summer of 1973, the stage had been set for a general election. The state had been strengthened against the forces of civil society. Machinery for crushing dissidents was in place, whether in universities or factories. But as a response to these changes, the Left gathered around the RPP, which had become a social democratic party under the leadership of Bülent Ecevit (1925–). Social democracy had become an important ideology in the seventies, and was partly responsible for the military intervention which was to take place on 12 September 1980.

The RPP's social democracy partially filled the gap left by the dissolution of the Workers' Party in July 1971. Republicans had moved 'left-of-center' in the mid-1960s and the right wing of the party had left after the election of 1969. The military coup of 1971 divided the party even more over the question of whether to support the military regime or not. İsmet İnönü, the party's chairman, had come out on the side of Erim; Ecevit, the general secretary, had opposed Erim and resigned. Ecevit's political future at that point looked bleak, but he became more populist and asked the party to abandon its elitism, summed up in the old slogan: 'for the people in spite of the people'. His populism began to pay off and he won the support of party organizations in the provinces. Alarmed by this

trend, İnönü called an extra-ordinary party congress in May 1972 and confronted Ecevit. İnönü, certain of defeating his rival, asked the party to choose between himself and Ecevit. Much to everyone's surprise, the party voted for Ecevit and İnönü resigned as the party's chairman on 7 May. He had occupied that office since November 1938 when Atatürk died. The following week the congress elected Ecevit as the new chairman of the now social democratic RPP.

The 1973 election aroused great expectations throughout the country. It was impossible to predict how the parties, especially the RPP, would fare. Demirel and the Justice Party seemed best placed to win, for he had maintained control over his party and showed its strength during military rule. The RPP under Ecevit was still untried and İnönü's resignation from the party in November 1972 seemed to weaken it further.

The small parties of the Right – the Democratic Party, the Nationalist Action Party, the Reliance Party, the Republican Reliance Party after its mergers with the Republican Party in July 1972 – were not considered a threat. The new National Salvation Party (NSP), formed in October 1972 by Islamists as successor to the National Order Party which was dissolved in May 1971, was an unknown quantity.

In 1973, the NSP projected a more serious image than had its predecessor, emphasizing its opposition to the growth of monopolies and dependence on foreign capital. Necmettin Erbakan (1926–) called for heavy industry and an economy based on Islamic values such as interest-free banking. The political Islamists wanted to cultivate an image of 'Islamic socialism' (though they never used those words!) for this was more likely to appeal to the voters than 'Islamic fundamentalism'. Its propaganda was so successful that the NSP became the third party after the RPP and the JP in 1973. Thereafter the challenge of political Islam and the rising counter-elite had to be taken more seriously.

The election results were most revealing; the RPP victory had been a surprise, but the Right had fragmented more seriously than predicted. The JP vote had diminished from 46.5 per cent in 1969 to 29.8 per cent, to the benefit of the Democratic Party and the NSP; they won 11.9 and 11.8 per cent of the vote respectively in their very first election. The Reliance Party vote was reduced and the NAP made a modest gain of 0.4 per cent.

The RPP victory surprised most people, but the party failed to win sufficient votes and assembly seats to govern on its own; Ecevit won 33.3 per cent of the vote and 185 seats and needed 226 to form the cabinet. Nevertheless, the party fortunes were on the rise; not since 1961 had it been so successful. The new social democratic identity had helped and the RPP won its votes in the progressive, industrial belt of Turkey and not in its traditional stronghold of backward, east and central Anatolia. The party was attractive to urban migrants, who saw social democracy as the ideology of the future.

The rightist parties, which had garnered over 60 per cent of the vote, failed to agree on a government. Therefore Ecevit was asked to form the government. He offered to form the government with the secular parties of the Right – the JP and the DP – whose leaders turned down his offer. Ecevit then invited NSP's Necmettin Erbakan, who accepted the offer. Both parties were committed to protecting 'the little man' from the monopolies, and to economic development with social justice. They both claimed to believe in democracy and fundamental rights and freedoms. They agreed to paper over their differences on cultural values for the moment. For example, the Republicans wanted to emulate the example of social democratic Europe, and the Islamists were wary of it!

COALITION GOVERNMENT: RPP–NSP

In the end, the RPP–NSP coalition was formed due to political opportunism – and it collapsed for the same reason. Both leaders had to establish their legitimacy and leading the government was the best way to do so, especially for Erbakan whose NOP had been banned in 1971. Nevertheless it took three months of hard bargaining before the coalition was finally announced in January 1974.

