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From socialism via anti-imperialism to nationalism : EDA-TIP : socialist contest over Cyprus

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Chapter 4

The Turkish Case

The TİP (*Türkiye İşçi Partisi* – Workers’ Party of Turkey)

The coup d’état of the 27th of May in 1960 seemed to prove that revolutions cannot be reduced to a response to economic hardships alone, but that it is also necessary to take into account the desire for democracy and political freedom.¹ In Turkey, however, the desire for democracy and political freedom seems to have faced too many obstacles. The primary goals of the military coup were to restore political and economic order, which had collapsed due to the crisis that had emerged in the previous years. However, order was far from restored.

Actually, the fact that the military hierarchy within the Turkish army was disrupted after the coup, which was led by junior officers, made it clear that the Turkish military’s young and enthusiastic Kemalist officers were not willing to give up the Turkish army’s role of being the pioneer of modernization. Aware of the junior officers’ intentions, high-ranking officers, especially in 1960 and 1961 became extremely worried about the interference of the National Unity Council (*Millî Birlik Komitesi*), i.e., the junta that had seized power through purely military means and had undermined the military hierarchy. In response, they took “counter-measures to control dissident elements, measures which involved both appeasement and coercion.”² These high-ranking officers established the Armed Forces Union (*Silâhli Kuvvetler Birliği*), which “interfered in politics repeatedly during 1961 and 1962 with memoranda warning the civilian politicians not to return to the politics of before 27 May.”³ The military’s concern about forestalling independent action taken by radical officers who opposed a return to civilian politics were not unfounded. Colonel Talat Aydemir, one of the original conspirators, was influenced by the ideas of the leftist influential review *Yön (Direction)*,⁴ the main ideas of which will be referred to later, and twice he attempted to carry out a coup but without success.⁵

In addition, there was still ambiguity about how the constitution would be re-drafted. Until the final draft of the constitution was published, there were many discussions and changes in personnel working on the drafts. Many researchers refer to the coup d’état of the 27th of May

¹ Hannah, Arendt, *On Revolution*, The Viking Press, New York, 1963.

² Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey*, Routledge, London-New York, 1993, p. 128.

³ Erik-Jan Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, IB Tauris, London and New York, 3rd rev. ed., 2004, p. 244.

⁴ “Though it is not known whether the *Yön* group and Aydemir had direct links, there was clearly a close similarity in discourse.” Özgür Mutlu Ulus, *The Army and the Radical Left in Turkey: Military Coups, Socialist Revolution and Kemalism*, IB Tauris, 2010, p. 30.

⁵ *Ibid.*; see also Feroz Ahmad, *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy, 1950-1975*, C. Hurst & Co, London, 1977, pp. 177-182 and Erik-Jan Zürcher, pp. 241-250.

as a “revolution” because of the relative relaxation of the liberal and democratic content of the new constitution, but in fact it was far from being that; revolutions, broadly speaking, aim to destroy the existing status quo and replace it with another. In the Turkish case, however, this was not the case, since many of the institutions and political agents remained the same.⁶ The new constitution was “more liberal than the old one in the sense that it tolerated a wider spectrum of political activity than before, both to the left and to the right,”⁷ but the fact that it allowed the military to get involved in the politics of the country resulted in serious implications for the politics of the country. Indeed, it marked the beginning of the end of independent party politics in Turkey free of military interference.

The military had not just become an integral part of the political, social and economic life of the country, but also in later years it acquired so much power that it became an autonomous organization and was able to intervene whenever it decided that the country was at risk.⁸ It did not take long for the Army Mutual Assistance Association (*Ordu Yardımlaşma Kurumu – OYAK*) to bring the military into the sphere of business and industry, which resulted in the signing of contracts with large European and American companies.⁹ These changes made the army want to protect the system, its primary concern being stability and normalcy. In practice, “there was an inclination to intervene against any party or political leader who appeared to be a threat to a stable order.”¹⁰

Under the new constitution, citizens enjoyed freedom of thought and expression, publishing houses could more easily publish Marxist, Leninist and generally leftist books, trade unions were granted the right to strike, university students were given the freedom and right to participate in and organize their own associations, and universities were granted greater autonomy. Lastly, it was stipulated that the peasantry was in need of land and land reforms, although these were never enacted.¹¹

⁶ “Only few of the changes that were implemented made any difference in practice. The general character of the constitution remained, upholding democratic freedoms and social rights, but some restrictions were imposed on the exercise of these freedoms – for example allowing for the establishment of security courts in emergencies, and providing for state supervision of the universities.” Çağlar Keyder, “The Political Economy of Turkish Democracy,” p. 53, in İrvin C. Schick and Ertuğrul Ahmet Tonak (eds).

⁷ Erik-Jan Zürcher, p. 242.

⁸ For one of the best recent accounts on the army see the contributions in Ahmet Insel and Ali Bayramoğlu (eds.), *Türkiye’de Ordu: Bir Zümre, Bir Parti*, Birikim Yayınları, İstanbul, 2006 and Hale Akay, “Turkish Armed Forces: Institutional and Military Dimension,” pp. 105-142, in Ahmet Insel - Ali Bayramoğlu (eds.), *ALMANAC TURKEY 2006-2008: Security Sector and Democratic Oversight*, TESEV Publications, İstanbul, 2010.

⁹ For a discussion of military economics, see Feroz Ahmad, pp. 129-131.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Kemal H. Karpat, “Social Groups and the Political System after 1960,” p. 241, in Kemal H. Karpat (ed.), *Social Change and Politics in Turkey, A Structural- Historical Analysis*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1973.

Although the new constitution provided extensive freedoms for new parties to be established and for left-wing texts to be published, the emergence of the TİP was not just related to those developments. The social dynamics and the structural transformations that had already started to develop in the 1950s as the result of extensive immigration from the periphery to the center together with rapid industrialization and the contributions of the industrial sector to the economy also helped in the formation of a leftist party. The coup also brought about a new model of capital accumulation, which was basically founded on the appropriation of economic resources such as currency and credits through political mechanisms and the creation of a domestic market through the redistribution of income with the aim of building social consensus.¹²

This relatively liberal political atmosphere also accelerated the politicization of the intelligentsia, students and university professors, and even a part of the workforce. Thus, the coup also provided the means by which socialism could be represented and heard. All these freedoms, especially the granting of the right to strike to trade unions, made many intellectuals consider the 27th of May coup to be a revolution. Among these were numerous leftist intellectuals such as Behice Boran, who claimed that because of the 27th of May movement, the Turkish socialist movement was able to organize and spread its ideas through journals and newspapers.¹³ On the other hand, Mehmet Ali Aybar, the leader of the TİP for nearly a decade, expressed his opposition to any kind of coup in an interview in which he said that he was “...against coups. [I am] against top-down movements,”¹⁴ expressing his commitment to the transformation of society from below.

Global developments during the Cold War and the radicalization of the global left, specifically in the Third World, affected Turkish socialists as well. They sought shelter in a newly formed party, the Workers’ Party of Turkey (TİP),¹⁵ as well as in the movements that evolved around the review *Yön* and the *Milli Demokratik Devrim* (MDD – National Democratic Revolution) which was created in the mid-1960s.¹⁶

¹² Çağlar Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey. A Study in Capitalist Development*, Verso, London, 1990, p. 202; Doğu Ergil, “Electoral Issues: Turkey,” p. 14, in Jacob M. Landau, Ergun Özbudun and Frank Tachau, *Electoral Politics in the Middle East*, Croom Helm, London, 1980.

¹³ Behice Boran, *Türkiye ve Sosyalizm Sorunları*, Gün Yayınları, İstanbul, 1968, p. 60.

¹⁴ Uğur Mumcu, *Aybar ile Söyleşi. Sosyalizm ve Bağımsızlık*, um:ag, Ankara, 2004 [1986], p. 11.

¹⁵ Some researchers prefer to translate TİP as “Turkish Labour Party,” most likely because they are influenced by the name of the British Labour Party. In this study, “Workers’ Party of Turkey” will be used instead, indicated by the Turkish abbreviation of the party’s name, TİP.

¹⁶ “The liberalization of the political life in the country following the 27 May revolution with the adoption of a new constitution for Turkey – the most democratic in its history – created favorable subjective preconditions for legal activity by proponents of socialist ideology.” Igor P. Lipovsky, *The Socialist Movement in Turkey, 1960-1980*, Brill, Leiden-New York-Koln, 1992, p. 11.

Establishment of the TİP

The party was founded on February 13th in 1961 by twelve trade unionists¹⁷ who broke away from *Türk-İş* (*Türkiye İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu*, the Turkish Confederation of Trade Unions).¹⁸ All of the founders were members of the working class, not intellectuals, and they did not have high levels of education.¹⁹ The founders were Kemal Türkler, Şaban Yıldız, Rıza Kuas, Kemal Nebioğlu, Avni Erakalın, Salih Özkaray, İbrahim Denizcier, Adnan Arkın, Hüseyin Uslubaş, Ahmet Muşlu, Saffet Göksüzoğlu and İbrahim Güzelce.²⁰ The 13th of February was the last day, according to a declaration issued by the Ministry of the Interior, for parties to register if they wished to participate in the upcoming elections.²¹ All the trade unionists, encouraged by the “hopeful” atmosphere brought about by the 27th of May regime, decided that the time was ripe for the establishment of a party that would represent the interests of the working class.²² Moreover, and rightly so, the trade unionist group foresaw a vacuum being created by the liquidation of the Democrat Party in terms of voters’ preferences. A large portion of the electoral basis of the Democrat Party was that of the working class of the periphery and it was believed that those votes could be channeled to the only party which represented the interests of workers, or at least a considerable number of them. On the other hand, the trade unionist group, most likely seeking to further strengthen the party, sought the support of Türk-İş,²³ but without tangible results. The idea of lending support to the TİP did not enjoy widespread acceptance in Türk-İş, while, on the other hand,

¹⁷ Aybar refers to 40-50 trade unionists as being the founders of the party. Mehmet Ali Aybar, *TİP Tarihi*, vol. 1, BDS Yayınları, İstanbul, 1988, p. 196. However, 12 were those who signed the regulations of the party. Mehmet Ali Aybar, p. 255; Nihat Sargın, *TİP’li Yıllar*, vol. 1, Felis Yayınevi, İstanbul, 2001, p. 62; on the relations between *Türk-İş* and the trade unionists see *Ibidem*, pp. 71-72.

¹⁸ *Türk-İş* had been originally founded with the sponsorship of the American Institute of Free Labor Development (AFILD) as part of the worldwide crusade to establish pro-US, anti-communist trade union federations as bulwarks of the Cold War. Ahmet Samim, “The Tragedy of the Turkish Left,” *New Left Review*, issue 126, March-April 1981, pp. 60-85, here p. 67, fn. 4; see also Nihat Sargın, p. 64.

¹⁹ Murat Belge, “Türkiye İşçi Partisi,” p. 2120, in *Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türkiye Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 8, İletişim, İstanbul, 1985.

²⁰ Of the twelve, Adnan Arıkan was not a trade-unionist but Kemal Türkler’s driver; Sadun Aren, *TİP Olayı, 1961-1971*, Cem Yayınevi, 1993, p. 31, n. 1; Murat Belge does not mean İbrahim Güzelce from among the trade-unionists although he does suggest that Ahmet Muşlu was proven that he was a member of MIT; Murat Belge, “Türkiye İşçi Partisi,” *Ibid*; for a more analytical account, see Mehmet Ali Aybar, *TİP Tarihi*, vol. I, pp. 196-203.

²¹ Until 1961, political parties in Turkey functioned under the provisions of the Law on Associations, which made it possible for the authorities to disband the parties more easily. The Constitution of 1961 stated that political parties were indispensable entities for democratic political life, whether or not they were primary or opposition parties.

²² It has been argued that the inclusion of six trade unionists to represent workers in the Constituent Assembly, which was in charge of drafting the new constitution, is a prime example of the new political atmosphere that emerged. Sadun Aren, p. 31.

²³ The Türk-İş leadership distanced itself from the party and announced that it was going to start its own party, the Workers Party (*Çalışanlar Partisi*, ÇP). This caused strife between the ÇP and the TİP, which finally, after Aybar and other intellectuals entered the party, ended when Türk-İş decided to cancel its plan to form the ÇP.

Türk-İş also declared that the syndicate would have no direct relationship with the political party.

The bottom-up efforts on behalf of the trade union activists had a “strict *ouvriériste* ideology which attracted little support.”²⁴ However, as noted earlier, this changed after 1962. Under “the banner of socialism,”²⁵ non-capitalist development and the anti-imperialist stance of the TİP attracted many diverse left-wing elements, giving the party a broader appeal which embraced all the democratic strata of Turkish society in the 1960s. It is notable that after 1962 there was a coexistence of two forms of socialism: firstly, socialism as a stream of political thought among the intelligentsia that found expression in the pages of newspapers and journals, and, secondly, as the political organization of the working class. One of the TİP’s great characteristics was that to a certain extent it was “able to unite these streams,”²⁶ at least for a decade. The TİP managed to do so because it was the only socialist party serving the interests of the workers and, at the same time, it was the only party representing left-wing ideas.

The role of the trade unionists was overemphasized, however, even after a change in leadership in the party. In 1962, the founders requested that Mehmet Ali Aybar should assume the leadership of the party.²⁷ He was a well-respected lawyer known for his democratic and socialist ideas, characteristics that likely played a crucial role in his selection by the founders of the party,²⁸ as his knowledge of the legal system could be used for the benefit of the party, even though he was not the first choice.²⁹ This shift in the stance of the trade unionists in which they ultimately decided on choosing someone from the intellectual community can be explained by the fact that military rule had ended and the new constitution guaranteed extensive freedoms and rights for people who had heretofore been largely ignored.³⁰ These

²⁴ Ahmet Samim [Murat Belge], “The Left,” p. 154, in İrvin C. Schick and Ertuğrul Ahmet Tonak (eds). First published in a different form as “The Tragedy of the Turkish Left,” *New Left Review*, 126, March-April 1981, pp. 60-85, here p. 67.

²⁵ Murat Belge, “Türkiye İşçi Partisi,” p. 2131; Özgür Gökmen, “Vanguard of the Working Class.” The First Ideological Dispute within the Workers’ Party of Turkey, 1961-1971,” p. 2; [http://edoc.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/servlets/MCRFileNodeServlet/HALCoRe_derivate_00003210/vanguard.pdf;jsessionid=jsmw0ouoxqqv?hosts=\[accessed on May 2, 2014\].](http://edoc.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/servlets/MCRFileNodeServlet/HALCoRe_derivate_00003210/vanguard.pdf;jsessionid=jsmw0ouoxqqv?hosts=[accessed on May 2, 2014].)

²⁶ Behice Boran, p. 124; Igor P. Lipovsky, p. 12.

²⁷ TÜSTAV, “Genel Başkanı Mehmet Ali Aybar’ın 9 Şubat 1962 Günlü Demecinin Metnidir,” *Nihat Sargın Papers*, Box 1, folder 28.

²⁸ Artun Ünsal, *Umuttan Yalnızlığa: Türkiye İşçi Partisi (1961-1971)*, Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, İstanbul, 2002, p. 93.

²⁹ Murat Belge, “Türkiye İşçi Partisi.” According to Kemal Sülker, the following figures were among those whom the founders thought of proposing for the party leadership: Prof. Z. F. Fındıkoğlu, Ali Rıza Arı, Dr. Ekmel Zedil, Mehmet Ali Aybar, Orhan Arsal, Sabahattin Zaim, Sedat Erbil, Yaşar Kemal, Prof. Sabri Esat Siyavusgil, Esat Tekeli, Nadır Nadi, Esat Çağa. Kemal Sülker, *100 Soruda Türkiye’de İşçi Hareketi*, 2nd rev. ed., Gerçek Yayınevi, İstanbul, 1973 [1968], p. 151.

³⁰ The memorandum was ratified July 9, 1961.

freedoms and rights were put into effect after the October 1961 elections, at a time when socialist and democratic ideas had been revived by the new constitution. The weekly *Yön* is a prime example of publications from that era, and it marked just the start and would be followed by other journals, such as *Sosyal Adalet (Social Justice)*, *Ant (Oath)* and others.

Mehmet Ali Aybar believed that the fact that the party had been founded by a group of trade unionists contributed to the development of the political consciousness of the working class, but this was not true. The pre-Aybar period of the party bears no resemblance to the period after Aybar was inaugurated as chairman of the party, at least as far as the party ideology and its essence are concerned, and, in addition, the level of working class consciousness was most probably mistakenly overestimated.³¹ However, the whole issue around the significant contribution and overemphasis on the trade unionist group was also about reconciling trade unionists with the intellectuals. The lack of trust in those intellectuals stunted the party in its first few months of its formation.³²

The TİP managed to play a crucial role in the Turkish political arena, mainly because, like its Greek counterpart, it managed to transform its content and became a party with broad appeal due to its heterogeneity which reached “the point of populism.”³³ Additionally, one of its major successes was attributed to the fact that it could combine active and open campaigning and “[link] socialist arguments to the concrete problems of the masses.”³⁴ Lastly, a more important issue was the fact that TİP was the “first really ideologically based party to compete in elections” and it forced the other parties “to define themselves more clearly in ideological terms, too.”³⁵

By the time Aybar acquired the chairmanship of the party,³⁶ the TİP had few branches and those that existed were in cities like Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Kayseri, Adana, and Kocaeli, but they lacked active organizational roles and viability, and were limited in terms of their effectiveness. On the other hand, the situation as regards the party branches and regulations worked in favor of the new orientation that the party would take in the sense that the party’s choice to follow a Marxist orientation would be achieved without intra-party obstruction.³⁷

³¹ Apart from Aybar, there were also members who did not agree with their leaders’ point of view, but they did not oppose his opinions. See Sadun Aren, pp. 33-35.

³² Behice Boran, *Türkiye ve Sosyalizm Sorunları*, p. 59.

³³ Ahmet Samim, p. 154.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Erik-Jan Zürcher, pp. 246-247.

³⁶ For the results of the party elections, see IISG, “Genel Yönetim Kurulu ve Haysiyet Divanına Seçilenler,” *Kemal Sülker Papers*, Box 524.

³⁷ “There was no requirement to deal with a membership and an organizational structure that would oppose the new orientation.” Sadun Aren, p. 85.

Therefore, by the time Aybar was called to take over the leadership of the party he was given a “free hand” to shape and guide the party as he saw fit.³⁸ After 1962, the party expanded into fourteen major provinces,³⁹ a clear indication of the major reorganization and reformulations of the party. The acquisition of a more coherent socialist program also helped the party increase its public profile. Thus, in the municipal elections of the 17th of November in 1963, the TİP put into effect its programmatic principles. Moreover, the elections gave the party the first real opportunity to make its ideas and principles known and organize itself throughout the country. However, the party only managed to receive 37,898 votes, or 0.40% of the total votes cast.

The First Congress of the TİP

By February of 1964, the TİP was ready to organize the party’s first congress at which its program would be ratified and put in place of the first one. This new program would remain in place until 1971. However, preparations were carried out late so the party leadership decided to issue a party statute first, which would be temporary, until the program could be formulated. In order to create a more prestigious and serious coherent ideological analysis, Aybar prepared a few articles of the statute himself and these would later be incorporated into the program. The ratification of the second party program, which was more elaborate, took place at the First Congress of the Party and was the main goal of the event. The congress took place on the 9th and 10th of February in 1964 in Izmir, and it was a mass gathering, considering the new political environment. The new and more articulate, Marxist oriented-program was presented and approved,⁴⁰ and Mehmet Ali Aybar was re-elected chairman and a new executive committee was also elected.

The First Congress of the Party was also marked by the first dispute within the party. The reason for the quarrel was, as a party member put it, whether or not “to keep the party under the control of the headquarters.”⁴¹ To put an end to the debate and return to the main task of the Congress, Aybar made a speech explaining the situation stating that “[...] if we choose to

³⁸ The trade unionists believed that “narrow class issues would not be sufficient for countrywide politics.” Metin Çulhaoğlu, “The History of the Socialist-Communist Movement in Turkey by Four Major Indicators,” p. 182, in N. Balkan and S. Savran (eds.), *The Politics of Permanent Crisis: Class, Ideology and State in Turkey*, Nova Science, New York, Huntington, 2002.

³⁹ Istanbul, Izmir, Ankara, Bursa, Diyarbakır, Malatya, Adana, Antep, Eskişehir, Kocaeli, Bolu, Urfa, and Bilecik.

⁴⁰ TİP, *TİP Programı*, Istanbul Maatbası, Istanbul, 1964. The length of the program is 166 pages and testifies to the maturation the party underwent after the incorporation of intellectuals into its core.

⁴¹ “The number of elected delegates in the Grand Congress had been extremely limited by 1 delegate per 1,000 members.” Sadun Aren, p. 93; Nihat Sargın, p. 88.

extend it suddenly [the proportional representation], there will be 600 delegates here tomorrow. Why is this so important? If these 600 delegates are all aware people, its importance will be great. But, if they are yet unaware people, [...] it may lead to vacillation. However, the drawbacks are also evident. That is, if the number of delegates is less than the number of leaders, that would not be appropriate. I believe that an intermediary solution should be reached. There is no problem if one does not go to the extreme while doing it.”⁴²

The TİP’s Ideological Tenets and the Party’s Decisions at the First Congress

The TİP was established primarily as “the culmination of previously short-lived attempts at establishing legal socialist parties, and secondly, it reflected the more liberal mood towards political radicalism intimated in the 1961 Constitution, for example, its emphasis on the ‘social’ character of the Second Turkish Republic.”⁴³ The first program was only sixteen pages long and it became obvious that the party at that point lacked a socialist-Marxist ideology.⁴⁴ Indeed, the party program did not have a socialist character and was completely bereft of a clear political stand on social and economic issues. In addition, the general tone of the basic reforms made by the founders considering the declaration of the party, i.e., the “protection of the workers’ rights” and that the TİP was party of the working masses,⁴⁵ added significance to the above argument.⁴⁶ The TİP was a socialist party in the process of formation,⁴⁷ and it was given the ideological depth it needed by Mehmet Ali Aybar and other intellectuals such as Sadun Aren,⁴⁸ Çetin Altan and Behice Boran⁴⁹ who transformed the party into an “active, political force.”⁵⁰

⁴² *Eylem*, issue 1, March 1964, pp. 49-50.

⁴³ Jacob M. Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey*, Brill, Leiden, 1974, p. 122.

⁴⁴ Aren argues that if the TİP had been a socialist party since the beginning it would not have taken a year to find a chairperson for the party. The fact that there was not a strong leader since the beginning, however, does not contradict with the possibility of the TİP being a socialist party. Sadun Aren, p. 35.

⁴⁵ For the announcement of the party without a date and title, but obviously on the occasion of the party establishment, see IISG, [untitled], [n.d.], *Kemal Sütker Papers*, Box 524.

⁴⁶ For the declaration see TÜSTAV, Türkiye İşçi Partisi Bildirisi, February 8, 1962, *Nihat Sargın Papers*, Box 1 folder 28; Mehmet Ali Aybar, “Türkiye İşçi Partisi Bildirisi,” pp. 191-194, in Mehmet Ali Aybar, *Bağımsızlık, Demokrasi, Sosyalizm: Seçmeler, 1945-1967*, Gerçek Yayınevi, İstanbul, 1968; Jacob M. Landau, p. 125.

⁴⁷ Interview with Gündüz Mutluay, June 11, 2010; interview with Murat Belge, June 22, 2010; interview with Ertuğrul Kürkçü, June 7, 2010.

⁴⁸ Sadun Aren [1922-2008], was a professor of political science. He was arrested in 1955 on charges of carrying out communist activities but he was released. He co-founded the Turkish Workers’ Party and entered parliament as a TİP parliamentarian representing İstanbul in 1965. He was arrested both in the aftermath of the military coups in 1971 and in 1980 and spent several years in prison each time. Aren was a member of the Confederation of the Revolutionary Workers’ Trade Union (DİSK) and was honorary chair of the Freedom and Solidarity Party (ÖDP). He died in the hospital at the age of 85.

⁴⁹ Behice Boran [1910-1987], was a lecturer in sociology at Ankara University. She was arrested as a member of the TKP (Turkish Communist Party), but she was released due to lack of evidence. In an interview, Rasih Nuri İleri revealed in confidence that although Boran participated actively in the TKP she was not officially a party

The first article of the program, which would normally state the character of the party, did not make any direct or indirect reference to socialism or a socialist-oriented direction. This can be attributed to many factors, the most important of which perhaps was fear that the party would be closed down. TİP members were quite careful not to use the word “socialism” in the first years of the existence of the party. Instead, they used the word “*toplumculuk*” and Aybar later used “*demokratik öncülük*” (democratic vanguard) instead of “*önderlik*” (leadership), so as to exclude any assumption that the party was in violation of articles 141 and 142.⁵¹

In addition, the party had to be extremely careful about introducing a socialist-oriented program, since during the Cold War, anti-communism was rampant in Turkey, as it was in other parts of the world. Trade unionists, and later the party leaders, believed that any hints of communism or socialism would alarm the authorities and thus jeopardize the whole attempt to form a left-wing party.⁵² In addition, despite the fact that the new constitution was more liberal, this does not mean that anti-communist sentiment ceased to exist or that the government stopped efforts to stamp it out.⁵³

Lastly, workers’ political awareness and the slow pace of introducing communist and/or socialist ideas and translations of classic works of Marxism in Turkey in the previous decades was stunted by state censorship, and this also affected the content of the program. The fact that only a few workers had developed a coherent political consciousness through personal endeavors did not make it the rule, but rather the exception. In general, the working class was

member. She began publishing left-wing periodicals, for which she was fired from the university. In 1950, she led the formation of the Turkish Peacelovers’ Association, which protested against Turkey’s participation in the Korean War, which led to her arrest and a sentence of 15 months in prison. She served as a deputy for the TİP (1965-1969), and in 1970, at the Fourth Congress of the party she became its chairperson. She was arrested in 1971 and was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment. She re-established the TİP in 1975 after her release, and in 1980 she went into exile. She died of heart disease in Brussels after she announced that the TİP and TKP had decided to merge.

⁵⁰ Jacob M. Landau, p. 124.

⁵¹ Özgür Gökmen. If translated into English it means the same, but in Turkish it does not bear the same political content; that kind of change is used for creating an environment of legitimization for the socialist movement. The Leninist motto for “vanguardism” as *demokratik öncülük* or the Turcofonization of socialism as *toplumculuk* do not mean anything in themselves. These were just an effort to legitimize it in the political scene as an actor and in public language as a domestic echo. *Toplumculuk* may have also been used as a cross reference to Kemalist populism (*halkçılık*). I would like to thank Kerem Ünüvar for that insight. According to Gündüz Mutluay, the first person who used the word “socialism” openly at a meeting was the fearless Çetin Altan; Interview with Gündüz Mutluay.

⁵² Interview with Gündüz Mutluay; interview with Yusuf Ziya Bahadınlı.

⁵³ “[...] the authorities did their utmost to make the living and working conditions of TİP members as difficult as possible and to force them to leave the socialist movement.” Igor P. Lipovsky, p. 13; There were also incidents involving TİP members in the National Assembly. In an interview, Yusuf Ziya Bahadınlı referred to just two of the incidents that took place in the Assembly and in which he was directly involved. Interview with Yusuf Ziya Bahadınlı. See also Yusuf Ziya Bahadınlı, *Meclis’in İçinde Vurdular Bizi*, Asya Şafak, Istanbul, 2006 and Çetin Altan, *Ben Milletvekili İken*, İnkilap Kitabevi, Ankara, 2005.

still in formation,⁵⁴ and would start to play a more significant role later in the 1960s and 1970s.⁵⁵

The party statutes and the first program of the party declared that the party regarded loyalty to “the Republic and to democracy as the duty of all citizens and institutions.” Moreover, the party considered the Turkish Republic to be “a democratic, secular, social, and a labor-based state”⁵⁶ where sovereignty rests unconditionally with the Turkish nation.⁵⁷ The party regulations after the election of Aybar changed essentially both in essence and in scope, and declared that:

...the TİP is a political organization marching to power by legal means, and it is of the Turkish working class and all strata and classes of proletariats (of laborers and small peasants, of salaried employees and wage earners, of artisans, of small tradesmen and self-employed persons with small incomes, and of progressive youth and *toplumcu* intellectuals) which gather around its leadership.⁵⁸

It became apparent from the start that the TİP was devoted, according to its regulations, to the Republic and to the constitution. The TİP’s revolutionary strategy went through the parliament⁵⁹ and not through any kind of violent uprising of one or many classes,⁶⁰ and the claim was made that it was the working masses that would continue socialism when the latter would be achieved through democratic elections. Its parliamentary strategy to obtain power would become one of the most heated points of conflict among the left-wing elements in Turkey after the mid-1960s.

