



# THE DISINTEGRATION OF FASCISM

H. YERGEN

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**Workers of all countries, unite!**

## **The disintegration of fascism**

**The speech delivered by comrade R. Yürükoğlu at a meeting held in London on 10th September 1984 to commemorate the 64th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of Turkey.**

# The disintegration of fascism

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# I. Turkey — the process of the disintegration of fascism

## 1. 12th September 1980: Fascism

Prior to 12th September 1980, Turkey was experiencing a profound economic, social and political crisis. The monopoly bourgeoisie's inability to rule the country had been exacerbated and popular activity against rising exploitation and oppression was on the upsurge. There were many incidents of bloody clashes and local uprisings. The revolutionary front, however, was splintered. No party or organisation was able to fulfil the demands of the revolutionary situation. The subjective factor lagged far behind the objective situation. In general, the struggles developed as spontaneous movements.

Under these conditions, the counter-revolution began to intensify its attack. When the revolutionary forces were unable to take advantage of the atmosphere created by the Izmir Uprising, the tendency to regress which had been developing for some time merged with the tactical defeat of May Day 1980 and with the impasse of the graduated strikes which were being organised at the time. The regression in the revolutionary section accelerated. Struggles such as those at Fatsa and Çorum remained isolated spurts within this general retreat. The representatives of the petty-bourgeoisie within the revolutionary movement were rapidly adopting a capitulationist attitude. For its part, the non-

monopoly bourgeoisie and its political organisation showed once again that, at the stage of development reached by Turkey, it would be unable to wage an independent struggle against fascism, imperialism and the monopolies.

The opportunist leaders of the Communist Party of Turkey stand historically guilty in regard to the approach of 12th September 1980. Having denied the existence of a revolutionary situation, the CPT leadership defended step-by-step reformist tactics rather than revolutionary action. It repudiated tasks which were becoming ever more urgent, tasks such as breaking social-democracy's influence over the working class and drawing the proletariat into revolutionary action. It confined the working class struggle within limits acceptable to the non-monopoly bourgeoisie. The turning of the mass funeral procession for Kemal Türkler into a capitulationist demonstration was opportunism's final treachery before 12th September.

For years, the CPT leadership had used slogans which identified fascism with the Nationalist Action Party. This obscured the fact that given the conditions of Turkey, fascism was more likely to be imposed by the army. In this way, opportunism contributed to creating the social-psychological conditions for the 12th September coup.

At that time, the *Worker's Voice*, which had only recently arrived on the political scene, determined the revolutionary character of the objective situation in the country and the backwardness of the subjective factor. Nevertheless, there were still various possibilities open to the society. In this situation, the *Worker's Voice* advanced the view that the battle was not yet over and that the popular classes and revolutionary forces should retrench, not retreat.

During the revolutionary situation, the *Worker's Voice* made the direct propaganda of revolution the foundation-stone of its tactics. It explained that this task required organisational forms that were not confined within legal borders. In order to be able to prepare an attack against reaction together with the masses, it set the aim of "organisation through struggle". In order to create a militant communist party in Turkey, it united

this aim with that of convening the 5th Congress which was overdue by half a century. In its relations with other fighting revolutionary organisations, the Leninist wing of the CPT gave priority to work for a joint struggle. However, it could not be expected that the CPT's Leninist section would be able to give direction to developments in the country in this short time, despite its great ideological influence.

Making clever use of its superiority under these conditions, finance-capital advanced against the revolutionary forces with terror. The society arrived at a point at which nothing but violence could resolve the deepening crisis. And at this point, the counter-revolutionary forces prevailed. At a moment which also suited the general policy of imperialism in the region, the most ferocious section of finance-capital in Turkey established its open fascist dictatorship with the 12th September coup.

A statement issued by the Bureau of the CPT Coordinating Committee on 14th September 1980, two days after the coup, declared the new regime to be a fascist regime:

"Imperialism and the monopoly bourgeoisie, using the reactionary generals, have staged a *fascist* coup aimed at putting an end to the revolutionary situation through counter-revolution and resolving in the negative the profound economic and social crisis. By means of this coup, the domestic monopoly bourgeoisie seeks to bring about a further significant stage in the process of turning Turkey into an imperialist country, and in the development of state-monopoly capitalism."

The same statement declared that, despite the deteriorating conditions, the revolutionary situation still persisted and described the path of struggle with the slogan: "people, do not abandon your weapons".

While a broad chorus from Trotskyists and mensheviks to social-democrats and, unfortunately, the world communist movement, denied the fascist character of the new regime, life



rapidly confirmed the views set out in the CPT Bureau's 14th of September statement. The fascist junta suppressed the revolutionary situation. The country entered a period of reactionary stabilisation.

This, however, was not a peaceful, reformist period. In a country which, like Turkey, lacks extensive opportunities, the efforts of finance-capital to solve the crisis from the negative could only be directed towards breaking the workers and working people. And so they were. Far from letting up, the economic crisis became deeper. The activities of the fascist junta reached such a point that, within two years, both the world communist movement and our mensheviks were compelled to recognise its fascist character.

A statement issued by the CPT Coordinating Committee two months after the coup, on 29th November 1980, set out the path of struggle against the fascist junta in the following terms:

“Our aim in the struggle against the fascist junta is not to return to 11th September 1980. We shall defend to the end all the democratic rights which the fascist junta has trampled underfoot, but we shall combine this defence with the struggle for revolution. In our country, the only way to really defend democratic rights is by smashing fascism, imperialism and collaborating monopoly capitalism with a people's revolution. Those who come by force go by force. Those who have come with tanks must go with revolution. ...”

It was not inevitable that fascism should come to Turkey. In this respect, it is interesting to note that, prior to the 7th Congress of the Comintern, there emerged the view that, since imperialism becomes ever more reactionary, capitalism would pass through the stage of fascism before collapsing, and that this stage is natural. This view was later corrected.

Fascism is *compulsory for the ruling class* in periods when the political crisis cannot be overcome and when symptoms of the

collapse of the system have appeared. Under such conditions, fascism is *inevitable* for societies in which the revolutionary forces have remained relatively *weak* and are unable to overthrow the ruling class during a revolutionary situation. Thus, if we are to speak of any compulsion in regard to fascism, it must be of a political, rather than an historical nature.

In Turkey, fascism came in order to suppress the revolutionary situation and to head off revolution. This was its *immediate aim*. Alongside this, were its longer-term (and less realisable) aims of solving the underlying problems which had created the revolutionary situation; of furthering the process of becoming imperialist; and of bringing about the centralisation of the state, social life and the economy that is demanded by the stage reached in Turkey by state-monopoly capitalism.

The 12th of September fascism in Turkey, a country which is organically tied to the imperialist system, can only be examined and understood in the context of the international situation.

However, we must be very careful in regard to this point, especially at a time when the "*plot theory*" has been spread so widely by the mensheviks and by superficial interpretations which fail to grasp the complexity of social developments.

According to the plot theory, all the evils in the capitalist world are manufactured by puppets which are under the command of the CIA and whose strings are pulled from Washington. Such is the explanation given for the 12th September fascism: by order of the Pentagon.

We are very well aware of the long list of counter-revolutions directly incited by US imperialism in many regions of the world, particularly in Latin America and the Far East. The massacre in Indonesia, events in Thailand, the Philippines, the Dominican Republic, the Somoza family in Nicaragua, Batista in Cuba, the dispatch of the Vietnamese butcher Thieu from the US, and the "banana republics" of Central America, constitute only a small part of this list. We know these at least as well as anyone else, as we know just how aggressive and unrestrained an exporter of counter-revolution US imperialism is.

Turkey is one of the countries to which imperialism devotes

its most careful attention. Due to its geographical position, it is a key country in any type of war plans against socialism. (We can see Turkey's significance for imperialism in the table below.) In regard to the aid and military training it received between 1946-1975, Turkey comes third after only South Vietnam and South Korea. Obviously, calculations are being made in regard to Turkey.

Our repudiation of the "plot theory" derives, not from any denial of such possibilities on our part, but rather from our belief that a particular phenomenon, whether it be counter-revolution or fascism, and whether or not it be planned in the US, must be examined and understood within the context of the concrete economic, social and political situation, and of the alignment of classes, in the society involved. For no plan could be successful which does not fit in with the alignment of classes and which is consequently not appropriate to the struggle between forces in that society.

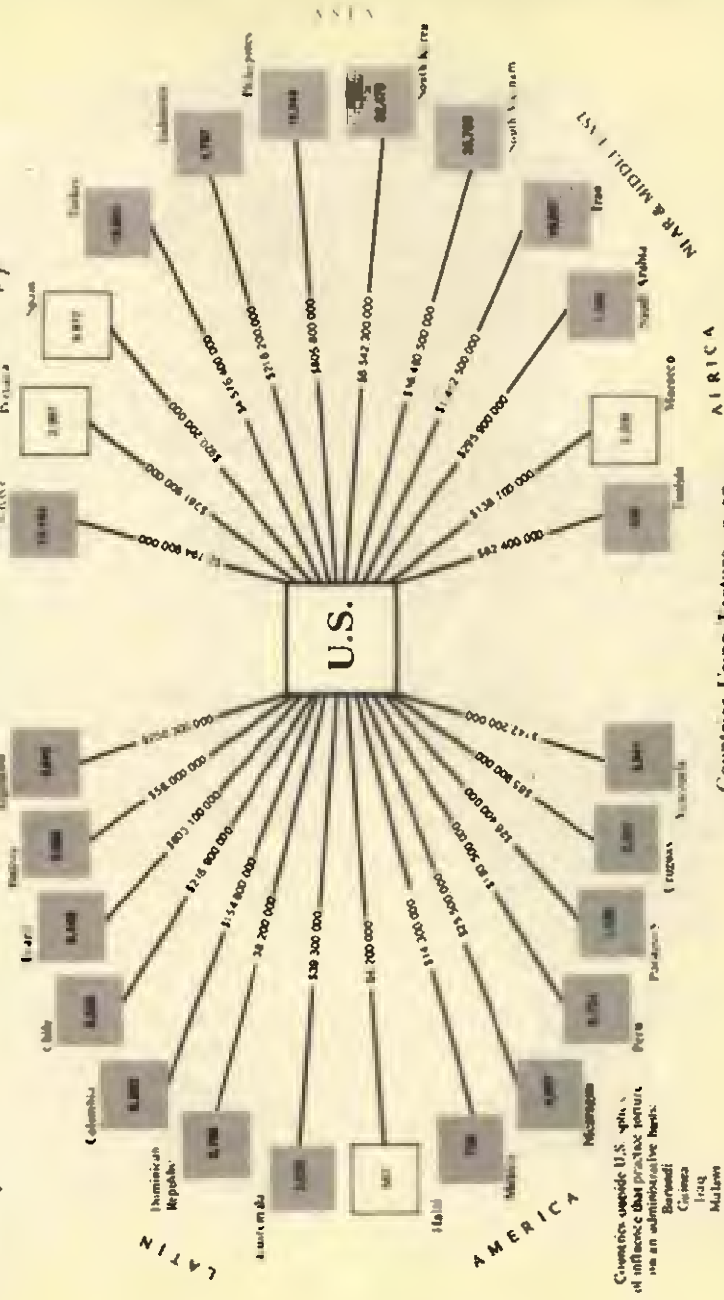
Because the plot theory disregards this basic truth of Marxism, it also disregards the role played by the "children" (reactionary classes and strata) of the particular society. It obscures the local class forces imposing darkness on the country behind talk of striking at US imperialism.

In our opinion, the broad connection between the 12th September and international relations must be sought primarily in the state of the world economy. This in itself is really a subject for lengthy investigation. Nevertheless, there is one indication which we can easily measure and follow, and that is the situation in the country. For the influence of the world economy is manifested in developments within the country.

There is a direct connection between the 12th September fascism and the economic crisis and recession that were being experienced in all imperialist countries at the time, first and foremost, in the United States. In those years, all the economic indicators in those countries: production, per capita income, investment, and social services, showed a decline. Those countries were not in a position to provide rescue aid to the ruling forces of countries like Turkey which were in even more

# The Sun and Its Planets

Source: Nevins Chamberlaine, Edward S. Sherman, *The Undergrowth of Commerce and Third World Incrimination: The Political Economy of Human Rights*, Volume I, first published in GB in 1979 by Spenceman (Nottingham)



Countries Using Torture on an Administrative Basis in the 1970s, With Their Parent-Client Affiliations

No. of U.S. trained military personnel 1954-75 (in squares)  
 Total U.S. military and 1946-1975 (on lines)  
 Gray tone = military U.S. aid or training co. police

Countries outside U.S. sphere of influence that practice torture via an administrative basis:

- Burma
- Cambodia
- Cameroon
- Iran
- Malawi
- Rhodesia
- South Africa
- Sudan
- Syria
- Uganda

serious trouble. Indeed, foreign aid was cut back in those years.

It was under these conditions that Turkey fell victim to fascism on 12th September 1980.

On that date, the bourgeois state reverted to naked dictatorship and fascism: the National Assembly handed over its powers to the National Security Council, while the president handed over his to Kenan Evren. Thus were constituted the main features of the totalitarian and monolithic structure of the fascist state.

In the period from this date until the advent of elections after the adoption of the new constitution, all power was concentrated in the executive, the bourgeois parliament and parties were closed down, and the state was rendered completely monolithic.

The members of the Supreme Military Council and the National Security Council (the chief of staff, the chiefs of the air, land and sea forces, and the commander-general of the gendarmerie), the prime minister, the national defence minister, and the commander of the navy, were all appointed from the ranks of the armed forces' full generals and admirals. General and Chief of Staff Kenan Evren became Head of State and chief of the National Security Council.

The National Security Council (NSC) appointed a constituent assembly made up of members of the NSC and the Council of State. This latter was in turn made up of 120 members proposed by each province but chosen by the NSC, and of 40 members appointed directly by the NSC.

In this period, the Chief of Staff appointed the Prime Minister who in turn appointed the Council of Ministers. The power to pass legislation was handed over to the NSC. The administrative bodies of the dissolved legislative organs were subordinated to the General Secretariat of the NSC. In this manner, the form was developed of the subordination of the legislative to the executive.

Again in this period, it was made illegal to say that any statements, decisions or laws announced by the NSC contravened the constitution.

Law number 2303 dissolved municipal councils and removed the mayors. Mayors began to be appointed by the Ministry of the Interior in the provinces and by the governors in the districts in accordance with the wishes of the NSC. The condition was stipulated that mayors must have no connection with political parties.

It is clear that the fundamental characteristic of the fascist state, monolithicism and the total supremacy of the executive, was established *absolutely* in this period. However, the corporative bodies of this fascist state could not be developed and refined as in countries where fascism continued over a long period. Two years is too short a period to achieve this.

The fundamental distinguishing feature of the fascist state is not corporativism, but monolithicism. In Italy, for example, corporativism was never completely established. Likewise for Spain and Greece. For this reason, it would be very wrong to conclude that fascism was not consolidated and a fascist state not established because fascism was unable to establish a corporative structure in Turkey.

Similarly, the fact that many sections of former laws and of the former state continued under the new state, may be presented as evidence to deny that there was a fascist state in Turkey in 1980 and thereafter. However, this would only indicate a failure to fully understand the subject of the state.

A state cannot be administered without laws and rules. The Evren junta did not even abolish the 1961 constitution in its entirety. Is there any such thing as a state without laws? It is, however, necessary to understand correctly what type of laws they are. Regardless of whether or not fascism comes, a green light still means go and a red light still means stop. Thieves are brought to trial. Without such laws, there would be chaos. Likewise, fascism preserves one aspect of the former state while doing away with another. What aspect does it do away with? That aspect which does not suit it, which does not concern *power*.

Those who cannot grasp how fascism in Turkey made use of many aspects and laws of the former state, make the mistake of confounding revolution with counter-revolution and forget that

fascism too is a state of the exploitative capitalist system. They forget that the aim of counter-revolution is to *preserve the old system*, while revolution brings an entirely new system and a state to accord with it. Will the two do the same thing? The transition from the ordinary bourgeois state to a counter-revolutionary bourgeois state is a much smoother and easier affair. In comparison with revolution, counter-revolution affects a much smaller part (but the part which concerns power) of the old state.

Between 12th September (1980-trans.) and 1982, the apparatus called the "General Secretariat of the National Security Council" superimposed by the junta on the old state, had commissions parallel to all the organs of the old state. Parallel to the Ministry of Transport was a transport commission. Parallel to the intelligence service was an intelligence commission. The same for statistics. Institutions of the old state were not abolished, but subordinated to this secretariat. In the two years after 1980, Turkey's fascist junta passed an unprecedented number of laws and took an unprecedented number of decisions. All this was done by five people. One could not conceive of a more monolithic and more absolutely centralist form of state. A fascist state existed in Turkey for two long years.