The coalition presented a moderate programme that alarmed neither the business community nor the generals – although the Right opposed the government's proposals for a general amnesty for political prisoners, the restoration of rights lost by the unions, and to heal the wounds left by the military regime. The Right denounced the programme as an invitation to anarchy at a time when unemployment was rising as a result of economic depression in the West.

The formation of the Ecevit-led coalition was marked by political violence instigated by ‘the Grey Wolves’. Political terrorism had become a staple of Turkish life, intensifying throughout the seventies until it became the pretext for the military coup in September 1980. Before the 1971 coup, leftist terrorism had been designed to ignite revolution; the aim of rightist terrorism was to demoralize the country and create a climate of uncertainty in which military law and order would be welcomed by the masses. In opposition, Demirel was both provocative and intimidating. He often referred to Bülent Ecevit as ‘Büllende’, an allusion to the Chilean President Allende, who had been killed during the CIA-backed military coup of 1973, suggesting that Ecevit might share Allende’s fate!

After receiving a vote of confidence on 7 February 1974, the coalition began to carry out its campaign promises. Poppy cultivation was restored, and an amended amnesty bill was passed, resulting in the release of hundreds of political prisoners. Ecevit’s growing popularity caused tension in the coalition, especially after he ordered the army to intervene in response to a coup d’état in Cyprus against President Makarios. On 15 July, the National Guard of Cyprus, acting on orders from the junta in Athens, overthrew the government and seized power. When Britain refused to intervene jointly with Turkey, Ankara decided to intervene unilaterally, as one of the guarantors of the 1960 Treaty. Turkish troops landed on the island on 26 July and launched a second offensive on 14 August, capturing 40 per cent of the island. There was now a de facto partition of Cyprus. Relations between Greece and Turkey were already tense because of a dispute over territorial waters in the Aegean Sea. Relations deteriorated even more as a result of the Cyprus issue; even now, the search for a diplomatic solution has yet to be found, despite regular negotiations.

In Turkey, Ecevit became an instant hero and tensions between him and Erbakan became so intense that Ecevit decided to resign on 18 September, convinced that a fresh election would bring his party to power. But there were no elections because the parties of the Right refused to sanction them, knowing that they would be committing political suicide if they did so. Ecevit’s crisis created a situation during which there was no government for 241 days. A caretaker government failed to obtain a vote of confidence and

Demirel was finally able to form a rightist coalition, known as 'the Nationalist Front', on 31 March 1975.

The Nationalist Front was composed of the Justice, Salvation, Reliance and Nationalist Action parties and was supported in the assembly by independents who had defected from the Democratic Party. The strong presence of the NAP, with its leader Türkeş as deputy prime minister, gave the coalition a neo-fascist complexion. The slogan 'Demirel in Parliament, Türkeş in the Street' was popularized by the activities of the Grey Wolves, who began to terrorize the social democrats in order to undermine their electoral strength. The extreme left-wing forces, organized in such factions as the 'Revolutionary Left' (Dev-Sol) and the Revolutionary Path (Dev-Yol), responded and added to the confusion.

The formation of the Demirel coalition ended the possibility of an early general election, and the coalition partners used the opportunity to colonize the state apparatus. The Justice Party controlled the media; NAP and NSP took over education, recruiting their militants from the schools and universities they now controlled, and control of the ministry of customs enabled them to import arms for their movement. The militants of the Right considered themselves as part of the state now that their leaders were in a governing coalition which gave them protection and the ability to terrorize their political opponents. They not only attacked RPP meetings (even in Ecevit's presence), but also the Alevis, a Shia sect in Anatolia, as well as the Kurds, because they supported the Republicans who were secular and not ultra-nationalist.

Despite the violence, the RPP's position improved in the Senate election on 12 October 1975 and the party's vote increased to almost 44 per cent, in comparison with 35.4 per cent in 1973. The JP's share also increased from 30 to 40 per cent, while the smaller parties of the Right declined. By the mid-1970s a two-party system seemed to be gaining momentum. Under these conditions the splinter parties wanted to avoid an early general election and were determined to continue the Nationalist Front coalition, even as they struggled to strengthen their parties before the election. Political violence continued into 1976; Demirel proposed declaring martial law but was rejected by his Islamist partners who feared the secularist military. It was an open secret that the NAP was

guilty of fomenting the violence, but no action could be taken as its leader was the deputy prime minister.

There was fear of some sort of fascism under Türkeş because of his party's role in the violence during the 19 May Youth Day celebrations of 1976. Even Demirel was alarmed and decided to agree to an election in order to free himself from the hold of his extremist partners. The constitution required that the election be held by October 1977, but in April, the JP and the RPP voted to bring the date forward to 5 June 1977.