⁵⁴ Günseli Berik and Cihan Bilginsoy, “The Labor Movement in Turkey: Labor Pains, Maturity, Metamorphosis,” p. 47, in Ellis Jay Goldberg (ed.), *The Social History of Labor in the Middle East*, Westview Press, Boulder, 1996.

⁵⁵ Brian Mello, *Evaluating Social Movement Impacts: Comparative Lessons from the Labor Movement in Turkey*, Bloomsbury, New York and London, 2013.

⁵⁶ Türkiye İşçi Partisi, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi Tüzüğü*, İstanbul Matbaası, İstanbul, 1962, p. 5.

⁵⁷ Article 1 of TİP, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi Programı*, İstanbul Matbaası, İstanbul, 1961, p. 6. The article also states that “the State’s duty to solve all economic, social and scientific problems that will facilitate social progress and will create better living conditions through more freedom, without discrimination towards color of the skin, race, religion, language or gender.”

⁵⁸ Türkiye İşçi Partisi, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi Tüzüğü*, İstanbul Matbaası, İstanbul, 1965, p. 5. The party regulations were ratified at the First Congress of the Party, February 9-10, 1964 and the above text was incorporated as article 2 in the Party Regulations. Article 2 remained in effect unchanged in later party regulations. See also Türkiye İşçi Partisi, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi Tüzüğü*, Alfabe Basımevi, İstanbul, 1966; Türkiye İşçi Partisi, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi Tüzüğü*, Ulusoğlu Matbaası, Ankara, 1967; Türkiye İşçi Partisi, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi Tüzüğü*, TÖYKO Matbaası, Ankara, 1968. From 1969 onwards the word *toplumcu* was substituted with socialism in the party regulations; see Türkiye İşçi Partisi, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi Tüzüğü*, Balkanoğlu Matbaası, Ankara, 1969, p. 3. For an English translation of the present article as this was defined in 1969, see Özgür Gökmen, p. 3, fn. 11.

⁵⁹ Although one could argue that the TİP was actually a Eurocommunist party, the present word will be avoided since Eurocommunism as a distinct current appeared only in the 1970s and, therefore, it would be an anachronism.

⁶⁰ Artun Ünsal, pp.139 and 143-145.

Although the party was founded in order to protect working class rights, it was not founded as a socialist party but rather as a pressure group to force the government to heed trade unionists' interests.⁶¹ The TİP presented its ideology as the next step of Kemalism, not only in order to prevent any direct conflicts with the official ideology, but mainly because the TİP theoreticians truly believed in Kemalism. Hence, because he admired Atatürk, Mehmet Ali Aybar decided to incorporate a part of one of his speeches in the party program. The TİP also presented itself as totally committed to the parliamentary system, expressing clearly that the TİP was against dictatorial rule over the proletariat and that it was committed to democratic principles and the constitution.⁶² Aybar believed that the new program should be oriented towards the working class, adding both a Marxist class character to the party and seeking the support of the working masses (especially those of the peasants), who constituted the majority of the toiling masses, without which the TİP would not have been able to emerge as a competing party.

This class orientation and emphasis is evident in the program of 1964. A detailed analysis in the party program indicates that the classes in Turkey were divided into three main categories. These were the dominant classes (*hâkim sınıflar*), the middle classes (*orta sınıflar*) and the working class and landless peasants (*işçi sınıfı ve topraksız köylü*).⁶³ The position of the working class was considered to be extremely important, since the difference between the classes and their importance was based on whether a class possessed the means of production or not.⁶⁴ The party claimed to be a party of the laboring masses and guaranteed by Article 53, which stated that:

...it is *observed* that half of those holding posts in all bodies of the party be elected from among those members who earn their living by selling their labor power to the owners of the means of production since they do not own their own means of production or *those who are holding posts in the administrative bodies of labor unions*. Slates to be presented to the congresses by the administrative bodies shall be prepared in line with this principle. The congresses shall elect the delegates and the bodies inspired by this guideline.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Sadun Aren, p. 34.

⁶² Uğur Mumcu, *Aybar ile Söyleşi. Sosyalizm ve Bağımsızlık*, um:ag, Ankara, 2004, p. 15.

⁶³ TİP, *TİP Programı*, pp. 28-38, 38-43 and 43-57, respectively.

⁶⁴ Artun Ünsal, pp. 129-131.

⁶⁵ As quoted and translated by Özgür Gökmen, emphasis as in the original.

The leader of the party stated that “the working class must become the leading force in the social and political transformation,”⁶⁶ indicating a clear belief that the working class presented signs of maturity since it was growing rapidly and could play a leading role in the transformation of Turkish society. On the other hand, it was argued that the peasants could not present themselves as a leading force in Turkish society, although they should not have been neglected.⁶⁷

However, no matter how strong the party’s emphasis was on the working class, it should not be considered as a strictly working class party. For example, on the issue of the leadership, another intellectual claimed that “leadership is not a privilege provided to the working class by parties or socialist theory.”⁶⁸ In addition, enumerating the weaknesses of the working class in Turkey, one could argue that Boran was implying, implicitly or explicitly, that the party was not a working-class party⁶⁹ and was not bearing similarities, and in extent, any links with the USSR.⁷⁰ However, there was a belief that the Turkish worker should get his share of the national income.⁷¹ On the other hand, it was argued that the dominant class had control over the other two classes (middle class and working class), as was the rule. It was because of that specific class that the exploitation of the other two classes was taking place, since it was the one that possessed the means of production. Therefore, since the other two classes were not in a position to make ends meet they should be incorporated into the same political organization.⁷² For the theoreticians of the party, the middle class’s role was limited.⁷³ According to Aybar, because intellectuals belonged to the middle class, they bore great responsibility in the construction of socialism.

They have in their possession the knowledge of the theory of socialism without which the development of the socialist movement is impossible. But, socialism is the ideology of the working class and of

⁶⁶ Mehmet Ali Aybar, “Kalkınma Şartı: Kurtuluş Savaşı Felsefine Dönüş,” pp. 251 and 252, in Mehmet Ali Aybar; see also Igor P. Lipovsky, p. 26.

⁶⁷ According to Aybar, although “the peasants constitute 74.6% of the gainfully employed population, the working class is a more organized, more coherent and a more class conscious force,” pp. 251-52.

⁶⁸ Behice Boran, p. 149.

⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 149 ff.

⁷⁰ “All Marxist socialist parties had a common strategy” and Soviet-type socialism was hegemonic,” Sadun Aren, *Puslu Camın Arkasından*, İmge Kitabevi, 2nd ed., Ankara, 2006 as quoted in Özgür Mutlu Ulus, p. 65, fn. 16.

⁷¹ Mehmet Ali Aybar, “Emek Zafere Ulaşacaktır,” pp. 213-219, in Mehmet Ali Aybar, Ibid., as quoted in Jacob M. Landau, p. 149.

⁷² Artun Ünsal.

⁷³ The middle class included petty tradesmen, artisans and craftsmen, petty landowners, civil servants, and waged and self-employed individuals.

all the toiling masses. For that reason, intellectuals should cooperate and work within the political organization of the masses. [...].⁷⁴

That political organization was meant to be the TİP, which was the only party that respected the constitution because it created and provided “favorable opportunities”⁷⁵ for the left to attain power through elections. The ruling dominant class persistently avoided the implementation of the constitution in order to maintain the status quo,⁷⁶ which was also established during the First Turkish Republic.

In addition, what became obvious was that, at least indirectly, they were not allied with the idea of the socialist bureaucratic system and this indicated what “revolutionary strategy” meant for the TİP. Firstly, the fact that the TİP was in favor of the working masses and against a socialist bureaucratic system indicates that they were against the top-down transformation of society, marking a distinct difference with the Kemalist model. Secondly, especially after the Malatya Congress in 1966, the theoreticians of the party put emphasis on the indivisibility of the national democratic revolution and the socialist revolution. TİP leadership regularly called attention to the fact that if the national liberation struggle was to be led by the middle strata or the national bourgeoisie (and they believed that the latter did not exist in Turkey) they would eventually develop relations with imperialists in the future.⁷⁷

“National bourgeoisie” is used in Marxist literature exclusively in the context of backward or underdeveloped countries. In an advanced capitalist country, the class struggle can be analyzed in terms of the conflict between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, while in so-called backward countries it is necessary to consider the interaction among at least four classes: the emerging proletariat, the capitalist class, the pre-capitalist exploiting class, and the direct producers in the pre-capitalist mode of production.⁷⁸ In “backward” countries, the class struggle is rendered particularly complex for two reasons: “First, from a classical Marxist viewpoint, there may be an antagonistic interaction between the two exploiting classes caused by the tendency for capitalism to undermine pre-capitalist society as it expands, and this antagonism proceeds concurrently with the emerging conflict between labor and capital. Second, imperialist domination of backward countries may involve oppression of the entire population to some degree, though support from pre-capitalist ruling elements may

⁷⁴ Mehmet Ali Aybar, “Emperyalizme Karşı Mücadele, Sosyalizm için Mücadele ile Birlikte Yürütülür,” p. 501, in Mehmet Ali Aybar.

⁷⁵ Igor P. Lipovsky, p. 43.

⁷⁶ TİP, *Türkiye İşçi Programı*, 1964, p. 69.

⁷⁷ Özgür Mutlu Ulus, p. 69.

⁷⁸ Elizabeth Dore, “National Bourgeoisie,” p. 393, in Tom Bottomore (ed.), *Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, 2nd ed., Wiley Blackwell, Oxford, 2001.

sometimes be needed.”⁷⁹ In this context, Dore points out that it has been common to use the term “national bourgeoisie” to refer to a fraction of the capitalist class in underdeveloped countries, which is anti-imperialist. In this sense, the national bourgeoisie is a potential ally of the working class in the anti-imperialist struggle, which is characteristically supported by the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry. Thus, the term is normally defined with respect to the role of a part of the bourgeoisie in the political sphere. On the other hand, however, “this definition presupposes contradictions between fractions of the local bourgeoisie and imperialism. The term “comprador bourgeoisie” is applied to the portion of the local bourgeoisie, which tends to ally itself with imperialism.”⁸⁰ Similarly, a heated debate was generated in Turkey concerning which strategy would be the correct one for revolutionary transformation, and if the bourgeoisie could play a role in the unfolding of the revolutionary strategy.

Although Mihri Belli and his group, the MDD, will be discussed later in this study, it will be helpful to point out that Belli considered the national bourgeoisie to be in the ranks of national-democratic front, and he was careful to distinguish it from the comprador bourgeoisie. He argued that as a bourgeoisie of a backward, peripheral country that was oppressed by imperialism, the Turkish national bourgeoisie could play certain revolutionary roles in the national-democratic struggle against imperialism and feudalism. Elsewhere, however, Belli referred to the national bourgeoisie as a reactionary force unwilling to participate in a radical social and economic transformation and to break totally with the world imperialist system. That is to say, he argued that this class has a double character which is both national and bourgeois, both revolutionary and reactionary. Belli, in this sense, believed that the Turkish national bourgeoisie, as a temporary, tactical ally, could not lead the national-democratic revolution which had to be won through the ranks of the national-democratic front.⁸¹ Therefore, he asserted that the anti-imperialist struggle and the struggle against capitalism should go hand in hand in the process of socialist transformation, and they had to be implemented simultaneously through a common struggle. Moreover, the indivisibility of these two struggles had a common enemy, i.e. imperialist USA and its allied “lords – compradors – American bureaucrats.”⁸²

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Erkan Doğan summarized Mihri Belli’s ideas on the national bourgeoisie. Erkan Doğan, p. 153, fn. 37.

⁸² Mehmet Ali Aybar, “Türkiye Sosyalizmi,” p. 640, in Mehmet Ali Aybar, Ibid. In addition, another term used for comprador bourgeoisie was “bureaucratic” bourgeoisie, which might shed some light on the reasons behind the TİP’s refusal of a socialist bureaucratic system.

For TİP ideologists, that class of national bourgeoisie was completely absent, as it was “a class of industrialists who oppose American imperialism and do not constitute a comprador bourgeoisie.”⁸³ Another ideologist claimed that even if there was a national bourgeoisie, most likely it would jeopardize the revolutionary process.⁸⁴ It is notable, however, that being dominant in Turkish society was not a “national” but a “comprador” bourgeoisie in that it was dependent on the foreign bourgeoisie,⁸⁵ while at the same time basing its legitimacy on the notion of “national independence” and objectively developed interests which came gradually into conflict with those of the foreign bourgeoisie.⁸⁶ Since the characteristic feature of the comprador bourgeoisie was its anti-national and pro-imperialist position, Aybar argued, all those elements that were collaborating with the imperialist powers were enemies of the country.⁸⁷

In other words, the progressive forces that would be called to take charge of the transformation of Turkish society were the toiling masses because they would be enhanced by the voting majority of the peasants, while the middle class would be incorporated into the same political organization with the working class, and this would lend the intellectual means to the working class in order to fully exploit the means of production and put them in the service of socialism. These progressive forces were called on to participate in the rapid modernization⁸⁸ of Turkish society through the “non-capitalist path to development” (*kapitalist olmayan kalkınma yolu*), as this was how the party program was defined during the First Congress of the party with the aim of making sure that Turkey would become free.⁸⁹ In addition, it was argued that “on the global stage of modernization or imperialism, ‘nations’ become the main actors. Classes are idealized – the ‘intelligentsia’ or ‘the peasants’ are the motive force of nationalism – or they are quite simply ignored.”⁹⁰

⁸³ Ibid., pp. 652-653; also quoted in Igor P. Lipovsky, p. 30.

⁸⁴ Igor P. Lipovsky, p. 31.

⁸⁵ The most important element of this class was that it did not possess the capitalist means of production, or at least control them, but acted as the commercial or sub-managerial intermediary between the foreign bourgeoisie and the local working classes.

⁸⁶ The class-ambivalent character was the twin necessity “denouncing the foreign ‘interference’ and control, as well as foreign values, and having to woo the foreign bourgeoisie in order to ensure its continuing survival and extolling traditional values while, at the same time, being detached from the peasantry and traditional elite.” Geoffrey Hunt, “Two African Aesthetics: Wole Soyinka vs. Amílcar Cabral,” p. 67, in Georg M. Gugelberger (ed), *Marxism and African Literature*, Africa World Press, USA, 1986.

⁸⁷ Mehmet Ali Aybar.

⁸⁸ Karpat notes that socialism in the 1960s was referring to rapid modernization and the emphasis was more on the “social” rather than the “-ism.” Kemal H. Karpat, “Socialism and the Labor Party of Turkey,” *Middle East Journal*, vol. 21, issue 2, 1967, p. 157.

⁸⁹ TİP, *Türkiye İşçi Programı*, 1964, p. 64; see also Artun Ünsal, pp. 123-124.

⁹⁰ Ronaldo Munck, p. 146.

It was argued that Turkey was underdeveloped because the country was part of the periphery and reliant on the resources of the core countries, i.e., the developed capitalist countries. According to Boran, although Turkey no longer had to undertake a national struggle, the country was unable to reach the level of developed Western civilization because of the slow rate of development⁹¹ (in reference to the historical Kemalist mission to attain the same levels as Western civilization). Additionally, as stated in the party program Turkey needed to avoid underdevelopment and backwardness “in accordance with the principles of democracy and social justice, hence acquiring the equal place we [the Turks] deserve among the nations of the world.”⁹² Mehmet Ali Aybar claimed, “forty-three years after victory, we find ourselves needing to wage a second liberation struggle” to fight capitalism.⁹³ Another idealist of the party and staunch supporter of the Kurdish issue was the Diyarbakir deputy, Tarik Ziya Ekinci, who wrote in the party’s review:

1. The international capitalist system resists attempts at independence and industrialization within the confines of capitalism in underdeveloped countries.
2. The process of capital accumulation and the development of the advanced countries of the West through private initiative had been realized in past centuries through the over exploitation of labor under conditions of misery and destitute for the masses. The improvement in the rights of labor in Turkey and the emergence of a strong trade union movement makes it more difficult for such exploitation to occur.
3. Expansionism and the exploitation of backward countries have also constituted a major source of capital accumulation for the west. This alternative is not available for underdeveloped countries.
4. During the process of development in the West, the only available path for development was capitalism. Today, it is known that a non-capitalist path of development exists.
5. The dominant classes in Turkey constitute regressive forces, which stand in the way of the economic development of the country and of social justice and independence from imperialism.⁹⁴

The “non-capitalist path to development” was a rather common model in that period, especially in Third World countries, since the models that were put into effect in the West did not seem to be productive for them. Therefore, “underdeveloped” countries had to find a model of their own. It should be noted that the “non-capitalist path to development” was

⁹¹ Behice Boran, p. 253-255.

⁹² TİP, *TİP Programı*, p. 17

⁹³ Based on the questions Mehmet Ali Aybar answered for the journal *Dönüşüm*; Mehmet Ali Aybar, “İkinci Milli Kurtuluş Mücadelesi Bayrağını Partimiz Taşıyor,” p. 505, in Mehmet Ali Aybar.

⁹⁴ Tarik Ziya Ekinci, “Az Gelişmiş Ülkelerde Kalkınma Yolu,” *Sosyal Adalet*, issue 14, 18 June 1963, p. 8 as quoted in Gökçe Heval Şimşek, *The Conception of Development in the Turkish Left in the 1960s: The Case of TİP*, MA Thesis, METU, 2004.

referring to a mixed economy, as “a special kind of third way – neither capitalism nor socialism.”⁹⁵ The party believed that in a “planned, etatist, mixed” economy, in which the industrialization of the country was of the greatest importance and could only be accomplished by the laboring classes in the government of the TİP. Etatism would be the “leading force” in the national economy and in the social and cultural life of the country, in which the private sector would also exist for a period of time.

During the first period of the party, i.e., until the elections in 1965, the party did not put all its efforts into changing the system and establishing socialism, but instead focused on establishing a more just and democratic society and creating a class consciousness for the workers and the petty peasantry in order to bring their party to power by democratic means. According to Yerasimos, the party proposed a three-staged process to introduce socialism to Turkish society. The first stage aimed at fighting for the functioning of constitutional rights and freedoms and for their defense against the bourgeoisie and imperialism. This stage also included training the working class and petty peasantry. Because of this step, workers and peasants would be able to carry their own party to power by democratic means. Then, after attaining power, a form of state capitalism would be implemented which would lead the way to socialism within the framework of an advanced democracy; this was to be led by the working class and supported by peasants and a section of the petty bourgeoisie. The final and third stage was the enactment of socialism.⁹⁶ Seen in this light, it can be argued that the period leading up to 1965 was marked by an attempt to utilize the second of the three-stage procedure to socialism, while socialism, as the enactment of the third stage, would take place only after 1965. Although the TİP did not make any direct claims about socialism during the first period of its existence, it has been argued that socialism was implied in its discourses. Thus, the anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist struggle to be performed under the leadership of the working class would directly transform into a struggle for socialism by the party.⁹⁷

In addition, the national economy was directly related to the progressive nature of the Turkish state. According to TİP leaders, the “non-capitalist path to development,” or the “transitional phase leading to socialism,” could be achieved only by changing the nature of power. In other words, the foreign affairs of the country needed to be guided by an independent policy and be in accord with the national interests of the country. In addition,

⁹⁵ Behice Boran as quoted in Igor P. Lipovsky, p. 15.

⁹⁶ Stefanos Yerasimos, *Az Gelişmişlik Sürecinde Türkiye*, vol. 3, Gözlem Yayınları, İstanbul, 1976, pp. 1674-1675; see also Serpil Çelenk Güvenç, *Solun Merceğinden Dış Politika. TİP Deneyimi, 1960-1970*, Daktylos Yayınevi, İstanbul, 2008.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 1674.

Turkey needed to undertake radical changes in order to change the economic and social structure of the country and adopt a democratic statist policy favoring the people.⁹⁸ For the TİP, the country's economy and foreign policy were two sides of the same coin, which aimed at exactly the same thing: the total, unconditional independence of the country, the ultimate goal of which was to reach the level of a developed civilization. Thus, already by 1962 the party stated that it supported a foreign policy according to which:

Our national existence and independence stands above all things. A peace-loving foreign policy, aiming at friendly relations on equal terms with all states and in favor of the United Nations Charter is the one that best suits Turkey, a country that has waged a National War of Independence.⁹⁹

Although Mustafa Kemal led the country to victory in the first struggle for liberation and managed to retain the total independence of the country for fifteen years,¹⁰⁰ it was argued that after the end of WWII, subsequent governments in Turkey let foreign capital invade the country and collaborate with local landlords and domestic capital and thus strengthen its position within the country. This was argued to be the reason behind Turkey's state of development, which had been in a slump since 1947, and the dependency of the country was claimed to be the result of foreign capital.¹⁰¹ For that reason, Aybar noted in his memoirs that the party¹⁰² needed to return to the "glorious struggles of the Turkish nation"¹⁰³ and the philosophy of Atatürk's Struggle for Liberation to regain total, unconditional independence. In order to achieve this, however, it was argued that in terms of national independence and dominant rights, sacrifices had to be made. These were to protect and adhere to national borders, to oppose imperialism and colonialism, to promote equity among nations, and be dedicated to peace.¹⁰⁴ In short, the TİP "defends [...] a one hundred percent national, independent and peaceful foreign policy."¹⁰⁵

⁹⁸ Behice Boran, "Kalkınma ve Gericilik Üstüne," *Sosyal Adalet*, issue 7, 1964, pp. 5-7, esp. pp. 5-6 and in the same issue see also, Sadun Aren, "Kalkınma, Demokrasi ve Türkiye İşçi Partisi," *Sosyal Adalet*, issue 7, 1964, pp. 3-4.

⁹⁹ Article 3 paragraph f. of TİP, *Tüzük*, 1962, p. 7; TİP, *Tüzük*, 1965, p. 6; quoted also in Mehmet Ali Aybar, *TİP Tarihi*, vol. 1, p. 216 and pp. 256-257.

¹⁰⁰ TİP, *TİP Programı*, p. 157.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

¹⁰² For Aybar's analysis and quoting for the party program see Mehmet Ali Aybar, *TİP Tarihi*, pp. 257-263.

¹⁰³ TİP, *TİP Programı*, p. 161.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 163-164.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

***Yön*, a Leftist Platform**

The constitution also permitted the publishing of reviews and books with a leftist content. As mentioned, one of those was the review *Yön*. The importance of this review lies in the fact that, along with the TİP and later with the MDD group, it shaped left-wing politics in Turkey, although it never managed to hegemonize Turkish society and politics. It was a radical left-oriented political and social weekly¹⁰⁶ founded in December of 1961 by Doğan Avcıoğlu, who served as its chief editor, and a circle of intellectuals, some of whom were members of the TİP. It was not a purely Marxist review, but rather a broad-based forum embodied with a left-wing radical ideology, and it provided the left-wing movement with the ideological boost it needed. The review was closed down temporarily in 1963 after the publication of the 77th issue on the 5th of June, based on a ruling handed down by the Ankara Commandership of Martial Law, for a period of fifteen months. Then it was re-launched and continued publication until 1967 when the founders decided to close it down. *Yön* was widely read, and it reached a circulation of 30,000 within a very short period of time – a number that indicates the intellectual void the review was filling, as well as the reaction of the people to the situation of the country¹⁰⁷ – but in 1965, circulation dropped to about 6-7,000.

The basic common principle of the contributors aimed at radically transforming society through military¹⁰⁸ intervention/cooperation to prepare the ground for the transition to socialism. In other words, the military element was an essential precondition, as it would be allied with intellectuals – an alliance which coincided with Kemalist ideals and aims, and specifically, the top-down transformation of the society – and not with the working class, in order to achieve socialism. The review was in favor of the National Democratic Revolution, a strategy that later would lead the review to ally with the MDD group during the Malatya Congress in 1966, and thus, it wary of the way that the TİP planned on acquiring power through parliament. It was in favor of non-parliamentary forces, or as they used to be referred to, *zinde kuvvetler* (vigorous forces), by which they meant the “left-leaning section of the military and civilian intelligentsia, the trade unions, and youth organizations”¹⁰⁹ which were able to bring about a real Kemalist regime via a military coup or a revolution from above.

¹⁰⁶ Lipovsky refers to the review as a “daily newspaper.” See Igor P. Lipovsky, p. 85; issues 1-6 consisted of 24 pages, 7-49 (except 47) of 20 pages and 50-222 of 16 pages.

¹⁰⁷ Jacob M. Landau, p. 51.

¹⁰⁸ For the socialist perceptions of the left about the army and the reciprocal influence of *Yön* and the army, see Özgür Mutlu Ulus, especially chapter 3.

¹⁰⁹ Igor P. Lipovsky, p. 93.

The “*Bildiri*” (“Statement”)¹¹⁰ published in the first issue of the review was a manifesto of its program. It was signed initially by 164 persons and, in later stages, by 848 more (totaling 1,042).¹¹¹ Its supporting base was an elitist group comprised of academics, journalists, politicians, writers, artists, doctors and teachers,¹¹² all of whom believed that the social, economic and political deadlock would be weathered through socialism, no matter how each one of them defined socialism. However, they were from all over the political spectrum, yet all defined themselves “socialists.”

“Turkish Socialism” (*Türk Sosyalizmi*) was also promoted by the Socialist Culture Society (*Sosyalist Kültür Derneği* - SKD),¹¹³ which served with *Yön* as a think-tank, although the SKD had a stronger agenda¹¹⁴ and attempted to firstly prepare the ground for “Turkish Socialism” and secondly formulate an ideology of “Turkish Socialism” itself. *Yön* members, who did not consider joining the legal representatives of the left because of its emphasis on the class leadership of the movement, decided instead to establish the SKD. Forty-one members established the society in January of 1963 and most of them were the founders and members of *Yön*. In addition, the attempt of the review to establish a party, named the Çalışanlar Partisi, ultimately failed because of a change of hearts by members of Turk-İş, who were going to found the party.

¹¹⁰ For the *Yön* statement see *Yön*, December 20, 1961, pp. 12-13; quoted also in Hikmet Özdemir, *Kalkınmada Bir Strateji Arayışı: YÖN Hareketi*, Ankara, Bilgi Yayınevi, 1986, pp. 295-300; Gökhan Atılğan, *Yön-Devrim Hareketi, Kemalizm ile Marksizm Arasında Geleneksel Aydınlar*, TÜSTAV, İstanbul, 2002, pp. 331-337, and or the full list of the signatories, see pp. 338-354. It was discussed outside Turkey and translated into English by Frank Tachau and into French by Rene Giraud. See *Middle Eastern Affairs*, 14, 3, March 1963, pp. 72-8, for the translation and Frank Tachau’s comments and for parts of it, see Kemal H. Karpat (ed.), *Political and Social Thought in the Contemporary Middle East*, Frederick Praeger, New York-Washington-London, 1968, pp. 334-338.

¹¹¹ Lipovsky states that in the beginning there were 150 but fails to refer to the later signatories, while Landau argues that there were more than 160, which makes more sense. See Lipovsky, p. 86 and Jacob M. Landau, p. 52. Of the signatories, 94% were male, while only 6% were female. For the proportion between male and female signatories, see Hikmet Özdemir, p. 53.

¹¹² Among them, there were leftist writers and poets like Kemal Tahir and Çetin Altan, members of the TBMM on the left of the CHP such as Turan Güneş and Çoskun Kırca, Marxists-Leninists such as Çetin Altan and Sadun Aren (TİP members as well), and Kemalist pro-military leftists like Doğan Avcıoğlu, Mihri Belli, ex-Kadroists like Sevket Sürreya Aydemir and Mümtaz Soysal who was close to “Western social-democracy.”

¹¹³ Ulus’ “Socialist Culture Society” is preferred here to Lipovsky’s “Society for Socialist Culture.” The SKD was not a political party and, therefore, its members could belong to any party they so wished. The SKD was founded about a year after *Yön* in 1963 by 41 members, of which some were *Yön* members as well. For the SKD’s statement of establishment, see Hikmet Özdemir, pp. 339-344, and Gökhan Atılğan, pp. 355-359 and for the list of the founders pp. 337-338 and p. 360, respectively.

¹¹⁴ “The Socialist Culture Society, which regards labor as the major value of society, investigates the conditions with the aim of founding a real democratic system which will abandon exploitation, while working for the cultural basis of such a system and for the expansion of those.” *Yön*, “Sosyalist Kültür Derneği Tüzüğü,” issue 53, 1962. The proclamation of the SKD, in addition to Atatürk’s revolution, social justice, development and *etatism* as appropriate remedies for the socio-economic and political problems of Turkey, also included moral considerations and hence defined socialism as the *only* just, ethical, democratic, humane and efficient model for social justice in Third World countries. Özgür Mutlu Ulus, p. 31.