## 2. Fascism in disintegration

Fascism is not necessary, compulsory or inevitable. It is neither a stage that must be gone through nor, due to the fact that it has very serious structural weaknesses as an emergency form of state organisation, is it *a lasting, permanent state form*. When it has eliminated the immediate reason for its coming, solved the political crisis that rendered it compulsory for the ruling class, and succeeded in heading off revolution, *the way is opened for its demise*. From the point of view of the labouring classes, they would in any case overthrow fascism the moment their strength sufficed.

When fascism has succeeded in eliminating the immediate reason for its coming, this is the beginning of its end. If we leave aside for the moment the majority of society, the working people, *it is compelled to go* even from the point of view of the bourgeoisie alone. For arbitrariness, lawlessness and violence constitute a sword which cuts in every direction.

Whether or not fascism goes the moment the immediate reason for its coming has been eliminated, whether or not it is accorded time to achieve its long-term aims, and what kind of processes operate if and when it goes, are questions whose answers lie in the balance of political forces. The answers lie in



the ratio of class support obtained by fascism on the one hand and by the alternatives to it on the other. However, this does not contradict the fact that fascism is no longer politically necessary once it has achieved its immediate aim.

At one time, the Comintern ideologues defined fascism as the "organisation of decay". In recent years, the writer Poulantzas, the favourite of petty-bourgeois revolutionary intellectuals, has been criticising this definition and talking about fascism as a means of developing society.

If it is necessary to adopt a position between these two definitions, we could say as follows: In whatever country, fascism definitely first organises decay. One could not think otherwise. The revolutionary situation is a period of social chaos, anarchy, economic crisis and the destruction of material values. If fascism comes, it comes in such situations. The first thing it will do will be to organise this decay. What it will want to do next will be to advance on the basis of what it has organised. Both of these stages were experienced in the example of Germany. The decay was first organised using such methods as drafting all the unemployed and using them to lay new roads, plant trees, etc. Then the decay was halted and, later, significant development was achieved.

Again, we must not forget the peculiarities of the German experience. The chief of these peculiarities were the fact that national pride had been poisoned at the end of the First World War; the fact that the people had consequently accumulated an indisputable amount of social energy; the mass support for fascism which grew up on this basis and which gradually reached frightening proportions; the plunder of the human and raw materials of all Europe and their transfer to Germany.

Since all these peculiarities could only rarely come together, it is difficult to show another country which fascism developed.

Keeping in mind what we have said up to this point, let us ask whether or not (Turkey's — trans.) fascist junta achieved its immediate aim. *It achieved it.* It suppressed the revolutionary situation, solved the political crisis, and imposed a reactionary stabilisation.

In addition, it also achieved a part of its longer term aims: it brought about the economic and political centralisation required by state-monopoly capitalism. It was unable, however, to make any significant advances towards becoming imperialist and expanding abroad. It rapidly became clear that contemporary Turkey is not Germany.

Thus, leave aside development, the fascist junta could not solve the economic crisis. It could not eliminate the foundations of the revolutionary situation. Opposition in the society began to increase. The junta, whose base was narrow in any case, began to be severely pressed by the "compulsion to go". Mass support is not necessary for fascism to be able to seize power and establish a fascist state. But mass support is necessary if fascism is to last.

In this atmosphere, the junta also began to come under pressure in its international relations. It began to come under pressure in particular from the European bourgeoisie which holds positions different from those of the United States, the vanguard force of counter-revolution on a world scale, and which is compelled by the pressure of democratic public opinion in these countries to somewhat increase these differences. The European bourgeoisie made it clear that it preferred a certain amount of democratic procedure, even if it were a sham, to naked dictatorship.

Because of Turkey's position in the world and certain of its characteristics, gaining the acceptance and respect of Western Europe was one of the indispensable aims of the fascist junta from the very outset. At the same time, western acceptance was part of a much broader problem: that of fascism adopting a guise acceptable to society in Turkey and according with its way of life. Acceptance by Europe was part of this broader problem.

Keeping in mind the junta's hesitations, it is clear that various responses to this broader problem emerged from within the ruling elite. One section declared for the junta continuing in the manner it had come, saying that even the slightest softening would threaten the very existence of the regime and the state and revive the "enemies of the state" once again. On the other hand, the more realistic section of the ruling elite, that section which

has a better understanding of conditions in the world and in Turkey, declared that the continued existence of the regime required that the appearance of greater participation by the people be achieved in one way or the other. Developments show that the section proposing the second alternative prevailed. In this way, the drift towards disintegration began.

We must also consider as one of the factors underlying the process of disintegration the need for the army to withdraw from political life in order to preserve its own internal discipline.

It is also necessary to consider both the connection between the coming of fascism in Turkey and the state of the world capitalist economy, and the connection between the latter and the process of disintegration. There is abundant evidence of this connection, particularly as regards late-1982 and the revival of the economies of the imperialist countries starting with the US. It is clear that this situation brings with it a certain enhancement of the possibilities for countries dependent on the metropol. Otherwise, we would have to regard as chance or coincidence the process of disintegration of fascism which has been taking place in many medium-developed countries in the past two years.

As indications of this process, let us consider the following. Recently, a ceasefire was declared in the war that has been continuing for decades between guerrillas and the reactionary state in Columbia. The junta in Chile is fiercely resisting, but nevertheless things are changing and the junta is rapidly becoming isolated. The juntas in Brazil, Guatemala and Pakistan remain in power but "democracy negotiations" have begun. In Argentina and Bolivia the juntas have departed. Matters are coming to a head in the Philippines. (We will consider below the similarities between the process of disintegration of fascism as it has emerged in various countries and in Turkey, and the conclusions we can draw from this.)

In Turkey, the fascist junta adopted a "democracy" manoeuvre in order to alleviate the pressure that had begun to make itself felt in the country under the conditions we summarised briefly above, and in order to make itself more readily acceptable to the European bourgeoisie. It produced a

constitution and, following the example of Kemal's (Atatürk —trans.) fraudulent communist party, it set up three parties. It vetoed all politicians, both old and new, who displayed a tendency to pursue policies independent of the junta. In this way, it planned to conduct its "democracy" manoeuvre over a long period and to use the see-saw that would be established among these three parties to release rising tension. This manoeuvre could have worked on paper.

In fact, the junta intended that "civilian government", "transition to democracy" and the like would remain manoeuvres. Indeed, it will be remembered that the junta first floated the idea of a *single state party*. When it became clear that this would not work, the junta set up three puppet parties to achieve its aims via another route. But, due to the hatred of society for the junta and its acts, these parties then ceased to be puppet parties. Moreover, three additional parties were founded.

Even these well-known developments alone illustrate two characteristics of the fascist junta in the process of disintegration.

1) Liberalising the junta regime does not involve a tendency to move towards democracy; or, to put it another way, the regime could not go on the same way forever and the junta intends that the "transition to democracy" should be a *long and slow process* (the meaning is the same). 2) However, the junta cannot afford the risk of a new and broad conflict erupting in society and for this reason it is displaying a tactical flexibility, accepting in every new situation that emerges the solution that is most beneficial or least "harmful" to itself.

As I have said, the junta's plan did not look too bad on paper. But it didn't work. The economic crisis it was unable to solve became deeper and the situation was not relieved by the false statistics published for the benefit of the IMF. The conditions of the working masses sharply deteriorated. Thus, since the junta's mass base, which had been narrow in any case, shrank even more under these conditions, *the inauguration of the "transition to democracy" manoeuvre brought with it the beginning of the process of disintegration of fascism*. What gave birth to this

process were the *power relations* in the society in Turkey.

It would be impossible to assign a precise date for the beginning of the process of disintegration of fascism in Turkey. For it is a *process* including some leaps forward and turning points. However, to facilitate understanding, certain turning points can be distinguished. Looking back from the present, we can see that the local elections were a very important turning point. Contrary to what was planned, the general elections were also a major turning point. The founding of the political parties brought about a genuine change of scene. Just before that, the political parties law had been another important turning point. If we look back even further, Wednesday always brings Thursday. The fact that the fascist junta was compelled to introduce a constitution was a very important turning point.

*Time-wise*, the process of disintegration began with the "democracy manoeuvre", the adoption of the constitution. The constitution was not the *cause* of the disintegration, but was rather itself the *result* of the new balance of forces which inaugurated the disintegration.

Let us think back a little to the referendum on the constitution and consider what could have happened.

Fascism could have been maintained using the state of emergency powers in the constitution. This would, in fact, have meant shelving the constitution, but doing so in a manner based on certain articles in the constitution itself. The constitution would have been still-born, would have remained an irrelevant piece of paper.

What was the second alternative? The form of state organisation, the institutional structure and procedures outlined in the constitution, could have been used only for show. There could have emerged a situation that was fascist in essence, but non-fascist in appearance. For example, a situation could have emerged in which there was the freedom to establish political parties, but none other than the fascist party would be established. Anyone who attempted to establish a party, who submitted an application, would be struck down by a lorry, or be found dead in a back-street. In countries like Turkey,

maintaining democratic appearances is difficult in any case, and doing so would not mean that the constitution is being applied.

What was the third alternative? Implementation of the constitution. The fact that this is precisely what happened became clear with the establishment of political parties after May 1983. The constitution was being applied and was becoming an opening through which the contradictions in society would seep out into the open. We are looking back with hindsight at the referendum on the constitution, after having experienced the process of disintegration and witnessed this development, and are now evaluating this as the first turning point in that process. If any one of the other alternatives I have listed had been realised, the adoption of the constitution may not then have been a turning point at all.

When the first political parties were established, some non-fascist right-wing and centre cadres joined the Motherland and Populist parties in particular. Some of these cadres did so assuming that these were genuine political parties; others thinking that, whatever the case, they would be able to influence the parties after joining. More importantly, these two parties, the Motherland Party in particular, objectively began to serve as channels into which flowed the popular anger against fascism. Since it was known that other parties could and would be founded, this process of becoming channels could not advance sufficiently. Nevertheless, to the extent it did advance, it led these parties to make disturbing noises in opposition to the acts of the junta.

In the meantime, the Correct Path and Social Democratic (SODEP — trans.) parties were founded as parties which did not want a fascist regime, preferring in its place a system more restricted than the one that existed on 11th September (1980 — trans.). The participation of these parties in the local elections constituted a new stage in the process of disintegration.

SODEP, the centre party of the non-monopoly liberal bourgeoisie, adopted a very conscious tactic, not wanting to come out in opposition to the junta immediately, preferring to achieve the position it coveted in time, and with a minimum

amount of conflict. Nevertheless, however wavering, conciliatory and luke-warm the manner in which it was taken, every step in the direction of undermining the functioning of fascism, at the same time opened the way to steps that were always a bit more advanced, a bit less conciliatory, and somewhat more courageous. Examples of this are the Democratic Left Party, which has completed the preparations for its founding, the petition by 1383 intellectuals, the lawyers' statement, the rising number of publications, increasing trade union activation, student youth becoming restless, and the association activities which have begun to revive. (A more complete list of these developments can be found in Appendix I.)

Further evidence of the disintegration, and this evidence is very significant for us, is the fact that in 1983, for the first time since 1980, our party once again began to gain members in Turkey. Among these comrades who are newly joining us are students and intellectuals.

It will be remembered that after 12th September people fell away in droves from every left-wing organisation. We lost relatively few. What is important is the fact that all of those who left our party were students. Now we are once again gaining communists from among students. This is very significant since, as Lenin said, students are the most sensitive section of society; they demonstrate immediately which way the wind is blowing.

What is the junta doing in the face of these developments which began as a manoeuvre but then began to expand their scope?

Firstly, before matters get totally out of hand, it is increasing the number of arrests with the aim of so crippling the revolutionary movement that it will not be able to stand up straight for at least 5-6 years; increasing the amount of torture, the number of provocations against local cadres by the civilian police, and the number of anonymous murders. "*The opportunities are increasing but repression is not decreasing.*"

Secondly, after the National Democracy Party, which the junta had prepared as the "party of power", was knocked down to size by the people's hatred for the junta, the latter set out to

establish a viable division of labour with the Motherland Party, which had become the main party and to strengthen it in every respect. It has supported the influx of known civilian fascists into this party and into positions at every level of the state.

Whatever else then, the developments witnessed since 12th September confirmed in as short a period as two years our view:

“The fact that the fascist junta was able to come to power shows the relative weakness of the revolutionary forces vis-à-vis the counter-revolutionary forces. However, their superiority is shaky and unreliable. The economic and social realities of our country and the demands of our people will work against the fascist coup.” (Statement, *Bureau of the CPT Coordinating Committee*. 14 Sept. 1980)

## The concept of disintegration and some ‘criticisms’

Before looking more closely at the present situation in Turkey, let us first define the concepts we are using, with particular attention to the concept of disintegration and various criticisms that have arisen.

*Fascism* is a form of the bourgeois dictatorship (state). Basically, the fascist state relies on naked force. It has a monolithic — centralised structure; the executive power is supreme and unlimited. It abolishes the system of political parties and pluralist, electoral democracy. It has a corporative organisational form with every type of trade union and association (and, consequently, classes) incorporated into the state. Fascism is a form of organisation of the state which displays these characteristics, monolithicism and centralism first and foremost.

The *overthrow of fascism* means the destruction of the fascist state form at one blow — either through revolution or a coup.

The *disintegration of fascism* refers to the watering down,



changing of the fascist state form in an evolutionary manner, through a process. The step-by-step modification of its procedures and rules until it arrives at a new form of the state.

During the process of disintegration, the fascist state form begins to decompose. Its monolithic structure is undermined to this or that extent. The laws, institutions and procedures of institutions change.

This wearing down does not proceed only in the direction desired by the bourgeoisie. The revolutionary opposition of the people plays a fundamental role in the decomposition of the fascist state. According to its organised and conscious strength, this role either pushes a bourgeois section from behind or comes to determine everything.

Due to the changing balance of forces in society, disintegration is a concept which includes the compulsorily loose application of fascism's "legal" structure; its becoming invalid at times; and even some legal changes in the direction of democratisation.

"Disintegration" is a concept that we use in this way, and the content of which we define in this way. For this reason, it would be absurd to understand, or even worse, to criticise, the concept of "disintegration" with various concepts used by other writers. I would like to give two examples of such absurdity.

For example, there is Poulantzas' concept of a "transition process". It refers more or less to the same process. However, the meaning which Poulantzas gives this concept is different from the meaning we ascribe to the concept of disintegration. Aside from one or two phrases for form's sake, he gives priority in the "transition process" to the *internal contradictions of the bourgeoisie* rather than to the popular struggle. Consequently, he makes the mistake of presenting appearance as reality and of underestimating the people, the fundamental factor underlying developments.

The basic element of the concept of disintegration is, however, popular pressure which manifests itself in various forms. This is the determining factor underlying the sharpening of the bourgeoisie's internal contradictions.

A second example of an absurd attempt to criticise us by ascribing meanings to the concept of disintegration that we never mentioned is the equating of disintegration with democratisation.

*Democratisation* in the political sense means that the institutions of the state and the functions, powers and duties of individuals, as well as the relations between these state institutions and the society, are determined by the *will of the majority*.

However, let us stress one point. We must understand the appearance of the "will of the majority" under capitalism, as under any other system of exploitation, as primarily the presence and application of a *form* which allows this. The degree to which the will of the majority exists *in essence* varies greatly from country to country (just as does its form) but never reflects this will genuinely, completely or freely. This can only emerge in a society in which exploitation has been abolished. For this reason, we must understand the will of the majority as it exists in the bourgeois system within this framework.

When speaking of democratisation, one is referring *primarily* to changes in the system of laws and rules. However, it would not be correct to restrict one's conception of democratisation solely to changes in the legal structure. The spread of a different application in practice of laws which remain the same, would also be a type of democratisation. Such democratisation is a direct and immediate product of the class struggle. (For example, the inability to apply in practice articles 141 and 142 of the penal code prior to the 12th September coup.) If the new balance of class forces that gave birth to democratisation in practice continues, it is certain that this change will be reflected in the laws as well.

When we compare our definition of disintegration with the concept of democratisation, it is clear that these are not equal or identical concepts. Further, every such disintegration entails a certain democratisation, but every democratisation may not entail disintegration. (For example, in situations when democratisation is achieved via revolution or a coup, this is an

instance, not of disintegration, but of overthrow.)