The tempo of political violence increased once elections were announced and reached its climax during the May Day celebrations of 1977. The workers had organized a huge rally against 'the rising tide of fascism' and everything went off peacefully until shots rang out and a panic was created that led to 34 people being trampled to death and hundreds wounded. People were convinced that the May Day massacre had been orchestrated by rightist forces within the state to intimidate voters. But five weeks later, when the election was held, the voters were not intimidated. The turnout was higher than in 1973 – 72.4 per cent as against 66.8 per cent – and the RPP won 41.4 per cent against 36.9 for the JP. The Islamist vote declined, and only the neo-fascist NAP increased its assembly seats from 3 to 13; violence and state power had been effective!

This time, Ecevit fell short by 13 of the 226 seats required to form a Republican government. He formed a minority government, but failed to win a vote of confidence; on 21 July 1977, Demirel again formed the second Nationalist Front, even though the business community, led by TÜSİAD, proposed a JP–RPP coalition. The two major parties acted in the interests of their leaders rather than on behalf of the 'national consensus' of the business community. Although the business community was becoming more powerful and articulate, it was still not able to dictate politics to the parties. Elections had failed to provide stability, and political life became even more polarized and political violence continued unabated. The Second Front coalition, marred by ideological contradictions, fell apart after the local election of 11 December 1977, when Demirel failed to obtain a vote of confidence. In the JP, moderates resigned because the party had become captive by extremists. The following week, Ecevit

formed a coalition with independents who had resigned from the JP and conservatives from the Reliance Party. Such a coalition was not designed to carry out reforms and it soon undermined RPP's electoral support; forming a coalition with conservatives proved to be a major political error on Ecevit's part, almost as great as his resignation in 1974.

Apart from his failure to institute reform, Ecevit also failed to restore law and order; there were 30 political murders during the first 15 days of 1978. In July, when the police failed to cope, Ecevit called in the gendarmerie, the first sign that martial law was on the way. The Right began to assassinate prominent intellectuals, the most dramatic killing being that of Abdi İpekçi on 1 February 1978. One of the most prominent liberal journalists committed to democracy, he was also a close friend of Prime Minister Ecevit, who had himself begun his career in journalism. As usual, very few rightists were detained. When İpekçi's assassin was finally arrested, he turned out to be Mehmed Ali Ağca, who before long acquired universal notoriety as the Turk who made an attempt on Pope John Paul II's life in Rome in April 1981, after escaping from a Turkish military prison.

Because it was secular and supported the RPP, the Grey Wolves now targeted the Alevi community, a fringe Shia sect in Anatolia. They were attacked in Malatya (April 1978), Sivas (September), and Bingöl (October), the violence being designed to destroy them economically. In the assembly, the opposition began calling for the imposition of martial law, which Ecevit was reluctant to implement, hoping to control the situation with a stricter application of existing laws. But the Alevi pogrom in Kahramanmaraş, a small town in central Anatolia, on 22 December, altered his plans. There were many deaths and hundreds were wounded when the Grey Wolves went on the rampage, shouting 'no funerals for communists and Alevi'. Air force jets and an armoured unit were sent to restore the peace and on Christmas Day, Ecevit was forced to order martial law in 13 Anatolian provinces. His failure to end terrorism was a crucial reason for the loss of support among voters. But even under martial law, terrorism continued, the opposition claiming that Ecevit was placing restrictions on the generals so that they were unable to deal with the terrorists. Nevertheless the generals now

controlled the Kurdish-populated areas in eastern Anatolia and were able to ban May Day celebrations in 1979. These measures eroded support for Ecevit even more, so that when partial Senate and some by-elections were held on 14 October, the RPP's vote declined, while that of the JP increased in both these elections. Again there was a high turnout of 73 per cent; despite everything the voters still had faith in the ballot box. Following his defeat, Ecevit resigned on 16 October. Since the country found another Front coalition repugnant, Demirel formed a minority government on 12 November, rejecting the bourgeoisie's appeals for a 'grand coalition' with Ecevit. With the support of the Right, Demirel received a vote of confidence on 25 November 1979.