Both of these attempts, however, faced TİP opposition. Aybar had long discussions with both organizations with *Yön* leaders and tried to prevent them from creating a political party.¹¹⁵ Apart from their seemingly common ideological points, their mutual existence was marked by continuous strife, which eventually escalated into a major debate. Although they supported the establishment and existence of the TİP, the review's founders believed that the leadership of the party would not be able to spread socialism throughout the country. One of the major differences of the two groups was, however, the question of who would lead the socialist movement. On the one hand, the TİP believed in the working class leadership of the movement, while on the other hand, according to Avcıoğlu:

This dogmatic stance led the TİP leaders to underestimate the role of the intellectuals, the youth and the other forces that are against the status quo.¹¹⁶

The aim of the "Statement" was primarily to set up a dialogue in Turkish society in order to find a solution that would salvage Turkey from the political, social and economic impasse; and that, in turn, could only be achieved through "rapid economic development." This solution, despite the broad ideological range of the *Yön* movement itself, was founded on "socialism." The starting point of the dialogue among the forces taking part in it had to be the, democratization, preservation of social justice and the end of exploitation. Socialism would provide Turkey with the "rapid economic development" it needed. Therefore, the *Yön* movement rejected both the communist and capitalist model and proposed a "Third Way" for development, or as the TİP argued, a "non-capitalist path to development."

In this respect, the party shared the same goals as the review, and this held true roughly until the end of the first period of the TİP. However, "*Yön* engaged in the adaptation of Turkish socialism firstly through the elite and then through the popular classes. Interestingly, it emphasized that the Turkish military sided with those desiring social justice and rapid development, and there was an implied warning that the present unequal distribution of national income could otherwise lead to communism."¹¹⁷ Even today, some socialists may share Avcıoğlu's way of thinking and, to a certain extent, may perpetuate the perception that "Atatürk, personally, was never against socialism and if the conditions were ripe he could have defined himself as a socialist."¹¹⁸ However, Turkey was still dependent on foreign

¹¹⁵ According to Sargın, Avcıoğlu said, "The TİP is a still-born party. You are struggling in vain." Nihat Sargın, p. 94.

¹¹⁶ Doğan Avcıoğlu, "Türkiye İşçi Partisine Dair," *Yön*, issue 50, 28 November 1962, p. 16.

¹¹⁷ Doğan Avcıoğlu, "Yapııcı Milliyetçilik," *Yön*, issue 4, 10 January 1962, p. 3; quoted also in Özgür Mutlu Ulus, p. 22.

¹¹⁸ Doğan Avcıoğlu, "Sosyalizm Anlayışımız," *Yön*, issue 36, August 22, 1962, p. 3.

capital and, therefore, was under the threat of imperialism. Although the Struggle for National Liberation was won, the economic struggle had to be won as well for Turkey to become fully independent.

Yön derived most of its ideas and agenda, albeit in a more coherent form, from the *Kadro* of the 1930s. Etatism was another concept that was borrowed from the *Kadro*, although with a different content, hence its name “new etatism” (*yeni devletçilik*). Contrary to the *Kadro*, *Yön* recognized the existence of classes. However, according to *Yön*, the working class was too weak to assume an active role in the social and political struggle to be waged in the country. In *Yön*’s understanding, socialism, which drew upon the experiences of Third World countries, as evidenced by “Arab socialism” and “Islamic socialism,” was elaborated as the means of achieving rapid development through a “third way.”¹¹⁹ The “third way,” which was the “national-revolutionary path,” excluded both communism and capitalism in that this strategy did not stipulate the hegemony of the proletariat and it was directed against a coalition of conservative classes and the nationalist intelligentsia played the main role.¹²⁰

It was argued socialistic development could only occur through a revolution. In an underdeveloped country which did not yet have an aware working class, such a revolution could only be a people-less one: a top-down revolution by civilian and military intellectuals. Thus, civilian and military intellectuals, the agents of the new political revolution, should be first convinced that there was no contradiction between Kemalism and socialism; on the contrary, the relation was posited to be one of continuity. In the 1960s, Avcıoğlu emphasized again and again that socialism would be the most natural outcome of Kemalist principles. In one article, he argued that “in essence, we regard socialism as the most natural outcome and continuation of Atatürkism, which rests upon the principles of populism, statism, revolutionism, secularism, republicanism and nationalism.”¹²¹

In order to claim, however, that Kemalist principles led to socialism, Kemalism had to be re-written and its principles had to be re-interpreted in accordance with socialism. *Yön* and Avcıoğlu formulated this difficult task as follows: revolutionism described a radical change of the economic and political order. Populism was reinterpreted as a social and economic policy that supported workers and peasants but stood against capital and big landowners, instead of a principle that envisaged “a unified nation of unprivileged, classless existence.” Etatism was reconstructed as taking precautions to save the country’s economy from being a satellite of

¹¹⁹ Stefanos Yerasimos, p. 1667 and Gökçe Şimşek, p. 50.

¹²⁰ Igor P. Lipovsky, p. 92.

¹²¹ I would like to thank Gökhan Atılgan who kindly sent me a small section of an upcoming article on “Turkish Socialism,” from which the above quotation was derived.

international capitalism while implementing populist policies. Nationalism became the anchor of the struggle against imperialism and the struggle for full independence. Thus, the principles of Kemalism were rewritten as directions in a program of development and transition to socialism that would change the class characteristics of power and the position of dependence on imperialism in the world, while organizing all policies for the good of the laboring classes.¹²²

In brief, it was suggested that the dominant economic role should be played by the state, and that the private sector should operate only under the guidelines and strict control of the state. There were proposed agrarian and tax reforms as well, but only for the sake of social justice. Although it was not stated anywhere explicitly, it is clear that they were suggesting a “planned, socialist-oriented economy.” Statist planning was defined as the means of eliminating social injustice and bringing about true democracy, which were also the goals of Atatürk.

Avcıoğlu in his work *Dün – Bugün – Yarın* summed up the positions of *Yön* and the SKD as follows:

1. Imperialism is the chief obstacle in the way of social and economic progress in Turkey.
2. All efforts to develop the economy with the aid of foreign capital and stimulation of the Turkish private sector will ultimately fail.
3. The development of Turkey along the capitalist path has proved unsuccessful.
4. The Turkish capitalist class, which receives about one-third of the national income and is supported by the state in every possible way, avoids capital investment. It expends the major part of its share of the income on private consumption.
5. Existing social and economic contradictions are not being resolved but are deepening.
6. The dominant classes stand in the way of the economic development of the country and also impede social justice, democracy and independence.¹²³

The following extract from one of Avcıoğlu’s articles is quite revealing. It states:

Socialism, with one word, is the rapid development within the social justice system. Rapid development within the social justice system is the only way to save our country. For that reason, socialism is the greatest nationalism.¹²⁴

Nationalism for *Yön* was a political struggle being played out between the progressive (*ilerici*) forces, i.e., those who wanted to save the country, and the conservatives (*gericilik*), the supporters of the status quo. This scheme can easily be interpreted with another

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Igor P. Lipovsky, p. 91.

¹²⁴ Doğan Avcıoğlu, “Yapıcı Milliyetçilik,” p. 3; also quoted in Gökhan Atılğan, p. 101.

approach.¹²⁵ Nationalism in the writings of the review was not denounced, but instead, there were two kinds of nationalism; “pseudo” nationalism and “true/patriotic” nationalism. The first represented the imperialist and capitalist system, while the latter represented socialism. In addition, “real” nationalism was possible in a socialist society, where it would mean national unity. This was not possible in a non-socialist society where some people were oppressed. For *Yön*, and specifically its editor Avcıoğlu, since socialism was unique in principle and all socialist currents have their roots in socialist ideals, the only apparent problem was the way social order could be achieved in each country, a way that was defined by the historical evolution of each country. It was claimed that Turkey’s manner of development would be prompted by “Turkish Socialism” (a mixture of laborism and Kemalism, which actually was statism)¹²⁶ and could be employed by other developing countries. On the other hand, however, “Turkish Socialism” did not coincide with communism. Indeed, much effort has gone into emphasizing that the *Yön* movement’s perception of socialism was different from communism, and sometimes it was even presented as a staunch advocate of anti-communism. Specifically, Şevket Sürreya Aydemir, an ex-TKP member and one of the main theoreticians of the *Yön* movement, wrote as early as 1962 that “[Turkish] Socialism is the antidote of communism and for that reason, is the most effective means of struggle against communism,”¹²⁷ a struggle that was to be won by the “nationalist” and “libertarian” character of Turkish socialism.¹²⁸

Kemalism represented another important element of the *Yön* movement, and that concept deserves special attention because it can shed light on how imperialism was conceptualized in the pages of *Yön*, and at the same time it demonstrates an alliance and continuity with the Kemalist tradition. The *Yön* movement, as well as the whole of the left-wing movement in Turkey, saw in Kemalism a genuine anti-imperialist struggle. Extensive references were made to the National Liberation Struggle (1919-1922) by the whole socialist/communist movement.

In this way, the Kemalist revolutionary character provided a point of reference and legitimized all the anti-imperialist claims on behalf of the left. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was seen as the true patriot who protected Turkey from her enemies, which were the imperialist

¹²⁵ For *Yön*’s perceptions of nationalism, see Gökhan Atılğan, pp. 100-113, especially for the “real” and “pseudo” forms of nationalism, pp. 103-106; additional material on *Yön* can be found in Haluk Yurtsever, *Yükseliş ve Düşüş. Türkiye Solu, 1960-1980*, Yordam Kitap, İstanbul, 2008, pp. 45-60; Mustafa Şener, *Türkiye Solunda Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset. Yön, MDD ve TİP*, Yordam Kitap, 2010, pp. 77-171; Ergun Aydınoğlu, *Eleştirel Bir Tarzı Denemesi, 1960-1971. Türk Solu*, Belge Yayınları, İstanbul, 1992, pp. 38-45 and ff. and the latest study by Ergun Aydınoğlu, *Türkiye Solu (1960-1980)*, Versus, İstanbul, 2007, pp. 73-86. See also the thesis by Nuran Aytumur, *The Turkish Left and Nationalism: The Case of Yön*, M.A. Thesis, Middle East Technical University, 2000.

¹²⁶ Jacob M. Landau, p. 56.

¹²⁷ Şevket Sürreya Aydemir, “Türk Sosyalizminin İlkeleri,” *Yön*, January 9, 1962.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

powers. Likewise, the *Yön* movement placed blame on the Menderes government of the 1950s, as well as the CHP government, referring to them as compradors for betraying the country and allying with the imperialist powers at the expense of the country. *Yön*'s understanding of anti-imperialism was not against external imperialism alone, but internal imperialism as well; and those were the conservative forces that were collaborating with the US in the previous decades. They managed to associate and closely link anti-imperialist rhetoric with nationalist ideology, and to be more precise, with a "true nationalist" ideology. Although anti-imperialist rhetoric (which was actually anti-Americanism) was apparent from the early days of the publication, it was only after the re-launch of the review that the tone of anti-imperialism, as a political stance, could candidly be expressed, and that in the days of the Johnson Letter and the intervention of the US in Turkey's plans for Cyprus. In addition, as had been argued, "*Yön* means anti-imperialism."¹²⁹

The review's interconnection of concepts became perhaps more apparent in terms of foreign policy. The primary goal, of *Yön*, as with the TİP and MDD, was for Turkey to obtain complete independence. And independence in foreign policy meant, according to the review, non-alliance with colonialist and imperialist Western powers and "an alliance with the Soviet Union which supported national liberation movements." In short, Turkey needed to maintain good relations with the Soviet Union and other Third World countries, but this did not mean that the review thought Turkey should be dependent on the Soviet Union or other country.¹³⁰ The review merely advocated an independent orientation as regards world affairs, which meant, increasingly, the rejection of a Western orientation in national development as well as in foreign policy.¹³¹

The TİP's Attempt to Consolidate its Position

During the first years of its existence, the TİP limited itself to the creation of the necessary preconditions so that the party could function without having to contend with "constitutional" difficulties in the following years. When the first coalition governments¹³² were established in the Turkish Republic, the emergence of a powerful and influential left-wing movement, referred to as "the threat from the left," was used as an excuse to prolong martial law, and

¹²⁹ Gökhan Atılğan, "Türkiye Sosyalist Hareketinde Anti-Emperyalizm ve Bağımsızlıkçılık (1920-1971)," p. 682, in Murat Gültenkingil (ed), vol. 8: *Sol*, İletişim, İstanbul, 2008.

¹³⁰ Gökhan Atılğan, *Yön-Devrim Hareketi*, p. 121.

¹³¹ Nurhan İnce, *Problems and Politics in Turkish Foreign Policy, 1960-1966*, PhD Dissertation, University of Kentucky, Lexington, USA, p. 112.

¹³² For more on those coalition governments, see Feroz Ahmad, *The Turkish Experiment in Democracy*, pp. 212-227; for an older but detailed account, see C.H. Dodd, *Politics and Government in Turkey*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969, pp. 55-103.

successive governments focused on the left which they deemed to be “the real threat to the existing order.”¹³³ In addition, the left was treated as unpatriotic, and hence the ideas proposed by it were to be considered hazardous to the national interests of the country, an approach that was similar to policies in other countries during the Cold War era.¹³⁴

The party kept a low profile, considering the events taking place in the first years following the 27th of May coup, and that seemed to be the most logical course of action since one of its *raison d’êtres* was its dedication to changing the system. Thus, the TİP was considered to be a reformist party and therefore it was perceived as a threat to the already established state structure and the interests of the ruling classes.

As early as 1962, when issuing the second party regulations, the TİP stated that it was in favor of a peaceful foreign policy according to international laws and regulations and was held to the spirit of the Struggle for National Liberation. No matter how insignificant it may seem, the TİP’s stance on foreign policy mattered, and it should be noted that this was because of the party’s proposals and party’s idealist insistence on democratic methods and open debates, as well as their criticism of fascist methods and censorship; in such a setting, foreign policy issues ceased to be taboo and could be opened up to discussion.¹³⁵ The party’s emphasis was on domestic issues and the consolidation and expansion of the party. Foreign policy matters, especially after the proclamation of the Cyprus Republic in 1960, failed to attract much more than passing attention,¹³⁶ let alone the fact that it was still a party without concrete ideological bases. The three-year period of relative peace on the island made it easier for the TİP to get organized and open new branches, which, after Aybar’s inauguration as party chairman, expanded rapidly.

The liberalism and relaxation of limitations that the new constitution provided helped leftist groups focus on their scope, and they were able to openly criticize government policies for the first time. These first criticisms, made mostly by the left, targeted Turkey’s pro-American and pro-NATO foreign policy alliance.¹³⁷ Thus, when the Cuba missile crisis broke out, Turkey’s stance demonstrated “continuity in Turkish cooperation with the United

¹³³ Feroz Ahmad, p. 187 and p. 195.

¹³⁴ “Not only the concept of ‘national foreign policy’ was for long imposed on all sections of the public, but also it was continually enlarged, encompassing all criticism and alternative suggestions. A special agreement was achieved between the government and the opposition on the foreign policy issues, whereas domestic and foreign policies of a country are the two sides of the same coin.” Türkaya Ataöv, *N.A.T.O. and Turkey*, Sevinç Printing House, Ankara, 1970, p. 87.

¹³⁵ Sadun Aren, p. 67.

¹³⁶ William Hale, *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1774-2000*, Frank Cass, London-Portland, 2000, p. 133.

¹³⁷ Yasemin Çelik, *Contemporary Turkish Foreign Policy*, Praeger, United States of America, 1999, p. 59.

States.”¹³⁸ Turkey’s pro-American stance had already started with the Truman Doctrine in 1947, but especially in the following decade during Menderes rule, when Turkey entered NATO and accepted the Marshall plan.¹³⁹ The Turkish political elite and a large part of the population believed that Turkey and Turks drew closer to their nation-state and formation of national identity through Westernization and Turkish-Western alliances. In addition to NATO, Turkey was bound to the United States by 56 separate agreements, of which three were concluded before 1950, 31 under Menderes and 22 in the early 1960s. The 1954 treaty on military facilities granted the Americans the right to build military installations and bases in Turkey. The Turkish army met the cost of the building and upkeep of the installations and they remained Turkish territory, but the Americans ran them. From 1957 onwards, Jupiter nuclear missiles were based in Turkey.¹⁴⁰ These were not the first nuclear weapons to appear in Turkey, but they significantly enhanced Turkey’s potential role in a nuclear war.¹⁴¹

In this way, the Menderes government regarded both NATO membership and the stationing of Jupiter missiles on Turkish soil as a great success, confirming their integration with the West. Soviet reactions failed to make the Turkish government back down on the stationing of Jupiter missiles on its territory, nor did the opposition of some members of the Turkish foreign ministry. The missiles were installed at a base near Izmir in the autumn of 1961, but due to the complexity of the launching equipment and the time needed to train the troops, the missiles only became operative in July of 1962. The Cuba missile crisis however, that erupted in October of the same year had strong implications for Turkey, both externally and internally.¹⁴²

During the crisis, Nikita Khrushchev was also reacting in part to the Jupiter missiles that the United States had installed in Turkey. Partially, it was because of the Turkish Armed Forces’ insistence on not transferring the Jupiter missiles to Polaris submarines, since the missiles were considered to provide better safety against Soviet attack. In that respect, the fragile İnönü government could not pose any objections. Turkey sided with the US, reaffirming the Turkish-Western alliance, and İnönü stated, “We will fulfill our commitments when requested by one of our allies as we would expect our allies to fulfill their commitments

¹³⁸ George S. Harris, *Troubled Alliance. Turkish-American Problems in Historical Perspective, 1945-1971*, AEI-Hoover Policy Studies, Stanford University, California, 1972, p. 91.

¹³⁹ See Senem Üstün, “Turkey and the Marshall Plan. Strive for Aid,” *Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, vol. XXVII, 1997, pp. 31-52 and Çağrı Erhan, “ABD ve NATO’yla İlişkiler,” pp. 522-550, in Baskın Oran (ed.), *Türk Dış Politikası. Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, 1919-1980*, vol. 1, İletişim, İstanbul, 2001.

¹⁴⁰ Erik-Jan Zürcher, p. 274.

¹⁴¹ William Hale, p. 133.

¹⁴² George S. Harris, p. 92.

when we ourselves are faced with danger.”¹⁴³ However, this decision to stand by the side of NATO, the US and the West in general, also created the risk of, implicitly or explicitly, an attack by the Soviet Union.

In the end, President Kennedy gave in to Russian demands that the missiles based in Turkey be withdrawn in exchange for the USSR not basing missiles in Cuba. However, by the time the missiles were withdrawn from Turkish soil, the damage was already done for İnönü. Right after the crisis there were debates in the Turkish National Assembly. In addition, public opinion was quite critical of the government and the missile issue. The government was criticized by the CHP, *Yeni Türkiye Partisi* (YTP, New Turkey Party) and *Millet Partisi* (MP, National Party), which shared the opinion of the public concerning the final decision to withdraw the Jupiter missiles stationed in eastern Turkey. Although the withdrawal of the obsolete Jupiter system and its replacement with the submarine-based Polaris system was no sacrifice, for the Turks it raised the question about whether or not Turkey was an important strategic partner for NATO and the West, or just a pawn serving the interests of the latter.¹⁴⁴ In response, Erkin, the Turkish Foreign Minister, stated:

[...] because of our exceptional geographic location and our determination to fight for the principles we believe in, our strategic importance will always continue regardless of any technological advances in weaponry systems.¹⁴⁵

The Turkish government’s generally loyal stance to the alliance was strained when developments seemed to indicate that NATO was an organization that served American strategic interests and not those of Turkey, and the Cuban missile crisis was just the first of these. The issue scarred Turkish-US relations, and tensions would increase in the upcoming months with the Cyprus Question and the Johnson Letter.

At that moment, however, the Cuba crisis left an impression not only on politicians but also suggested that NATO’s interests might not be closely bound with those of the Turks, and raised doubts that on another occasion, Turkish interests might be set aside. In addition, the Soviet threat of placing missiles in Cuba as a reaction, as well as the posing of Turkey as a threat to the Soviet Union, made Turkish opinion believe that it was because of American weaponry that they had become a target for the Soviets. The emerging left used this Turkish

¹⁴³ As quoted in Nurhan İnce, p. 67.

¹⁴⁴ For the discussions in the National Assembly and the critiques that were made, see the very interesting account by Melek M. Fırat, *1960-1971 Arası Türk Dış Politikası ve Kıbrıs Sorunu*, Siyasal Kitabevi, Ankara, 1997, pp. 111-114 and Çağrı Erhan, “ABD ve NATO’yla İlişkiler,” pp. 681-685, in Baskın Oran (ed.), *Türk Dış Politikası. Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, 1919-1980*, vol. 1, İletişim, İstanbul, 2001.

¹⁴⁵ As quoted in Nurhan İnce, p. 77.

sentiment to promote its ideological tenets and to express its opposition to the pro-American government stance.¹⁴⁶ In particular, Avcıoğlu, the chief editor of *Yön*, was of the opinion that the missiles had placed Turkey in the Soviet spotlight again, and praised İnönü for his handling of the situation during the Cuban crisis.¹⁴⁷

On another occasion, Avcıoğlu again referred to the Turkish case stating that “[Turkey] should develop through [her own] recourses as it did during the Atatürk period” and claimed that local agents should stop collaborating with “the forces that wish to upset the status-quo.”¹⁴⁸ Eventually, for many left-wing intellectuals, the Cuba crisis was enough of a reason to disengage from the US and “move closer” to the Soviet Union, always in accordance with the foreign policy of Atatürk.¹⁴⁹

In addition to that, the left was also critical of the European Economic Community, or Common Market as it was known, as the only body that did not agree with the Ankara Treaty that the Turkish government was planning to sign in September of 1963.¹⁵⁰ In the TİP Program, the Common Market was dealt with only briefly, and considering the extent of the first program of the party this seems logical; it pointed to the contradiction between Turkey’s EEC membership and the need for “a serious program of industrialization.” EEC membership was regarded as a factor that would hamper economic development and enforce the maintenance of the prevalent “semi-colonial” economic situation. Thus, as it was “a hundred percent” against membership, the TİP was determined to “protect the newly emerging Turkish industry by the use of Customs Walls against the hegemony of foreign capital.”¹⁵¹ According to the party, Turkish membership in the Common Market put national interests in danger and threatened the spirit of the National Treaty. In addition, the party stressed the importance of national independence and an insistence on a “national” policy.¹⁵² Thus, the economic imperialism of Western powers, i.e. the US, would not be able to invade the Turkish market

¹⁴⁶ For critical articles, see especially *Yön* and the newspapers *Milliyet* and *Cumhuriyet*, for which some left-wing intellectuals wrote. The two newspapers, however, followed the social-democratic path in subsequent years.

¹⁴⁷ Doğan Avcıoğlu, “Füze Üsleri,” *Yön*, 46, October 31, 1962, p. 3. The complete list of articles, writers and topics throughout the history of *Yön* is presented in Hikmet Özdemir, *Yön’ün Yazar ve Konu Dizini*, Ankara, 1984. A copy of this rare publication can be located at the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam; for newspapers sharing similar views, see Nurhan Ince, *Ibid.*, p. 79.

¹⁴⁸ Doğan Avcıoğlu, “Füzeler Kalkarken,” *Yön*, 59, January 30, 1963, p. 3.

¹⁴⁹ Melek M. Fırat, p. 104 and Serpil Çelenk Güvenç, p. 77.

¹⁵⁰ According to the Treaty, it was envisaged that after twenty years Turkey would establish a Customs Union with the EEC.

¹⁵¹ On the party’s stance regarding the EEC, see Sadun Aren, p. 66 and Serpil Çelenk Güvenç, pp. 120-126.

¹⁵² As soon as the Ankara Treaty was signed, the TİP published its opinions and ideas on the issue in a leaflet titled “No to the Common Market” (“Ortak Pazara Hayır”). See also IISG, “TİP Ortak Pazara Niçin Karşıdır?” 1963, *Kemal Sülker Papers*, Box 723; TÜSTAV, “Niyazi Ağırnaslı’nın Ortak Pazar Hakkında Meclis Konuşması,” September 23, 1963, *Nihat Sargın Papers*, Box 4, folder 157.

and encroach on its territories, and to an extent, “colonialism with new methods,” as Aren called the EEC strategy, would be avoided, as it would also strike local landowners who collaborated with foreign capital at the expense of the country.¹⁵³ The agreement, it was argued, would be fatal to Turkey since “economic imperialism” would be fatal for the country’s economic development and industrialization.¹⁵⁴

In this way, the Cuba crisis and the party’s critique of the EEC helped the left in Turkey formulate me a critique of the government for the first time, especially to express its sentiments of anti-Americanism and anti-imperialism, and in fact, to open the way for political discourses and competition with other parties on “equal” ground. Foreign policy was a matter which was closely combined with democracy, as well as development, nationalism and independence. At the general meeting of the executive board of the party in Ankara in August of 1962, Mehmet Ali Aybar stated that Turkey had earned her freedom and, after thirty-nine years, her people ought to discuss any kind of issue and all issues openly without fear, as it happened in other “free” countries.¹⁵⁵ In doing so, Mehmet Ali Aybar was pointing out the anti-democratic attitude of the ruling parties and circles that were against the left, and in addition, offering a critique of Articles 141-142¹⁵⁶ under which communist activities were persecuted and impeded the development of the leftist movement in general.

The crisis of December 1963 led to reactions in the press and in public opinion. The press demanded a more dynamic foreign policy and military intervention unless the attacks against the Turks on the island were brought to an end.¹⁵⁷ Youth organizations such as the *Türk Milli Gençlik Teşkilatı* (Turkish National Youth Organization), the *Türkiye Milli Talebe Federasyonu* (Turkish National Students Federation) and the *Milli Türk Talebe Birliği*

¹⁵³ Sadun Aren, 65.

¹⁵⁴ “TİP ve Ortak Pazar,” *Forum*, October 1, 1963; see also “Ortak Pazar Kalkınma Yolu Değildir,” *Sosyal Adalet*, issue 8, May 7, 1963, p. 3. The ideas expressed in this leaflet were heavily criticized by the AP and CKMP in absentia of the TİP, indicating that leftist ideas in general made an impression and represented some kind of a threat. For an earlier criticism, see IISG, “GYK 12 Mayıs Gaziantep Toplantısında, Genel Başkan Mehmet Ali Aybar’ın Yaptığı Açış Konuşması,” *Kemal Sülker Papers*, Box 547.

¹⁵⁵ Mehmet Ali Aybar, “Gerçek Demokrasiyi Emekçi Halk Yığınları Kuracaktır,” pp. 207-208, in Mehmet Ali Aybar.

¹⁵⁶ “Articles 140-142 of the Criminal Code, prohibiting organizations and propaganda designed to promote class struggle or communism, which was defined by the Code as the establishment of the supremacy of one class over the other, were rendered inoperative by the outburst of social currents which confused further the already vague differences between social democracy, socialism and Marxism.” Kemal H. Karpat, “Ideology in Turkey after the Revolution of 1960,” p. 359, in Kemal H. Karpat (ed).

¹⁵⁷ The variety of newspapers shows that generally all currents in Turkey at the time sided with an intervention to end the ills of the Turkish Cypriots. See *Cumhuriyet*, December 22-25, 1963; *Milliyet*, December 22-25, 1963; *Tercüman*, December 22-24, 1963; *Son Havadis*, December 22-25, 1963.