The democratisation which can be entailed by the process of disintegration depends on the borders of the bourgeois state and the balance of class forces at the time. The democratisation which is brought about by the overthrow of fascism (this includes the possibility of the process of disintegration of fascism turning into its overthrow), however, goes beyond the borders of the bourgeois state and may proceed to genuine proletarian democracy. This depends on the position of the classes which come to power...

The democratisation which may be brought about by the process of disintegration depends on the borders of the bourgeois state, but there is also a strong possibility that this disintegration and democratisation may give birth to a revolutionary situation.

Fascism does not voluntarily give way to democracy. The special group interests of the fascist gang, and of the interest group created by it, prevent this. For this reason, one cannot speak of the democratisation of fascism, but only of its disintegration.

Now let us look at the criticisms.

It will be remembered that, at first, the revolutionary movement did not accept the existence of finance-capital. It did not accept the existence of state-monopoly capitalism. It still does not accept the striving to become imperialist. For years and years it did not see the revolutionary situation. Those who did finally see it still insisted that the revolutionary situation had not ended, even after the coming of fascism. One section did not accept that fascism had come at all. Now, all together, they are repudiating the process of disintegration. Can political forces which have so often and so profoundly failed in political analysis and forethought, provide leadership for the people?

If we may rephrase an Irish joke, many organisations in Turkey's revolutionary movement never know what they want but are always ready (!) to fight for it anyway.

Before passing to criticisms of our view of disintegration, I will first give a long quotation from Haydar Kutlu (General

Secretary of the "official" CPT — trans.), at the risk of boring the reader. In this section, Kutlu gives proof that the regime is fascist and that it has not disintegrated.

Here is his proof:

"Dear comrades,

"Developments since the local elections expose bourgeois lies that there has been, or is now, a transition to democracy in Turkey, as well as *claims by some so-called leftists that the fascist regime is disintegrating*. They demonstrate more clearly the dangers facing our people.

"Now, every time that the dictator Evren opens his mouth, he strikes out at 'those who want to change the Constitution', 'those who want an amnesty'. He resorts to threats.

"The collaborating oligarchy is stepping up its repression of the working class. This parasitic minority wants to eliminate even those trade union rights it reduced to nothing in the 12th September Constitution. At the same time, the chairman of the Chambers of Agriculture and of the Agricultural Engineers' association are being put on trial charged with having been 'involved in politics', i.e., having defended the interests of their members and exposing the dangers facing agriculture in our country. Artists are being arrested on the discovery that films and records they made five years ago are 'communist propaganda'. The new regulations governing lawyers are designed to bind them hand and foot. Censorship of the press continues. They are trying to impose new prison sentences on Mahmut Dikerdem, President of the Peace Association. Political prisoners are being subjected to the most inhuman treatment, both crude and refined. New death sentences are being handed down. They want to close down the Correct Way Party. New trials are being

opened of the former President of the People's Republican Party, Bülent Ecevit. Evren is hovering over the heads of all the permanent bourgeois opposition.

*"Recent developments further expose the fascist characters and features of the regime in our country. What are these features? The Americanist, militarist generals at the head of the army who are organised according to the Pentagon's view that 'the real enemy is at home', who are now stepping up their preparations for aggression abroad, and think that they can solve every question with force, hold the means to take all important political decisions in their own hands. The top leadership of the army controls political power free of any kind of supervision. The generals do not favour letting anyone else have a say in either foreign or domestic affairs.*

*"Economic policy has been left to Özal and a handful of men. Neither parliament nor the Motherland Party organisation, not even the entire government, have a clear right to comment on the measures of Özal and his gang. This circle 'pays no attention' to any of these, but works in accordance with the decrees of the centres of Wall Street, the IMF, and the collaborating holdings. This economic policy is designed to shift the entire burden of the crisis onto the shoulders of the people, tie the country more closely to imperialism, increase imperialist exploitation and plunder, and the plunders of a handful of collaborating holdings.*

*"Nationalist Action Party fascist cadres are being brought into decisive positions in the civilian state apparatus. NAP cadres who 'passed the test' of service and loyalty to US imperialism and the collaborating oligarchy throughout the 12th September period, are being brought in to an ever*

increasing extent. With these NAP cadres being put at the head of the coordination committee of the state of emergency measures which are planned to take the place of martial law, of the Committee of Appointment of State Employees, and the General Security Headquarters, both the state's civilian apparatus of repression, and its social and economic arms are being thoroughly fascistised from top to bottom.

"In many places, Motherland Party mayors are at the head of former NAP cadres or local Mafia gangs. The collaborating oligarchy is attempting to bind other sections of the bourgeoisie to itself and to the fascist regime by spreading such organisations as the Rotary, Lion and Propellor organisations, the legal arms of secret Mason organisations, province by province, district by district. Now fascist organisations are being revived and experienced NAP killers are preparing to accelerate terrorism when necessary in working people's districts with the support of the state and Motherland Party mayors, and in factories with the support of employers. The opening of MİSK indicates the intention to strengthen the fascist movement in the trade union sphere.

"After all the universities and high schools were turned into barracks by the supreme Education Council, and handed over to NAP cadres and mason leaders, now the state's other ideological and propaganda arms, Turkish Radio and Television, the General Inspectorate of the Press, the Anatolian Agency, and the organisation which replaced the History and Language Foundations, are also being handed over to NAP cadres.

"These steps are being taken sneakily while the collaborating oligarchy is trying to divert the people with chatter in the coloured press about 'Turks

preparing to rise like the sun on the horizon of civilisation', with a new and deceptive argument being cooked up every day, with Turgut Özal's idiosyncrasies, and with Don Juanism and the sex trade. The result is that a political system is being institutionalised which, with the entire military and civilian repressive apparatus, and all the ideological and cultural bodies, is in the hands of Americanist fascist cadres, a system in which fascist paramilitary organisations will operate wherever legal force does not suffice. The fact that it became readily apparent that, contrary to the hopes of the collaborating oligarchy, the Motherland Party found it impossible to secure for itself mass support, and the possibility of rising popular struggle, has accelerated this process even further. Of course, the collaborating oligarchy has not given up its aim of establishing a social base, it is persisting in its social demagoguery, but at the same time it is standing prepared to attack the people with all its force if they should take action on behalf of a demand for even the smallest right, and to spread the charge that this was inspired by 'terrorism originating abroad.'

"The lords of this enemy-of-the-people regime are the militarist generals, the collaborating holdings, and the main support of both, American imperialists.

"A most concrete example of the evil collaboration among these three enemies of humanity, peace and the people is the recently signed agreement on the F-16 combat aircraft. This agreement is one of the blackest documents of national treachery in the history of our country. Those who give every type of political and military concession to Washington in exchange for American combat aircraft, who accord the American General

Dynamics monopoly a thousand times more than the capitulations of the Ottoman period, are not compelled to take these anti-patriotic steps in order, as they claim, to protect our national security. They act only on behalf of their own selfish interests. They hope to further strengthen their positions in the Middle East using fleets of F-16's, and plan to make huge profits by participating in military production and assembly work, and military construction works to be financed by the state treasury. The generals who control TUSAŞ, Aselson, etc., are merging with Enka and other holdings which have undertaken the expansion of American and NATO bases and airfields and the construction of aircraft and other factories. They are all becoming more closely connected with American monopolies. At the same time, they are also tending to become middle-men and commissionaires for the latter's plunder in the Middle East. In this way, a group is being formed of all those who have objective interests in the realisation of American military plans, those whose strings are pulled in Washington, those who are extremely corrupt and reactionary and favour tension. This is a group which is continuously importing militarism and fascism from the US to Turkey, continuously giving to imperialism in exchange, the sweat and labour of the people and national resources, a corrupt and hollow group which worships dollars.

"Dear comrades,

"In our day, fascism means a regime which, exactly like its main support, American imperialism, refuses to accept objective realities, which resists the dictates of logic, and is ready to resort to any insanity in order to achieve its aims which run exactly counter to the course of the epoch. For this reason, it is an extremely dangerous regime, but one which is, in



general, weak and always liable to instability. It is a regime which can only remain on its feet by naked force.

"It is likely that the social base of fascism in Turkey will remain very narrow. Even if it succeeds to expand its sphere of influence from time to time using various manoeuvres, there will not be sound support for it among the people. Every step that the Evren-Özal duo takes at home or abroad will ultimately return like a boomerang, hitting themselves. Social and political contradictions will become even deeper. In conditions when its ability to manoeuvre becomes even further worn down tomorrow, the collaborating oligarchy may try getting rid of Özal and his team, changing horses. But it will be unable to find a solution to the crisis.

"This regime is weak, but it will not collapse of its own. The militarist generals and civilian fascist cadres will not hand over the power positions they have seized to the forces of democracy on their own.

"The time has come for all forces opposed to the junta to see these truths. Contrary to what is supposed by some, the collaborating oligarchy will not, cannot, give up this regime, even if it ceases to hope in the success of Özal's economic policy. No lasting change in the situation can be achieved unless the people unite and throw themselves into the struggle." (*Political Activities Report presented to the Second CC Plenum by H. Kutlu, General Secretary of the CPT CC, June 1984, pp.33-59. In Turkish. Our emphasis.*)

Let us briefly review what Kutlu says here.

**Developments since the local elections which expose the claim that fascism is disintegrating:**

1. (Those demanding amnesty are so numerous that) Evren strikes out at those who want an amnesty every time he opens his

mouth!

2. Trade union rights cannot be used, and repression of progressives and revolutionaries continues!

**Recent developments which further expose the character of the regime:**

1. The top leadership of the army controls political power free of any kind of supervision. (Not correct).

2. Economic policy has been left to the Özal group which shares in power. (Is this fascist?)

— Neither parliament nor the Motherland Party, nor even the entire government, have a right to comment on its measures. (Half true, but does it indicate fascism?)

— This cricle is under the command of Wall Street, the IMF, and local holdings. (Does this make it fascist?)

— Their economic policy is against the working people!!

3. NAP fascist cadres are being brought into decisive positions in the civilian state apparatus and the state is being fascistised from top to bottom. (The right to make appointments to the state apparatus is one of the advantages which the president and the government can easily use today. Do you think that it will not be used to stop the disintegration, to slow it down, or at least make sure it proceeds according to their own wishes? Again, the NAP cadres who are infiltrating the state through the Motherland Party must be considered within the context of the struggle going on in that party. Moreover, the fact of fascists being strong in the state is a concept quite different from the concept of a fascist state.)

4. An agreement was signed regarding F-16 combat aircraft! Military and civilian holdings have merged further. (This is not fascism but state-monopoly capitalism.)

5. Local finance-capital is becoming more closely tied to US monopolies!

6. And it is tending to become middlemen and commissionaires for US monopolies' plunder in the Middle East! (Sub-imperialism)

7. Fascists do not give up their power positions to the forces of democracy on their own! (This is correct!)

In the last paragraph of the excerpt, Kutlu defines fascism as the regime of the local monopoly bourgeoisie as a whole. His ears should be ringing, since he was accusing us of making such an evaluation.

Is what has been said convincing, does it prove that fascism is being institutionalised, consolidated?

“What is the situation of those running the country... today?” If we look at this a bit more closely, it becomes clear that one would have to be blind to deny the disintegration.

“The wasps which have nested in the Motherland Party have their eyes on the honey of the working people and have begun to bite each other. Accusing each other of abuses, Ulusu, Kafaoğlu and Özal are engaged in mutual, degrading quarrels. Evren was *compelled* to issue frequent statements that there are no problems among junta members, and to claim that none of his ‘friends’ has been involved in taking bribes, etc. While, on the other hand, Evren is telling Özal that he ‘raised MP’s salaries too much’, Özal is *asking* Evren ‘what is the salary of the chief of general staff?’. Every minister and general is ready and waiting with blackmail files containing ‘secrets’ about the others. *Could any of these take place in a country with a stable political life? Would any clashes come out into the open in this way* if these circles, each of which wants a greater share from exploitation and plunder and a greater voice in the running of the economy and the state, could resolve the problems among themselves using tested methods?

“These disgusting scenes are normal for this dictatorial regime. The economic crisis will continue and become deeper. Every step taken by the Evren-Özal duo will lead to new problems. The people do not approve the existing state of affairs and want a change. The collaborating oligarchy has been unable to find a political solution that can divert the people

for long and make them wait. Among the ranks of the big bourgeoisie today, it is even being discussed whether or not the Özal government will last to the end of this year." (*Ibid*).

Did I read these lines in the article entitled "Ordinary Fascism" in the 1st August 1984 issue of *Atılım*? If so, they are correct!

The first criticism or distortion, and the most widespread one, is to treat the matter and respond as if we had said that disintegration means the junta wants democracy.

Let us give the most classic example of this shadow boxing in the publications of organisations campaigning against us:

"It was necessary to dress the 12th September fascism in *civilian clothes*. Both international and domestic reaction have placed their hopes in this. In this way, it is possible to head off rising democratic opposition on both the national and international levels. However, the existence of such a political 'need' *does not mean that there is a plan for the fascist regime to disintegrate step-by-step since 12 September 1980 — and somewhat rapid steps — and for it to be replaced by a limited bourgeois democracy*". (A. Engin, *Türkiye Postası*, 18 May 1984. Our emphasis)

They seek and find(!) the dynamic of the disintegration of fascism in the wrong place and then give a corresponding answer. Either those at the top will bring democracy themselves or they will remain *spectators* to those who want to bring democracy.

One would have to be very confused to give such an answer to what we have said. What, indeed, did we say?

"The 'general elections' in Turkey took place under conditions where not even the slightest bourgeois opposition, apart from the three permitted parties,

was allowed, and where the popular classes were subjected to every manner of oppression, threat and blackmail. It was such a farcical election that it would be the greatest hypocrisy even to mention the word democracy! An election which had nothing to do with any 'return to democracy'.

"One might conclude that such an election could have no significance whatsoever from the point of view of society. But this would be an error made by those who confuse politics with mathematics. It would be hard to find any evidence more conclusive than these elections to show that politics is *independent* of the subjective wishes of those involved in it. With these fraudulent elections, Turkey has entered a *new era* independent of the subjective intentions and calculations of those who stage-managed them. (I include the leadership of the three parties which took part in the elections amongst the plotters.) (R. Yürükoğlu, "Turkey after the elections", *İşçinin Sesi*, 21 November 1983, no:246. Translated in *Turkey Today*, Jan.-Feb. 1984, no:67.)

The second criticism contends that "the junta issued a democracy calendar, it is going according to plan, therefore there is no disintegration."

We, however, say that Turkey is not Germany and that the world of today is not the world at that time. After the great experience which mankind has had of fascism, it has become extremely difficult today for fascism to seize power with mass support. And a fascism which has not come with mass support from below is compelled to say that it will not stay. Neither Mussolini nor Hitler said that they would ever go. Rather they said they would establish empires lasting for 1000 years. Is there a fascist dictator in the world today who came saying, "I will not return to democracy. I am democracy"? This is an important feature which must be taken into account when evaluating present-day fascism.

When it came to power, the Evren junta said that it would go in order to prevent the people from pouring out into the streets and in order to head off protests from Europe. But when would it go? Pinochet said the same. How many years have passed since then? Brazil? What dictatorship seizes power without pledging to return to democracy? Its aim is something else, however: to impose its will. It is obvious that it would not desire the present situation.

A third criticism maintains that, "If the junta had solved the crisis, fascism would have disintegrated. It could not solve it, thus fascism will remain. For this reason, the junta cannot dissolve fascism." The argument here is connected with the first mistake.

The economic crisis is not the immediate cause of fascism, but the basic factor creating its immediate cause. The immediate cause of fascism is the political crisis. It would be a great mistake to connect fascism with the economic crisis. Secondly, on the contrary, the economic crisis lies at the base of the situation which makes it necessary for fascism to disintegrate today. Thirdly, with what justification can they impute to us the idea that the junta is voluntarily dissolving fascism? Lastly, according to those making the criticism, it seems that, since the economic crisis in Turkey will continue until the revolution, *this* fascism too will last until then.

There is a fourth criticism which also confounds the concepts of disintegration and democratisation, and claims that we do not see the masses as the fundamental factor preparing the disintegration. According to this criticism, we define democratisation as a formal change undergone by fascism *under popular pressure*, when fascism has "fulfilled its task and become unnecessary" or when it has "led to the danger of an explosion". Supposedly, we define disintegration as a change made by finance-capital of its own volition *without fear of the people*. In this way, we supposedly forget the role of the masses and create illusions that "fascism disintegrates *spontaneously(1)*".