TURKEY'S RENEWED STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE

The strategic importance of Turkey changed dramatically after the 1978/9 Islamic revolution in Iran and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979. The West needed a stable regime in Turkey, something the political parties had been unable to provide it with; perhaps the generals could. By December 1979, the generals began discussing the timing and nature of their next military intervention. First of all, they agreed to tell the politicians to put their house in order. Had they wanted to end terrorism and bloodshed, they ought to have intervened long before September 1980, but they seemed more concerned about the consequences in Iran and the outbreak of a 'second Cold War' with the Soviet Union. As early as April 1979, *The Guardian's* Brussels correspondent wrote: 'Not surprisingly Turkey ... is now seen as a zone of crucial strategic significance not only for the southern flank [of NATO] but for the West as a whole'. But Turkey, in her current state of political turmoil, was incapable of assuming her new responsibilities. In January 1980, when the terms of the new US–Turkish Defence and Cooperation Treaty were being finalized, Demirel refused to allow the use of Turkish bases by any future Rapid Deployment Force or to facilitate Greece's return to the NATO political structure, unless Turkey's rights in the Aegean were recognized. Washington concluded that, under Demirel, Turkey could not play the regional role that was being assigned her: it seems that only the military could.

The generals made unilateral concessions to Greece regarding Aegean airspace, without even informing the foreign ministry, and in March, the signing of the Defence and Cooperation Treaty anchored Turkey to the West; Ecevit's attempt to have a 'multi-dimensional' foreign policy was abandoned. Demirel also gave the generals full authority to crush terrorism which, they said, came only from the Left, for the Grey Wolves were considered allies of the state in its struggle against the communists. But the generals failed to put a stop to the violence that often took as many as 20 lives a day. The unending violence prepared the ground for military intervention, and many welcomed the generals' coup as salvation from the anarchy and chaos that gripped the country.

MOUNTING ECONOMIC GLOOM

As well as terrorism, the economy also required a regime of strict discipline and social peace that only the military could provide. Throughout the seventies, all the coalitions had neglected the economy, until Ecevit was forced to attend to it in 1978/9. During this time, successive governments had to cope with a worldwide economic downturn, the oil-price shock of 1974, the US embargo of 5 February 1975, and European sanctions that followed on the heels of the Cyprus intervention. The cost of military occupation of northern Cyprus and subsidies to the Turkish-Cypriot government were an added burden to the economy. With an eye to elections, the parties had pursued a populist policy and provided subsidies with public money to all sectors, to encourage high employment and economic growth. They borrowed money to finance the budgetary deficits. In the end, Ecevit had to turn to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and accept its harsh terms as the price of the economic bailout. But the IMF and TÜSİAD wanted even more concessions than Ecevit was willing to make so that the austerity programme could be implemented. Finally Ecevit curbed consumption at home in order to encourage exports and all this undermined his support in the October 1979 Senate elections, forcing him to resign.

Thanks to US support, the economy showed signs of recovery following the revolution in Iran. The Demirel minority

government implemented the IMF's programme under Turgut Özal (1927–93) who was appointed his economic adviser. Özal was a technocrat who saw politics as an impediment to the implementation of economic measures he introduced on 24 January 1980. The Turkish lira was devalued by 30 per cent and prices of virtually every commodity – oil and oil products, cement, sugar, paper and coal, cigarettes and alcohol – rose sharply in an attempt to cut consumption. The aim was to create a new economy based on exports rather than internal consumption. Turkey was thrown open to the capitalist world and globalization.

Özal's economic programme was the beginning of a transformation which would cause much social and economic turmoil. Özal asked the generals for a five-year respite from party politics for the success of his recipe, and that is precisely what the military coup of 12 September 1980 gave him. The generals planned to build new foundations for the political system in order to provide long-term stability by de-politicizing Turkish society; the restructuring of 1971 had proved insufficient. The country was tired of the antics of politicians and was ready to accept a military takeover. Demirel could not stop the terrorism because he needed the NAP to prop up his minority government, and the Islamists had to be appeased for the same reason. The generals were ready to intervene and the date for the coup was set as 11 July. But Ecevit's failure to bring down Demirel with a censure motion postponed the coup; and the generals did not want to be seen as doing something which Ecevit had just failed to do. Erbakan's support had saved Demirel in June. But in August, Ecevit and Erbakan agreed to introduce a motion of censure against Demirel's (and the generals') foreign policy and, on 5 September, Hayrettin Erkmén, Demirel's foreign minister, was forced to resign. The next day, a 'Save Jerusalem' rally in Konya angered the generals, as the secular state was openly insulted by this. There were other motions of censure against Demirel in the pipeline, but they could not be implemented because of a lack of quorum on 9 and 10 September. Political life had been paralysed. On 12 September, the generals intervened and, to the relief of the country, seized power.

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