(National Turkish Students Union) protested the events.¹⁵⁸ Gatherings were also held to stage protests in smaller cities in Anatolia as well as in Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir.¹⁵⁹

Although the TİP espoused the indivisibility of the socialist and the national-democratic revolution after the Second Congress of the party, significant signs emerged regarding the strategy to be followed, at least concerning the Cyprus Question. For the TİP, from the very start this issue was seen as a struggle against imperialist rule and, most notably, after the British retreat, against the US. Moreover, the anti-imperialist Turkish struggle was based on the Struggle for National Liberation launched by Mustafa Kemal. The point of reference, as it has been for all political parties in Turkey until the present day, was Mustafa Kemal. Thus, after Aybar's initiative, Atatürk's speech dating from the 1st of December in 1921¹⁶⁰ and the proclamation of the Turkish Grand National Assembly were incorporated into the party program of 1964, after the Izmir Congress. Atatürk's speech was associated with populism (*halkçılık*), imperialism, and capitalism. The text states:

We are the people who, through work, protect the independence of our lives. Let us know who we are. We are a laboring and poor people. Through our labor, we all have a right and a power. Our society has no place for those that lie on their backs or clamber on the backs of others. So what is populism? It is the social doctrine that bases its law on the labor of our society. Gentlemen, populism is the appropriate doctrine of a people, who, in order to protect their independence must wage a national war against an imperialism that seeks to destroy our nation, against a capitalism that aims to swallow us whole.¹⁶¹

Both of the texts were regarded by the TİP leadership and the party members as anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist, the meanings of which were often overlapping. According to one of the leading ideologues, the texts were put at the beginning "to give the impression and the belief that the TİP and the movement led by it was a continuation of the spirit instigated by the *Kuva-i Milliye* (National Forces)."¹⁶²

Therefore, within the discourse of the TİP, the successful outcome of the Turkish warning of sending jet fighters over Nicosia, the capital of the island, which frightened away the Greek Cypriot¹⁶³ community, was guided by the spirit of the *Kuva-i Milliye*. The spirit of the *Kuva-i*

¹⁵⁸ *Milliyet*, December 23, 1963.

¹⁵⁹ *Cumhuriyet*, December 25, 1963.

¹⁶⁰ Mehmet Ali Aybar, *TİP Tarihi*, p. 177. The text is also at the beginning of the party statute.

¹⁶¹ This speech by Atatürk, which was given in the assembly December 1st, 1921, is quoted in full in Nimet Arsan (ed.), *Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri*, vol. I, Türk İnkılap Tarihi Enstitüsü Yayınları, Ankara, 1964, pp. 187-220, here p. 196.

¹⁶² Sadun Aren, p. 56; Serpil Çelenk Güvenç, p. 64.

¹⁶³ Melek Fırat, "Yunanistan'la İlişkiler," pp. 719-720, in Baskın Oran (ed.), *Türk Dış Politikası. Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar, 1919-1980*, vol. 1, İletişim, İstanbul, 2001.

Milliye managed to stop the cycle of bloodshed that had started with the deaths of two Turkish Cypriots. The following day, the 26th of December in 1963, Greece and Britain proposed jointly with Turkey that the Cyprus government restore peace and place Major-General Young as the head of the joint-peace making force.

On this occasion, we can see the first statement made on behalf of the party in the National Assembly. Efforts were made by the party to convince the ruling elites about its patriotism, and also most importantly that it truly believed in Kemalist ideals according to which the Turkish state and nation was built. An example of this is the declaration made by one of the party's two parliamentarians, Niyazi Ağırnaslı:¹⁶⁴

The Turkish nation is a peace-loving nation. Turkish society is based on the doctrine "peace at home, peace in the world." But the conditions of peace, our dominant rights, independence and national dignity, stop at her [Turkish] borders.¹⁶⁵

The parliamentarian concluded his speech by stating his, and the party's, suffering and concern about their brothers, the Turkish Cypriots, who needed to find a viable solution so they could live along with the Greek Cypriots and prevent *Enosis* from taking root again. Lastly, he thanked "the government and the army – although they procrastinated until today – for their actions."¹⁶⁶ The parliamentarian made those closing remarks of thanks to a large extent because of the fact that on 25th of December, İnönü had expressed concern about the crisis in Cyprus, setting aside domestic issues aside for the sake of solidarity, no matter how superficial and momentary that might have been, so that the crisis could be properly handled.¹⁶⁷

However, that solidarity was indeed fleeting. Faced with a new crisis on the island, which lasted throughout 1964, İnönü, who was not able to receive a vote of confidence, warned that without a vote of confidence the CHP would abstain from any other coalitions that might be formed. In light of the crisis and İnönü's warning, the TİP, as well as the other parties, supported the İnönü government. In a circular, the party criticized the government, however, claiming that it was not sharing information about the situation in Cyprus. Specifically, the circular stated, "our party condemns the brutalities taking place in Cyprus and favors calm and just order [on the island], [but] the government is keeping its policy on Cyprus secret by

¹⁶⁴ For Ağırnaslı's participation in the party, see Nihat Sargın, *TİP'li Yıllar*, pp. 135-136.

¹⁶⁵ Niyazi Ağırnaslı, "Kıbrıs Konusu," 21st session, December 27, 1963, p. 54, in Turhan Salman (ed.), *TİP Parlamentoda, 1963-1966*, vol. 1, TÜSTAV, Istanbul, 2004.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

¹⁶⁷ Feroz Ahmad, p. 221. For İnönü's speech about the program of the third coalition on December 30, 1963, see Kâzım Öztürk (ed.), *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Hükümetleri ve Programları*, AK Yayınları, Istanbul, 1968, pp. 551-578.

not revealing party information.”¹⁶⁸ In a rather diplomatic way, the following day İnönü justified the government’s stance by saying that when the crisis broke out, Turkey was not in a position to intervene because of the consultations required with Great Britain and Greece based on the Treaty of Guarantee.¹⁶⁹ Indeed, Turkey was not in a position to attack Cyprus because of İnönü’s personal views,¹⁷⁰ Soviet support for Makarios and the lack of readiness of the Turkish armed forces to undertake an intervention in Cyprus.¹⁷¹

However, a few days later parliamentarian Niyazi Ağırnaslı expressed his party’s concerns to the second coalition government about land reforms and taxation because they were not dealt with sincerity, as had been promised, and more generally he addressed the coalition governments and parties that led the country into an unstable and dangerous situation. As far as Cyprus and the vote of confidence were concerned, he stated that:

[...] we are a nation that shows commitment to laws, international agreements and obligations. From this point of view, “perhaps a little more courageous behavior would be nice” from our government to protect the rights of our brother Cypriots.¹⁷²

However, the parliamentarian went on and stated that in the midst of such a dangerous situation the party hoped for a system of peaceful co-existence for the two communities on the island and to that end, he said, “...the entire Turkish nation and the political parties that represent the Turkish nation will support the government.”¹⁷³

While the government was preoccupied with Cyprus, domestic issues seemed to have accumulated and were creating new frictions in the third coalition government of İnönü, which that time was a minority coalition of the CHP and independents. However, the opposition, including both the AP and the YTP, were also not able to propose any reforms, despite the fact that they were also against reforms that the new constitution had promulgated. The TİP, on the other hand, believed that if the reforms were presented in a better way, then

¹⁶⁸ TÜSTAV, “Genelge,” January 2, 1964, *Nihat Sargın Papers*, Box 4, folder 170; also quoted in Nihat Sargın, p. 191.

¹⁶⁹ Süha Bölükbaşı, *The Superpowers and the Third World. Turkish-American Relations and Cyprus*, University Press of America, Lanham Maryland, 1988, p. 60; see also Nasuh Uslu, *The Cyprus Question as an Issue of Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish-American Relations, 1959-2003*, Nova Science Publishers, New York, 2003, p. 23.

¹⁷⁰ Çetin Altan, writing at the time for *Milliyet*, expressed his support for İnönü’s decision not to undertake military action in Cyprus, stating that “his intelligence was superior to brute force.” Çetin Altan, “Akıl ve Çizme,” *Milliyet*, January 1, 1964, as quoted in Süha Bölükbaşı.

¹⁷¹ Süha Bölükbaşı, *Ibid.*, pp. 65-69, and Nasuh Uslu, *Ibid.*; see also Tozun Bahçeli, *Greek-Turkish Relations Since 1955*, Westview Press, Boulder, San Francisco and London, 1990, pp. 62-63.

¹⁷² Niyazi Ağırnaslı, “Hükümet Programı,” 23rd session, January 3, 1964, p. 56, in Turhan Salman (ed.); the word “brother” is preferred here because it is believed that it is closer in meaning. The Turkish word used is *soydaş*, which means “of the same kind or race,” according to the Redhouse Dictionary.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

both the TİP and the other parties and society would accept them. Regardless, İnönü remained in office for the sole purpose of handling the crisis in Cyprus in 1964. When the crisis was over, the JP lost no time in bringing the government down.¹⁷⁴

The Bursa Speech

While the crisis in Cyprus was escalating, demonstrating that the joint peacekeeping force was unable to maintain peace, Great Britain proposed a meeting of Greek and Turkish foreign ministers, along with Greek and Turkish-Cypriot representatives, to find a solution to the crisis. However, a solution could not be found for the two communities, which declined Britain's proposals. The Greek and Turkish ministers also rejected each other's proposals, revealing that the enmity between the two countries superseded a peaceful settlement. The NATO plan was eventually rejected by Makarios on February 4th but by then, the bi-communality provided by the 1960 Constitution had already been lost. Greek Cypriots, who outnumbered the Turkish Cypriots and instigated the crisis to a large extent, launched another offensive on Limassol in mid-February, which in turn invoked a harsh reaction from Turkey. This offensive became one of the most serious publicly debated topics in Turkey since it was perceived as representing the "extermination" of the remaining Turkish Cypriots on the island.¹⁷⁵ İnönü, who was not only trying to minimize the political cost to his coalition government but also find a solution to the crisis in Cyprus, called for an immediate cease-fire and issued an ultimatum to Makarios on the 12th of March threatening a military intervention,¹⁷⁶ for which the Turkish parliament had granted him authority.¹⁷⁷ In the meantime, the United States had already started to take an active role in the Cyprus Question in January of 1964, replacing Great Britain who also wished to broaden American responsibilities concerning the Cyprus Question. Despite the hesitance of the US, considering the fact that Cyprus had become a powder keg in the Mediterranean and a "Mediterranean Cuba" that could place the southern flank of NATO at risk, they eventually took the lead.¹⁷⁸ Both Greece and Turkey had been striving for privileged partnerships with the US, but soon after they would be let down.

¹⁷⁴ Erik-Jan Zürcher, p. 249.

¹⁷⁵ For the events and also criticism of the İnönü government, see the newspapers *Milliyet* and *Cumhuriyet*, March 9, 1964 ff.

¹⁷⁶ For İnönü's call for a meeting of the chiefs of the armed, air and naval forces to decide about military actions, see Melek M. Fırat, "Yunanistan'la İlişkiler," pp. 723-725, especially pp. 723-724; Süha Bölükbaşı, pp. 72-74 and Nasuh Uslu, p. 40.

¹⁷⁷ George S. Harris, p. 110

¹⁷⁸ George Ball, as quoted in Nasuh Uslu, p. 27.

Although the US tried not to take sides, since the Turkish Cypriots were on the defensive in their respective enclaves, Turkey felt it had been abandoned, and Prime Minister İnönü criticized the Western powers and their policy on the Cyprus question, without, however, changing the fundamentals of Turkish foreign policy. In the assembly, İnönü said that “in their dealings in connection with the Cyprus question, our allies have from time to time created the impression that they are not interested in the problem or have no influence on it. [...] We see that the United States and Great Britain have lately evaluated the dangers which the Cyprus crisis has brought about in a better way and that they are making better efforts. We sincerely hope that our allies will take a stance which distinguishes the guilty from the innocent and show their loyalty to the [Western] alliance, legal principles and justice.”¹⁷⁹ The opposition party took a similar stance, siding with the official and long-enduring pro-Western stance and statements.

However, the TİP was the only party that went further than just being critical of the Western powers by abstaining from recycling the official rhetoric, although it was not very pleased about having to make its position clear on such a topic so soon after its establishment.¹⁸⁰ In April, through the semi-official review of the party, *Sosyal Adalet*, their views appeared in an article that should be considered significant in the sense that it presented a fresh approach that differed from the official line’s interpretation of the causes of the Cyprus crisis.

The article presented the history of the Cyprus Question and the origins of the crisis on the island. For the first time, British colonial support for the Turkish Cypriot community was presented as it was used to counter the EOKA struggle, as well as the important fact, which will also be referred to later in the Bursa speech, that Turkey was forced to take part and “make” Cyprus a national Turkish issue by Great Britain, the “main architect of the London-Zurich agreements.” It stated that it aimed primarily at the preservation of British security and maintenance of her bases which were used to control the Middle East. Lastly, a criticism was made for the first time of the Turkish Cypriot leadership for unjustly and unsuitably using the right of veto, despite the fact that the Greek Cypriot community was to blame for the tensions between the two communities in the first place.¹⁸¹

The above article should be considered to be the pioneer of what would follow at the official TİP meeting in Bursa, where the party’s coherent and official policy on Cyprus was

¹⁷⁹ İnönü’s speech in the Turkish National Assembly, as quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 44.

¹⁸⁰ Nihat Sargın, p. 223.

¹⁸¹ “Kıbrıs,” *Sosyal Adalet*, April 17, 1964, issue 4, pp. 42-44.

presented for the first time;¹⁸² the approach caused the resignation of Esat Çağa, one of the two delegates of the party, as well as Professor İsmet Sungurbey, Necla Sungurbey and Demir Özlü.¹⁸³ According to Nihat Sargın, one of the leading figures of the party, Mehmet Ali Aybar added a couple of notes just before his speech, which was set for the 10th of May,¹⁸⁴ without consulting any of the members of the executive board. Those notes might have caused the members' resignations, but as Sargın points out, he did not hear anyone saying, "I wish he hadn't added these points."¹⁸⁵

Mehmet Ali Aybar started his opening speech on domestic and international issues, one of which, and perhaps the most important one, was the issue of Cyprus.¹⁸⁶ After presenting the situation in Cyprus, the chairman sharply criticized the premeditated killings carried out by EOKA.¹⁸⁷ He also referred to the Cyprus Question as having been non-existent for Turkey until 1955,¹⁸⁸ i.e. the first year of the struggle for national liberation launched by the Greek Cypriot organization EOKA against the British colonizers, as well as the fact that the Turkish Cypriots were completely satisfied with the London-Zurich Agreements and, therefore, they had never suggested an "ideal of annexation" to Turkey.¹⁸⁹

This might be because the island had been legally linked to the Ottoman State. But perhaps since 1878, when the island was left to England, each time the Cypriot Greeks resisted and manifested against England, the leaders of the Turkish community stated their alliance to England and refused to be put on a par with rebellious Greeks. The Greeks have passed their case of "Enosis" on from generation to generation. They have built organizations and armed groups for this ideal and fought England for years. EOKA, which has been an overtly

¹⁸² TÜSTAV, "GYK'nun 10 Mayıs 1964 Bursa'da Toplantısında Genel Başkanın Açış Konuşması," *Nebil Varuy Papers*, Box 4, folder 122; IISG, "GYK'nun 10 Mayıs 1964 Bursa'da Toplantısında Genel Başkanın Açış Konuşması," *Kemal Süller Papers*, Box 550.

¹⁸³ Mehmet Ali Aybar, *TİP Tarihi*, vol. 1, p. 235.

¹⁸⁴ For the information about the time and organization issues sent to Bursa branch, see IISG, [no title], May 1, 1964, *Kemal Süller Papers*, Box 550.

¹⁸⁵ Nihat Sargın, p. 224.

¹⁸⁶ For the analytical political agenda concerning the activities of the Bursa meeting signed by General Secretary Rıza Kuas, see IISG, "GYK'nun 10 Mayıs 1964 Gündemi," May 5, 1964, *Kemal Süller Papers*, Box 550; for the report prepared for the Bursa meeting by Rıza Kuas and Nihat Sargın, see TÜSTAV, "Çalışma Raporu," *Nihat Sargın Papers*, Box 4, folder 179.

¹⁸⁷ "As is well known, since December Cyprus has been home to bloody events. Children, women, and the elderly are being killed, and villages are being set on fire. These bloody events are turning into a civil war. It is difficult to say that these events started randomly. Considering the vehicles and arms that are used, and the starting date of the events, we have to conclude that these attacks are based on a premeditated plan." IISG, "GYK'nun 10 Mayıs 1964 Bursa'da Toplantısında Genel Başkanın Açış Konuşması," *Kemal Süller Papers*, Box 550, p. 1.

¹⁸⁸ Mehmet Ali Aybar's statement is actually correct. For the talks concerning the adoption of Cyprus as a Turkish "national" issue by the British, see Arif Hasan Tahsin, *Aynı Yolu Yürütenler Farklı Yerlere Varamazlar*, vol. II, Nicosia, 1989, p. 392, as quoted in Niyazi Kızılyürek, *Cyprus: The Impasse of Nationalisms*, p. 65, where there is an added confidential report by the British Embassy in Ankara.

¹⁸⁹ TÜSTAV, "GYK'nun 10 Mayıs 1964 Bursa'da Toplantısında Genel Başkanın Açış Konuşması," *Nebil Varuy Papers*, Box 4, folder 122, p. 1.

nationalist, *Enosis*-ist, and fascist group, is still active today. President Makarios has met with the leaders of this group in Athens.¹⁹⁰

The TİP was perhaps the only sincere and consistent party adhering to Kemalist principles, and above all, to the *Misak-ı Milli*, the milestone of the Turkish of the War of Independence, which was abandoned after Atatürk's death.¹⁹¹ Hence, it was argued, any irredentist plans should be abandoned:

We are a nation that has won the War of Independence, and that has purified an old inheritance. We have re-shaped the borders of the country definitively around a homogenous people. We have no claims on any other lands than the ones that are inside of our borders and we should never have such claims. We have to move rapidly towards being a most civilized society.¹⁹²

And he continued:

This is why Atatürk embraced the principle of “peace at home, peace in the world” and aimed to create a homogenous population regardless of religion, ethnicity, and language differences among its members. As it is stated today in our constitution, all the people who are connected to the Turkish Republic by their nationality are considered Turks. Atatürk has founded and applied a policy of friendship with Turkey's neighbors with its modern and powerful army to protect the borders decided upon at Lausanne. The first aim of Atatürk's international politics has been to make treaties with neighboring countries.¹⁹³

In addition, according to the speech, it was England that dragged Turkey into the Cyprus issue to preserve her Majesty's interests, and the claim was made that Turkey should not fall into the British trap. “Cyprus has primarily become an important military base for England since the latter left the Suez Canal. The political interests of England are easily controlled from there and its rights to Middle Eastern oil are freely and effectively controlled. The constant revolts of the Greek Cypriots in 1955 and Greece's request to the United Nations for self-determination for Cyprus created a difficult situation for England. England is trying to present Turkey as being responsible for Cyprus, in order to save herself.”¹⁹⁴ It is after such calculations that Turkey was invited to the London Conference, and as such, that's how an overthrown government seeking adventure has complicated matters.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 2.

¹⁹¹ “After Atatürk's death this founding principle has been disregarded. After our friendship with Greece has been compromised, today our only friend is Iran.” Ibid.

¹⁹² Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

We accepted the annexation of Cyprus to England with the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. Until 1955, Cyprus was not an issue for Turkey. It is only after the rebellion of the Cypriot Greeks against the English colonial administration in April 1955 and the threats that were posed by EOKA that England invited Turkey to the London Conference.¹⁹⁵

The TİP argument concerning Cyprus was agreed upon by the illegal TKP, many secret members of which were also TİP members.¹⁹⁶ Notably, the TKP stated, “Although the Motherland shed blood for them, the Turkish Cypriots never wished to join the Motherland” unlike the Greek Cypriots who took up the cause of *Enosis*. Specifically, *Enosis* served the Greek bourgeoisie interests, the Leipzig report claimed, and also served the interests of the Americans and the British. Lastly, according to the TKP, Aybar’s speech supported the independent and demilitarized island of Cyprus under international guarantees.¹⁹⁷

The TKP, however, was one of the few who agreed with the speech. Because of these points, on the 19th of May in 1964, Esat Çağa filed his resignation and left the party because he found the party’s opinions pro-Greek. He resigned because of the “injustice and wrongdoings on the Cyprus case by the party administration.”¹⁹⁸ However, as Aybar notes in his memoirs, Çağa, as one of the two delegates, could and should have explained to the party why he considered that the party’s declaration on the issue was “unjust and wrong” so that it could be corrected, if that indeed were the case; no one ever found out his reasons for disagreeing or why he resigned.¹⁹⁹ The other members of the party mentioned above followed suit soon after.

However, the most important incident that took place because of that speech was when a journalist of the influential newspaper *Milliyet* distorted Aybar’s words, and mistakenly quoted him as stating, “Cyprus does not represent an issue for Turkey.”²⁰⁰ The article in *Milliyet* says, “According to the chairman of the TİP we [Turkey] must not deal with issues

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 2.

¹⁹⁶ Most probably Sadun Aren and Behice Boran were also TKP members. Rasih Nuri Ileri claims that Behice Boran was a TKP member but she had never been officially registered. Rasih Nuri Ileri, interview.

¹⁹⁷ See “Türkiye İşçi Partisi Üzerine Seminer Notu,” pp. 204-213, especially p. 208, in Erden Akbulut (ed.), *İşçi-Demokrasi Hareketi ve TİP. 1963-1965 TKP Belgelerinde*, TÜSTAV, İstanbul, 2003.

¹⁹⁸ For Esat Çağa’s resignation, see his resignation letter, Esat Çağa, “İstifa Mektubu,” May 19, 1964, document from the personal archive of Halit Çelenk. I would like to thank his daughter, Serpil Celenk Güvenç, for locating the 8-page letter and sending me a copy. See also Kemal Sülker, “TİP’nin Kuruluşu ve Başarılı Mücadelesi,” *Eylem*, issue 29, March 1, 1966, pp. 25-26.

¹⁹⁹ Mehmet Ali Aybar, pp. 235-236. The party’s stance on Cyprus was accepted and ratified by all nineteen presidents of the branches, as well as by the founders of the party.

²⁰⁰ Nihat Sargın, p. 224. The reader can find a part of Aybar’s Bursa speech in Nihat Sargın’s book, but he omitted a large part of it, and actually the most important part of it. For the full text, see Serpil Çelenk Güvenç, pp. 256-263 (document number 12 from the personal archive of her father, Halit Çelenk).

outside our borders” and that “the Turks, which constitute one fifth of the population of the island, share no bonds whatsoever with the Motherland nation.”²⁰¹

However, in reading Aybar’s account, as well as the summary of his speech in *Sosyal Adalet*,²⁰² the semi-official organ of the party, there is a striking similarity with his Bursa speech. In Aybar’s view, Turkey had to that difficult situation in Cyprus because of the extremely important mistake that was made: deviation from Atatürk’s fundamental principles upon which Turkey was built. An understanding of foreign policy that can be summarized as “giving bases and getting foreign aid” did not suit the “Turkey of the war of liberation.”²⁰³ Aybar, however, was unable to clarify the accusations made about the party.²⁰⁴

On the defensive, the party felt obliged to defend itself against the accusations and to “set the record straight” about the party’s stance on the issue. Therefore, Mehmet Ali Aybar decided to clarify the main points of his speech and reply to the slander in the press through a news bulletin. The bulletin consisted of the following points:

1. The bloody events occurring [in Cyprus] which are based on a pre-meditated plan prepared by the extreme nationalist, pro-*Enosis*, fascist, terror organization EOKA must immediately stop.
2. The Turkish Cypriots must have access to all their fundamental rights; including the right of life and security for which they have shed their blood, and a system must be established on the island that will protect these rights.
3. The United Nations must take serious precautions to stop the bloodshed on the island and the aggressive behavior of these forces must come to a halt.
4. Since last December, the Cyprus crisis has become an extremely serious and tangled issue of foreign policy for us; it can be solved only in light of the “National Treaty” and through the help of a foreign policy with strong character.²⁰⁵

²⁰¹ *Milliyet*, May 11, 1964; also quoted in Kemal Sülker, p. 23.

²⁰² “Olaylar Karşısında,” *Sosyal Adalet*, issue 19, May 15, 1964, pp. 24-27.

²⁰³ Mehmet Ali Aybar, p. 236.

²⁰⁴ In his memoirs, Nihat Sargın gives the impression that Aybar was influenced by the struggle of the Greek Cypriots against British colonialism, and he was somehow disappointed by the neutral, and even collaborative, behavior of the Turkish community in its relations with the colonialist power and its reluctant attitude to become a part of Turkey. This remark is owed to Serpil Çelenk Güvenç, p. 164, n. 25. According to Serpil Çelenk Güvenç, Aybar’s statement was a reckless one that might have brought about the party’s closure. Interview with Serpil Çelenk Güvenç, Ankara, May 30, 2010.

²⁰⁵ TÜSTAV, “Haber Bülteni,” May 13, 1964, *Nebil Varuy Papers*, Box 4, folder 120; the points are also referred to in Nebil Varuy, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi. Olaylar-Belgeler-Yorumlar (1961-1971)*, Sosyal Tarih Yayınları-TÜSTAV, Istanbul, 2010 [1975] [an original copy of the book can be found in IISG]. As Erden Akbulut informed me, there were some corrections in the recent published book. It was also published in *Eylem*, another review that was hosting the party’s news, “Türkiye İşçi Partisinin Bursa’daki Yönetim Kurulu Toplantısı,” *Eylem*, issue 4, June 1964, p. 56; see also the publication of the party to clarify the Cyprus situation, TİP, *Gerçekleri Açıklıyoruz. Kıbrıs Meselesinde Neden İşçi Partisine Saldırdılar?*, Önder Matbaası, Bornova, 1964.

The argument was also made that people made false accusations with vicious intent, looking for an opportunity to attack the party. The claim of false accusations was true, considering the fact that the already established elite did not consider the TİP to be a legitimate party, as it did for the AP during the first years of its existence, and that the establishment felt threatened by the rising popularity of the left. In addition, it seemed that the TİP was the only party that was not afraid of sticking to the beliefs and principles that it believed in, i.e., the Kemalist principle of *Misak-ı Milli*. However, a combination of both might be more convincing. The party went on to claim that the allegations made by the journalist from *Milliyet* were complete fabrications. “Our president [Mehmet Ali Aybar] has never declared that Cyprus is not a cause for Turkey; this is a complete lie,” and it was argued that the statement made by *Zafer* to the effect of “the Chairman of TİP wants Enosis in Cyprus” was also a lie.²⁰⁶

Nearly half of Aybar’s speech was devoted to democracy and to the anti-democratic spirit and laws that had infiltrated the Turkish government and society in general. It was as if Aybar’s words were heard, because just before the meeting in Bursa, the Ankara Martial Law Commander forbade the distribution of the speech and, moreover, it was rumored that Aybar himself would not be able to enter Ankara to attend the meeting.²⁰⁷ As a result, Aybar sent a telegraph to İnönü a week after the meeting in Bursa criticizing the approaches to democracy in the country,²⁰⁸ while another telegraph was sent on June 11th in 1964 to protest the unjust and partial behavior of the government as it hadn’t invited the TİP’s representative to attend the meeting İnönü had called because of the Johnson Letter which was sent on the 5th of June.²⁰⁹

After the Bursa incident, on the 30th of May in 1964 Aybar summoned the chiefs of the province branches to Ankara for a meeting to draft the party’s policy on Cyprus. In the wake of the meeting, it was announced that the ongoing policy on Cyprus was approved by all party chiefs and that they all put confidence in Aybar.

²⁰⁶ Meaning *Enosis* with Greece; TÜSTAV, “Haber Bülteni,” May 13, 1964, *Nebil Varuy Papers*, Box 4, folder 120.

²⁰⁷ Mehmet Ali Aybar, p. 235; Sadun Aren, *Ibid.*, p. 97. According to Aren, it was the Cyprus Turkish Youth of Higher Education that first protested about Aybar’s statement.

²⁰⁸ The telegraph is dated May 17, 1964, but it was included in the news bulletin (Haber Bülteni, May 18, 1964). The telegraph is reprinted in full in Serpil Çelenk Güvenç, pp. 254-255 (document no: 11) based on Halit Çelenk’s personal archive.

²⁰⁹ TÜSTAV, “Haber Bülteni,” issue 10, *Nebil Varuy Papers*, Box 4, folder 117; Sadun Aren, p. 98; Melek M. Fırat, *1960-1971 Arası Türk Dış Politikası ve Kıbrıs Sorunu*, p. 159.

The Johnson Letter

The situation on the island worried the US, since an intervention by Turkey could lead to an outbreak of war between Greece and Turkey, and possibly Cyprus, as well as American interests, would be severely jeopardized. Therefore, the US government decided to dispatch what came to be known as the “Johnson letter.”²¹⁰ In summary, the letter sent by Johnson was a warning to the Turkish government not to take military action against Cyprus; if Turkey did so, the US vowed that it would not provide any assistance to Turkey in the case of a Soviet attack.