There is no need to look for the source of criticisms which we say are distortions. Let us rather look back at what we did say:

“With these elections, social life has entered *a new period*. Everything that has been done has been manoeuvres, but what forced these manoeuvres was the real anger of the people against fascism. *Fascism has entered into a process of disintegration*. What kind of a curve this disintegration will follow, whether it will include new periods of regression, and what paths it will follow, are matters difficult to discern today. They will be determined mainly by the extent and direction of the pressure that the people will bring to bear against the regime. Nevertheless, *the period of the rolling back, the disintegration, of fascism has begun.*” (*Ibid*).

It is obvious that those who take their stand on wrong positions have nothing left to do but distort! They are engaged in politics under various names but they are all drying their laundry under the same sun. All that we can say to the working class is: Recognise them for what they are and march on.

### 3. The present situation in Turkey

#### 3.1. The new state and the transitional period

The process of disintegration of fascism, which started together with the introduction of the democracy manoeuvre, advanced according to a logical flow of its own, without the violent relapses which could have been expected, and reached the point of a qualitative change.

Despite the violence which is being imposed without let-up against the revolutionary forces, since the passage from the introduction of the "democracy manoeuvre" through the general to the local elections, *the state in Turkey can no longer be considered as a totalitarian (fascist) state.*

Is there or is there not a fascist state in Turkey?

The world has seen many different forms of organisation of the fascist state. Are there or are there not variations in the application of fascism? There are grey horses, bay horses, even green horses; but there are also certain characteristics which distinguish a horse from a lion. Once the class essence of the state has been determined, this distinguishing characteristic is *monolithicism*. (There is no fascist state wherever a multi-party system exists and is functioning.) Everything falls into place when we make this distinction. In doing so, we avoid the mistake of characterising any type of reactionary or oppressive regime as



fascism. We avoid the mistake of thinking that there has been fascism in Turkey ever since the Kemal (Atatürk — trans.) period. To understand it otherwise would be to pull the concept hither and thither, to render it meaningless. Fascism is counter-revolution and it has neither borders, nor handbook, nor moderation.

In attempting to answer the question of whether or not a state is fascist, one must start from the characteristics that make a state fascist. Given these characteristics, the forms in which they are wrapped will be different under different conditions.

The fundamental characteristic of fascism derives from its function. In general, fascism is counter-revolution of the stage of imperialism; in particular it is counter-revolution of the stage of becoming imperialist. Counter-revolution becomes necessary for the bourgeoisie in situations when its power is crumbling; when it has begun to lose power. For this reason, that section of finance-capital which comes to the fore faces one task which it can never deny, as well as a second, auxiliary task helpful in accomplishing the first.

The task which this section can never deny is two-fold: to suppress the rising popular struggle and, in order to do this, to eliminate the divisions within the ruling class itself. It is obvious that in a revolutionary situation, it never could and never will be able to do this using the normal bourgeois state form of organisation. Thus, at the same time as it is applying violence against the masses, it also finds it necessary to hold the ruling class together *with force*. Consequently, fascism involves the application of violence, not only against the masses, but also against the bourgeoisie. Of course, the degree and the form of violence employed against the latter is quite different. We have experienced all of this in Turkey.

Applying violence against both the people *and* the bourgeoisie means doing away with the former structure that made it possible for the bourgeoisie to act together as the ruling class despite its internal contradictions. Consequently, in whatever form it appears, the fascist state has one distinguishing characteristic: monolithicism. By the very nature of the task it

must accomplish, fascism is compelled to concentrate both the judiciary and the legislative under the executive, under a single central authority, and to stand above normal laws.

Should bourgeois sections still enter the political arena for their own interests and insist upon acting independently, we will immediately be confronted with the following dilemma. First, monolithicism will disappear. Second, since we are referring to a handful of people when we talk about the bourgeoisie, various bourgeois sections will definitely try to advance themselves by attracting popular support. For this reason, the second, auxiliary task of fascism in establishing monolithicism is to line up the popular masses under the central authority, rather than this or that section of the bourgeoisie. This is the *corporative* form of state organisation. Thus fascism is essentially monolithic, while corporationism is a secondary characteristic. This type of organisation is necessitated by the very function of fascism.

Looking at Turkey today, we must ask what kind of fascist state it is when various bourgeois sections are able to engage in a conflict of interests within certain limits — one can discuss the fragility of those limits. For the sake of their own interests, and taking advantage of whatever mass support they have gathered, these sections are able to compete with each other. And their right to do so has been documented as a law on the basis of an agreement within the bourgeoisie. There is a fundamental difference between the previous situation in which the NSC was sole and absolute ruler, and the present situation in which the president is only one power centre among others. The criterion is whether or not the organisational form which makes a state fascist exists. In Turkey, the function of fascism has vanished; so too have the organisational form and superstructural formation required by that function.

Let us be very careful. Calling fascist a regime which is not fascist, is not a leftist deviation. On the contrary, it means to attribute striking, but non-existent talents to the bourgeoisie; it leads to admiration of the bourgeoisie. So much so, that if fascism exists in Turkey today, our bourgeois are acting in a

manner reminiscent of Namık Kemal\*. What heroes they are!

Today one must be careful not to confuse two things: a new threat of fascism and the existence of a fascist state. The fascisation of this or that institution, and filling up state positions with fascist cadres, do not mean that the state itself is fascist. In fact, this situation in itself is confirmation that the state is not fascist. The fascists are seeking and will seek new ways. The threat of fascism remains.

Today, Turkey is going through a *transitional period* which combines some very striking characteristics.

It may seem contradictory, paradoxical, but *one* of the factors determining the transitional period is the fact that the fascist clique has no intention of giving up its hold on power. Compelled to adopt and follow a "democracy calendar" by domestic and foreign pressures, the junta approached it from the beginning as a manoeuvre. But every stage of the manoeuvre brought with it its own conditions and the opportunity for pluralist procedures was created. However, we now see the junta displaying the intention to violate the constitution it was compelled to introduce.

Recent developments in the Populist Party and in the Motherland Party are very significant from the point of view of the junta's intention to retain its hold on power. Within these parties, there is a growing differentiation between civilian political forces and supporters of the junta; the latter are waging a fierce struggle for the leadership.

The junta does not want to lose control of these parties. To this we must add the operation which the NAP is conducting within the Motherland Party with the junta's support.

The fascists did not become democrats. They can see that they are losing control and that this could mean their heads. Being hanged in Chankaya is not a pleasant prospect. They will try to protect themselves. In order to slow down the process of disintegration as much as possible, to keep it under control, they

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\* Namık Kemal (1840-1888) was a prominent Young Ottoman writer and reformer.

are sending out feelers to the civilian fascist forces with whom they have been in contradiction up until the present. Of course, they will attempt to create a fascist party and use it to gain mass support. They too saw why they had arrived at this point within the space of two years.

The NAP poses a great danger during the transitional period. Despite the existence of definite conflicts of interest and ideology between the military and civilian forces, a voluntary or forced alliance between them is possible in the face of the constantly growing tendency towards democratisation in the society. Whatever the case, the NAP poses a great danger. (Instead of reassuring themselves by applying "violence" against each other, and even against their own members, the revolutionary organisations would do better to think out and develop methods of struggle that would serve as examples to the people in this sphere.)

The fact that the President and the new chiefs of the army are for the most part in control during the transitional period constitutes a danger for all the peoples in the region. Let us illustrate this for the Middle East.

After Evren's February visit to Riyadh, Turkey entered into much closer relations with the Arab world. At the beginning of July, it quietly sent a number of F-5A and F104S combat aircraft, together with 50 pilots, to Saudi Arabia. These were stationed at the Hamish Musayd airfield in North Yemen.

In addition, a parachute unit and a group of officers have gone to Hamish Musayd to provide commando training for the Saudi army.

According to the agreement that was signed between Saudi Arabia and Turkey in March 1984, in an emergency, Turkey will send aircraft and three parachute units to Saudi Arabia to protect oil wells and other key installations. In return, it will receive almost 1.6 billion dollars in petrol and money.

Because a large amount of goods is passing through its ports to Iran, Turkey is avoiding the appearance of taking sides in the Gulf War. However, the agreement with Saudi Arabia also covered Iraq. Turkish planes are patrolling the oil pipeline from

Kirkuk to Turkey and, in addition, commando units and helicopters stand ready to respond at any moment to any attack on the pipeline by Khomeini supporters.

According to one report, some Turkish commando units are already based in North Iraq.

The positioning on Arab territory of troops from Turkey, a member of NATO, is an extremely dangerous situation. It is clear that they will constitute a part of the west's Rapid Deployment Forces in any crisis in the Middle East.

Depending on time and place, these moves by Turkey pose serious threats to Iran, Iraq, Syria, North Yemen, the Kurdish movement and the Soviet Union.

The fact that the fascist clique still plays the dominant role in real life is also extremely dangerous for our people. When seeking to take advantage of expanding legal opportunities, we must not for a moment forget this or act as if there were a normal situation.

A *second* factor determining the transitional period, and one which gives the period its main character, is the emergence of partners sharing power with the junta, regardless of the wishes of the junta, and the continuous expansion of the sphere of these civilian political forces. The regime must now be considered not as a *totalitarian* (fascist) regime, but as an *authoritarian*, anti-democratic, politically reactionary, aggressive and nationalist regime.

The powers accorded to Evren by this constitution are very similar to those set out in the De Gaulle constitution. The army's participation in the state and government has taken a new form, been pushed into more indirect paths. At the same time, some features which form the *basis of a totalitarian state* have either disappeared or could not be realised, despite all the junta's efforts. For example, a single political party parallel to the state administration, a single state trade union, mass mobilisation, an executive above all supervision, these simply do not exist.

A *third* factor determining the transitional period is the weakening of the unity among the views, forces and institutions which in one sense constitute the mortar in the junta's ability to

perpetuate itself ever since it first came to power. This situation has facilitated the splintering of the ruling bloc.

The mosque is divided. One section of the religious elite in Turkey which is traditionally closely connected with the Arab world has been integrated into the junta regime. Another section appears to be conducting negotiations and making agreements within the ruling party. However, a large section is opposed to the junta despite the present regime's devotion of much energy to expansion into Saudi Arabia and Iraq. All this is one aspect of the struggle taking place within the Motherland Party.

A *fourth* factor determining the transitional period is the failure of the procedures and institutions created by the fascist junta to ensure and preserve popular support for the regime, and to stem the contradictions and conflicts which are beginning to raise their head again.

One of the most significant indications of the failure of these institutions and procedures, and the *fifth* feature determining the transitional period, is the huge task being shouldered by the bourgeois press, the fact that it is, in a sense, performing the task of parliament. This is so regardless of how wrong and backward this press has been during the political ice age inaugurated with the junta's coming to power, no matter even how reactionary a section of that press has been. (I will discuss below what we must do in response to this.)

The Evren junta savagely attacked and completely abolished all the political procedures that had been created in our country by popular struggle. However, it did not touch the traditions of state administration or, perhaps more correctly, the aims of state administration. The absorption of middle class talents into the system has been one of the important factors underlying the Evren junta's ability to maintain itself in power. Any ambitious or talented person who wanted to advance in life was left with no opportunity outside the system.

However, all the developments have eliminated this feature which the junta had established right at the beginning and which provided great support for the maintenance of the regime. How advantageous is it now for people who want to advance to tie

their fates to this regime? This question is being posed with greater force with every passing day. And increasingly broader sections of the bourgeoisie are sensing that this period is a transitional one and are reviewing their alternatives for the coming years.

When we look at our country today, we see that the transitional regime is face to face, besides the working class first and foremost, and right behind it the students, with serious problems in three more areas. Firstly, the great majority of the people living in Turkish Kurdistan is practising at least a passive enmity against the regime. Secondly, the religious elite in Turkey, from which the junta had in its first year derived support to a certain extent, has become divided. Thirdly, the entire press, from the whitest to the pinkest, is opposed to the junta.

There is no point in discussing whether or not it would be necessary or useful since its development is out of our hands, nevertheless, it would not be wrong to say this: Kurdish nationalism will rise violently in the coming period, as if it will try to take revenge for the years lived after 1980. This phenomenon may play a great role in the democratisation of Turkey, as well as functioning as a lever for a shift back to the totalitarian, naked dictatorship again.

The survival of the transitional regime under the conditions we have summarised briefly above, depends on such factors as the following: the fact that the people are in a certain apolitical mood and are not yet completely free of the intimidation of the period of fascism; those pressure groups which have been integrated into the regime are still satisfied to this or that extent; the revolutionary left which opposes the regime is systematically kept out of the political arena; and it has not yet shown the ability to break into this arena.

It can be seen that *what makes the present period a transitional period* is the social and political situation in Turkey. All the characteristics of the period combine to create the following situation: The institutional forms and political organisation of the state are no longer fascist, but the fascist clique remains a significant *de facto* power centre by virtue of its

relations with the new army chiefs and due to the cadres it has installed in important positions in the state. In addition, it must be remembered that the opposition which gained 40% of the vote at the time of the elections (it is certain that the proportion has risen since then) remains outside parliament.

Another very important factor which makes the period a *transitional* one is the fact that the legal system and procedures in the country today stand in *irreconcilable* contradiction to the level of freedom and democracy which the society rightfully considers inviolable.

In a society in which the economic situation is such as everyone knows it to be in Turkey and, most importantly, where there is a longing for a better life, even the slightest liberalisation has the same result as ordering a drink for an alcoholic. For the people of Turkey, this period is not a stage which will continue for very long. The disintegration is continuing. However, this is now the process of disintegration of an authoritarian, reactionary regime, not a fascist one.

\* \* \*

In concluding this section, and bearing in mind the difficulty and relativity involved in assigning definite dates to processes advancing in an evolutionary manner, we can make the following determination: the fascism which began with the 12th September 1980 coup continued unadulterated until the adoption of the constitution. It entered into a process of disintegration with the onset of the democracy manoeuvre. From this date until the 25th March 1984 local elections, the fascist state turned step-by-step into a reactionary, repressive and anti-democratic state. The disintegration which has continued since the local elections is the disintegration of this state. Since fascism began to disintegrate, Turkey has been passing through a transitional period the duration of which is unclear. (It is clear, however that it will not last long.)



### 3.2. The 1982 constitution and the political system

A constitution is the fundamental document setting out the form of existence of a state. For this reason, it is generally of great importance and significance. First and foremost, it demonstrates the alignment of class forces, the balance of forces existing in the society at the time of its adoption. For it is the balance of class forces in the society which determines the existence and application of the legal structure.

At the same time, for exactly the same reason, every legal structure will be changed in this or that respect, pulled in this or that direction, or have various of its article ignored, depending on the changing balance of forces in the society. For legal structures are static while social structures are dynamic.

From the point of view of our topic, it would be a legalist (judicial) approach if we were to come to a conclusion about the present form of the state in Turkey solely by looking at the constitution. Obviously, constitutions do not fully or accurately reflect the functioning of the state and the relations between the state and society. There are always political power centres and procedures existing which are not set out in the constitution. However, it would also be extremely incorrect to forget that the constitution is one of the basic means by which the regime in given country can be interpreted.

In this section, we will try to answer four questions.

1. What kind of state is presaged in the 1982 constitution?
2. Could fascism be implemented through the 1982 constitution?
3. Is there such a thing as a constitution of fascism?
4. Could a broad bourgeois democracy be implemented through the 1982 constitution?

The first question is one which inevitably confronts us when attempting to trace the process of disintegration of fascism, going back step by step, taking into account the events society has experienced in recent years. The local elections were an important turning point. The establishment of political parties

was a most important turning point. Going one step further back, the emergence of the constitution was an important turning point. It is when we come to this point that we ask: *what kind of state is presaged in the 1982 constitution?* It is at once extremely legitimate and extremely necessary to ask this question.

Then let us ask: is the 1982 constitution a fascist document? A clear question demands a clear answer.

No, the 1982 constitution *is not a fascist document*. It does not presage a fascist state.

Calling a "constitution" fascist means that that constitution organises the state in a fascist manner. The 1982 constitution is rather an anti-democratic, repressive and reactionary constitution which elevates the executive.

Some object that the constitution provides for decrees having the force of law. In their efforts to explain the situation in which Turkey finds itself today, various left-wing movements are using concepts such as the "institutionalisation of fascism," the "systematisation of fascism," the "consolidation of fascism", and "parliamentary fascism". It is for themselves to judge, but if they would also explain the characteristics of a fascist state, they would be helping their own members, if nothing else. For some reason, they seem unable to do this. Thus all their formulations turn out to be hollow. For our part, let it suffice to say that, as time progresses in Turkey, inconsistent analyses will increasingly be weighed down by their internal contradictions, and eventually become untenable.

Now, before looking at the 1982 constitution and the political system, let us first consider some background information that may be helpful in this respect.

For example, Great Britain has no written constitution. Nevertheless, even this shows that the executive is, in essence, in the last analysis, dependent solely on the balance of forces in the country.