Firstly, it led to changes on a governmental level. Membership in NATO and alliances with the Western powers were challenged and re-evaluated, and there were increasing fears about the country’s security. Secondly, the letter confirmed the fears of the left, that America’s initial reluctance was *prima facie* evidence that the US did not want to help Turkey.²¹¹ Lastly, it created a hostile environment, not only for the left, which it was expected even without the letter, but generally for the population. As it was argued, the letter by President Lyndon B. Johnson marked a turning-point in Turkish-American relations: “It became the most important factor since World War II to affect the relations between the two countries unfavorably. This document [...] was received with great surprise and created strong repercussions, not only in leftist circles, but on public opinion as a whole.”²¹²

Although the content of the letter became publically known eighteen months later, the contents were partially leaked to the press and they confirmed the fears of leftist circles. From “that time forth all Turkish governments would be on the defensive in regard to the American connection, and the memories of the Johnson letter would color popular impressions of the United States for many years.”²¹³ Despite the deep offense caused in Ankara by the letter, the US achieved the desired outcome of dissuading the Turks from intervening in June of 1964. However, Turkey seized an opportunity a few months later to lend more credibility to its threat of intervention, as Greek Cypriot assaults raged on. In the beginning of August of the same year, Greek Cypriot forces launched another offensive, which was countered by a series of raids by the Turkish Air Force.²¹⁴

²¹⁰ For the letter and İnönü’s reply, see *Middle East Journal*, Summer 1966, pp. 386-393 translated by Frank Tachau and Jacob M. Landau, *Johnson’s 1964 Letter to İnönü and Greek Lobbying of the White House*, The Hebrew University, Israel, 1979.

²¹¹ “Kıbrıs ve YÖN,” *Yön*, issue 78, September 25, 1964, p. 8; George S. Harris, p. 111.

²¹² Mehmet Gönübol, “Turkish-American Relations: A General Appraisal,” *Dış Politika*, vol. 4, December 1971, p. 50 as quoted in Jacob M. Landau, *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

²¹³ George S. Harris, p. 116.

²¹⁴ Tozun Bahçeli, p. 63.

Finally, although it “monopolized the attention of the country,” the Cyprus crisis also demonstrated Turkey’s isolation in foreign affairs,²¹⁵ placing the Johnson letter *per se* on a higher level of importance than the Cyprus Question itself. Furthermore, the aftermath of the Johnson letter raised the issue of Turkey’s isolation in relation with the Middle East. Past decisions to ally with the West left the country in a vacuum. Secondly, the Johnson letter demonstrated to the Turks that American interests did not coincide with their own, contrary to what Ankara had once believed. In line with that, Turkey began to grow distant from American influence and dependence, but at the same time, Ankara maintained its fidelity to NATO and continued its military and economic cooperation with the United States. As far as the left was concerned, however, the crisis on the island and its repercussions marked the beginning of a process that would lead to the movement’s approach to foreign policy,²¹⁶ just as it also brought about the first anti-American youth demonstrations.

Independent Foreign Policy

Following the Johnson letter, and critiques of the party and its leader, another article made its appearance in *Sosyal Adalet*. The writer of the article claimed that “the national interests of Turkey and the long-term interests of the peoples of the Middle East” did not converge with “the interests of the imperialists in this region and with the foreign policy pursued by the RPP government.” However, Cyprus had already become an issue of importance for Turkey, since during the Menderes period the DP “had collaborated with the former colonial power Great Britain to defend the interests of the imperialists in the Middle East.” Similarly, the CHP government was abandoning the National Treaty policy of Atatürk, and supported DP’s Cyprus policy. In exchange, colonial Britain had granted rights to the Turkish Cypriot community through the London-Zurich Agreements, but *Enosis* had to be avoided as it would serve American strategic and economic interests. At least, the article concluded, the Cyprus Question made it possible for discussions to emerge in society about Turkish politics and foreign policy issues.²¹⁷

The above argument was repeated the following month at the General Administration Committee meeting which was organized in Ankara on the 5th and 6th of September. In a lengthy speech, Mehmet Ali Aybar analyzed anew the party’s stance on Cyprus, which bore

²¹⁵ Feroz Ahmad, *Turkish Experiment in Democracy*, p. 188.

²¹⁶ Serpil Çelenk Güvenç, p. 161.

²¹⁷ B.C.Ü [Burhan Cahit Ünal], “Kıbrıs Çıkmazı Dış Politikamızın Çıkmazıdır,” *Sosyal Adalet*, issue 19, August 8, 1964, pp. 4-5.

significant similarities with the Bursa speech, although more clearly articulated, in order to avoid any misinterpretations again by those who sought the party's closure.²¹⁸

In addition, on the 6th of September, Aybar made another suggestion to bring the Cyprus crisis to a halt.²¹⁹ Aybar stated:

All the parties of the dispute, Turkey, Greece, and the Turkish and Greek Cypriot communities, should be invited to participate in a round-table conference. In fact, all the parties that are involved in the Cyprus crisis [should be included]: Turkey, Greece, and the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot communities. The United Nations should also join the round-table conference to safeguard the provisions of the two communities and the preconditions for trust and a viable solution.²²⁰

In addition, Aybar made the following statement concerning the anti-leftist opposition of newspapers and parties in the country. Specifically, he stated that:

A newspaper, which is known for its views against our party and which never hesitates to censor its own writers for this purpose, has published the comments about Cyprus made in our president's speech in a distorted way. It has also written remarks as if they were made by our president when they weren't. Moreover, they did this despite the fact that the entire word-by-word text of his speech was sent to all newspapers to avoid misunderstandings, and therefore it is clear that this has been done on purpose.²²¹

Moreover, the slander spread by newspapers resulted in another campaign of opposition to the party. Notably, it was stated that "this [slander] has been encouraging the rebirth of a campaign against our party, a campaign that has been going on since the day of its creation and has been increasingly active from time to time. We have received protest letters from yellow syndicates affiliated with them and they have tried to provoke student groups to oppose us."²²²

Niyazi Ağırnaslı supported Aybar's proposition and declared in a speech he gave at the assembly that "the TİP thinks it is appropriate for the two countries in question [to talk] about the Cypriot conflict, two people who have lived together side by side as brothers, free from all

²¹⁸ Nihat Sargın, pp. 246-247.

²¹⁹ For a summary of the Ankara meeting and Aybar's speech, see IISG, "TİP Genel Başkan Mehmet Ali Aybar Ankara'da Yapılan GYK Toplantısında Özeti," *Kemal Sülker Papers*, Box 551; for the full speech, see Mehmet Ali Aybar, "Kıbrıs Tezimiz," pp. 317-336, in Mehmet Ali Aybar, *Ibid.*; Aybar's speech was handed out as the first additional leaflet to *Sosyal Adalet*, issue 7, October 12, 1964 and can be found in IISG [BRO 1866/8].

²²⁰ Mehmet Ali Aybar, "Kıbrıs Tezimiz," p. 319; emphasis in the original. See also IISG, "TİP Genel Başkanı M.A. Aybar Ankara'da Yapılan GYK Toplantısında Özet," *Kemal Sülker Papers*, Box 551.

²²¹ *Ibid.*

²²² *Ibid.*

exterior disturbances, to gather around a round table and discuss the issues in the presence of a representative of the United Nations.”²²³

Shortly after this, the party’s view about Cyprus and foreign bases was formulated in the following way:

Considering Cyprus’s particular situation, the main point to express and underline is the evacuation of foreign military bases. Then it is essential to consider Cyprus’ impartiality as a must. To want a Cyprus that has attained international guarantees and is fully independent and free of foreign bases, where Turks have all their rights and freedoms, means to want a solution that is going to last.²²⁴

Lastly, the General Board of Director’s communiqué of the 12th of May, 1965 accepting Cyprus’ federative state status was published. In this communiqué, the party’s viewpoint was stated in the following terms:

The TİP, which has been following developments regarding the Cyprus crisis with worry and sadness, holds to the view that it has defended since the beginning: the Cypriot crisis is directly related to the interests of British and American imperialism in the Eastern Mediterranean area and has been fueled by Greek capitalism, which is under the control of Anglo-American imperialism.

Therefore, to be able to solve the Cypriot crisis in a way that suits our national interests, it is crucial to go back to the politics of the National War of Liberation, which is a form of politics that is absolutely anti-imperialist.

The TİP defends the proposal that Cyprus should become a disarmed federative state free of all foreign military bases and its independence and neutrality must be guaranteed via international agreements. A round table conference should be held with the only concerned parties involved, which are Turkey, Greece, the representatives of Cypriot Turk and Greek communities and a representative of the UN.²²⁵

At the same time, Aybar made an unprecedented bold suggestion, calling on all anti-imperialist forces – the socialists and Atatürkists:

[All socialists and Atatürkists] let’s unite our power for an independent foreign policy. Everything depends on our being independent; planned development, establishment of a democratic regime, carrying out radical reforms – all these goals can be attained only when we become fully independent in our foreign affairs.²²⁶

²²³ Ağırnaslı’s speech is reproduced in “Niyazi Ağırnaslı’nın Cumhuriyet Senatosunda Türkiye İşçi Partisi Adına Yaptığı Konuşma,” *Sosyal Adalet*, issue 7, October 12, 1964, pp. 10-11; see also Nebil Varuy, *Ibid*.

²²⁴ TÜSTAV, “M.A. Aybar’ın Konuşmasının Özeti,” May 9, 1965, *Nebil Varuy Papers*, Box 3, folder 95.

²²⁵ IISG, “Bildiri,” May 12, 1965, *Kemal Sülker Papers*, Box 553.

²²⁶ Mehmet Ali Aybar, “Kıbrıs Tezimiz,” translation by Özgür Mutlu Ulus, p. 66.

The same opinion was expressed a few months later in a communiqué issued in May which called yet again on segments of the population for solidarity and collaboration:

The Turkish Workers' Party states once more that it defends the absolute and definitive execution of our constitution and calls on all the workers and farmers of the country, all the hard working citizens, all the visionary youth, the Kemalists, the main elements of the spirit of *Kuvay-i Milliye* ["Nationalist Forces," the Turkish guerilla forces in the Turkish War of Independence] to collaborate and express solidarity in working for the sovereignty of our constitution and the instauration of independent foreign policies that defend our national interests one hundred percent.²²⁷

Aybar believed that the Cyprus issue could be solved via a conference in which Cypriot Turks and Greeks participated along with a representative of the UN, and this view became increasingly popular in leftist circles and even had the chance to be put into practice. The same opinion was also shared by *Yön*, which opposed Turkey's dependence on super-powers. A "Kemalist" foreign policy free from alliances with super-powers and in solidarity with Third World countries was promoted and advocated, especially in the writings of two ex-Kadroists, a point which shows quite clearly the *Kadro* influence on *Yön*. Yakup Kadri (Karaosmanoğlu), a novelist, parliamentarian and one of the leaders of *Kadro*, wrote in an article:

If we had stuck to [the principles of] Atatürk, we would have kept the leadership of a movement that is so much exploited by others today. We would be carrying the banner of freedom by taking the lead over Western nations.²²⁸

Both the TİP's and *Yön*'s leftist advocacy of independence, with their neutralist and anti-imperialistic themes in foreign policy, set the ideological framework for anti-Americanism. And it was the Cyprus Question which pulled the left out of hiding.

The 1965 Elections

In the meantime, the party was working to fulfill all the necessary requirements²²⁹ so that it could participate in the parliamentary elections in June of 1964. Despite all these efforts, however, Aybar's independent candidacy was prevented and the TİP was not allowed to participate in the elections. Therefore, the party started preparing for the general elections, which were to be held the following year. The election campaign would normally start in

²²⁷ IISG, "Bildiri," May 12, 1965, *Kemal Sülker Papers*, Box 553.

²²⁸ Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, "Esir Milletlerin İlkeleri," *Yön*, October 7 1962, pp. 10-11, as translated in Nurhan Ince, p. 117.

²²⁹ A political party, according to the Election Act, had to have convened its first grand congress and have founded branch organizations in at least 15 provinces.

September of 1965, a month before the elections, but all the parties, including the TİP, had already started working on the elections months before the official date. These elections were the first and most important test to prove the TİP's political presence. Unofficially, the election campaign started as early as January 1965 with party chairman Aybar declaring, "The upcoming elections will be a turning-point in Turkish history [...]. In these elections we must get a number of deputies in parliament; in the upcoming elections the political environment will change fundamentally and it will open the way to power for our people."²³⁰

During the elections, the party made itself rapidly known on a national scale by radio broadcasts, its own publications, weeklies, monthlies, leaflets, and the support of some columnists of certain newspapers. Also, the widespread left-wing publications and headlines concerning the TİP that were highlighted in the biggest newspapers helped the party obtain more exposure to the general public.²³¹ However, the party also had to face many serious problems. First of all, there was the issue of funding the election campaign as well as funding party activities for the elections. Although the party was counting on the state budget for financial help, as the state did for the other five parties participating in the elections (AP, CHP, CKMP,²³² YTP and MP), the TİP's proposal was rejected, and the party had to find its own financial sources.²³³

The financial problem was compounded by another issue the party had to deal with, and that was perhaps a much more important problem. As of the 20th of February in 1965, the third coalition government of İnönü had collapsed and it was substituted by a new coalition government under the premiership of Suat Hayri Ürgüplü in cooperation with the AP. It has already been noted that anti-communist activities had continued, despite the new constitution. However, this situation became more intense and after 1965 there was increased hostility towards the left. The AP was a staunch advocate of anti-communism, much more so than the CHP. Süleyman Demirel, the leader of the AP, claimed that he would not allow class struggle in Turkey and openly attacked the TİP, while another AP deputy stated that "the Grand

²³⁰ Speech made by Mehmet Ali Aybar in IISG, "İstanbul'da Yapılan TİP GYK Açık Toplantısı," January 10, 1965, *Kemal Sülker Papers*, Box 552, p. 16; quoted also in Erkan Doğan, "Parliamentary Experience of the Turkish Labor Party: 1965–1969," *Turkish Studies*, vol. 11, issue 3, 2010, p. 319, using the party publication of the speech TİP, *Güzel, Mutlu Günler Uzak Değildir... ve de Asıl Yüreğimiz Korkusuz, İncancımız Bütündür*, Sosyal Adalet Dergisi, İstanbul, 1965

²³¹ Sadun Aren, p. 104; Murat Belge, "Türkiye İşçi Partisi," p. 2121.

²³² *Cumhuriyetçi Köylü Millet Partisi/Republican Peasants' Nation Party*.

²³³ In order to finance itself, the party organized fundraising events; see *Sosyal Adalet*, issue 17, August 1965, p. 11; the cover has the title "Türkiye İşçi Partisi Bağışlarınızı Bekliyor," a point also noted by Erkan Doğan.

National Assembly of Turkey would not be able to function as desired if the TİP would be represented even by two representatives.”²³⁴

In addition, the party had to contend with physical and verbal attacks carried out by members of other parties, as well as by the supporters or members of the *Türkiye Komünizmle Mücadele Derneği* (Association for Fighting Communism in Turkey) and members of the AP, the main party body that funded the association’s activities. The association was “an active and well-known organization of nationalists (*milliyetçi*), whose main goal was to fight communism in Turkey”²³⁵ and derived its ideals and inspiration from Pan-Turkism. The CHP leader, İnönü, took a strong stand against the association and threatened that if President Cemal Gürsel (the former chief-of-staff) did not resign as honorary chairman of the association and take the necessary measures to prevent violence, he would take up the issue personally to “struggle against the SS.”²³⁶

The AP was so eager to identify the TİP with communism and atheism that even Süleyman Demirel, in one of his speeches in Gaziantep,²³⁷ encouraged people to chase down members of the TİP. Within the context of the cold war communist witch-hunt, the members of the party and its leadership were launching a two-fold struggle. On one hand, the party was striving to prove its patriotism and be accepted as an equal party in the political scene, while on the other hand, it was striving to delegitimize the ruling elite, most of all the AP which was rising in popularity and claimed that the TİP was not a communist party. Through the party, the left was doing its best to debunk the accusations of being communist, claiming that those who made such accusations against the TİP were agents serving foreign interests with domestic wealth.

Seeing that it was most likely to be the winner in the next election, the leader of the AP, Demirel, addressed a gathering where he claimed that he would not permit class struggle and that it was high time they united to fight that “group of perverted minds.” Mehmet Ali Aybar replied, saying: “If the Deputy Prime Minister wants to prevent class struggle, let him nationalize oil, give land to the landless, tax everyone according to their income, and pass the unemployment insurance law. In short, allow the constitution to be fully implemented in its totality. Otherwise the true implications of “preventing class struggle” will be simply to

²³⁴ Sadun Aren, p. 100.

²³⁵ Jacob M. Landau, p. 203; interview with Yusuf Ziya Bahadınlı.

²³⁶ Özgür Mutlu Ulus, pp. 36-37.

²³⁷ For Demirel’s speeches see, among others, Süleyman Demirel, *Muhtelif Konuşmaları*, Adalet Partisi Genel Merkezi, Ankara, 1969 and Süleyman Demirel, *Seçim Konuşmaları*, Adalet Partisi Genel Merkezi, Ankara, 1969.

maintain today's rotten system.”²³⁸ Proving Aybar's statement, the AP applied to the Election Board three times to prevent the accession of the TİP to the elections, playing the anti-communist card every occasion it could, but none of them were approved by the board.²³⁹

Attacks on the party, however, continued up until the elections. There were serious incidents on the 5th of March in Akhisar,²⁴⁰ on the 28th of March in Kırıkkale and on the 4th of July in Bursa. On another occasion, a leading AP member, V.A. Özkan, accused the TİP of instigating a riot in which two workers were killed by soldiers²⁴¹ and claimed that the TİP was a communist party. The accusations, however, proved to be false, and the party did everything in its power to debunk claims that it was associated with atheism and communism.²⁴²

Despite all the efforts made by the opposition to disparage the left, the TİP managed to garner 276,101 votes²⁴³ and win fifteen seats in the Turkish Assembly; this, perhaps, was the most important moment in its history, especially at a time when polarization between the left and right had reached its peak. These elections were significant in the sense that “socialism was gaining legitimacy in Turkey.”²⁴⁴ On the other hand, the results were not satisfactory for the RPP, which managed to gather 28.7 % of the total votes and won 134 seats in the National Assembly. The AP, on the other hand, as was expected, received 52.9 % of the vote and got 240 seats.

Considering the election results, one can argue that the TİP was the biggest winner, since it was the first time a left-wing party in Turkey had managed to win seats in the National Assembly. The 1965 elections also marked a shift in policy on behalf of the TİP. On the one hand, the period leading up to the elections of 1965 was characterized by an attempt to crystallize the ideas of the party and consolidate the party in Turkish society, and hence the absence of the word “socialism” in the party program. On the other hand,

²³⁸ Demirel's statement was made at a meeting of the Turkish Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Union of Bourses; as quoted in Feroz Ahmad, *Turkish Experiment in Democracy, 1950-1975*, pp. 190-191.

²³⁹ Nermin Abadan, *Anayasa Hukuku ve Siyasi Bilimler Açısından 1965 Seçimlerinin Tahlihi*, Sevinç Matbaası, Ankara, 1966, pp. 235-236.

²⁴⁰ See, for example TİP, *5-6 Mart Akhisar Olayları, Kimler Niçin ve Nasıl Yaptılar*, Başnur Matbaası, İstanbul, 1965; for Akhisar and Bursa, see also Nermin Abadan, p. 230.

²⁴¹ For more on the gatherings, see the account in Nihat Sargın, pp. 265-284.

²⁴² See especially the party publication TİP, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi Tanıyalım*, Karınca Matbaası, İstanbul, 1965, in which the party tried hard to clear its name so that its supporters would not to get “cold feet” and continue believing in and voting for the party. For the AP's anti-communist activities, see also Feroz Ahmad, *Turkish Experiment in Democracy*, pp. 190-192.

²⁴³ TİP took part in the elections in fifty-one provinces, putting forward 382 candidates, 216 of whom were workers. Further data can be drawn from “Türkiye İşçi Partisi Adaylarının Tam Listesi,” *Sosyal Adalet*, issue 18, September 1965; the number of votes, percentage and number of deputies is taken from *1950-1965 Milletvekili ve 1961, 1964 Cumhuriyet Senatosu Üyeleri Seçimleri Sonuçları*, Devlet İstatistik Enstitüsü Matbaası, Ankara, 1966, issue no. 513.

²⁴⁴ Mehmet Salah, “The Turkish Working Class and Socialist Movement in Perspective,” *Khamsin*, special issue on “Modern Turkey: Development and Crisis,” 1984, pp. 86-116, here p. 91.

the second period of the party, i.e., following the 1965 elections, marked a time when they were more confident about the realistic content of the party's principles, and this marked the shift in the party towards the struggle of socialist transformation.²⁴⁵ One scholar claimed, rather light-heartedly, "The Cyprus dispute enabled the party to inject a much needed nationalist element in to its propaganda and thus expand its own influence."²⁴⁶ However, although the TİP never denied that it was a "hundred percent" national party, and it can be argued that it was forced to adopt the official nationalist line in foreign policy matters so that it would not be deemed unpatriotic, as was the case with the Bursa speech earlier in 1964. The importance of the left, however, lies in another point: it played an important role in the opposition as it elevated the character of public discourses by taking up issues of social inequality and democracy and, in general, it "introduced the ideological dimension, absent among parties which differed in emphasis rather than substance."²⁴⁷

During that period, a more active student mobilization also made its appearance. Although the legitimacy of the political system was perceived as being low, even among the most active student youth, the Cyprus Question contributed to changing that perception. Thus, a great number of students opted to vote for the TİP, forcing the CHP to adopt an *ortanın solu* policy. On the 29th of May in 1965, in an interview with Abdi İpekçi in *Milliyet*, İnönü said that he had developed an economic approach that was left-of-center. Due to the exploitation of the term by the AP in the slogan "*Ortanın solu, Moskova yolu*" (left of center is the road to Moscow), some CHP members demanded the dismissal of the slogan because the Turkish people could misunderstand it. İnönü insisted on using the term, claiming that it was not a new political direction but simply the name of its existing political line.²⁴⁸ The aim of this policy was intended to control the radicalism of the 1960s and direct it to the RPP. The motive of İnönü, while presenting democratic reforms, was to use them as a remedy to prevent intellectuals and youth from being drawn to socialism. İnönü's attempt to approach and win over the left, however, was, since the election results were extremely low and the student preferences showed signs of constant erosion.

²⁴⁵ Igor P. Lipovsky, p. 19.

²⁴⁶ Kemal H. Karpat, "Socialism and the Labor Party of Turkey," *Middle East Journal*, vol. 21, issue 2, 1967, p. 166.

²⁴⁷ Feroz Ahmad, p. 192.

²⁴⁸ Emin Alper, *An Indigenous Social Democracy: The Democratic Left Thought in Turkish Politics, 1972-1975*, M.A. Thesis, Atatürk Institute for Modern Turkish History, 2003, p. 23; from the same author, see also "Milliyetçilik, Modernleşme, Gerilimde Ortanın Solu," *Toplum ve Bilim*, no. 93, 2002, pp. 110-142; Derya Kömürçü, *The Emergence of Center-left Politics in Turkey, 1960-1980*, M.A. Thesis, Boğazici University, Institute of Social Sciences, 2001 and most recently Yunus Emre, *The Genesis of the Left of Center in Turkey, 1965-1967*, M.A. Thesis, Atatürk Institute of Modern Turkish History, Boğazici University, 2007.

The Malatya Congress

Through the elections, the party had acquired more appeal and had won a few seats in the National Assembly. With the clear decline of the CHP, one of the TİP's leading members claimed that "the struggle is now between the TİP and the AP."²⁴⁹ A direct outcome of this was the calculation that the time was ripe for socialist thinking and working class consciousness because of the proximity of the masses to the party.²⁵⁰ However, because of the Second Congress of the TİP, many questions were raised and rifts were created within the left-wing movement itself, not just within the party. The questions that were raised are beyond the scope of this study, but suffice to say that they were aimed at whether the party could utilize a socialist revolution, as proposed by the party, and whether it could also realize the goals of the MDD (National Democratic Revolution)²⁵¹ and of socialism.²⁵²

The party's Second Congress was held in Malatya from the 20th to the 23rd of November in 1966.²⁵³ The most important issue that was raised (as it had been in previous months) was the approach that the party would follow. There were predominant two lines of thought: the Socialist Revolution (SR) approach, advocated by Mehmet Ali Aybar, Sadun Aren, and Behice Boran, and the MDD approach, which was supported by old-guard communists such as Mihri Belli, as well as *Yön* followers. The split between the MDD and SR also marked the first serious split of the Marxist left in the 1960s, which would escalate in the following years, signifying a more explicit split.

The congress ended with the SR predominating over the MDD. The most important outcome of the congress was a further articulation to the party program with added content. The main line of the congress was the indivisibility of the national-democratic and the socialist revolution. In other words, it was argued that:

Forty-four years after completing the First Struggle for National Liberation, we must start the second struggle. [...] Until now, we let

²⁴⁹ "The other parties will vanish or they will completely lose their influence." Nebil Varuy, p. 161.

²⁵⁰ Mehmet Ali Aybar, p. 489, as quoted in Özgür Mutlu Ulus, p. 71.

²⁵¹ Opposition and discontent against party leadership were shown more openly after the elections of 1965 because of the feelings aroused by the legalization of the party; hence party members did not hide their disagreement with the party leadership. Firstly, the fight was between the old-guard, TKP members who had become members of the TİP, and the party leadership. The first serious opposition came to the surface at the Provincial Congress of Istanbul, from the 22nd to 23rd of October in 1966. This opposition continued at the Second Grand Congress and manifested in an ideology that would ultimately threaten the hegemony of the party. Yerasimos argued that what the TİP called socialism was indeed the national democratic revolution. Yerasimos, p. 1683.

²⁵² For the discussions, see Nihat Sargın, pp. 379-426. For a brief but analytical account on the discussions before the congress, see Ulus, pp. 71-73.

²⁵³ For documentation related to the Second Congress of the party, see IISG, *Kemal Sülker Papers*, Boxes 608-620; see also the very detailed and in-depth analysis in *TİP'in Birinci Onyılı (1961-1971)*, İNFO-TÜRK, Brussels, 1982, pp. 50-52 and ff.; I would like to thank Özgür Gökmen for bringing this book to my attention.

our rights be violated by America with the excuse that they will protect us from future dangers. We are not in favor of this. And we are determined to fight until the last American soldier has left our country. [...] The Second National Liberation Movement has started. And this time it will be certain that victory will also mean a victory for socialism.²⁵⁴

In the beginning, the party also called for resistance to American influence using a stronger discourse than ever before, as anti-Americanism was at its height.²⁵⁵ It was also agreed that Turkey should rescind its membership to NATO and the United States should hand over all its military bases to Turkey. Since Aybar reserved a special place for the proletariat in his theory, he argued that the working class had to become a leading force in the social and political transformation of Turkey.²⁵⁶

The Socialist Revolution was formulated by Aybar himself and it was claimed that the Turkish situation was unique compared to other Western or Third World countries because of the uniqueness of Turkish society and the economy, reminiscent of when Atatürk said “*biz bize benzeriz.*”²⁵⁷ It was argued that Turkey had been freed from imperialism, but because of deviation from Atatürk’s principles, Turkey found itself in the grip of imperialism yet again. He claimed that in the West it was a struggle waged between the bourgeoisie and the working class, while in Turkey it was the working class fighting against the alliance with US imperialism and that local landlords and the domestic bureaucracy were strongly influenced by the imperialists. Hence, the Second Struggle for Liberation was the only solution, following Atatürk’s principles to abolish imperialism once and for all.²⁵⁸ The struggles for independence and for socialism were two sides of the same coin. In addition, it was argued that socialism and nationalism, meant the same thing in underdeveloped countries because, for the chairman of the party, being a nationalist presupposes fighting against landlords, compradors and imperialism.²⁵⁹ The Second War of Liberation would be fought against these forces. To further clarify:

²⁵⁴ IISG, “Basın Bülteni,” November 20, 1966, *Kemal Süller Papers*, Box 610, folder 1.

²⁵⁵ At the Malatya congress, a call was made for the whole nation to join a passive resistance movement against the US. The TİP referred to this as the “Second War of Independence.” Özgür Mutlu Ulus, p. 219, fn. 26.

²⁵⁶ IISG, “Büyük Kongreye Sunulacak Teklif Maddeleri,” n.d., *Kemal Süller Papers*, Box 615, folder 1, especially p. 1 and p. 2; IISG, “Teklif Maddeleri,” September 27, 1966, *Kemal Süller Papers*, Box 615, folder 4.

²⁵⁷ Mustafa Kemal Atatürk said this in a speech in the National Assembly on December 1, 1921. Quoted at length in Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, *Atatürk’ün Söylev ve Demeçleri*, Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu, Ankara, 1989, p. 212. The quotation used here is from Andrew Mango, *Atatürk: A Biography*, John Murray, London, 1999, p. 332.

²⁵⁸ For the most representative speech, see Mehmet Ali Aybar, “Türkiye Sosyalizmi,” pp. 639-668, in Mehmet Ali Aybar.

²⁵⁹ Mehmet Ali Aybar, “Gerçek Milliyetçiler, Sosyalistlerdir,” pp. 559-564, here p. 563.

Independence and nationalism are the foundation stones of socialism. Without a doubt, the nationalism in question has nothing to do with fascist nationalism which commands that other nations be enslaved, oppressed and humiliated. All oppressed nations which take up socialism and fight imperialism draw their power from a humanist sense of nationalism. They all want to be freed from foreign domination and develop their own cultures and economies.²⁶⁰

At the Second Grand Congress, the Socialist Revolution theory was adopted as the official party strategy and Aybar was re-elected as chairman of the party. However, despite the success of Aybar and his circles within the party, it marked the beginning of a questioning of the authority of the party. Mihri Belli and his followers started to protest more openly, while Aybar accused the ex-TKP members of wanting the leadership to abdicate. The TKP group had started to grow in power and was considered by the party leadership to be dangerous for the left-wing movement. Apart from the ideological differences that were present before and during the congress, there was concern that the establishment might consider the TİP to be communistic, an accusation that had already been put forward by the anti-communist AP. Thus, especially after the Congress, Aybar decided to do take measures. By that time, he had already shown signs that he felt he was beyond criticism, representing a hegemonic figure within the party itself.²⁶¹ He also voted against a draft resolution on the need to engage with criticism and self-criticism, as it was suggested that a “regime of personal power” had emerged.²⁶²

After the Congress, Aybar established a questioning committee to interrogate thirteen members who were suspected of being against the party leadership. The official reason for this was that these members had formed a faction that acted against the political line and provoked the central organs of the party. It could be argued that this measure bore great similarities with the Stalinist Soviet Union; however, the party always tried to dissociate itself from the USSR. Halit Çelenk and his wife, who were members of the party leadership, were suspected of being pro-MDD. In his memoirs, Çelenk describes the whole procedure of the interrogation, and he states that the party committee asked him and the twelve other members

²⁶⁰ Mehmet Ali Aybar, “Tarihin Çizgisi Antiemperyalist Savaş Çizgisidir,” pp. 614-624, here p. 621.

²⁶¹ Interview with Rasih Nuri Ileri; his book Rasih Nuri Ileri, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi'nde Oportünist Merkezîyetçilik (1966-1968)*, Yalçın Yayınları, İstanbul, 1981, focuses on these discrepancies within the party. Ileri admitted to the author in an interview that if he had to write the book again he would have changed a lot of things, since it was quite polemical. It is said that Aybar had a personal restroom for himself at the party's headquarters, which could only be used by him, and there was another restroom for the rest of the party members, a clear sign of that state of his mind. Interview with Gündüz Mutluay.

²⁶² Igor P. Lipovsky, pp. 23-24.

seventy-two questions to establish if there had been a gathering before the Malatya Congress that aimed at jeopardizing the official party line.

Aybar voted in favor of expelling those thirteen members, and went as far as to threaten the Executive Board by saying that if they did not convict the thirteen members he would resign from the party leadership. However, according to Çelenk, this was a ruse because there was not enough time for the findings to be fully read and analyzed in order to reach a verdict.²⁶³ The party's decision, as it was expected, caused much turbulence within the party and the movement in general, and letters were sent to the leadership of the party protesting the anti-democratic methods that were being used; the central tenet of the dissatisfaction was "the seizure of the right to freely express one's ideological differences."²⁶⁴ But the opposition was in vain; those members were expelled, followed by six more who were sent to the disciplinary committee. A total of seventy-six more members were expelled because of their reactions to the shaking up of the democracy of the party.²⁶⁵

In this way, the dual importance of the party for the communist movement itself becomes clear. The party presented the platform under which all the democratic and left-wing elements of Turkey could, and did, find shelter, but it was also the party itself that triggered the deeper split within the movement that would take on greater proportions in the following decade by suppressing dissident voices. At the same time, the different approaches to socialism and the means and strategy of attaining power became more than obvious, and especially after 1968, the splits within the Turkish left inevitably grew deeper.

Milli Demokratik Devrim

The third group of left-wing politicians in Turkey, after the TİP and *Yön*, was the MDD, or National Democratic Revolution. As mentioned earlier, it was comprised of the old-guard of communist leaders, such as Mihri Belli and Muzaffer Erdost, and especially after 1968, figures such as Hikmet Kıvılcımlı, Mahir Çayan, Deniz Geçmiş, Doğu Perinçek, and İbrahim Kaypakkaya were involved in it. The major ideological difference became apparent in 1966 at the Malatya Congress, but the MDD's position, albeit perhaps in a primitive form, had already become public as early as in 1962. Despite the fact that both *Yön* and the TİP,

²⁶³ See Halit Çelenk, *Türkiye İşçi Partisi'nde İç Demokrasi, Yaşadıklarım*, Evrensel Basım Yayın, İstanbul, 2003, pp. 91-96; a listing of the members of the board can be found in *Ibid.*, p. 90. Çelenk was even accused by Aybar of being a CIA agent.

²⁶⁴ For documents relating to the expulsions from the TİP (1962-1970), see IISG, *Kemal Süller Papers*, Box 660.

²⁶⁵ Many scholars claimed that the party had followed a more opportunistic tendency during its last period. See especially the articles by Murat Belge, "Türkiye İşçi Partisi," p. 2123, and Mehmet Salah, p. 96; see also the studies already referred to: *TİP'in Birinci On Yılı*, p. 72 and Artun Ünsal, p. 319.

although bearing similarities with the communist movement of the past, had denounced communism, the MDD had communists at its core, a fact that signifies the continuity of the traditional politics of the left in Turkey.²⁶⁶ The MDD was also the product of the disagreement and opposition within the TİP. Although the MDD was very close to the *Yön* movement, there were some ideological differences between the two movements. In the second half of the 1960's, the strategy of a national democratic revolution became a dominant characteristic of one of the radical left-wing factions. In many respects, the political and ideological approaches of this newly shaped movement overlapped with those of the *Yön* group.

Mihri Belli, using the pen name Mehmet Doğu, published the first manifesto of the MDD in *Yön* in 1962.²⁶⁷ As with the other groups, Doğu [Belli] made the claim that Turkey was not an independent country and, in addition, although Mustafa Kemal was anti-imperialist, anti-imperialism had been put aside.²⁶⁸ According to the stance of the MDD, anti-imperialism had been substituted by the alliance of the big bourgeoisie and the class of the landowners, i.e., the *Ağas*. This alliance was argued to be closely linked with international imperialism, which managed via the above method, to infiltrate and seize national power and wealth. Thus, Turkey should regain its national independence and carry out the democratic revolution. But in order to do so, it was argued that a *milli cephe* (national front) had to be formed which would consist of all the national forces of the country, i.e. workers, peasants, Kemalist intellectuals, the youth, and certain segments of the bourgeoisie.²⁶⁹ In the same article, it was also argued that although socialism was the ideology of the working class, the focus should be transferred to the intellectuals, as they would lead the socialist revolution and teach about the revolutionary elements of the working class.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁶ Mustafa Şener, *Türkiye Solunda Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset. Yön, MDD ve TİP*, Yordam Kitap, 2010, p. 173.

²⁶⁷ The formula “national and democratic” appears in Chinese pronouncements concerning Latin America as early as 1960, and offered a different road to socialism. Reporting on a speech by Chu Tu-nan, President of the China-Latin America Friendship Association, *Peking Review*, III, 35, August 30, 1960, the article refers to “the vigorous development of the national and democratic movements in Latin America.” The Greetings of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party to the Fifth Congress of the Brazilian Communist Party, a document dated August 12, 1960, praised that party for its efforts to develop “a national and democratic united front.” It also claimed that “owing to the ever-increasing strength of the socialist camp and the vigorous development of the national and democratic movements in Africa, Asia and Latin America, U.S. imperialism has become isolated,” and the article wished the Brazilian Communist Party “new successes and achievements... in the cause of defending the Cuban Revolution and the national and democratic movements in Latin America.” Ernst Halperin, “Peking and the Latin American Communists,” *The China Quarterly*, no. 29, 1967, pp. 111-154, here, p. 112. The terms “democratic” and “national,” the two basic elements of the NDR ideology, were derived from the texts of Lenin and Mao as well as the meaning attached by them in relation to revolutions in colonized or semi-colonized capitalist societies.

²⁶⁸ Mehmet Doğu [Mihri Belli], “Sosyalizm Tartışmaları,” *Yön*, issue 48, 1962, p. 2.

²⁶⁹ Ibid.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

In a “backward” country like Turkey, the main issue was deemed to be imperialism and feudalism. The national front was to launch a national and democratic revolution that was socialist in nature, as the TİP proposed. The MDD can be said to have had an eclectic ideology which consisted of Kemalism and Maoism. The MDD’s main enemy was the comprador bourgeoisie that acted against the national interests of the country. The MDD strategy, like that of *Yön*, held to the impossibility of carrying out national liberation and attaining political power by electoral means within a multi-party system. However, the distinguishing aspect of the MDD movement was that it propounded an armed struggle in the form of guerilla warfare to seize political power. This was the first time that a political group propagated such a strategy to attain power. Thus, although *Yön*, the group that was closer in ideology with MDD, aimed at seizing political power through a military coup, the MDD insisted on using guerilla warfare and tactics to destroy the political power of the big bourgeoisie and the big landowners. According to MDD, the liberation of Turkish society from the exploitation of imperialism could only be achieved by launching armed struggle against the ruling classes.²⁷¹

Following the controversies that had erupted between the TİP and the pro-MDD members of the party before and during the Malatya Congress, Mihri Belli came forward with the second manifesto of the MDD, using the penname, Ertuğrul Tüfekçi. Published again in *Yön*, the second manifesto outlined the main themes of the MDD.²⁷² The expulsion of some MDD members during the Malatya Congress prompted the MDD to continue as a separate movement and publish its own weekly, called *Türk Solu*, published between November 17, 1967 and April 14, 1970, and would be followed by a monthly called *Sosyalist Aydınlik* (*Socialist Enlightenment*). Şahin Alpay and Nuri M. Çolakoğlu of Robert College, which is now Bosphorus University, and Halil Berktaş, a Turkish academician studying in the USA at the time, were among those who introduced Maoist ideas in Turkey. They all met at Robert College, Istanbul, and at Ankara University in the Political Science Department (*Siyasal Bilgiler Fakültesi*), and worked at the *Aydınlik Sosyalist Dergi* with Mihri Belli and Doğu Perinçek. The MDD group suffered several splits, the first occurring at the end of 1969 with the break of a group of activists from *Sosyalist Aydınlik* under the leadership of Doğu Perinçek and Şahin Alpay. This pro-Maoist group began to publish its own monthly, *Proleter Devrimci Aydınlik* (*Proletarian Revolutionary Enlightenment*), and sought to implement

²⁷¹ Interview with Mihri Belli, *Milliyet*, October 26, 1996.

²⁷² E. Tüfekçi [Mihri Belli], “Demokratik Devrim: Kimle Beraber? Kime Karşı?” *Yön*, issue 175, August 5, 1966.

Maoist teachings in Turkey while propagating a national democratic revolution, the fundamental force of which was to be the peasantry. They tried to distinguish themselves from other factions with a very radical discourse, for instance claiming that “we reject any reformist or parliamentary ways. The power of the workers and peasants can be established only through revolution and can be born only from the muzzle of a gun.”²⁷³ The models of the Latin American guerilla and the peasant warfare of Mao symbolized an active line of class war which ran contrary to the pacifist line of Soviet communist parties.²⁷⁴ The theories and ideas recommended by the Soviet Union for communists in capitalist countries, i.e., peaceful transfer to socialism and peaceful co-existence, sounded too pacifist and compromising for the revolutionary generations of 1968. By the end of the 1960s, the guerilla model had already been introduced in Turkey. Translations of some of the books of Che Guevara, Carlos Marighella and Régis Debray by the Ant publishing house had appeared and quickly became popular in student circles, while figures such as Fidel Castro and Che Guevara became the mythical symbols of the revolutionary fight.

The second major manifesto of the MDD claimed that the Turkish people were not in a position to shape their own destiny because of the existing feudal structures. Thus, the first stage of the MDD revolution was to be the elimination of these. In addition, according to the statement there was open opposition to the TİP and the other leftist movements. To do so however, as with *Yön*, the MDD proposed the establishment of a “national front” made up of all the “national classes,” i.e., the social classes other than the big bourgeoisie and the big landowners (*Ağas*).²⁷⁵ However, unlike the TİP, the MDD did not ascribe the leading role of the revolution to any class.

According to the MDD, as was the case with other national liberation movements, it was maintained that Turkey had lost its independence due to imperialism and the alliances imperialists had managed to make with the big bourgeoisie and the landowners. The big bourgeoisie was one of the conservative classes of Turkish society and, in addition, it represented just an extension of the imperialist powers at the domestic level. Unlike in developed Western countries, in Turkey the bourgeoisie’s strength was absent due to the process of colonization after WWII and hence it was not in a position to launch a

²⁷³ Quoted in Igor Lipovsky, “The Legal Socialist Parties of Turkey, 1960-80,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 27, no.1, 1991, p.103; Erkan Doğan, p. 125.

²⁷⁴ Mihri Belli, whose ideas at first resembled more those of the Soviet position, started to flirt with Maoism after 1968, saying, “the Chinese thesis (i.e., Maoism) seemed more sympathetic to them.” Belli’s flirtation with Maoism, however, can be explained by the effect the student movement had on him. Ergun Aydınoglu, *Türkiye Solu (1960-1980)*, Versus Yayınları, İstanbul, 2007, p. 239; Ergun Aydınoglu, *Türk Solu (1960-1971). Eleştirel Bir Tarih Denemesi*, Belge Yayınları, İstanbul, 1992, p. 164.

²⁷⁵ E. Tüfekçi [Mihri Belli], p. 10.

revolutionary movement. The bourgeoisie, which represented a “non-revolutionary” class, was divided into three parts: the big bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie. The first part, as just mentioned, was dangerous since it was cooperating with the foreign powers at the expense of the country. It was also the dominant group in the country and exploited the national classes (i.e., workers, peasants, etc.). The MDD held that Turkey had been transformed into a satellite country, or a periphery country, and the Turkish state had become dependent on the core countries, i.e., the imperialists, and more specifically, the USA. It was argued that the conservative classes had been ruling the country, but because of a lack of power, those classes could not completely seize political power.²⁷⁶ While, at the same time, the absence of adequate power was brought about by the military-civilian intelligentsia,²⁷⁷ which comprised the segments of the petty bourgeoisie of the country.

Thus, the MDD differentiated itself from the party representative of the left as regards the significance and leading role it acquired regarding the national bourgeoisie. The MDD claimed that the petty and national bourgeoisie were part of the revolutionary classes, in contrast to the big bourgeoisie. The petty bourgeoisie represented the military and civil facets of Turkish society, which were largely the most aware and hence could offer more support to democratic and socialist revolutions.²⁷⁸

Nationalism, as with all other leftist movements in Turkey and in Third World countries in general, was given a socialist and anti-imperialist content. According to the MDD, Marxism/internationalism and nationalism were in complete alliance. As Belli had argued, “Turkish socialism is a national movement in its deepest meaning.”²⁷⁹ In order to reach the stage of socialism, Turkey needed a national bourgeois revolution, and nationalism would represent the element of transition for the stage of national democratic revolution. As it was argued, “[...] Turkey, with complete independence, will utilize the principle of nationalism in its deepest meaning.”²⁸⁰

A theoretician of the MDD claimed that since nation-states were not founded simultaneously, the conditions in which they came into being differed. According to Erdost,

²⁷⁶ Muzaffer Erdost, “Türkiye Sosyalizmi ve Sosyalizm,” *Türk Solu*, issue 44, September 17, 1968, p. 5; from the same author see also “Türkiye Sosyalizmi ve Sosyalizm,” *Türk Solu*, issue 43, September 10, 1968, pp. 4-5; “Türkiye Sosyalizmi ve Sosyalizm,” *Türk Solu*, issue 45, September 22, 1968, pp. 4-6.

²⁷⁷ E. Tüfekçi [Mihri Belli], p. 11.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

²⁷⁹ Needless to say, “internationalism, in the original Marxist sense, is incompatible with the conventional kind of nationalism” and “quite compatible, with support of anti-imperialist national liberation movements. But since the socialist states are all forced to play international politics, with all the hypocrisies that involves, they often find themselves supporting reactionary groups in the countries that are their political allies.” Horace B. Davis, *Toward a Marxist Theory of Nationalism*, Monthly Review Press, New York and London, 1978, pp. 17-18.

²⁸⁰ Mihri Belli, “Ya Güçbirliği Ya Faşizm,” *Türk Solu*, issue 24, 29 April 1968, p. 1.

during the imperialist period Western countries managed to transform their internal conditions of feudalism into capitalism based on their own internal forces. However, in Eastern countries, it was argued, this did not happen; the transformation took place through external oppression and that was the specific reason why national movements were intrinsically progressive. Based in the same article it was argued that in underdeveloped countries, it is not about “the victory of working class” but “being freed from imperialism,” and not the “proletariat of the underdeveloped country” but “the oppressed people of colonized and subordinated countries.”²⁸¹

For Erdost and for the MDD in general, national liberation movements were progressive as long as they were fighting and weakening the biggest ill of all, imperialism. Therefore, it was impossible for the MDD not to refer to and make connections between the greatest anti-imperialist movement of Turkey and the anti-imperialist leader of the Turkish National War of Liberation. Thus, it was argued that “there are no impassable bridges between socialism and Kemalism.”²⁸²

Similarly, Mihri Belli had stated that Kemalism sought to create national honor and that the national honor Kemalism was striving to create was the element which provided harmony between these two currents of political thought. When referring to the Kemalist ideals of “progress,” “love of nation” was used as the common denominator for all of those who wanted “progress.”

Today’s struggle is the continuation of the national revolt in new conditions. This revolt, which had started on the 19th of May in 1919 under the leadership of Atatürk, went through a period of decline. Today’s struggle is the struggle of those who sincerely call themselves a Turk. We praise each patriot who joins this struggle.²⁸³

In addition, it was claimed that progress could be achieved only through national independence, which in turn could only be achieved through the anti-imperialist struggle. Adherents to this belief asserted that what differentiates a democratic revolution from a national democratic one is that the latter is anti-imperialist and thus, necessarily, nationalist. Hence, for the MDD group, anti-imperialism and nationalism were two elements that co-existed and acted simultaneously in seeking the same ends. In other words, one could not exist without the other.

²⁸¹ Muzaffer Erdost, “Milliyetçilik ve Enternasyonalizm,” *Türk Solu*, issue 41, August 27, 1968, p. 5 and p. 6.

²⁸² Mihri Belli, “Türkiye’de Karşı Devrim,” *Türk Solu*, issue 64, September 4, 1969, pp. 12-24. For clarification on the relations between the MDD and Kemalism, see the chapter on the evolution of communism in Turkey and the TKP’s relations with and perceptions on Kemalism and the Kemalist revolution of 1919.

²⁸³ Mihri Belli, “Türkiye’nin Devrim Stratejisi,” *Türk Solu*, issue 9, January 16, 1968, pp. 4-5.

People who are in favor of a revolutionary and nationalist development (...) [i.e. for Turkey] are those who are among countries that have their war of independence and they should be against the West and Westernism.²⁸⁴

According to the MDD, the War of Liberation had not been launched in the name of the bourgeoisie but in the name of all classes and strata which had conflicting relationships with imperialism. For Belli, Turkey belonged to the East due to “its origins, geography, structure and stage of development.” “It is the political conjuncture that puts Turkey among the Western countries” but “this should not change our Eastern identity.”²⁸⁵ However, the MDD’s insistence on belonging to the East and the group’s ideological content created conflict between its Easternism and Westernism; especially since the military-civil alliance was one of the main agents of the expected revolution, it was argued that its Western ideology should not be ignored.

Lastly, as noted earlier, the main reason for the conflict that emerged between the TİP and MDD was the “stage strategy” that the revolution would carry forward. The main theoreticians of the MDD argued that because it was an underdeveloped country, Turkey should unite on a front that brought together:

...all of the members of Turkish society, except for comprador capital and feudal despots, including the Turkish proletariat which corresponds to the urban and rural proletariat who do not have the control over means of production and land and live through selling his/her labor in modern industry, petty industry, craft, trade and working of the land. Lastly, this should include the urban and rural bourgeoisie who have little means of production or land but nevertheless are exploited. That is to say, except for a few “parasites,” all of the laboring masses in Turkey are part of the front.²⁸⁶

This is how Belli defined the national forces of the country. As noted, the Kemalist forces were part of the national forces of the country, where they would help the come to fruition when the working class could take the lead. However, until that time, i.e., the moment when the working class would be ready to take the lead, the national democratic revolution would take place, having at its leadership the military-civil-intellectual stratum together with the youth movement.

²⁸⁴ Apart from Mihri Belli’s articles in *Türk Solu*, another important book is *Yazılar:1965-1970*, Sol, Ankara, 1970, here p. 281.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 279.

²⁸⁶ Mihri Belli, “Türkiye’nin Devrim Stratejisi.”

This brief presentation of the main ideas of the MDD illustrates the main differences within the party and the reasons why the MDD distanced itself from the party, along with, of course, the hegemonic administration of Aybar and the lack of democratization within the party.

Domestic and International Developments and their Impacts on the Left

The late 1960s in Turkey were marked not only by an increase in revolutionary activity but also by numerous splits in the Turkish leftist movement. As the chairman of the party put it, “we cannot ignore the fact that certain political events which determined the agenda of the following years appeared in 1967.”²⁸⁷ However, signs were evident even before 1965.²⁸⁸ The most important outcome of the congress and the talks and debates that followed was about the revolutionary strategy that the party would follow. Not long after, the Aybar-Boran group managed to succeed in maintaining its position in the party and banished the opposition faction from the party. Cevdet Sunay (1899-1982), the president of the Republic (1966-1973), proclaimed in a speech in May of 1967 that the constitution was not open to radical political movements based on class, and specifically on socialism, clearly addressing the TİP. Aybar and the other leading intellectuals of the party tried to convince the public that the constitution had libertarian elements and characteristics that allowed Turkey to base her policy on socialism and, in addition, the TİP suggested that both of the blocs of the Cold War era take up an independent political strategy, obviously trying not to be associated with either bloc.²⁸⁹

Moreover, there were some serious international developments (apart from the Cyprus Question, which had direct implications) that shaped the following debates within the Turkish left and, in addition, were referred to at the Third Congress of the TİP that took place from the 9th to the 12th of November in 1968. One of the most important issues, which we will see later, was the increased and intensified anti-imperialist/anti-American emphasis of the party members and leadership, not only in relation to Cyprus but more generally in relation to American activities, military or otherwise. The attitude of the TİP as regards the US toughened and reached its peak at the end of 1967. The party chairman declared: “Our second

²⁸⁷ Mehmet Ali Aybar, *TİP Tarihi*, vol. 3, BDS Yayınları, İstanbul, p. 105.

²⁸⁸ Sadun Aren, p. 218.

²⁸⁹ Mehmet Ali Aybar, “Bütün Bloklara Hayır,” *Ant*, no. 87, August 27, 1967, pp. 4-5.

War of Independence has started. America will return back to where it came from. The campaign of passive resistance will be hastened....”²⁹⁰

The TİP’s emphasis on the anti-imperialist aspect of the was due primarily to the Vietnam War, which had already started back in 1959 (Aybar took part in the Russell Tribunal as a judge of the body), and secondarily because the TİP was invited to the Mediterranean Conference of the Progressive Parties in Rome in January of 1968, which likely provided a new perspective on anti-imperialism and anti-Americanism for the party.²⁹¹

A second international development was the Six-Day or Arab-Israeli War in the Middle East in 1967, which was also discussed at the Mediterranean Conference in Rome. Besides the Arab-Israel conflict, the TİP concluded that the US wanted to spread American imperialism throughout Middle East, including Turkey, by transforming the whole region into a platform for military, economic and political activities. Hence, the adoption of a much more intense anti-imperialist policy was seen as being vital for the preservation of the party itself, since it was also perceived that the US sought to eliminate all leftist parties in the region.²⁹²

Lastly, since its establishment the TİP had tried to avoid being associated with the Soviets and communism, and tried to keep an equal distance from both the US and the USSR. The independence of Turkey, as well as the party itself, was predicated on the independence of all foreign elements, regardless of their ideological premises. Despite all the efforts and statements, the party never openly dissociated itself. According to one of the leading party members, the TİP thought of itself more as a communist rather than socialist party.²⁹³ The main point of reference of the party was also the primary reason for its dissolution. The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August of 1968 made apparent what the leading figures of the party thought the party character should be and, especially for Aybar, it meant the complete decline of the Soviet Union. Specifically, it was the reason why the party into two groups, one led by Mehmet Ali Aybar and the other led by Behice Boran and Sadun Aren. The conflict within the party was of great significance since that was the primary reason why the party started to deteriorate and lose both votes and popular appeal. As was expected, the rifts within

²⁹⁰ Speech delivered by Mehmet Ali Aybar at the *Spor ve Sergi Saray* on the 12th of November in 1967. Mehmet Ali Aybar, “Bağımsızlığı Neden Kaybettik, Nasıl Kazanırız,” p. 605, in Mehmet Ali Aybar, quoted also in Sadun Aren, p. 114.

²⁹¹ For more on Aybar’s participation in the Russell Tribunal, see Mehmet Ali Aybar, *TİP Tarihi*, vol. 2, BDS Yayınları, pp. 131-145 and a collection of papers just released: Mehmet Alı Aybar, *Vietnam Günlüğü. ABD’nin Vietnam’da İşlediği Savaş Suçlarına Karşı Russell Mahkemesi*, prepared by Kıvanç Kocak, İletişim, İstanbul, 2012; on the Mediterranean Conference in Rome, see Sadun Aren, pp. 121-128.

²⁹² For more on the Middle East War, see *Ibid.*, pp. 114-121.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

the party continued at the Third Congress of the party which was held from the 9th to the 12th of November in 1968.

Splits in the TİP and the Third Congress of the Party

The last development in Czechoslovakia had an especially great impact on the party leadership. Even before the invasion took place, Aybar made a statement at the party's gathering in the Beşiktaş neighborhood in Istanbul on the 21st of July in 1968. He addressed the issue of socialism, explaining that "socialism should be founded based on a country's historical conditions and full independence is one of the foundational rules."²⁹⁴ Based on these two preconditions, he further claimed that a socialist country, like the USSR, had no right to interfere with another's domestic issues; therefore, he claimed, the USSR should stop acting like a big state. In the aftermath of the military intervention, Aybar made three consecutive announcements that were published in the party's review, *TİP Haberleri*.²⁹⁵ For the chair of the party, the Soviet invasion was a clear sign of Stalinist politics, which blackened the face of socialism. For Aybar, the intervention proved two things; namely, the desire to be a non-aligned country outside military blocs and that independence was an indispensable requirement of socialism. The road to socialism was "a road of non-conditional independence" far from the influence of the US and Soviet Russia, or any other country.²⁹⁶

In a similar vein, Boran argued that the military action carried out by the Soviet Union, with the participation of four Warsaw Pact states, could not be justified as it was against the right of independence and, most importantly of all, against socialist internationalism.²⁹⁷ Although Sargın claimed that the opinions of leading figures were similar, in an interview with Mumcu, Boran argued that Aybar's criticism was based on "anti-Sovietism" while her criticism was based on her evaluations of the situation.²⁹⁸ In addition, later in the interview she claimed that while making the above statement she was not fully informed about the underlying facts of the Soviet invasion, but now she argued that the USSR was correct in

²⁹⁴ Based on the talk by Aybar given in Beşiktaş, "A.P. Anayasaya Gerçekten Saygılı Olmasını Öğrenmelidir," *TİP Haberleri*, issue 18, 1 August 1968, p. 8; quoted also in Nihat Sargın, vol. 2, p. 661.

²⁹⁵ The three announcements were published in an issue of *TİP Haberleri* with the heading "Çekoslovakya Olayları Karşısında TİP'in Görüşü," *TİP Haberleri*, issue 20, 1 September 1968, pp. 2-3; Nihat Sargın mistakenly refers to the article substituting "görüşü" for the plural form of "görüşleri." The same in Ulus, Ibid., p. 81, fn. 104. While Güvenç refers to the article as "Çekoslovakya Olayları Hakkında TİP 'in Görüşleri," the correct title, however, is as indicated above.

²⁹⁶ *TİP Haberleri*; Nihat Sargın, pp. 662-663; Serpil Çelenk Güvenç.