The highest central powers are concentrated in the hands of the sovereign. No draft bill can become law without the queen's approval. Consequently, the queen is the supreme authority. She

is at one and the same time, both the supreme judicial organ and the supreme executive organ. The queen has the power of veto over legislation passed in both houses of parliament.

As the supreme executive power, the queen stands at the head of the army, the navy and the airforce and also, something rare in the present-day world, of the church. She has the right to intervene in any court case or trial in the country. She can appoint ministers, dissolve parliament, call new elections, pass laws, and remove the prime minister.

Alongside the queen, the supreme judicial organ is the House of Lords, which includes peers created by the crown and leaders of the church. Every lord has the right to enter and observe any hearing in the courts any time he wants. The Supreme Court is subordinate to the highest court of all, the House of Lords. The judges of high courts and all other courts are appointed by the Prime Minister with the queen's approval.

The powers of the queen are even broader in "states of emergency". At such times, she has the authority to take any measure she deems suitable, including martial law. She can call in the police or, if she considers it necessary, the army to put down any "domestic conflict" or uprising.

The queen does not use the majority of the powers we have cited above. For example, the sovereign last refused assent to bills passed by the two houses of parliament in the year 1707; dismissed the prime minister for the last time in 1834; and, despite the law, appointed a prime minister from the minority rather than the majority party only in 1923 and 1933. Nevertheless, the queen still has these rights. Why the need was felt for such a degree of centralisation is neatly explained by S.E. Finer in discussing the British constitution: "Such a discretionary power continues to reside in the British Crown but... would be exercisable — if at all — only in bizarre, one might almost say revolutionary, circumstances." (S.E. Finer, *Five Constitutions*, Penguin Books, 1979, p.49)

The 1958 French constitution, known as the "De Gaulle constitution", also gives extraordinary powers to the president. The presidential and parliamentary elections are held separately

and the president is elected by popular vote for a seven-year term.

The president has the power to select and appoint the prime minister, appoint ministers, preside over the council of ministers, dissolve the assembly, and appoint civilian and military state officials.

As the chief of the armed forces, the president also presides over the national security council. He has the power to take any "measure" in states of emergency.

In addition, the president's power to interfere in parliament was expanded. He was given the power to amend laws that he considers contrary to the presidency or the constitution by using his right of amendment. The government has the power to issue decrees having the force of law in states of emergency.

While the executive was so strengthened in the 1958 French constitution, the legislative powers of parliament were reduced. The government can adopt any legislation it considers a matter of security, without submitting it to a vote. The matters which can be dealt with by legislation were restricted, and parliament's authority to take decisions on financial matters reduced.

Before looking at Turkey's 1982 constitution, let us, without going too far back, look briefly at the 1961 constitution and the changes made in it in 1961.

The 1961 constitution vested legislative, executive and judicial authority in separate organs. However, the power of the executive was hardly reduced at all.

The legislative organ (the Grand National Assembly) is bicameral, including the National Assembly and the Senate of the Republic.

The authority to pass legislation is vested in parliament and its adoption goes through four stages. First, the draft legislation is prepared in the National Assembly. From there it then goes to the Senate. If the President approves it, it is published. If he does not, it is sent back. If the legislation again comes back to the President, he has the right to initiate a revocation hearing in the Constitutional Court.

In the 1961 Constitution, the president *is not responsible* to the parliament which elected him.

The President's duties and responsibilities include the following: to select members of the Senate; convene extraordinary sessions of the National Assembly; ratify and promulgate international treaties; select and appoint the prime minister; appoint ministers chosen by the prime minister and preside over the Council of Ministers when he considers it necessary; to represent the office of the commander-in-chief and appoint all generals and admirals, including the chief of staff and armed forces' commanders; to preside over the National Security Council; initiate hearings in the Constitutional Court on laws and parliamentary standing orders on the claim that they contravene the constitution; grant individual amnesties and select members of the supreme military courts.

Aside from all these powers, the President cannot be held accountable for *any action* he undertakes while in office.

The 1961 constitution dealt with the relation between military authority and civilian government within the context of the definition of "martial law regime". This definition is a manifestation at a higher level of the authority of the executive *vis-à-vis* the legislative organ. The duties of appointing martial law commanders, setting up organisations to perform martial law tasks, establishing military courts and appointing their judges and prosecutors, were all vested directly in the executive.

The 1961 constitution established the National Security Council as a constitutional organ within the civilian government. The council is made up of civilian and military members. The military members are four definite and unchanging persons: the chief of staff and the commanders of the land, sea and air forces. In contrast to this, the number of civilian members varies, and they are even completely left out in "emergency" situations. The civilian members are the Head of State, the Prime Minister and his deputies, the Ministers of National Defence, Internal Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Finance, Transportation and Labour, as well as other ministers called by the Prime Minister in connection with the matter at hand.

The National Security Council performs the role of a mechanism which unites the power of the army and that of the

executive within parliament.

The following conclusion can easily be derived from what has been said here: the 1961 constitution was not democratic in the true sense of the word.

By 1971, after the first years of the revolutionary situation, even this did not suffice and articles were added to the constitution which expanded the powers of the executive organ and increased the centralisation of the state. Some of the changes were the following:

- The Constitutional Court was empowered to supervise the form of changes to the constitution, but not their content (article 147 amended by law no: 1488).

- Restrictions on the right to “establish associations” brought by the law on associations (no:1630)

- The “martial law law” (no:1402)

- Article 46 of the 1961 constitution setting out trade union freedoms was changed and narrowed down by law no:1488.

- State Security Courts were set up as a form of emergency court. (Later, their functioning was prevented by popular struggle.)

- Law no: 1488 renewed the power of the Council of Ministers to issue *decrees having the force of law*. This article was already included in the 1961 constitution but with the stipulation that the Constitutional Court would rule on “the accordance of these decrees with the constitution.”

While the 1961 constitution had declared that “no action or function of the government can under any circumstances fall outside the supervision of the judicial authorities”, in 1971 this was amended to read: “every type of government function or action may be challenged through the courts.” Moreover, a second amendment to the article further restricted judicial supervision: “The power of the judiciary cannot be employed in a manner which restricts the fulfilment of the duties of the executive in accordance with the forms and principles set out by law.”

- Another amendment which restricted judicial supervision was that made to article 147 of the constitution. Thus, while

the 1961 constitution stated that the "Constitutional Court shall review the constitutionality of laws, the internal regulations of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, and the conformity of the Constitutional amendments", the 1971 amendment read: the "Constitutional Court shall review the conformity of laws, the internal regulations of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, and of the Constitutional amendments, with the procedures set out in the constitution."

It can be seen that, from the 1960's to 1982, the law was centralised step by step. The powers of parliament were reduced, those of the executive expanded.

When we come to the 1982 constitution, the organisation of the bourgeois state, as far as it concerns our topic, is as follows:

The supreme executive organ is the president who is elected for a term of seven years from among the members of the National Assembly. A candidate for president from outside the Assembly must be nominated by one-fifth of the plenary session of the Assembly. Among the most important of the president's powers are the following:

*Powers related to legislation:* to return to the Assembly laws enacted by it; to initiate a revocation hearing in the Constitutional Court when necessary; to decide on repeat elections. Here there is no difference with the 1961 constitution. However, temporary article 9 strengthened the powers of the president in regard to legislation for a period of six years as follows:

"TEMPORARY ARTICLE 9 — For a period of six years following the filling of the office of chairman of the Turkish Grand National Assembly that will be convened as a result of the first general elections, the President may return Constitutional changes to the Assembly. In this case, in order for the Assembly to re-enact the law and sent it back to the President, there must be a three-quarters majority of a plenary session of the Assembly."

*Powers related to the executive:* to appoint the prime minister, appoint ministers chosen by the prime minister and, on the proposal of the prime minister, to remove them from their duties; to act as commander-in-chief of the armed forces in the name of the Assembly, and to decide on the use of the armed forces in emergency situations when the Assembly is not in session; to appoint the Chief of Staff, convene and preside over meetings of the National Security Council; to declare martial law or states of emergency on the decision of the council of ministers meeting under his chairmanship; to issue decrees having the force of law, again on the decision of the council of ministers meeting under his chairmanship; to appoint the members and the president of the State Control Council and to examine, investigate and supervise it; to appoint members of the Supreme Educational Council as well as university rectors.

*Powers related to the judiciary:* to appoint members of the Constitutional Court, one fourth of the members of the Council of State, the Chief Public Prosecutors, members of the Military Court of Cassation, and members of the "Supreme Council of Judges and Public Prosecutors" from among candidates proposed by the General Councils of the Council of State and the Court of Cassation.

All the actions which the president will unilaterally perform when exercising these powers fall outside the scope of judicial supervision.

The Council of Ministers is made up of ministers chosen by the prime minister and appointed by the president. As head of the Council of Ministers, the Prime Minister supervises the implementation of the general policies of the government. The Council of Ministers is collectively responsible for the implementation of these policies. The Prime Minister is additionally responsible for ensuring that the ministers perform their tasks in accordance with the constitution and the laws, and for taking corrective measures if they do not. It can be seen then that the 1982 constitution has increased the role of the prime minister in relation to the council of ministers.

The legislative organ is the assembly of 400 members of



parliament elected by general vote. The Turkish Grand National Assembly has the power and duty to pass, change and revoke legislation; supervise ministers and the council of ministers; to give the council of ministers the authority to issue decrees having the force of law in regard to certain matters; to adopt the budget, print money, declare war, decide on the use of the armed forces; call for a vote on international agreements, etc.

The 1982 constitution declares that "every type of government action or function may be challenged through the courts." The legislative and executive organs, together with the administration, are bound to comply with decisions of the judicial organs. They cannot change court decisions or delay their execution.

The 1982 constitution re-establishes the State Security Courts. If martial law is declared in a region where there is a State Security Court, that court becomes the martial law court for that region.

The duties and powers of the Constitutional Court have been restricted. As in 1971, the Constitutional Court reviews the laws, decrees having the force of law and the internal regulations of the National Assembly, as well as amendments to the Constitution only from the point of view of procedure. However, in states of emergency, martial law or war, the constitutionality of decrees having the force of law, whether from the point of view of procedure or substance, cannot be taken up by the Constitutional Court.

Once the National Assembly had been reconstituted, the National Security Council turned into the Presidential Council, although without the full powers of the former. The legal existence of this council is to ~~cease~~ last six years hence.

The National Security Council cannot be held accountable either financially or legally for its rule from the time the junta seized power until the elections. It cannot be claimed that any laws or decrees issued in this period, or any decisions or actions taken in accordance with law no:2324 on the constitutional order contravene the constitution.

## Political parties after 1982

On 22nd November 1983 a new "Political Parties Law" was adopted and general elections were held on 6 November 1983. The new political parties law permitted the establishment of parties which did not pursue class aims, etc. However, the 12 temporary articles added to the law actually prevented any party not wanted by the junta from participating in the *first* general elections.

For example, the 4th temporary article of the law stated:

"The National Security Council has the authority to investigate the founders of a party identified in the founding statement submitted to the Ministry of the Interior for the purpose of establishing a political party."

As a result of the National Security Council's power of veto, many political parties were unable to show 30 founders (15 in the previous law) by the date announced by the Supreme Election Commission. Thus, in practice, it was the National Security Council which decided which parties were able to participate in the first general elections.

As if this did not suffice, the third temporary article of the Law on the Election of Members of Parliament gave the National Security Council the power of veto over parliamentary candidates as well. Thus, not only did the National Security Council determine which parties could participate in the first general elections, it also decided on the parliamentary candidates.

All of this testifies to the "emergency" character of the first general elections. Now let us look at some articles which concern future elections and, consequently, also the probable course by which political parties life will develop.

Article 22 of the new Political Parties Law states:

"Political parties must have at least 20 MP's in order

to establish a parliamentary group."

Previously, the number of MP's required was half this. Article 105 states:

"ARTICLE 105 — A written application by the Chief Prosecutor of the Republic for the closure of a political party which did not participate in the general elections for the Turkish Grand National Assembly for two uninterrupted periods from the time of its foundation can be submitted within a month of the time of the second general elections. If a decision to close the political party has not been taken within three months of the submission of this written application, that political party can be closed by decision of the Constitutional Court at a hearing called for by the Chief Prosecutor of the Republic."

This article becomes even more significant when taken together with article 36 concerning participation in the elections. Article 36 reads as follows:

"ARTICLE 36 — To be eligible to participate in elections, political parties must be operating in at least half of the provinces and have held a general congress, or have a group in the Turkish Grand National Assembly.

"Operating in a province requires that a party be operating in at least one-third of the districts of that province, including the capital district."

In this way, any party which is unable to participate in two consecutive elections because of inability to establish organisations in half the provinces, is closed.

Moreover, it is not enough to organise in half the provinces. Articles 12 and 13 of the Law on the Election of MP's taken together mean that political parties organised in at least half the

provinces must, in order to participate in elections, put up twice as many candidates as the number of MP's that will be elected in every electoral district in which they run. Political parties which cannot put up candidates in this way in at least half of the provinces lose the right to participate in elections in *all* electoral districts.

It can be seen that the new laws deprive small parties of the right to exist and develop. They aim for a small number of strong bourgeois parties.

### General Conclusion

Throughout the world it can be seen that the bureaucratic and centralist structure of the bourgeois state is continuously becoming even more centralised in a manner that corresponds to both economic progress and the deepening of the crisis of capitalism as well as the ever more reactionary character of imperialism. This is a tendency that can be seen throughout the world. In imperialist-capitalist countries with powerful economies and where the crises are less serious, this centralisation can, at least for the moment, proceed alongside bourgeois democracy. In countries like Turkey, however, where the economic crises that emerged on that basis are profound, even bourgeois democracy is subordinated to the demand for centralisation.

In Turkey, finance-capital has very little room for economic and political manoeuvring. Its expansion depends on its becoming imperialist. This, however, is a rather remote possibility. On the other hand, capital is becoming concentrated and centralised and state-monopoly capitalism is expanding rapidly. The crisis in society is reflected in the state as well. The country has been hit by a many-sided crisis. The bourgeoisie often falls into the position of being unable to rule. The long period of coalition governments, minority governments and failure to elect a president was an indication of this. The situation made it necessary to strengthen the bureaucratic and centralist

character of the bourgeois state to an extent much greater than that seen in countries better off than Turkey. Efforts in this direction have been continuing since 1961.

Even the liberal 1961 constitution was sacrificed to the level of centralisation demanded by capitalism in Turkey. The constitutional changes made in 1971 and the 1982 constitution confirm this.

Today, Turkey has reached such a stage of development that free political life in the *genuine* sense of the term has become the question of *winning democracy through revolution*.

On the other hand, contrary to the very widespread "belief" in the revolutionary movement, the 1982 constitution is not a fascist constitution. It is an authoritarian and reactionary constitution supported by a series of anti-democratic laws, including in particular temporary articles and various anti-democratic and reactionary elements, and which has increased the powers of the president and the prime minister in regard to the law. However, these do not render a state organisation fascist.

However reactionary the 1982 constitution may be, it is a document which creates a state in which powers are mutually restricted. In order to prove the existence of fascism in the country today, many people are pointing to the constitution's temporary articles. It is true that the temporary articles, especially article 9, increase the power of the executive for a period of six years. Nevertheless, according to the same article, the president is required to accept a law which he has previously vetoed if that law is sent back to him by a three-quarters majority of parliament. Thus, the executive does not have absolute power.

Naturally, we cannot consider the 1982 constitution as in any way on, or ever near, the same level as the British and French constitutions. Unlike the latter, the 1982 constitution is one which followed a counter-revolution, which was issued in a society in great turmoil. It is repressive and anti-democratic. It provides numerous possibilities for attacks on individual rights and freedoms, undermines the independence of the judiciary, and constitutes an attack on the legislative. The ban on

associations and trade unions becoming involved in politics is a vain reactionary effort that will not work in capitalist society. All of these are methods designed to exclude the people from politics. They are all reactionary and anti-democratic.

The 1982 constitution is a *hybrid* constitution which combines various features of the parliamentary and presidential systems together with ruling class worries and value judgements in a period of counter-revolution.

Every constitution proposes institutions and procedures for normal periods. These proposals answer the question, "what does the constitution envisage?" At the same time, *every* constitution also includes some "state of emergency" procedures for emergency periods. In our day, the tendency to insert emergency centralist procedures into the procedures governing normal periods is gaining strength in all capitalist countries. Because of the conditions in the country, the 1982 constitution is one which is far ahead in precisely this respect. Characteristics such as universal suffrage, the party system, the accountability of governments to an elected parliament, and the separation of powers, on the other hand, belong to normal bourgeois democracy.