²⁹⁷ Behice Boran, "Çekoslovakya Olayları, Sosyalist Demokrasi ve Ulusal Bağımsızlık," August 27, 1968, *Milliyet* reprinted in Behice Boran, *Yazılar, Konuşmalar, Soyleşiler, Savunmalar*, vol. 1, Sosyal Tarih Yayınları, İstanbul, 2010, pp. 681-684; Nihat Sargın.

²⁹⁸ Uğur Mumcu, *Bir Uzun Yürüyüş*, um:ag, Ankara, 1997 [1988], p. 56.

trying to stop the rebirth of capitalism in Czechoslovakia.²⁹⁹ Aybar's questioning of the Soviets was the first and clearest opposition to the official Soviet line in the Turkish left's history; this was not the case, however, with the MDD movement which welcomed the invasion, as this was seen as "a revolutionary intervention against the reformist tendencies that were under the control of the CIA."³⁰⁰ The Soviet invasion also triggered the biggest split among the leadership of the TİP, which would later lead to the resignation of Aybar and Boran as the second chairman of the party.³⁰¹

In this atmosphere, Aybar introduced his formulation of "socialism that is unique/peculiar to Turkey" (*Türkiye'ye özgü sosyalizm*), with which he tried to clarify that the establishment of socialism depended pre-eminently on the independence of Turkey from all of the international blocs. This was a reaction to the disappointing electoral results in the senate elections on June 2nd, 1968.³⁰² Although the party achieved a considerable victory, with an increase from 3% in 1965 to 5% in 1968, the amended electoral system made it impossible for the TİP to have a representative in the National Assembly. Aybar tried to give the party an ideological boost as he articulated an older concept, which he had been referring to since the early 1960s, but after the international developments and the split with Boran and Aren, he articulated more clearly what he considered Turkish socialism to be.³⁰³ In Aybar's socialism, there were three important elements which had to be taken into consideration: bureaucracy, the authoritarian state (*ceberrut devlet*) and the Asiatic Mode of Production (AMP).³⁰⁴ In his approach to bureaucracy, Aybar first and foremost came up against the circles around *Yön* and

²⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 57.

³⁰⁰ "The group around Mehmet Ali Aybar almost reached a version of Eurocommunism with their slogans of 'smiling socialism' or 'democratic socialism.' The other current would stick to a pro-Moscow line." Mehmet Salah, p. 96.

³⁰¹ Mehmet Döşemeci mistakenly states the facts in reverse, claiming that Mehmet Ali Aybar sided with the Soviet invasion, and Behice Boran and some high-rank members opposed him. Mehmet Döşemeci, *Debating Turkish Modernity: Civilization, Nationalism, and the EEC*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2013, p. 75, fn. 64.

³⁰² Sadun Aren, p. 126.

³⁰³ For example, in 1967 in the review *Ant* the chairman of the party presented the characteristics of Turkish socialism; Mehmet Ali Aybar, "Türkiye Sosyalizminin Özellikleri," *Ant*, issue 45, November 21, 1967, p. 5.

³⁰⁴ The debate on the AMP and the legacy of the Ottoman Empire is one of the largest that existed in the Turkish left of the 1960s, but it is beyond the scope of our study to analyze all the aspects of the ideology of the party. For a discussion on the AMP, see Özgür Mutlu Ulus and Igor P. Lipovsky, pp. 49-66; in Turkish, see Suavi Aydın and Kerem Ünüvar, "ATÜT Tartışmaları ve Sol" in Tanıl Bora and Murat Gültekinil (eds), *Sol*; Kurtuluş Kayalı, "ATÜT Tartışmalarının Hafife Alınmasının Nedenleri ve Bu Tartışmaların Atlanan Ruhunu" and Selahattin Hilav, "Asya TİPi Üretim Tarzı ve Türkiye Sosyalist Hareketi," in *Asya TİPi Üretim Tarzı*, Ant Yayınları, İstanbul, 1970; for general theoretical accounts in English, see Maurice Godelier, "The Concept of the 'Asiatic Mode of Production' and Marxist Models of Social Evolution," pp. 209-258, in David Seddon (ed), *Relations of Production. Marxist Approaches to Economic Anthropology*, Frank Cass, London, 1978 and Joshua A. Fogel, "The Debates Over the Asiatic Mode of Production in Soviet Russia, China and Japan," *The American Historical Review*. vol. 93, issue 1, February 1988, pp. 56-79.

the MDD, but at the same time, he emphasized the unique conditions of Turkey based on which form of socialism should be established.

What is more important for this study is that the chair of the party associated “Turkish socialism” with anti-imperialism and nationalism, two concepts that were closely linked together. Aybar, influenced by Hilav and Küçükomer, had provided his own account of Turkish socialism. He summarized the main features of Turkey as an “Ottoman type of state. Capitalism in Turkey was developed in a comprador manner, and there are remnants of feudalism in some parts of Turkey. Turkey won the first national independence struggle, and the Turkish constitution is in favor of the people, socialism and democracy.” According to Aybar, these features were distinct and could not be found elsewhere, and therefore Turkish socialism should be based on these features, since they determined the essence of Turkish socialism.³⁰⁵ Hence, Turkish socialism was defined as:

A system of theory and practice which arises out of the theoretical elaboration of the historical conditions unique to Turkey and of the application of socialism in accordance with these conditions [...] Turkish socialism is not an imported one. [...] The struggle for socialism is being conducted based on the conditions of this [Turkish] society.³⁰⁶

As Lipovsky rightly noted, Aybar pointed out three specific elements in his concept of “Turkish socialism” and these were that it should be democratic, populist and, most importantly in the case of this study, independent. He specifically defined the independent element of “Turkish socialism” in the following terms:

This principle is above all the basis of our foreign policy. Just as today we are taking a stand against American imperialism, tomorrow we shall decisively oppose any country that attempts to infringe upon the sovereignty of Turkey. We shall apply this principle to foreign socialist parties.³⁰⁷

Aybar’s concept of Turkish socialism became an issue of controversy within the party. In addition, Aybar started to use another term after the invasion of Czechoslovakia, that of

³⁰⁵ Aybar asserted that the bureaucrats were in alliance with the landlords and compradors, which both were playing an important role in the administration of the state. Aybar reflected back on the Ottoman Empire and described the “Ottoman-type state.” This type was marked by an administrative group which had become a class and dominated working production. This administrative class was identified with the state and was transferred to the Republic of Turkey, which is the dominant class in Turkey. On the 27th of May, the landlord-comprador alliance lost out to the progressive cadre of the bureaucrats. Mehmet Ali Aybar, “Turkiye Sosyalizmi,” pp. 639-668.

³⁰⁶ Ibid. See also Çetin Yetkin, *Türkiye’de Soldaki Bölünmeler, 1960-1970*, Toplum Yayınları, Ankara, 1970, p. 35.

³⁰⁷ Mehmet Ali Aybar, as quoted in Lipovsky, p. 64.

“socialism with a smiling face” or “humanitarian socialism,” terms already used by Alexander Dubcek, a Hungarian communist who was a leading figure during the Prague Spring (1968-1969), as well as by Gomulka a decade prior as a protest against the Turkish bureaucratic dominant class. It should be noted, however, that although Aybar criticized the MDD and *Yön*, they all shared the idea that Turkey had specific and unique historical conditions. Since the establishment of the party, Boran had followed Aybar, but now started to shift her position on the grounds that for Aybar the idea of “socialism unique to Turkey” no longer meant the same thing. However, their differences ran deeper than that³⁰⁸ and brought about the main split of the party into two groups, one led by Aybar and the other led by Boran-Aren-Sargın, mainly because whatever decision was made on behalf of the party it was actually decided upon by Aybar himself.

Therefore, the main figures of the opposition group in the TIP issued a declaration protesting regarding Aybar’s “personal leadership,” bringing the issue to the Central Executive Committee at a gathering of the 16th of October in 1968.³⁰⁹ However, the dispute was not resolved by the Central Executive Committee, which did not wish to sacrifice either of the party members. The dispute was carried over to the Third Congress of the Party the following month.

During the Congress, Boran’s and Aren’s criticism of Aybar’s formulations as an “aberration from Marxism” had become obvious. The views of Aybar were critiqued by both Boran and Aren on the grounds that freedom is intrinsic to socialism. In addition, they added that the formulations “free, humanitarian, socialism, democratic” were scientifically wrong and unnecessary since the party aimed at establishing socialism democratically. Aybar, on the other hand, claimed that it was a conspiracy, as he had done before. However, at the end of the Congress, Aybar was elected again, but the ideological proposals he had formulated could not be included in the party regulations.

The differences were so pervasive that it had become impossible for the groups in the party to work together. In addition, the youth who approached the party in the mid-1960s started to seek out more revolutionary ways to achieve socialism, and thus they began leaning towards the MDD because of the latter’s greater focus on action.³¹⁰ The most significant outcome of all the controversies was the fact that the unity of the party had been disrupted and in the

³⁰⁸ Besides Boran’s studies, see also the excellent biography by Gökhan Atılğan, *Behice Boran: Öğretim Üyesi, Siyasetçi, Kuramcı*, Yordam, Istanbul, 2007.

³⁰⁹ The declaration can be found in Sadun Aren, pp. 128-129 and in Nihat Sargın, vol. 2, pp. 680-682.

³¹⁰ Özgür Mutlu Ulus, p. 85. “This divergence was between the more or less classical *party form* and a more elusive but still strong tendency in the form of a *movement*” which started to become more obvious at the end of 1960s. Metin Çulhaoğlu, p. 186.

following elections in 1969 they managed to garner just 2.7% of the votes and win two seats. The new electoral law initiated by the AP had an added effect upon the TİP, which was based on the majority-proportional system and not proportional representation.³¹¹ In contrast to the fifty-four cities in which the party had in 1965, it participated in sixty-seven cities in the subsequent elections but failed to obtain more votes.

The decline of the party was caused by this internal split. The opposition group led by Boran and Aren even set up its own platform around the journal *Emek (Labor)*.³¹² As it was rightly argued, “it was almost inevitable that the election would not produce positive results when the party could not even agree on the conduct of its election campaign.”³¹³ The *Emek* group considered itself the genuine heir of the party, and thus it started to organize the party instead of criticizing Aybar and his followers.

In the meantime, the Turkish labor movement was going through a critical stage. Turk-İs, the primary and influential trade union of Turkey, reprimanded and suspended unions that were involved in an unauthorized strike at the Paşabahçe bottle and glass factory in Istanbul³¹⁴ and their main supporters. A new trade union, DİSK (*Türkiye Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu* –The Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey) was founded by Kemal Türkler, Rıza Kuas, İbrahim Güzelce, Kemal Nebioğlu and Mehmet Alpdündar, representing Türkiye Maden-İş, Lastik-İş, Basın-İş, Türkiye Gıda-İş and Türk Maden-İş, respectively. All of these unions were, until that time, affiliated with Türk-İş, except Gıda-İş, which was independent. The founders of DİSK, with the exception of Mehmet Alpdündar, were also members of the TİP, and they had long been in disagreement with the Türk-İş leadership about how the trade union struggle should be carried out. Although DİSK and TİP did not have organic relations, they supported each other. Concerning these events, TİP leader Mehmet Ali Aybar explained, “We moved forward with the dream of creating a

³¹¹ Proportional representation and the *milli bakiye* system was replaced after the proposal of the AP to majority representation which served only the large parties; Igor P. Lipovsky, p. 67; Murat Belge; Sadun Aren, p. 135.

³¹² According to Aren, *Emek* was launched in order to prepare the grounds for the next congress of the party to reduce Aybar’s influence even more and eventually remove him from the presidency of the party. Sadun Aren, p. 134; Nihat Sargın, pp. 853-856.

³¹³ Özgür Mutlu Ulus.

³¹⁴ For more on DİSK, among others, see the recent study by Aziz Çelik and Zafer Aydın, *Paşabahçe 1966. Gelenek Yaratan Grev*, TÜSTAV, İstanbul, 2006, especially pp. 137 ff. DİSK founders later prepared a report explaining their reasons for breaking away from Türk-İs. According to them, Türk-İş was no longer able to implement its own principles, allowed a readjustment of the regulations on industrial branches in breach of international norms, lost its national identity and could only survive with American help, and hence pursued a placatory policy that hindered workers in attaining their rights, opposed all justified strikes and supported the foundation of employer-friendly unions against Maden-İş. They declared that a new confederation was necessary to coordinate the struggle of individual unions for the common interests of the working people. The sole income of the new confederation would be workers’ dues and donations, and it would aim for the establishment of a system of equality and fraternity in the country.

new confederation. [We believed] that Türk-İş was of no use to unionists, that they were not of the opinion to support workers' rights. In the end... [it was] decided to form a new confederation."³¹⁵ However, Aybar's decision to promote the peasantry to the working class made DİSK withdrew its support on the grounds that Aybar had violated article 53 of the statute.³¹⁶

The peasantry, which represented the largest proportion of the Turkish population, became Aybar's voting base and, along with Tarık Ziya Ekinçi, the main exponent of the notion of Easterners, they led one of the four groups in the party at the time. The other groups were the ones led by Boran-Aren group, or the Emek group, the trade-unionists, and finally, the pro-MDD group of the PDA (*Proleter Devrimciler/Proleter Devrimci Aydınlık* - Proletarian Revolutionaries). The internal controversies in the party led to the resignation of Aybar, leaving space for the Boran-Aren group and the PDA to vie for power. The latter's aim was to try to oust the Boran-Aren group from the party at the party's Fourth Congress, which was held in Ankara from the 29th to the 30th of October in 1970 and the main topic of the Congress yet again was the party's strategy and tactics.

The Fourth Congress of the Party

The preparations for the Fourth Congress were made by the new leadership of the party which was in political crisis. Turkey had already entered a crucial point in her history for the second time. The AP, with Demirel as a leader that had won a landslide victory in the election of 1965 and gained an absolute majority both in terms of votes cast and in terms of seats in the assembly, seemed to face some difficulties on the eve of the election in 1969, without, however, significant effects. Since 1968, Celal Bayar, who was released in August of 1966, had gathered around him a pressure group that was called *Bizim Ev* (Our Home) to influence the policies of the AP. Despite the group's influence and Demirel's unpopularity among intellectuals, people's voting preferences in the countryside remained little unchanged, and they seemed to have become the party's voting base. However, the opposition that had been created within his own party was Demirel's Trojan horse, and in February 1970 he was forced to resign by the right wing of the AP. By the time he took over the party again the rifts were

³¹⁵ Brian Mello, p. 90.

³¹⁶ *TİP'in Birinci Onyılı*, p. 128. For more on DİSK and TİP, see also Artun Ünsal, pp. 259-269 and Nihat Sargin.

already too deep and 41 representatives and parliamentarians left the party and formed the *Demokratik Parti* recalling the banned DP of Menderes and Bayar.³¹⁷

At the same time, in 1968 the Turkish leftist youth started to dissociate itself from the parliamentary approach of the TİP and started to follow the MDD's approach of armed struggle, which had escalated to incidents of extreme violence, but from 1969 onwards, the violence of the militant right of Turkeş' *Ülkü Ocakları* (Hearths of the Ideal) surpassed that of the leftist student youth movement and both sides, substituting verbal attacks with armed conflict, led the country to a state of extreme unrest.

The Fourth Congress convened in this environment and decided once more that capitalism had evolved rapidly after 1950 and that "struggles against imperialism and fascism and for independence, democracy and socialism are integrated."³¹⁸ In addition, the party focused on the youth movement, as it also voted on some resolutions about the Kurdish issue, which should be referred to here since it was used as a pretext to shut down the party. This issue included the following points:

1. The Kurdish nation exists in the east of Turkey.
2. As regards the Kurdish nation, a policy of repression, terror and assimilation is being pursued.
3. The underdevelopment of the eastern region is the result of the policies of the ruling parties and the law of uneven development of capitalism.
4. The Eastern Question is not only a problem of regional development.
5. Support by our party for the constitutional democratic struggle of the Kurdish nation is its revolutionary duty, as our party is implacably opposed to all anti-democratic, fascist, repressive and chauvinistic approaches.
6. To unite the national-democratic struggle of the Kurds with the socialist revolution, Kurdish and Turkish socialists must work together in the party.
7. The party is resolved to struggle against the bourgeois ideology of racism and chauvinism.
8. The party sees the Kurdish question from the viewpoint of the necessity of the struggle for the socialist revolution.³¹⁹

The most important outcome of the Congress was, however, the fact that the TİP openly challenged the official stance on the Kurdish issue in terms of the official state ideology, as it recognized first and foremost the existence of the Kurdish people, and secondly, it recognized the repressive measures that were implemented against the Kurdish population and the assimilating tactics of the state. However, as it was rightly argued, the answer to the Kurdish problem "did not lie in the separatist national liberation movement of the Kurds but in the

³¹⁷ Erik-Jan Zürcher, pp. 250-252.

³¹⁸ Nihat Sargın, pp. 997-999; Sadun Aren, pp. 142-143; *TİP'in Birinci Onyılı*, pp.137-142.

³¹⁹ As quoted in Lipovsky, p. 78.

socialist transformation of Turkey, for which Turkish and Kurdish socialists had to work together in the TİP.”³²⁰ Despite the party’s resolutions, it was not in favor of the autonomy of the Kurds and, especially, “did not recognize the right of the Kurdish nation to self-determination to the point of establishing an independent state.”³²¹

In general, the congress verified only that the divergences of the previous years had not been forgotten and on the contrary, were deepening. Although the PDA left the party, the situation did not change. It became obvious after the congress that the party lost not only a great part of its working base, but also a large segment of the youth which had sided with groups that were more radical.

Demirel and his party were unable to constrain the violent events or minimize the impacts they were having on Turkish society. The violence in the streets and on university campuses continued. By early 1971, Demirel’s was unable to find a solution to the problems of the country and curb the burgeoning violence, nor was his party able to push through any serious legislation on social or financial reform passed in the assembly, and defections further weakened him. The Turkish military, well-known for its powerful and radical measures, issued a memorandum with which “it demanded that a strong and credible government be formed that would be able to end the ‘anarchy’ and carry out reforms ‘in a Kemalist spirit.’”³²² Demirel immediately resigned and a new government that was approved by the military command was installed.

It is noteworthy, however, that most sections of the left greeted the ultimatum with hope, interpreting it “as a 1960-type coup against a right-wing government,” although the left’s trust in the army had already been shaken by how troops used to suppressed striking workers in 1970. Despite the fact that the left’s aspirations were proving futile, they demonstrate the impact of Kemalism on the left and its perception of the army as a progressive force in alliance with the people and in the service of the people.³²³ The memorandum was a “soft coup” carried out by those in the higher echelons of the army, which was disconcerted by what was perceived to be a rising tide of “red terror.” Accordingly, the state turned against the

³²⁰ In fact, the TİP considered the Kurdish question to be related to an issue that was regional and driven by economic underdevelopment. In addition, he posited that it did not have a revolutionary character; İlhan Akdere and Zeynep Karadeniz, *Türkiye Solu’nun Eleştirel Tarihi-1*, Evrensel Basım Yayın, İstanbul, 1994, p. 265.

³²¹ Özgür Mutlu Ulus, p. 88. The TİP, through its approach to the Kurdish problem, had separated from mainstream parties and official state ideology. It had become custom for social democratic parties to deal with the Kurdish problem by drawing special attention to state repression, socioeconomic inequality and inhibitions of democratic rights.

³²² If the demands were not met, the army would “exercise its constitutional duty” and take over power itself. Erik-Jan Zürcher, p. 258

³²³ The best articulated and documented study on the left and the army is the recent study by Özgür Mutlu Ulus.

TİP for supporting the Kurdish cause and the party was convicted of acting in a manner contrary to the constitution and holding to a separatist policy that endangered the unity of the state, and as a result, an order was issued to ban the TİP. All left-wing activity was forbidden and many of the leaders of the party were arrested, and trade-unionism was suspended.³²⁴

Policies on Cyprus: Continuity or Rupture?

Following the 1964 crisis, Turkish officials and policymakers began a thorough re-examination of the country's foreign policy in order to find the reasons for Turkey's failure to intervene. The dominant belief was that Turkish politicians were too dependent on the US, which, because of Cyprus, meant that Turkey was isolated in the international community. Thus, a decision was made to pull away from the US and improve relations with the Soviet Union and the Third World, and in the process adopt a "multi-faceted" foreign policy.³²⁵ Domestically, however, the shift in official foreign policy demonstrated what the left had proclaimed was correct, an issue that contributed enormously to the left's entrance into the National Assembly.

Under Khrushchev, the Soviet leadership had warned the Turks in the summer of 1964 that any foreign intervention on Cyprus would entail a direct Soviet response.³²⁶ Soviet foreign policy changed, however, following the American response to Turkey with the Johnson letter, which was interpreted as a sign of a crack in the NATO alliance and, most importantly, after the Khrushchev government went to Kosygin and Brezhnev in October of 1964. In addition, following the visit of Foreign Minister Erkin to Moscow, the Soviet Politburo issued a communiqué referring to "the legal rights of the two communities" on the island.³²⁷ The cost of this on Soviet-Cypriot and Soviet-Greek relations was deemed to be small compared with the opportunities that were opening up between the Soviet rapprochement with Turkey, as well as the latter's pulling away from NATO and the US.³²⁸

³²⁴ For more concerning the ban of the party, see Sadun Aren, p. 155; Nihat Sargin, pp. 1073-1074 and 1081; Murat Belge; and Mehmet Salah.

³²⁵ Süha Bölükbaşı, p. 115.

³²⁶ Moscow offered the Greek Cypriots arms, and a TASS statement dating from the 8th of August in 1964 stated Soviet willingness to defend the Makarios government if it was attacked.

³²⁷ This position was repeated again in January of 1965 during the visit of a Supreme Soviet delegation to Turkey and by Gromyko during his May 1965 visit to Turkey. Galia Golan, *Soviet Policies in the Middle East. From WWII to Gorbachev*, Cambridge University Press, Great Britain, 1990, p. 250. Erkin claims in his memoirs that the rapprochement began because the threat posed by the Soviets to Turkey decreased as a result of the NATO alliance, the rise of China, her economic difficulties on the domestic front, and demands for autonomy by the USSR's allies in Eastern Europe. Kemal H. Karpat, "Turkish-Soviet Relations," p. 91, in Kemal H. Karpat (ed.), *Turkey's Foreign Policy in Transition, 1950-1974*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1975.

³²⁸ Ibid.

After his return from the Soviet Union, Erkin told the National Assembly that Turkey welcomed the Soviet overtures and explained the “multi-faceted” foreign policy:

[Turkey] has decided to play an important role in world affairs. [Turkey] wants its national causes to be supported by as broad an [international community] as possible. Therefore, our government wants to create a ring of peace around Turkey and establish good relations with its neighbors. We also want to intensify our relations with Afro-Asian countries.³²⁹

On the 7th of October in 1965, just a few days before general elections, Mehmet Ali Aybar made a critical two-hour speech in the National Assembly concerning Cyprus. In his speech, he expressed his party’s anti-American sentiment and offered a critique of the government’s policies, since

...during the Cyprus crisis, we saw the consequences of our alliance with the US [and] in which the alliances were not equal. Moreover, part of these bilateral agreements were not approved by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. Nevertheless, we haven’t encountered any phrases in the government program about ending this situation. On the contrary, we are told that our relations with the U.S are going to be stronger. Under these circumstances, as concrete assurances were not given on removing this politically dependent situation of ours, and as we are told that our relations with the U.S would be stronger, we would be skeptical about the promises made on following Atatürk’s foreign policy.³³⁰

The leader of the party went on to present his thoughts about Turkey’s policies as not being independent, and expressed his strong belief that only by returning to Atatürk’s approach to foreign policy, and Atatürk’s policy of collective security, that national policy would be truly independent. Collective security in the Atatürk era did not mean alliances with military blocs. The government, he argued, as well as policymakers, should act in the same way that Atatürk had acted. “[...] the conception of maintaining our national security by our own power, which is the basic ground of Atatürk’s foreign policy, has also been incorrectly interpreted in the government program. It is obvious that [because] our military forces are taking part in NATO and CENTO, which are overseen by the US, our own national security is not under our own power.”

Thus, the government did not have a clear-cut policy on Cyprus, and as a result, the TİP believed that:

³²⁹ As quoted in Süha Bölükbaşı, p. 117.

³³⁰ Mehmet Ali Aybar, “Aybar’ın Konuşması,” p. 103, in Turhan Salman (ed).

The reason that the Cyprus problem turned against Turkey and the Turkish community in Cyprus is because the English and American imperialists support their Greek allies. However, our governments wanted to solve the Cyprus problem with the help of England and America, and this request stultified the problem. The new government also seems to follow the same path. The first thing that needs to be done is to take the Cyprus problem away from the imperial forces, and get assurances that anti-imperial governments will support us in this case. For that purpose, the TİP suggests that Cyprus to be cleared of foreign bases, be disarmed, and become a federative, independent country which respects both sides under international warranties as the most appropriate solution for the rights of Cypriot Turks. The TİP believes that a round table meeting which would only be attended by those concerned: delegates from Turkey and Greece, and the Turkish and Greek [Rum] communities.³³¹

The party claimed that without a radical revision in the country's foreign policy it was clear that the military blocs did not meet their requirements; therefore, Turkey should develop relations with Third World countries, because:

Turkey is a backward community. Our nation had to endure the Independence War in order to regain its freedom and to get rid of this bigotry. We need our government to recall this historical fact. We want our government to avoid seeking out methods which conflict with the goals of Independence War. The great Ottoman Empire collapsed after it went into the orbit of Western capitalism. The Independence War was carried out to end the semi-colonized regime that imperialism and Western capitalism forced on us. However, after Atatürk passed away, Turkey slowly came under the influence of Western capitalism and imperialism. The solution for our case of development and progress is dependent on us getting over capitalism and every kind of foreign impact. However, as we mentioned before, the government seems to be unaware of this fact and defends the notion that Turkey will develop by means of capitalism.³³²

And he concluded his speech by saying:

Our salvation depends on us going back to Atatürk's foreign policy as soon as possible. We should never let foreign penetration, neither Eastern nor Western, or any other country to have the ability to inflict outrages upon justice as regards our independence or detract from our national freedom. Our nation, which led our National War of Independence, which was the first Independence War that history had ever witnessed result in victory under the immortal leader Atatürk, is determined to make this second independence movement succeed.³³³

³³¹ Ibid., p. 105.

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Ibid.

He went on to say:

As the TİP, we consider it a national duty that all signed contracts must immediately be reconsidered, and the clauses which are not compatible with our independence and our rights of independence must be eliminated within the means of international law. Our oaths of allegiance to Atatürk [and] his foreign policy are only to be taken seriously by us if our government takes serious steps towards this path.³³⁴

In addition to the more critical stance towards the government and, of course, the US, the most crucial declaration of the party, which signified a turning in policy of the left regarding the Cyprus Question, took place just before the end of 1965. On the 27th of December in 1965, again on behalf of the party, Mehmet Ali Aybar proceeded with a speech in the National Assembly. He warned the parties that they should set aside all futile discussions and start acting according to the country's national interests, pointing out, at the same time, the harmful impact of military alliances, obviously directing his fire at NATO and CENTO. He also stressed the fact that Great Britain and the US would support Cyprus to safeguard their military bases on the island. Aybar argued that Makarios skillfully played out all the countries that had participated in the Cairo Conference and had persuaded them to accept that his movement was a national one, without any implication that it was tied to *Enosis*.³³⁵

In Aybar's and the party's opinion, the Makarios government did not constitute a "legitimate" but a "*de facto*" government and, therefore, it should not be recognized by the UN or Turkey and, in addition, the Makarios government should not be accepted as a collocutor as well.³³⁶ Defending the London-Zurich agreements and justifying their validity according to international law, he asserted that the Turkish Republic should maintain its military unit in Cyprus and replace it when it was "convenient."³³⁷ Since the Greek-Cypriot government was not Turkey's collocutor, the Turkish government should, henceforth, accept the Greek government as a collocutor and warn the Greek government that the "necessary response will be given in case of an attack on our military unit or our Cypriot collaterals and that such an attack would be counted as a *casus belli* by the Turkish side."³³⁸ In his opinion, however, the

³³⁴ Ibid., pp. 105-106.

³³⁵ Mehmet Ali Aybar, "Kıbrıs Görüşmesi," p. 149, in Turhan Salman (ed).

³³⁶ The same view was also repeated later in 1967; see Mehmet Ali Aybar, "Kıbrıs'taki Acı Gerçekler. TİP'in Görüşünü Doğruladı," *TİP Haberleri*, December 1, 1967, issue 2, p. 9.

³³⁷ Ibid., pp. 150-151.