At the same time, individual freedoms, political organisation, and the political rights of individuals have all been severely limited, and there are no definite and reliable guarantees for what remains. Moreover, emergency state mechanisms like the State Security Courts are also included in the Constitution.

The 1982 constitution reflects the transitional (interim) character of the transitional period.

Let us now ask a second question: *could fascism be implemented through the 1982 constitution?*

It could be implemented in various ways. For example, according to the constitution, in emergency situations such as war or civil war, or in grave situations in which the security and existence of the state are threatened, a meeting of the council of ministers, presided over by the president, can declare a state of emergency or martial law and can govern the state during this

time by way of decrees having the force of law. A fascist regime could be established taking advantage of this situation and by making it continuous.

Moreover, some reactionary "holes" in the constitution's permanent articles could be used as continuous measures determining everything. For example, the legislative could be subordinated to the executive by making general use of the power to issue decrees having the force of law. For this to be possible, of course, parliament would have to become an organ meeting all the demands of the fascists, either through a fascist party gaining a parliamentary majority, or by parliament bowing to threats from outside.

The state or organisational forms and procedures set out in the constitution could even be used purely for show. For example, the freedom to establish parties exists, but various methods prevent it from being used.

Yes, the 1982 constitution could be used in such ways to establish fascism, as has happened in many countries. In that case, we would say that, "adhering to the letter of the law", they had abolished the state envisaged in the constitution and established a fascist state. The constitution itself would still not be fascist. It would have suffered the same fate as the Weimar constitution.

The 1982 constitution sets out a non-fascist form of organisation of the state: parliament, executive, judiciary, elections by universal suffrage, the party system, etc. At the same time, it also stipulates that the constitution can be pushed aside in states of emergency. If fascism is implemented on the basis of this stipulation, it would still be adhering to the constitution in form, since it would be acting on the basis of one article in the constitution while actually pushing aside the constitution as a whole, together with all the power centres stipulated in it. Failure to see this truth would be a fine gift to fascism delivered by our own hand. We would have to call a fascist regime a "constitutional" regime simply because this article had been included in the constitution.

A third question: *can there be a constitution of fascism?* Let

us not start and end by simply saying there have been no historical examples, but rather take a broader view.

In the sense that every state functions within the framework of some fundamental rules, every state has a constitution. Given this meaning of the word, the only conceivable alternative to a constitution is chaos. One could call these rules a constitution, even if the only rule were that the word of the dictator is law. However, the concept would lose all meaning if used in this way.

The idea that political society should be conducted according to laws that everyone will obey and that the supreme law is in natural law has been fundamental in the political theory and law of Western civilisation since the Greek city states of antiquity. From Aristotle to Cicero, from Thomas Aquinas to John Locke, Thomas Hobbes and Rousseau, the founders of the modern understanding of constitutionality, there has been the idea that leaders lead by the will of the led and that the rights of individuals are inviolable.

Within this sole context that has any meaning, the concept of constitution, of "*constitutional government*", refers to much more than a government that has rules, no matter what kind of rules they may be. The concept of constitutional government means that government is democratic, clearly defined and law-abiding.

The types of constitution which are included in the concept of constitutionality can be divided into two categories: *normative* constitutions (which are definitely applied in social life) and *nominal* constitutions (constitutions which do not reflect the political realities of the state; in our opinion, the Soviet constitution falls into this category).

Wherever the constitution is nominal, the document which outlines the principles according to which power is really exercised is found elsewhere. In the Soviet example, it is found in the party rules.

Consequently, every state has a constitution. However, in some of these the constitution is one which accords with the historical and social meaning of constitutionality; in others, the real constitution is the summary of hidden but real rules set out



some place other than in the invalid piece of paper called the "constitution".

Speaking of the genuinely existing state system rather than the constitution, we often see the following type of situation: The constitution envisages a parliamentary or presidential system in the organisation of the state, but in reality there is a dictatorship. This is the case in many countries of Latin America and Africa.

In the light of what has been said up to this point, one thing becomes very clear: having a constitution is not enough to make a regime a "constitutional regime". To be a *constitutional government* a government must display the following characteristics:

a. *Clear definition of procedures*: The absence of arbitrary changes in fundamental procedures, what is legal today not being counted illegal tomorrow; the rules and procedures to which political life will adhere being clearly defined so that everyone can know.

b. *The principle of accountability*: The regular rendering of account by leaders to those whom they lead. This can take place in various ways: elections, recall, referendum, etc. The most significant indicator is dependence on popular vote.

c. *The principle of representativeness*: Leaders behaving as the representatives of those who elected them.

d. *The principle of separation of powers*: A clearly defined division of authority among the legislative, the executive and the judicial.

e. *The principle of openness and publicity*: Openness in state and government affairs.

A close look at these principles reveals that constitutionality and democracy are not the same thing but between them there are indissoluble historical and practical ties. In our day, constitutionality is an indispensable prerequisite of democracy. Historically, it was a precursor of democracy.

When, in this context, we ask whether or not there is a constitution of fascism, the answer is that fascism has no constitution; there can be no such thing as "*constitutional fascism*." Fascism is counter-revolution. A constitution, on the

other hand, is a document which limits the executive to this or that extent, however much it may exalt it.

When we consider the topic of the constitution in the context of the entire evolution of the bourgeoisie and of its historical tendency to become ever more reactionary, the discussion of the constitution is an unnecessary one. However, a consideration of the constitution within this context will be very significant in understanding what must be discussed and what we must do starting from the moment we say fascism has gone.

We can really take two views of the constitution. We can look at it as a mere piece of paper, as a fraud, or we can regard it as the form taken by an historical compromise. The question, "why such a constitution?", also confronts us with the question of *why* fascism no longer exists in Turkey today. For herein lies the answer to the question of how the bourgeoisie is going to organise itself as a single ruling class despite its internal contradictions.

In this epoch, even the constitutions of the most democratic countries include articles "legitimising" counter-revolution. This does not indicate that fascism can be "constitutional." On the contrary, it shows that the bourgeoisie in general has become reactionary and that it is gradually losing its ability to be constitutional.

A final question: *could a very broad bourgeois democracy be implemented through the 1982 constitution?*

In general, representative government is equated with elections and democracy, and competitive elections on the basis of universal suffrage are in many respects the crowning characteristic of political democracy. In this narrow sense, yes, a broad bourgeois democracy could be implemented through the 1982 constitution. However, if we go one step forward towards the inviolable rights and freedoms of the individual, the independence of the judiciary and the legislative from interference by the executive, involvement of trade unions and associations in politics as a natural component of their activities, the right to organise freely, etc., it becomes clear that even a broad bourgeois democracy, let alone a broad democracy, could

not be implemented with this constitution.

The fundamental struggle of the transitional period is thus the struggle for the rights and freedoms enumerated above.

\* \* \*

Before leaving this topic, we must correct two mistakes that we made in our earlier treatment of the question of the disintegration of fascism and the constitution: 1. At the time of the referendum on the constitution, we evaluated the constitution as fascist. 2. We dated the process of disintegration from the 6th November 1983 elections.

In calling the constitution fascist, we were looking more at conditions in Turkey than at the document itself. The constitution was introduced in a fascist manner and it was not clear what would happen.

Nevertheless, it was a mistake for, although the regime itself was fascist, the constitution was not. Involved in our day-to-day tasks, we did not ask the question which should have been asked. We persisted in the habit which is shared by the entire revolutionary movement: shouting "Down with fascism!"

If I am not mistaken, we began as early as 1982 to warn that both the opportunities and the dangers were increasing. What were the increasing possibilities? What did we see? In the summer of 1983 the mensheviks declared that "fascism has come". The following idea cropped up often in our writings of the time: while everyone else is heading north, the mensheviks are heading south. Then came the November 1983 elections. Our articles increasingly began to stress the possibilities. Why? Because we are a movement that tries to grasp life's turning points in time. Although we have failed to pinpoint some definite turning points at the moment they took place with the same certainty, we did look and see and take decisions according to the logic of events. Now we are reviewing the developments, evaluating the turning points more closely, and developing our views. Any organisation which fails to do this will lag behind. We called the constitution fascist. It would be a much graver and more dangerous mistake to remain bound by this past mistake.

The *Worker's Voice* is the *first and only* organisation to recover from this error. It grasped the change in society and said: "Disintegration".

But then we made the mistake of considering the disintegration to have begun with the 6th November elections. We could perhaps have avoided this error.

Nevertheless, I must say that such mistakes as these are among the mistakes which can be considered a natural part of development. They are not mistakes of the kind that totally misinterpret life. The mistake was not one of declaring life to be moving in the opposite direction to which it was moving in reality, but one of showing the direction in which it was moving, although doing so somewhat belatedly.

In addition, there are some strong "mitigating factors" to be taken into account when weighing our mistakes.

Firstly, the process of disintegration of fascist is not a topic which has been sufficiently dealt with by Marxism. Nothing very serious has been written on the topic. Thus, from the point of view of theory, it is an untrod path.

Secondly, it is truly difficult to grasp the full significance of social developments at the moment when they are first experienced, before a sufficient amount of examples, evidence and consequences has accumulated. Most of the time, it is impossible. One could give countless examples of this from the history of Marxism.

For this reason, the maturing and integration of our theoretical understanding of disintegration lagged behind developments. It required a 7-8 months period of accumulation of events.

It is relatively easy to evaluate events once there has been a certain amount of such accumulation. When we look back today, and when we attempt to determine the date of certain turning points in the process which can be perceived by the majority of society, it becomes clear that the 6th of November was such a turning point, but not one that can be put at the head of the process. If it is necessary to determine such a date today, we would say that the process of disintegration of fascist began with

the democracy manoeuvre, without however forgetting that this too had its prelude and aftermath.

After all is said and done, what will we do now when faced with these mistakes? Do we try to remain consistent with what we have said before, or defend what we say is correct in the light of the present accumulation of evidence and consideration?

Of course, we will choose the latter course! Otherwise, we would remain consistent with what we said previously, but it would be a consistency in error.

There will be mistakes all along the road to revolution and its aftermath. Two things are very important in this respect:

1. Mistakes must not be of a kind that have grave and dangerous consequences.

2. Mistakes must be able to be corrected within the dynamic of the organisation itself.

Our attitude on the question of the evolution of fascism in Turkey is a measure of our self-confidence. We admit and correct our mistake without fear of what our enemies may say.

### 3.3 Is the disintegration proceeding slowly?

There are several hints which show that the resistance against the regime will spread. It would not be mistaken to expect actions from workers, and especially students in the near future. But, on the other hand, it is highly probable that, for the moment, the regime will manage to limit and control such action. The reason for this can be found in the answers to a more general question.

Why is the disintegration which passed through the adoption of the 1982 Constitution, the general elections of 1983, and the local elections of 1984 proceeding, or is it proceeding, slowly?

It may be said that when the actions against a regime which does not have any legal basis and is the people's enemy do not transform themselves into sudden explosions, huge demonstrations, and revenge for the counter-revolutionary violence, this process is proceeding slowly. But this can be said only within this framework, and the reasons for this may be explained.

However we answer the question of whether or not the process is proceeding slowly or quickly, it is very important to determine at least the most important reasons why this disintegration is proceeding less quickly than revolutionaries would wish, and moreover, why there is disintegration rather than overthrow. Grasping these reasons, we can better understand, a) what we have to change, b) how we must benefit from the period before us.

In our opinion, the *first reason* why we are witnessing, not the overthrow of fascism, but a process of disintegration, and why this process does not proceed at the tempo which we impatiently hope for, is the lack of any organisation in the revolutionary front which the people may support and which has a meaningful strength.

The revolutionary movement, which already had serious shortcomings in ideology and organisation prior to 12th September, has now arrived at a very dangerous position with a section of the leaders of these organisations having been wiped out by fascism, the rest of the leaders having gone abroad to Europe, and this overlapping with the conditions of a period of reaction. The majority of the organisations have lost touch with the realities of Turkey, and are in a situation where even the most advanced of their cadres are becoming apolitical in epidemic proportions.

The great majority of the "parties", "organisations" or "movements" which have been unable to escape the grip of these conditions and arrive at a more scientific world view have become, are becoming or will become "*taxi parties*", a term used in the last years of the Franco regime in Spain (in the sense that they are so small that all their members can fit into a taxi)

Yet a large minority of Turkey's workers and labourers have adopted revolutionary ideas. This mass, left on its own, is trying in the darkness to do something against the regime. And whatever is being done is being done by these people. They are the *compelling force* underlying the disintegration.

A party is strong, if it wins the people's sympathy. Yet we know that that sympathy can be won only by strong

organisations.

*The second reason*, is that in the absence of a revolutionary organisation which understands the people, it is the liberals again who become the champions of opposition to the regime. Since its foundation, SODEP has been following a conscious policy of not coming up against the regime. Together with the new party which is to be founded, they are both aiming at a "return to democracy" and, at the same time, they do not intend that this democracy should come to a stage which speaks to the genuine interests of the people. These people, whom we know well, are old dogs with new collars.

Hence, the process of disintegration proceeds for the time being via the way of bargaining within the bourgeoisie itself. However, it is clear that were there no accumulated popular rage in the background, even this much would not happen.

*The third reason* is the characteristics which the values and institutions of the superstructure of Turkey have acquired through history. In particular, the traditional characteristics which developed in the absence of a party which spreads class consciousness to the labouring masses systematically, consistently and widely enough, have an effect which cannot be underestimated even though their importance is diminishing.

Among these, the position of the religious system and institutions vis-à-vis fascism, is very much different, much more backward than the role played against fascism in Europe and Latin America by the church.

Under these conditions, the fascist junta has managed to adapt itself to the new situations and new power balances which are emerging. It has managed to implement its plan of "*slow transition to normal* (as normal as it can be in Turkey) *bourgeois democracy*" which we have mentioned several times.

In this plan of the junta, the *general tactics of imperialism* are manifested as well. To understand its tactics is of decisive importance in understanding both the stage through which the country is passing and the necessary actions to be taken.

Today we can speak of a wave of bankruptcies of counter-revolutions throughout the world. Especially in the medium-

developed countries, counter-revolutions and democratisations have come and gone in waves for approximately the past 100 years. The counter-revolutions which came one after another in the late 1970's and early 1980's could not solve a single problem. They could not solve the economic crisis. Even fascist dictatorships did not suffice to eliminate political bankruptcy and the inability to govern. Now these counter-revolutions are going bankrupt one after the other.

Let us look briefly at the most important examples.

The attitude of those who came to power in *Argentina* after the junta became clear in a short time. An agreement with the army is taking shape. For example, seven generals included on a list of criminals prepared by human rights groups were recently promoted by Alfonsín. Military advisors have been appointed to the government. No serious changes have been made in economic policy. The new government's attitude towards the army is a good indicator of the type of process through which the country is going.

A 16-man "national commission" was appointed by Alfonsín to investigate the fate of those who disappeared during the junta period. This at a time when all the democrats in the country were demanding that the investigation be carried out directly by parliament. Naturally, this appointed commission is killing time.

Moreover, the trials of people accused of torture and murder were transferred from civilian to military courts. The accused, the junta and the prosecutor are all the same. Who will try whom?

Yes, steps towards democracy have been taken in *Argentina*, but these are forward steps only *in comparison with fascism* and they have not yet gone beyond the boundaries drawn by the fascist junta. It is indeed difficult to understand the logic with which our mensheviks deny the disintegration of fascism in *Turkey* today at the same time as they talk about a "return to democracy" in *Argentina*. Most likely because they have only newly been able to call the Evren junta fascist. They have yet to savour this!



In *Brazil*, the Democratic Social Party which supported the military dictatorship and the opposition Democratic Movement Party held their first congresses for a long time in September 1984. At these congresses, candidates were elected for the electoral college which will elect the country's first civilian president after 20 years of military dictatorship in January 1985.

Both congresses were long-awaited steps in the process of "*slow return to democracy*" that is being closely controlled by the army. Up to the present, five of the generals who came to power with the 1964 coup have acted as president. The last two of these implemented bit by bit such political freedoms as an amnesty for political prisoners, the partial abolition of censorship, and increased participation in government by opposition parties. The results of the congresses may bring about, not only the end of military control, but also rule by the opposition party.

The unemployment rate in Brazil is 40% while the annual inflation rate is 218%.

The presidential candidate of the Democratic Social Party, the junta's party, is Paulo Selim Maluf, a former governor of Sao Paulo. The candidate favoured by President Joa Figueiredo, however, was the former Minister of the Interior, Mario David Andreazza. Figueiredo agreed to support the party's candidate but a 60-man group led by Aurelino Chaves, the vice-president, decided to support the opposition candidate Neves in exchange for promises of decision-making positions in the new government to be formed. This group announced that the supporters of former Interior Minister Andreazza would also take the same route. It appears that Neves, in his own words, will lead Brazil's political rebirth after a "20-year eclipse".

Of the two candidates, it seems probable that Neves will accelerate the return to democracy. However, it cannot be expected that either of them will take Brazil much beyond the policies of Figueiredo. For, at the moment, political life in Brazil is advancing within the boundaries imposed by the military junta.

In *Uruguay* as well, there is a process of "*return to democracy*". But here there is hope born of a high level of mass

activity. Last January there was a general strike and in June there was a 24-hour "civil-strike" on the 11th anniversary of the coup.

In July, official bargaining with the junta began and in August the boundaries of political life were expanded somewhat. General elections will be held in November and parliament will open in March 1985.

Communists are working in a broad front together with Christian Democrats and Socialists.

However, the junta is imposing one condition: all parties will accept the constitutional changes which limit political rights in the name of "national security". The junta makes it clear that, until these changes are accepted, the prohibition on 11,000 people's participation in political life will remain.

In *Guatemala*, there was a coup in March 1982. Here too there is a "*transition to democracy*". In July an 88-man parliament was elected. The largest proportion of votes cast in the elections were spoiled votes. Presidential elections will be held in 1985. The Union of the National Centre Party finds developments even in Argentina to be so extreme that it has promised that there will be no Alfonsin-style purge of the army!

There is a very striking situation in *Chile*. The fascist junta which overthrew the socialist Allende government in a bloody coup in 1973 has interfered in the economy to such an extent that it is being said that there is an "inefficient transition to socialism" in Chile today. The most striking example of this is the banking system. Seven of the country's leading banks are in the hands of the state.

There is a profound crisis in the economy and the popular base of the fascist regime has disintegrated primarily for this reason.

In September 1980, the regime introduced a new constitution and entered a period which it itself called a "*slow evolution to democracy*". But there is no let-up in the repression of progressive forces.

In response to this, protest demonstrations have been organised since December 1982. Communists and Christian Democrats together established the "National Trade Union

Cóordination”.

Most recently, the regime was unable to prevent three leaders of the Communist Party from returning to the country.

Some general conclusions can be drawn from the situations in these countries, Pakistan, the Philippines, and from the experience of Turkey.

1. “*Slow evolution to democracy*”, is a general plan which imperialism proposes for these countries. This general plan is the best plan under today’s circumstances in order to safeguard the capitalist system and the interests of the bourgeoisie in each country. However, there are differences of implementation among the countries and a role in this is played by many factors ranging from the degree of mass support for the juntas to the personalities of fascist leaders.

2. This transition does not mean that fascists become democratic. The process proceeds through conflicts and underlying it is the bankruptcy of fascist regimes and popular rage.

3. This general plan works in countries where the bourgeois sections lead the struggle for democratisation and where there is a *bourgeois* hegemony rather than a proletarian one. The working class is in various forms drawn into the class-collaborationism.

4. The intense repression of the working class and communists, therefore, continues without let-up in order to prevent any working class hegemony in the process of disintegration of fascism, of “slow evolution to democracy”. There is an attempt to cordon off all the ways for them to come onto the stage.

The same things are taking place in Turkey. Yes, the disintegration of the regime is proceeding, in the sense we have stated above, slowly. But does it really have to be evaluated in this way, or according to revolutionary hopes? Our people suffered greatly after 12th September 1980, but let us not forget that four years is quite a short span for social life. The period of real fascism lasted for only two of these years. In this sense, developments are proceeding very rapidly.

We often say that Turkey is not Germany. But, leaving Germany aside, it is not Spain either. The Spain of that time historically had much more favourable characteristics than those of Turkey.

The fascism that was established in 1939 persisted for a long time. Inevitably, these long years of fascism led to the expansion of the base of the anti-Franco forces to really extensive proportions. Would it otherwise be conceivable that Don Juan Carlos would want to play the main role in the coming of bourgeois democracy — he whom General Franco had chosen as his successor in 1969 and whom Franco had announced would be king after his own death; he who from 1969 to 1974 sat silently behind the ‘Caudillo’ at every meeting?

The society of Spain is one that has in general a more advanced cultural and organisational level than Turkey. Moreover, socialists passed the years under fascism in Europe and did not organise in the country. The only organised force which was active among the working class and students under these conditions was the Communist Party. This had a positive effect on the general level of class consciousness in the country.

The pressure which the bourgeois democracies of Europe exerted for a change of regime in Spain was of an intensity that is incomparable with the pressure brought to bear on Turkey.

Despite such favourable conditions, the process of disintegration of fascism in Spain continued for 10 years. (For a better view of the process experienced in Spain, see the chronology in Appendix II.)

When all of these are taken into consideration, it becomes clear that the process of disintegration of fascism in our country is not slower than that which took place in Spain. *No, the process of disintegration is not proceeding slowly in Turkey!*

Leaving all this aside, the discussion of slowness-rapidity is a relative one. Deciding whether it is fast or slow does have a certain meaning in evaluating the possible perspectives of the period before us. However, this must not lead us to ignore a more important point for today. What is important, whether or not the disintegration proceeds quickly, whether or not a short time has

already elapsed, is the fact that the junta's plan of "limited and slow return to democracy" is proceeding with some regularities. It is proceeding to a democracy more limited than that which existed on 11th September 1980.

We must see this process, take it into account, and act accordingly. If we fail to do this, we will end up working in a manner suited, not to the existing situation, but to various possibilities. It is obvious that this would be a dead-end road. However, let us not think for even one moment that the possibilities facing Turkey, even in the coming months and years, have been reduced from three to one.

The emergence of a "legal", permitted opposition reflected, in the beginning, the junta's to a certain extent arbitrary "tolerance". Having been forced to extend its limits, this "tolerance" brought the country to a *critical* turning point. Developments indicate that the period before us will proceed, from the point of view of both the junta and the opposition (both popular forces and liberals), with constant forward and backward steps. At the moment, the country is advancing along a certain path. Nevertheless, there are still three alternatives or possibilities facing society: (1) A "Turkey-style democracy"; (2) The birth and advance of a new revolutionary situation; (3) A return of fascism, either under the conditions of a revolutionary situation, or even before that (perhaps even tomorrow). Moreover, it is obvious that the first and third alternatives always harbour the second.

Much could be said in regard to the three immediate alternatives facing Turkey. What I want to emphasise here is the fact that the processes in the country are accelerating. At some point matters will come to a head and at that point an historical responsibility will once again devolve on the revolutionary movement, on the organised forces of the proletariat. If they then fail once again to constitute an alternative, the 1987 elections will be eliminated by a new totalitarian onslaught either before or after the elections, and this will not resemble the 12th September 1980. There is also a slight possibility of a "Turkish-style" limited democracy being established by political liberals using

the institutions and procedures of the 1982 constitution. However, this would not be as easy as it appears. Evren's constitutional rights and the resistance of the interests created by the regime would make it a very painful process. More importantly, in a country like Turkey, this could not be a lasting stage.

For this reason, the *permanent* alternatives which confront Turkey until there is revolution remain two: either fascism or revolution.

The only way to change the fate of the people, is an *Advanced Democratic People's Revolution*, a revolution which will emerge from the struggle for democracy and under the hegemony of the proletariat. And for this, it is necessary to have a communist party which will cause the ground to tremble when it steps forward.

II.  
New stage:  
New goal

Our party has arrived at the threshold of an important turningpoint. In its short life it has met many such turning points. For a long time it has had what, in one sense, can be called the misfortune to be the first to say many things. But, leaving this misfortune aside, if, as an organisation, we grasp the significance of this major turning point, we will benefit.

There are two, not one, phenomena preparing the turning point before our party. The first and most important one is the new stage into which the country has entered. We dwelt on this in the first section.

Saying that the regime in our country is not fascist is of vital significance from the point of view of the party's general political tactics. There is a huge difference between our perceptions of what could be expected in terms of mass activity under monolithic conditions, and how we intend the organisation to function in a situation where every bourgeois trend has begun to line up people behind itself. *We will either work as we did in the period of reaction, or work in the knowledge of fascism no longer exists.* The organisational forms and activities of each period are quite different. If we do not say this today, or warn the organisation of this, we would fail as a movement which is



striving to create an organisation on the basis of certain ideas. Life moves constantly forward, taking the party with it as well.

The second phenomenon preparing the turning point before our party is the stage that has been reached by party life.

Since the struggle against the mensheviks within the CPT came out into the open, we have done everything we could to rescue the party from opportunism.

Although we may not as yet have been able to win over to the militant line all the comrades we would wish, we have succeeded in creating a militant Communist Party that has *in broad terms* defeated opportunism, with those comrades we have won over from the old party as well as from approximately every section of the revolutionary movement.

The struggle against opportunism is continuous and necessary for the revolution. It will continue. However, it is necessary to leave behind the habits of the 1979-1983 period and consider everything within the context of the new conditions in which the party finds itself. The attitude of that period was necessary for that period. Today it would be quite incorrect to persist in that attitude out of habit. To use a phrase of Lenin's, we will not raise the struggle against menshevism to the level of a sport.

In the years of the emergence of the *Worker's Voice*, together with the appearance of the split within the CPT, we waged a struggle which was primarily on the principled level of the questions facing the country at the time, and the answers to them. We used even the most concrete questions to advance the uncompromising principles and theoretical positions of Marxism. It was necessary to create a completely new cadre. It is obvious that the habits formed in these years, the toings and froings and the incorrect understandings, fostered the tendency which at one time became very widespread in our organisation to conduct abstract politics and "talk in general". What we did was correct, but it had the by-product of fostering this incorrect tendency.

Today, this first period lags behind present needs and requirements. A cadre has been formed which has an ever better

grasp of Leninist logic. I do not at all claim that our cadre level is sufficient, but henceforward the process of cadre formation will proceed through intervention in the day-to-day life of the working people.

Our former attitude was correct: the task was one of creating a party nucleus. Our present attitude is also correct: the task is to *win over* the masses to the party:

We can formulate this in words used by Lenin in approximately the same context.

“Our attitude at the outset of the struggle was correct: at the time it was important to form a definite and resolute nucleus. Our subsequent attitude was also correct. We set out from the idea that it was necessary to win the masses.” (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol.42, p.325)

The mutually complementary new stages that have been reached both by Turkey and by our party present the party with a single goal: *to win the masses*. Henceforward, any change in one of these two elements, for instance a drift backwards that could emerge in either the situation in Turkey or in the party, will still *not change* this goal, but only the means of achieving it. This goal would only change if there were a change for the worse in both elements at once. This will not happen. Henceforward, our single general and fundamental goal is to win the masses.

The first thing that we must consider from the point of view of the goal of winning the masses is strengthening the party organisation.

# 1. Strengthening the party organisation

We talk about making a revolution and establishing an economy “just as described in the books”, but we do not say that that infrastructure will create the type of human being we want.

Historically, a new type of human being can in any case only develop on the basis of a new infrastructure. However, the element of consciousness and education with its relative independence, cannot be disregarded when speaking of the creation of a new type of human being.

From before the revolution, communists are the fore-runners of this new type of human being, a person for whom work has become a pleasure rather than a task, who is creative and independently minded, and gives *priority to the interests of the collective*.

I can say that the *Worker's Voice* is an organisation which exerts the most intense effort in this sphere. Without strapping its communism, socialist ethics and humanism into Japanese shoes, or giving way to hypocrisy, it is constantly fighting against the poison of bourgeois morality.

The struggle is not one that will be fought and won once and for all and then left behind. It is a continuous struggle. It will continue as long as the party exists.

New members are continuously joining the party. None of the new comrades who join us do so leaving their old clothes on the doorstep. Each individual is a composite of his habits, of what he has learned and what he has experienced.

The average age is young and this too brings certain characteristics. Moreover, all of us, new and old, young and not so young, live in a world in which imperialism is still stronger.

Both personally and organisationally, this is a continuous struggle. And first and foremost, it is a question of the individual being honourable and principled *towards himself*.

Our working people will and must see the highest level of intellectual honesty, self-sacrifice, comradeship and heroism among communists. Developing our communist character is one of the most important aspects of the goal of strengthening the party.

If we look at our organisational work, we have not yet fully achieved the ability to combine initiative with centralised discipline in our work. Comrades sometimes use their "initiative", at other times they will not go to the toilet without asking permission.

Yes, it is not easy to harmonise initiative with centralised work in which the democratic aspect is limited. But it is not impossible. The Bolsheviks succeeded.

We have only one key to enable us to harmonize initiative with centralised discipline, and that is our communist *consciousness*.

We know both theoretically and practically that, in Turkey, where it is a greater crime to be a communist than a thief or a murderer, a centralised party is necessary in order to be able to resist the police and overthrow the evil system. We know that it would be a fraud to speak of a fully operational democracy in a Communist Party in a country where the working class has not won political rights. We know as well that this state of affairs can deprive people of their initiative and cause them to do only what they are told to do. And we know that the task which communists have undertaken requires *enterprise* and initiative; creative, energetic and careful work. Knowing all these, we should be able

to solve the apparent contradiction between these two aspects of our work.

It remains to say that this is not the most difficult of the problems we have to solve in connection with the conditions of struggle imposed on us by the bourgeoisie. A more difficult problem is this: a centralised party which has worked under illegal conditions over a long period and which has developed corresponding habits, is, after the revolution, going to play the leading role in achieving our aim of building a pluralist and democratic system whose existence relies solely on the will and the support of the people.

That also is not impossible. We will do it. But let us now solve the problems of today. Their solution will help us to solve the problems of tomorrow.

Can it then be said, comrades, that we have registered any results in the struggle we are waging against the habits impressed upon us and ingrained in us from all sides by the system, against amateurism? What is the score? Are we winning or losing?

We are not losing in any sphere. In some spheres we are marking time. In most we are progressing. In general, it can be said that we are winning step by step.

In regard to our work in the past year, the following points, both positive and negative, have to be stressed:

1. The past year has seen great gains from the point of view of the organisation. I can say that all of our organisations have abandoned the habit of conducting politics in the abstract, a tendency which, in essence, means to avoid hard, day-to-day, modest work. They are now doing much more down-to-earth work, in much closer contact with workers and working people.

2. In the past year, we reached a level at which we were better able to meet the need for cadre mobility. It would be very difficult for a geographically balanced organisation to emerge without shifting cadres from districts in which there was an accumulation to those where there was a lack.

Even this confirms that the formation of cadres has advanced. Firstly, only cadres who have devoted, not their free time, but their entire lives to the cause, can participate in this

mobility. Secondly, organisations whose internal tissue is not sufficiently sound, which have not established comradely trust, cannot achieve this mobility even if they try. Rumours that "this is an operation" would abound, as was the case in the menshevik party in recent years.

3. We are an organisation that works, and works intensively. We work at a very high tempo. I am sure that this tempo will rise even further as our skins become tougher. Nevertheless, we still hear words to the effect that "work is mounting, we do not have a free moment".

If not all the time, at least very often, what underlies such words are shortcomings in planning, timing, setting priorities correctly, or freely delegating jobs and responsibilities.

4. One of the areas in which we have developed our ability in the past year is that of taking advantage of legal opportunities. Today, in both Turkey and Europe, we are accomplishing on a day-to-day basis work to which, one or two years earlier, neither our abilities nor our agenda could stretch. Our comrades in both Turkey and Europe are working in many legal publications and associations.

However, taking advantage of legal opportunities under present conditions in Turkey is of such vital importance and is such a comprehensive matter, that what we have done is as nothing beside what we must do.

5. There is one very important additional possibility that taking advantage of legal opportunities gains for an illegal party. Lenin once remarked that it was necessary to test people who will be taken into the party in legal activity for a long time. Legal activity is an area in which agent-provocateurs have the greatest difficulty in concealing themselves.

Due to various conditions, this principle of Lenin's is one which we are applying in Europe half consciously, half unconsciously. The most important thing, and something we must do, is to apply this principle extensively in Turkey.

6. A truly great gain of the past year has been our new draft programme and the wide discussion of it. The new draft programme has reached everywhere, even entering the prisons.

Under conditions which worsened with the coming of fascism, this raised the ideological and political unity of the party to a new level.

Our new programme is emerging as the result of intense but, more importantly, collective effort. The total number of proposals that were submitted in regard to the first and second drafts is 1447. More are coming and we know that more are coming still. Even this amount shows that all the comrades whom the programme reached studied it carefully and diligently and embraced the programme to an extent unprecedented in Turkey.