³³⁸ Ibid., p. 150.

Turkish state was “peace-loving,” as it was stated in the party’s program, and the Turkish government ought to let “the Greek government and UN hear this warning” from Turkey.³³⁹

In addition, it should be noted that Makarios’ position was highly thought of by the TİP, firstly as he was the unconditional leader of the Greek Cypriot community and secondly as he was a strong and influential political figure in Third World countries. Therefore, Makarios almost always took up a great part in the speeches of the party. However, Behice Boran, in one of her many speeches, tried to debunk Makarios by suggesting persistently that the latter was playing a “double game to realize *Enosis*, even if he stands up for independence,”³⁴⁰ a game that Third World countries in particular should know about. In addition, she argued that such third world countries:

...see us [Turkey] as we an ally with the US and Anglo Saxons as we vote with the US and follow US policies. In this situation, it will not be possible for us to sustain sound relations and win them over as long as they see us that way and as long as they believe that we are only by their side just because we want their support on the Cyprus problem. It is also the same way with the European countries, the US, the Soviets and every other country in the world. We should follow a policy which is long-term, serious and dignified by determining the point where our national interests and their foreign policies coincide, not by these short-termed goals and little narrow political games.³⁴¹

After repeating the well-known stance of the party promoting a de-militarized, neutral, federate and independent country under international guarantees and based on equality between the two communities,³⁴² Aybar stated that Turkey, Greece, and the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities must be invited to a “round table conference” to negotiate this position and it should then be explained to all the nations of the world and the Third World countries. He stated that every nation in the world should know “the determination of Turkey to keep its armed and military forces in Cyprus” and that “an attack” on these forces would be taken as a “*raison d’être* for war and *casus belli*.”³⁴³ Aybar’s speech was supported a week later by the Diyarbakir deputy, Tarık Ziya Ekinci, who claimed that the leader’s speech was a

³³⁹ Ibid., p. 151.

³⁴⁰ Behice Boran, “Dışişleri Bakanlığı Bütçesi,” p. 77, in Turhan Salman (ed), vol. 3.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

³⁴² The same stance was repeated during the pre-election campaign in the radio speeches of the party. See “Mehmet Ali Aybar’ın Konuşması,” p. 12, in Türkiye İşçi Partisi, *Yaşasın Emekçiler Yaşasın Türkiye*, Sosyal Adalet Yayınları, Ankara, 1965.

³⁴³ Ibid.; see also Serpil Çelenk Güvenç.

call full of “nationalist feelings” and a call for the need to deal with the Cyprus problem in a way that transcends domestic and personal political disputes.³⁴⁴

The significance of the party’s policy is that for the first time it adopted an approach that espoused military intervention of an independent republic recognized by the UN and, significantly, this approach was raised by a socialist party, the TIP.³⁴⁵ In addition, Aybar’s false assertion that the Makarios government was not legitimate came was opposed by *Yön*, which in an article, rightly claimed that according to the Security Council dated the 4th of March, 1964, Makarios had been chosen as collocutor.³⁴⁶ However, still the most important outcome of Aybar’s speech was the support of a militaristic approach and the party’s retreat from Atatürk’s policy of *Misak-ı Milli*, which was in direct contravention with the resolution the party that was voted for during the Malatya Congress the following year. The resolution passed at the Malatya Congress specifically said that “the Party has to pursue a foreign policy within the boundaries and philosophy of the National Pact; that is, avoid implementing occupational adventures [through which] we might be driven by imperialism outside our national borders.”³⁴⁷ However, a peaceful foreign policy seems to have been abandoned and replaced by a policy closer to the dominant one that was backed by conservative right-wing parties.

Demirel, who came to power in November of 1965, seemed to want a fresh start for the negotiations on Cyprus to find a viable peaceful solution. Despite the fierce accusations he made to İnönü in the assembly and elsewhere, Demirel displayed the same caution once in power. He may have believed that Cyprus was a lost cause because İnönü made it so, but he also believed that the Cyprus Question was a bilateral problem between Greece and Turkey and not one between Turkey and the Makarios regime. İhsan Sabri Çağlayangil, the Foreign Minister of the AP cabinet, made this point in the National Assembly:

The Cyprus dispute is a problem between Turkey and Greece. Therefore it can be negotiated only between Greece and Turkey. We don’t want to put our country through the disaster of war without first exhausting all peaceful possibilities of reconciliation. If, however, our community [in Cyprus] is attacked... we would not hesitate for one moment to use our right to intervene....³⁴⁸

³⁴⁴ See Tarık Ziya Ekinci, “Ekinci’nin Konuşması...” pp. 158-161, in Turhan Salman (ed).

³⁴⁵ Serpil Çelenk Güvenç, p. 171.

³⁴⁶ *Yön*, “Hükümet Programı’nın Kabulünden sonra Süleyman Demirel’in Durumu,” December 10, 1965, issue 141, p. 7 [taken from Neue Zürcher Zeitung’s November 28, 1965 issue].

³⁴⁷ Sadun Aren, p. 274.

³⁴⁸ As quoted in Süha Bölükbaşı, p. 130.

It seems that Demirel believed that a violent conflict was probable and that it should be avoided. However, this stance did not indicate a clear indication of what the Demirel government wished for as a solution for Cyprus. He specifically said that "...to insist on only one solution would mean to dictate a solution"³⁴⁹ and the dictation of a solution, it seems, was against his policy. The AP government, loyal to the bilateral agreements, started to negotiate again with Greece after June of 1966. The political instability in Greece, which eventually led to the junta of the colonels in April of 1967, brought about the collapse of the negotiation talks, but there were efforts to continue them.

Demirel's inability to counter the Greek colonels' and Papadopoulos' assertion that they were in favor of *Enosis* without making any concessions to Turkey³⁵⁰ was received by the youth as "lack of support for the Cyprus cause" on behalf of the Demirel government. A few months later, in November of 1967, when anew crisis erupted in the island, the TİP took advantage of public sentiment and allied with the general opposition and voted in favor of military action, providing the Demirel administration with the authorization to intervene.³⁵¹ However, the Demirel administration was heavily criticized for not taking advantage of this crucial opportunity, a "clear sign" of his inability to govern the country.³⁵² In response, the TİP issue two declarations in November of 1967 which were made known to the public the following month.³⁵³ The first of these accused the Demirel government of not using the authorization for intervention because of US pressure and argued that Greece was forced to attack Turkey 48 years earlier by "American Christians."³⁵⁴ After stressing the importance of

³⁴⁹ Ibid. Instead, the Demirel administration adopted a set of principles indicating the parameters of a Cyprus settlement acceptable to Turkey. These principles were: a) Cyprus should not be annexed unilaterally by either Greece or Turkey; b) neither Cypriot community should dominate the other; c) the balance of power established by the Lausanne Treaty (1923) in the Mediterranean between Greece and Turkey should be preserved; d) The 1959 Cyprus Treaties should not be revised unilaterally. According to Bölükbaşı, it was because of the Demirel administration that Turkey lacked international support since the Turkish government's propositions were so vague. Ibid., p. 131

³⁵⁰ See Sotiris Rizas, "The Greek Military Regime's Policy Towards Cyprus, 1967-1974," *Modern Greek Studies Yearbook*, vol. 18/9, 2002/2003, pp. 239-252; see also his study in Greek, Sotiris Rizas, *The United States, the Dictatorship of the Colonels and the Cyprus Question, 1967-1974*, Patakis, Athens, 2004.

³⁵¹ Ahmet Hamdi Dinler, *TİP Tarihinden Kesitler (1961-1971)*, Gelenek Yayınları, İstanbul, 1990, p. 83; I would like to thank Serpil Çelenk Güvenç for managing to locate Dinler's daughter and acquire a copy of this rare book and send it to me.

³⁵² See the speech by Behice Boran, "Behice Boran'ın Konuşması," pp. 93-100, esp. pp. 95-96, in Turhan Salman (ed), vol. 4.

³⁵³ The two declarations were issued on the 26th and 28th of November, respectively, and they can be found in *TİP Haberleri*, "Kıbrıs İle İlgili İki Bildiri," December 1, 1967, issue 2, pp. 14-15. A large portion of the declarations can also be found in Ahmet Hamdi Dinler, Ibid., pp. 83-84 and in Serpil Çelenk, pp. 268-269 (appendices 15 and 16), although they are not complete.

³⁵⁴ The party preferred to use the word "*gâvur*," which means "infidel" and is an offensive ethnic slur used by Muslims in Turkey and the Balkans to describe all those who are not Muslim, with special reference to Christians in Greece, Bulgaria and elsewhere. It is believed that this specific word was used to show the difference between Turkey and the West, and perhaps suggest the inferiority perhaps of the West, and lastly to

Cyprus for the security of Turkey, it was asserted that annexation of Cyprus by Greece would mean that Turkey would be placed under the yoke of imperialism. In the second declaration, the government was accused once more for moving away from a military intervention in Cyprus due to pressure by NATO and the US. In the TİP's opinion, by adopting a method of bargaining for a solution to the Cyprus Question, Turkey had lost the second opportunity to intervene in Cyprus, or, in other words, had lost the opportunity to carry out the second Turkish national struggle for liberation which had been promulgated so staunchly.

At a panel held in Istanbul and in Izmir on the Cyprus Question which was titled "What a Cyprus Strategy Should Be?" Behice Boran argued that the annexation of the island by Turkey was not possible "in the conditions of a realistic foreign policy."³⁵⁵ Similarly, she argued that the annexation of the island by Greece should be also be stopped. In her opinion, this was solely possible via the proposals made by her party, i.e. an independent, federate and demilitarized island. The TİP saw Cyprus as "a part of the war against imperialism." She explained that this was the reason behind the party's decision to "vote for the Turkish military intervention in Cyprus."³⁵⁶ She argued that being a socialist party did not mean being "pacifist," and that they would not stay with "crossed arms" when the national independence of Turkey was concerned.³⁵⁷ She further argued that if the Cyprus question was approached with an anti-imperialist stance and the appropriate praxis was chosen, it would result in the ousting of American and NATO bases in Turkey and victory in the anti-imperialist war.³⁵⁸

Boran's stance in the assembly, as she spoke on behalf of the party about their position on Cyprus, seems to have moved towards a more official line. She claimed that "of course, the island of Cyprus has great strategic importance for Turkey's security. For that reason, as during the Ottoman Empire, Cyprus should be under the control of Turkey, in the hands of Turkey. But you know, today that's not the issue, [and that issue] cannot even be referred to, cannot even discussed."³⁵⁹ She went onto say:

Taking into consideration the fact that it [Cyprus] cannot be in the hands [control] of Turkey, then no other foreign state should take control of it [Cyprus], no other foreign state establishing military

elevate national sentiment by adopting a phraseology which in other times would be used by the Kemalist regime.

³⁵⁵ *TİP Haberleri*, "Kıbrıs Stratejisi Ne Olmalı?" January 1, 1968, issue 4, p. 6.

³⁵⁶ Serpil Çelenk Güvenç.

³⁵⁷ Similar opinions were also expressed some years later in Brussels; see Behice Boran, *Turkey and the World of Today*, Info-Turk, Brussels, 1976.

³⁵⁸ Boran reiterated the same views at a panel held at the *Spor ve Sergi Sarayı* with the participation of RPP, TİP and RPNP representatives during the same days. The topic of the panel was "What should an anti-imperialist Cyprus strategy be?" Ahmet Hamdi Dinler, pp. 85-86.

³⁵⁹ Behice Boran, "Amerikan Üsleri," January 5, 1967, p. 275, in Turhan Salman (ed), vol. 2.

bases in Cyprus can influence and take control of the Turkish army or of any other young nationalist army in the Middle East. Rationality in terms of the benefit of national interests requires this. In this regard, it is in the interest of Turkey for Cyprus to be independent.³⁶⁰

She went on with her analysis, exemplifying the other options Turkey had regarding Cyprus. Another solution was the double annexation, i.e., annexation of the Turkish Cypriot community with Turkey and annexation of the Greek Cypriot community with Greece; a separation, she argued, was also unworkable since Greece, Makarios and Great Britain were against it. So, she concluded, the only logical solution in accordance with the “national interests” of Turkey was as follows: Cyprus should not belong to any other foreign country, and no foreign country should be allowed to establish bases that would result in military hegemony and control over Turkey and Middle Eastern states.³⁶¹ In fact, as it was rightly argued in the same session, Foreign Minister Çağlayangil expressed similar opinions.³⁶² Reiterating the stance of the TİP, she argued that if Cyprus was demilitarized, the main points of conflict between the two communities would be eliminated. In this way, Third World countries could support Cyprus because Turkey would have taken a rational, solid stance that could be backed.³⁶³

In December of the same year, Alparslan Türkeş, a Cypriot himself and the leader of the extreme nationalist right, presented an interpellation in the National Assembly in which he accused the latter of not using the authority vested in it by the National Assembly and the rest of the opposition parties to intervene militarily and put an end to the critical situation.³⁶⁴ Similarly, Boran, in the same session, placed blame on the government for the exact same reasons.³⁶⁵ She argued that military intervention lost its significance because the government backed down and because of Makarios’s illegitimate government which had managed to manipulate and deceive the Turkish government and, with the help of Greece, had tried to abrogate the London/Zurich agreements. She went on to argue that there had to be a serious attempt to make people believe that Turkey was not a satellite state of the US and, lastly, to promote the stance of intervention to sustain the security in the region, since it would be possible to urge the sides of the dispute to start negotiations by ensuring them of Turkey’s

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

³⁶¹ Ibid.

³⁶² See *TBMM Tutanakları*, 29th Meeting, 2nd Session, January 5, 1967, p. 276. I would like to thank Serpil Çelenk Güvenç for sharing her personal archives. See also the discussion in her book, pp. 172-173.

³⁶³ “The US supported *Enosis* due to the possibility of maintaining British and NATO bases because that would mean it could control Turkey, the Middle East and all the Eastern Mediterranean.” Behice Boran, p. 275.

³⁶⁴ Alparslan Türkeş, “Kıbrıs Gensorusu,” pp. 92-93, in Turhan Salman (ed.), vol. 4.

³⁶⁵ Behice Boran, “Behice Boran’ın Konuşması,” pp. 93-100, in Turhan Salman (ed.).

unwavering stance.³⁶⁶ Taking up the old Christian teaching of turning the other cheek, in the end Boran argued that the

TİP is not warlike as a socialist party. Problems should be solved in a peaceful way. But being peaceful does not mean being passive. A peaceful person should also fight in times of need.³⁶⁷

In response to the AP spokesman, Boran stated:

They said that the Turkish government had shown everybody how capable it is in the diplomatic arena. I am not sure if public opinion truly reflect this or not. Above all, what will history say about all this? I don't think that history will agree with the AP's spokesman. As I've said before, such a statement creates a lot of questions. This statement is much more inadequate than we thought. In this matter, unfortunately, the Cyprus case was lost for us. The claim that "our right of intervention is still valid" is not to be taken seriously any longer. In this case, the government is guilty and responsible for the Cyprus problem.³⁶⁸

In 1968 and 1969, the policy of the TİP did not change concerning Cyprus. Again in a speech to the National Assembly, Boran blamed the government for allying the foreign policy of the state with NATO and the US when it was known that the real intention of American policy was for NATO to maintain its military bases on the island, and in order to satisfy US interests they were even willing to comply with the wishes of the illegitimate government of Makarios.³⁶⁹ In the beginning of the following year, the chairman of the TİP fiercely criticized the opposition's position, arguing that in international politics, to defend a stance that favors national interests was not satisfactory since it should also be acceptable for the other party of the dispute and world public opinion. He argued that because the international status of Cyprus was an independent state, taking up a position to defend a stance promoting division (*Taksim*) was a lost cause, and Makarios, as well as Third World countries, would reject such a stance. According to Aybar, Makarios was very persuasive in presenting himself as a "sacred fighter who struggled against British imperialism and imperialism in general."³⁷⁰

³⁶⁶ Ibid.

³⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 99-100. Turhan Feyzioğlu, the spokesman of the GP, made a speech after Boran reflecting the political evenness of the parliament on the Cyprus Question. Asserting that the island should be held under the blockade of the Turkish Navy and Turkish Air Forces to prevent the entrance of Greek forces and military equipment, he pointed to the "decisive, strong and impatient stance of the Turkish National Assembly" regarding issues of national unity and solidarity. In his opinion, this situation was enough to reverse the conditions which emerged after the abrogation of the agreements (London-Zurich agreements) by Greece and Makarios; *TBMM Tutanakları*, 1st Meeting, 12th Session, December 4, 1967, p. 335.

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

³⁶⁹ Serpil Çelenk Güvenç, p. 175.

³⁷⁰ Mehmet Ali Aybar, "Aybar'ın Konuşması," January 22, 1969, pp. 568-569, in Turhan Salman (ed.), vol. 4; for a brief account of the main points of the speech by Aybar, see also "Kıbrıs Konusunda," *TİP Haberleri*, issue

Aybar also stated that all political parties, whether in opposition or in power, pursued a passive policy because Turkey had deviated from the road of Atatürk. Recent examples were Johnson's Letter and the invalidation of the authority granted to the Demirel government for military intervention after the visit of Cyrus Vance. This incapability and impotence in the defense of national interests came about in the presence of bilateral agreements, the American bases and Turkey's dependence on international capital. It was argued that the most suitable policy for Cyprus was to attempt to obtain international guarantees for the security of the lives and property of Turkish Cypriots and maintain Turkey's national security. In line with this, Cyprus should not become a threat in the Middle East and *Enosis* had to be eliminated. The TİP supported the integration of the island as an independent state backed by international guarantees on the basis of the provision of equal rights for both communities. Turkey, the USSR, the US and other countries chosen by the UN would then be the guarantor states for Cyprus. This written proposal was handed over to the head of the National Assembly by the party deputies.

The following day, the discussions continued and during that gathering the *Güven Partisi* (Reliance Party) chairman, Turhan Feyzioğlu, took the floor for the second time and criticized Mehmet Ali Aybar's opinions. Specifically, Feyzioğlu said that Aybar objected to the idea of partition not because it was impossible to realize but because he thought that it was harmful. He also said that "disarming the island would mean that AKEL would be the only organized armed power." Feyzioğlu claimed that the TİP's opinions were based on the assumption that Turkey would never use her right to intervene militarily. Mehmet Ali Aybar took the floor again and in response to Feyzioğlu said that the GP had distorted the TİP's position, leaving aside all the main points, mentioning that the stance of the left was in favor of a demilitarized, independent federative Cyprus. However, Aybar claimed that the party's position was based on two statements:

1. Cyprus is to be completely free of foreign military bases and facilities as long as the right of intervention and right of basing military units at the island which are entitled to Turkish and Greek governments by the pacts are applicable and will be reserved until this new status proceed securely.

26, 2 February 1969, pp. 3-8 and 16. Separation for the US meant giving a base to Turkey "the size of a garden." He argued that the USSR was against any type of separation as well. If separation was realized and the island was to be divided between Greece and Turkey equally, NATO bases would be established on both sides since both countries were NATO members.

2. Cyprus is to be committed to a federative, disarmed, neutralized, independent government status, which would be built on equal rights for both the Turkish and Greek communities.³⁷¹

Moreover, Aybar expressed the party's insistence on preserving the presence of Turkish armed forces on the island and therefore maintaining the right of intervention until "Turkey's national interests and the political rights, lives and properties of our Cypriot citizens will be safeguarded." To utilize such a strategy and acquire complete independence for Turkey, he suggested that the party should follow the campaign of "neither US, nor Russia," a strategy which stood in direct contrast to the opposition's proposal. Aybar defended "TIP's policy, as it is the right thing to do [and] defend it as it is the most suitable policy for Turkey's national interests."³⁷²

Cyprus was a national case for the TIP, which could not be left unsettled, according to the party's chairman, and the party's aims can be summarized in four points:

1. Preventing *Enosis*.
2. Guaranteeing the lives, properties, political and human rights of our citizens in Cyprus.
3. Securing Turkey's national interests and national security.
4. Preventing threats against world peace, and promoting peace for Cyprus and the Middle East.³⁷³

"These are our goals," Aybar stated. And he went on to ask, "Now, how soon can we reach them? It was stated from this rostrum: "strategy – tactics." This is true. Tactics is one thing, strategy is another. I emphasized this yesterday; strategy, too, can change. Strategy changes according to changing conditions, by taking into account our national interests and evaluating the validity of our national interests; of course it changes, there is no doubt about that. But, before anything else, we should find a way to get results as soon as possible."³⁷⁴

Aybar tried to explain to the other parties why his party believed that a possible partition of the island was not feasible in those conditions. Cyprus was a member of the United Nations and this, by definition, presented some difficulties. "There is a political and judiciary factor which blocks the proposal for partition in the first place: removing the Cyprus state. If half of the state was given to Turkey and the other half went to Greece, the Greek Cypriot

³⁷¹As noted by the editor, "they had skipped the word 'intervention' when typing." Mehmet Ali Aybar, "Aybar Yeniden Kürsüde....," p. 572, in Turhan Salman (ed), vol. 4.

³⁷² Ibid., p. 573.

³⁷³ Ibid.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

government should agree to this. It would not be possible if they wouldn't. Secondly, the world would have to agree with this. It would not be possible unless they agreed with this. Unless Cyprus accepts these conditions, it would be impossible for a government to be removed peacefully in this world order and under such conditions. In fact, it would be impossible to remove a government by the use of force.”³⁷⁵ In other words, a policy that favors partition of the island, according to the TİP, could not be realistic since it may cause many problems in the future.

The other opposition parties claimed that a non-partition solution to the issue of Cyprus meant a serious lack of guarantees to “our citizens in Cyprus.” Aybar, replied that “[Turkey] would also be included in the states which will guarantee the status of disarmament for Cyprus; a status which will be based on equality and equal rights.” In this way, not only the US and the Soviet Union would be the guarantors.³⁷⁶ Aybar proposed that Turkey would attend the meetings and it would also be free to intervene whenever the country's interests were at stake. The party's insistence on international agreements and belief in the negotiation process became obvious so that even when a serious crisis was occurring, the party insisted that international agreements would be beneficial for the country. It also shows the democratic path that the party chose to follow and its insistence on remaining on that path which the 1960 Constitution had made possible.

However, Aybar stated that there was a technical problem, or rather, an issue they had to face: how to realize the federation. But Aybar rightly claimed that in order for a federate solution to be applied adequately, first of all, “we [Turks] must believe in the federation” and Cyprus would also be bound to comply with the international agreements, which in the long run would prove quite fruitful for Turkey.

Aybar could not refrain from talking about Atatürk's policy, since there were references to that issue during the previous session of the assembly and he asserted that a return to Atatürk's policies was mandatory. Aybar said that, despite the claims that it had nothing to do with any “-ism”s, the Atatürk policy has something to do with an “-ism”– Kemalism. “Beyond a doubt it's not socialism,” Aybar replied to Cevat Önder from the GP who yelled, “It's not socialism.” “However, it is an ‘-ism’ and it is based on Turkey having self-confidence in foreign policy and discourages Turkey from allying with big states. Additionally, Atatürk's policy states that Turkey should be surrounded by friendly countries. These are the basics of Atatürk's policy. It is also attentive to collective security. However,

³⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 575.

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

this thing called collective security should be with the United Nations. Or, it would not be a collective security system within the alliance of big states. Atatürk had been attentive to these matters his whole life and wanted Turkey to base its national security on its own power. He also wanted Turkey to produce its own weapons, although our economic situation was not strong enough at the time. In this matter, we side with Atatürk.”³⁷⁷

The partition proposal was harshly critiqued by the TİP and its chairman, who argued that:

No doubt our friends in this assembly defending partition do not consider partition to be as it is in the Acheson plans. [...] This would mean to giving Turkey a military base which would be as big as a garden and we also stated that our friends would not want such a thing. But we asked how it could be realized. To whom would our population procure acceptance? To the 1 to 5 proportion of the population. If we calculate the lands belonging to Turks on the island, would it be possible that there will be a half to half partition? How can the technical issues on immigration be solved? If we don't get a certain answer to these questions, we cannot say that partition will be appropriate. We would appreciate that because of its emotional bases. But to consider this as being valid would take into account global circumstances.³⁷⁸

Aybar requested, as his final wish one could argue, that they focus on arguments and ideas and search for the best possible solution possible. The Workers' Party proposed a concurrent resolution to the National Assembly Supreme Court, asking for discussions on these heated topics and for them not to be closed until decisions are made. “These negotiations should not be ended only by the parties discussing them. There should be a joint decision about them all. We [the party] have proposed a concurrent resolution that is open to discussion.”³⁷⁹

The Cyprus Question at the End of the 1960s

During the AP period, the main concern in Turkish foreign policy was the reconsideration of relations with the United States and the development of relations with the Soviet Union and

³⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 575. “We would expect the GP's spokesman to prove the validation of the partition proposal after rebutting our federative argument. However, we did not see any real proposal other than the emotional stance of the Turkish flag waving over Cyprus.”

³⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 576. “Of course the world's situation has changed a lot since the Bandung Conference. I won't discuss that. However, today it is a fact that there are a lot of countries which have launched wars for national independence or they are getting ready for one. These all comprise forms of oppression. [...] Nkrumah is gone. Yes, he is gone. But has the thought of independent third world countries which gain their independence died? It's simply not possible. We would consider these things for sure. That's why a federate state the objective of which would be demilitarized, disarmed and established within the framework of equal rights for Turkish and Greek [Rum] communities, as well as an idea of establishing a federate state which would be under international guarantees, as well as that idea that it would be placed under Turkey's protection under guarantee agreements is not an argument that can be pushed aside by saying that all the communist parties would defend this argument.”

³⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 576.

Arab countries in consistency with the program of the government. More importantly, the Cyprus Question lost priority on the Turkish foreign policy agenda, at least for a few years, after the crisis of 1967. The late 1960s witnessed the reconsideration of Turkish-American relations, and during this period, bilateral agreements with the United States that had been made before the AP came to power preoccupied the government. Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel and Foreign Minister İhsan Sabri Çağlayangil declared that the AP government would scrutinize the agreements with the United States.

Another issue concerning Turkish-American relations was the presence of American bases in Turkey. The existence of these bases provoked responses from the opposition and leftist groups in Turkish society that were against Turkey's membership in NATO. Through bilateral agreements, the US military personnel in Turkey had been granted certain privileges. For example, American military personnel had a private postal service, duty-free shops and immunity from the Turkish judiciary, in addition to other military concessions. The abuse of those privileges instigated anti-Americanism in Turkey. The most conspicuous example of anti-Americanism was the reaction against the visit of the American Sixth Fleet to Istanbul in 1968. In response to the reconsideration of the agreements, the US reduced its personnel in Turkey and the remaining military personnel were ordered not to have a marked public presence. In addition to the reduction of military personnel, the US decided to turn over control of some bases to the Turkish government.

With the mediation of Cyrus Vance, the crisis on the island was resolved when the Greek government agreed to withdraw its troops, disband the National Guard and call Grivas back on November 30, 1967.³⁸⁰ Consequently, in 1967 the Cyprus crisis was smoothed over through diplomatic relations and in the solution of the crisis, the actors in the decision-making process, such as the prime ministry, the opposition and the military acted jointly. However, the issue of military intervention split public opinion. This split was more than obvious, in light of the varying positions taken up by different newspapers, although it was commonly argued that Turkey should have intervened militarily on the island.³⁸¹

³⁸⁰ William Hale, *Ibid.*, p. 153.

³⁸¹ On the one hand, İlhan Selçuk and Ecvet Güresin from *Cumhuriyet* and Abdi İpekçi and Metin Töker from *Milliyet* supported the decision that was made about intervention, but they also criticized the Demirel government for acting so passively on the issue. By the same token, Ahmet Kabaklı, Kadircan Kafılı and Cihad Baban from *Tercüman* and Mümtaz Faik Fenik and Orhan Seyfi Orhon from *Son Havadis* supported the policy of the Demirel government and criticized the opposition parties and press claiming that "national unity" was needed in order to successfully handle the crisis on the island. For cases in which support was given for intervention, see *Cumhuriyet*, November 23-30, 1967, and *Milliyet*, November 16-23, 1967 and for positions against the intervention see *Tercüman*, November 23-25, 1967 and *Son Havadis*, November 18 to December 1, 1967.

Despite the split in Turkish society, however, the Cyprus Question fell off the radar for a few years after the peaceful period initiated through diplomatic relations between the Demirel administration and the colonels' junta. This Greek and Turkish "national" issue would make its appearance again in the following decade, and would ultimately culminate with the Turkish military invasion of Cyprus, but the fact that the TİP, in its original form, was closed down in 1971 meant that it was no longer involved in the debate.