While the percentage of proposals fully accepted in regard to the first draft was 44.4, this percentage was 34.2 for the second draft. This is natural since, after the changes that were made to the first draft, the draft itself was much improved and enhanced. Again, in connection with this, the percentage of proposals which were partially accepted in regard to the first draft was 0.3, but 10.8 in regard to the second draft. In other words, with the second draft, it became more difficult to propose improvements that would be readily accepted, and proposals that would have fallen into this category in regard to the first draft were "partially accepted" when made to the second.

If we consider that 34.2% of all these proposals was completely accepted, while 5.9% was partially accepted, and that therefore a total of 40.1% was accepted, the extent to which the Fourth Programme is emerging as the product of a collective effort becomes more readily apparent. It remains to say that this is not the end. We are now looking at a process in which the programme will once again come up for intensive consideration.

A third draft has been prepared and will soon be submitted to the responsible organ.

Yes comrades, in some spheres rapidly, in others slowly, but as an organisation we are developing and maturing. We are fully determined to accelerate this development in the coming period by making our illegal work more effective, by learning to combine legal and illegal work more harmoniously, and by opening up opportunities to ensure that our comrades develop

further from the ideological point of view.

However, today, our organisation has arrived at such a point that henceforward developing and strengthening the organisation as well as developing our communist character, and anything else that comes to mind, everything, depends on one thing in particular, on the matter we will turn to now.



10 September 1983 — 21 November 1983

Proposals submitted regarding the first draft of the CPT's 4th Programme

Total submissions*		Proposed amendments**		Other***	
Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
682	100	602	88	80	12

Total submissions*		Concerning content		Concerning form	
Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
682	100	521	76	161	24

\*Total submissions: Includes proposals, questions, evaluations, etc.

\*\*Proposed amendments: Amendments proposed directly.

\*\*\*Other: Questions, requests for clarification, evaluations and interpretations.

Proposed amendments**		Wholly accepted		Partially accepted		Denied		In process*	
Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
602	100	267	44.4	2	0.3	264	43.8	69	11.5

\*In process: 533 have been processed, i.e., 89% of the proposed amendments. Processing of the rest has not been completed.

21 November 1983 — 30 July 1983

Proposals submitted regarding the second draft of the CPT's 4th Programme

Total submissions*		Proposed amendments**		Other***	
Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
765	100	686	89.7	79	10.3

Total submissions*		Concerning content		Concerning form	
Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
765	100	564	73.7	201	26.3

\* *Total submissions*: Includes proposals, questions, evaluations, etc.

\*\* *Proposed amendments*: Amendments proposed directly.

\*\*\* *Other*: Questions, requests for clarification, evaluations and interpretations.

Proposed amendments**	Wholly accepted		Partially accepted		Denied		In process*		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
686	100	173	25.2	74	10.8	414	60.4	25	3.6

\* *In process* 661 have been processed, i.e., 99% of the proposed amendments  
Processing of the rest has not been completed.

10 September 1983 — 30 July 1983

### Total proposals submitted regarding the drafts of the CPT's 4th Programme

Total submissions*	Proposed amendments**		Other***		Total submissions*		Concerning content		Concerning form		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
1447	100	1288	89	160	11	1447	100	1085	80	362	20

\* *Total submissions*: Includes proposals, questions, evaluations, etc.

\*\* *Proposed amendments*: Amendments proposed directly.

\*\*\* *Other*: Questions, requests for clarification, evaluations and interpretations.

Proposed amendments**	Wholly accepted		Partially accepted		Denied		In process*		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
1288	100	440	34.2	76	5.9	678	52.6	94	7.3

\* *In process* 1194 have been processed, i.e., 93% of the proposed amendments.  
Processing of the rest has not been completed.

## 2. Winning the masses

All our efforts, including developing our organisational structure, are devoted to one aim: to abolish the exploitative system through revolution. However, the only real force capable of doing this, of inaugurating change in the society, is the energy of the masses. The party exists in order to aid them in this struggle. For this reason, winning the masses is the key to everything else.

Let us see what is meant by the concept of "masses". In the words of Lenin:

"(The concept of 'masses' — R.Y.) changes in accordance with the changes in the nature of the struggle. At the beginning of the struggle it took only a few thousand genuinely revolutionary workers to warrant talk of the masses. If the party succeeds in drawing into the struggle not only its own members, if it also succeeds in arousing non-party people, it is well on the way to winning the masses. During our revolutions there were instances when several thousand workers represented the masses. In the history of our movement, and of our struggle against

the Mensheviks, you will find many examples where several thousand workers in a town were enough to give a clearly mass character to the movement. You have a mass when several thousand non-party workers, who usually live a philistine life and drag out a miserable existence, and who have never heard anything about politics, begin to act in a revolutionary way. If the movement spreads and intensifies, it gradually develops into a real revolution. We saw this in 1905 and 1917 during three revolutions, and you too will have to go through all this. When the revolution has been sufficiently prepared, the concept 'masses' becomes different: several thousand workers no longer constitute the masses. The word begins to denote something else. The concept of 'masses' undergoes a change so that it implies the majority, and not simply a majority of the workers alone, but the majority of all the exploited." (Lenin, "Speech at the Third Congress of the Communist International", *Collected Works*, Vol.32, pp.475-476)

Our aim of "winning the masses" has meaning only when taken in the context of these words of Lenin, only then does it fall into place. Adoption by the masses of the party and its political line, and the number of party members are two different things. Nevertheless, there is a close connection between the two. On the condition that it is organised on the basis of correct principles, a large party naturally achieves its aims more easily than a small party. However, whether the party be large or small, there is one unchanging rule: the ability to make a revolution depends on winning the support of the *active, organised majority* of the masses.

Now let us read a somewhat lengthier extract from the same speech by Lenin. I consider that it is of vital importance from the point of view of our topic:

"(...) In Europe, *where almost all the proletarians are organised*, we must win the majority of the working class and anyone who fails to understand this is lost to the communist movement, ...

"Terracini says that we were victorious in Russia although the Party was very small...

"... Comrade Terracini has understood very little of the Russian revolution. In Russia, we were a small party, but we had with us in addition the majority of the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies throughout the country. (*Cries: 'Quite true!'*) Do you have anything of the sort? We had with us almost half the army, which then numbered at least ten million men. Do you really have the majority of the army behind you?...

"We have not only condemned our Right-wing elements — we have expelled them. But if, like Terracini, people turn the fight against the Rightists into a sport, then we must say: 'Stop! Otherwise the danger will become too grave!' ...

"We were victorious in Russia, and with such ease, because we prepared for our revolution during the imperialist war. That was the first condition. Ten million workers and peasants in Russia were armed, and our slogan was: an immediate peace at all costs. We were victorious because the vast mass of the peasants were revolutionarily disposed against the big landowners. The Socialist Revolutionaries, the adherents of the Second and the Two-and-a-Half Internationals, were a big peasant party in November 1917. They demanded revolutionary methods but, like true heroes of the Second and the Two-and-a-Half Internationals, lacked the courage to act in a revolutionary way. In August and September 1917 we said: 'Theoretically we are fighting the Socialist Revolutionaries as we did before, but practically we are ready to accept their programme because only we

are able to put it into effect.' We did just what we said. The peasantry, ill-disposed towards us in November 1917, after our victory, who sent a majority of Socialist-Revolutionaries into the Constituent Assembly, were won over by us, if not in the course of a few days — as I mistakenly expected and predicted — at any rate in the course of a few weeks. The difference was not great. Can you point out any country in Europe where you can win over the majority of the peasantry in the course of a few weeks? Italy perhaps? (*Laughter*) If it is said that we were victorious in Russia in spite of not having a big party, that only proves that those who say it have not understood the Russian revolution and that they have absolutely no understanding of how to prepare for a revolution.

*"Our first step was to create a real Communist Party so as to know whom we are talking to and whom we could fully trust. The slogan of the First and Second congresses was 'Down with the Centrists!' ... Our first task is to create a genuinely revolutionary party and to break with the Mensheviks. But that is only a preparatory school. We are already convening the Third Congress, and Comrade Terracini keeps saying that the task of the preparatory school consists in hunting out, pursuing and exposing Centrists and semi-Centrists. No, thank you! We have already done this long enough. At the Second Congress we said that the Centrists are our enemies. But, we must go forward really. The second stage, after organising into a party, consists in learning to prepare for revolution. In many countries we have not even learned how to assume the leadership. ...*

*"It is possible that even a small party, the British or American party, for example, after it has thoroughly studied the course of political develop-*

ment and become acquainted with the life and customs of the non-party masses, will at a favourable moment evoke a revolutionary movement (Comrade Radek has pointed to the miners' strike as a good example). You will have a mass movement if such a party comes forward with its slogans at such a moment and succeeds in getting millions of workers to follow it. I would not altogether deny that a revolution can be started by a very small party and brought to a victorious conclusion. But one must have a knowledge of the methods by which the masses can be won over. ...

“And so, I repeat: I must unreservedly defend our theses and I feel I am bound to do it. We not only condemned the Centrists but expelled them from the Party. Now we must deal with another aspect, which we also consider dangerous. We must tell the comrades the truth in the most polite form (and in our theses it is told in a kind and considerate way) so that no one feels insulted: we are confronted now by other, more important questions than that of attacks on the Centrists. We have had enough of this question. It has already become somewhat boring. Instead, the comrades ought to learn to wage a real revolutionary struggle.” (*Ibid*)

In the light of these truly informative words of Lenin, let us now touch upon some questions facing us in regard to winning the masses.

Creating a thoroughly vanguard party organised according to communist ideology, and merging with the masses are two features which cannot easily be brought together, particularly in peaceful periods or periods of reaction. There is no such problem when thinking in the abstract. On the contrary, neither of these two features has any genuine meaning when taken apart from the other. What would a party which failed to win the masses be the vanguard of? Or, of what use would winning the masses be if the

party is not a vanguard? Nevertheless, due to various theoretical and practical shortcomings and lack of opportunities, bringing these two elements together in practice confronts us as one of the most difficult jobs in the world. It is for this reason that Lenin said:

“(...) the process of converting the Party into the vanguard of the revolutionary proletariat without permitting it to become divorced from the masses, but, on the contrary, by linking it more and more closely with them, imbuing them with revolutionary consciousness and rousing them for the revolutionary struggle, is a very difficult, but most important one.” (Lenin, “Notes of a Publicist”, *Collected Works*, Vol.33, p.209)

The difficulty of winning the masses over to the party line, of uniting them around fundamental demands, arises from various objective and subjective factors. The most important of these can be enumerated as follows:

The masses are heterogeneous, made up of various classes, strata and groups all of which have different demands, different levels of consciousness and different approaches to problems and their solutions (including the most general problems).

Communists are not the only political force trying to win the support of the masses. Alongside them are many varieties of leftists, left appearing, bourgeois parties. All of these are working towards the same goal. These various other political forces are, of course, not consistent defenders of the interests of the working people. However, they are often quite able to adapt themselves to the changing demands of various working sections.

However, the greatest obstacle facing the communists is the tactics of repression, exclusion from politics, and social manoeuvre which the finance oligarchy applies in order to divert the attention and energy of the masses away from the class struggle. From time to time, these manoeuvres focus on



nationalism and Turkism, at other times on social reform and displays of liberalism. The state, all bourgeois and conciliatory parties, the educational and indoctrination system, the mass media, are all united in applying the tactics of diverting the working people from the class struggle.

These difficulties are not ones that can be overcome easily; they are not to be belittled, but regarded with respect.

In the face of these difficulties, communists must absolutely become closely acquainted with, and work in a manner which takes into account, the levels of political consciousness, the psychologies and the demands of the sections in which they work.

The basic means on which the communist party relies for such work are the cells, its *basic units*. The basic units are the most important means of conveying to the party the situation prevailing at the time in the sections of society where they work. The information collected in this way should also be supported by information obtained through such means as research and questionnaires.

The party centre deals with the general demands, general psychology and consciousness of large groups, classes and class strata, on a nationwide scale. Since these general features would vary greatly under various conditions, it is absolutely essential that comrades working in different regions should undertake to become closely acquainted with the masses there. This is the responsibility of every regional leader and community.

With the spreading of means of communication and transport in Turkey, the ideological offensive of the finance oligarchy is today aimed at all sections of society. For this reason, communists must be much more active in their ideological, agitation and propaganda work. In the same way, they must wage a struggle based on detailed information about every section. Without this, there is no possibility of raising the level of consciousness of the masses.

At the present level of development of the means of mass communication and transportation, opposing the so-called solutions proposed by the bourgeoisie, exposing their fraudulent

character to the people and criticising the policies of the ruling class are a very important aspect of the work, but not everything. At the present level of development, we must not stop at this. Communists must oppose these reactionary "solutions" with *positive alternatives*. In comparison with the past, the presentation of positive alternatives today will play a much greater role in raising the political consciousness and revolutionary activity of the masses.

In order to be able to win the masses, one must be able to show them how problems requiring immediate solution can be solved. In a word, one must explain, in regard to every problem, how and why Turkey will be saved by an advanced democratic people's revolution that will grow into socialism.

The *democracy programme* that is proposed to society as a positive alternative in the new draft programme of our party is at once the most advanced and comprehensive such programme ever drafted in Turkey, and one that can be implemented. We will understand better the power of a positive alternative when we take this to our people.

There is another point which is closely connected with a positive alternative. It will not be possible for communists to win the support of the masses unless they show that they are profoundly concerned, not only with general political questions, but also with every kind of problem and trouble that concerns the people, with their day-to-day problems; unless they show that they have solutions for all of them, and that they will develop the people's democratic rights and freedoms in every sphere.

At a time when the means of mass communication have become so highly developed, when radio and television and numerous daily newspapers immediately convey the news to the people, and when the ruling classes ideological offensive has consequently assumed unprecedented dimensions, the communist party is compelled to develop its methods of propaganda and agitation, constantly finding new ways of explaining the questions to the people, and to overcome old mistakes and weaknesses. In my opinion, some of our weaknesses in this sphere are the following: (In fact, these weaknesses are not ours

alone, but are displayed by the entire revolutionary movement.)

1. Responses to urgent problems and new developments generally come after some delay. This helps the ruling class in its ideological offensive, allows it to gain time, distort the facts, and make its proposals to the people *before* we are able to present ours. Right from the beginning, this places the communists on the defensive. We must all remember that correct ideas can only achieve their aim if they reach the masses in time.

2. Most of the time, propaganda is lacking clarity and scientific grounding. This is perhaps least applicable to the *Worker's Voice*. However, there are still various propaganda spheres where we have not fully achieved scientific clarity.

3. We are very well aware that the strength of communist ideas lies primarily in their content, their correctness. However, there is much that we have to develop in regard to the presentation of these correct ideas. It is absolutely essential that we develop the most appropriate and advanced methods and skills of spreading our ideas.

Ideas can only be effective, can only be accepted, if they are presented in a clear, concise and open manner. For this reason, another important point is that the party use clear and readily understandable terminology in its propaganda. This clear terminology must also take into account the psychology of the masses at the time, must carefully reflect their conditions, and present the facts as they are. In my opinion, these are all being done very well in our central party documents and in the party central organ. However, we do not see the same level in every written document or statement that is issued in the regions. In one respect this is understandable. Nevertheless, it is something which the comrades working in the regions must pay attention to and develop.

4. In our propaganda directed towards *various sections* of society, we must show great awareness of their particular characteristics. This is not always done.

“We must learn to approach the masses with particular patience and caution so as to be able to

understand the distinctive features in the mentality of each stratum, calling, etc., of these masses." (Lenin, "Theses on Comintern Fundamental Tasks," *Collected Works*, Vol.31, p.192)

In order to win over and unite the vast majority of the working people, we must definitely learn the conditions of various social groups, their particular problems, professional interests, and approach to various questions. Starting from these, we must be able to formulate general demands which will enable various social groups to unite on a nation-wide scale, and be able to use these general and particular demands together in our propaganda.

When considering various social groups, one question which we will put at the head of our list of priorities today is the question of winning over the youth. In the forthcoming period, we must devote particular attention to the conditions of these sections.

5. Today, when radio, television and press have developed to such an extent, the old traditional type of audience has changed. Now, all kinds of information, both wanted and unwanted, is entering people's homes. This situation increases the importance of the communist press and of various new methods (tapes, film, video, etc.) We, however, are still unable to take full advantage of modern propaganda techniques.

At a time when the working people are up to their ears in the mass of material provided by the bourgeois press, the distribution of party publications has assumed much greater importance than of old. I can say in full confidence that spreading the party press is one of the most fundamental tasks of any party member, whatever his job in the party, and at whatever level he works.

6. There is a two-fold error which we make from time to time in our work devoted to winning over the masses.

When dealing with concrete questions, we sometimes fail to sufficiently explain their general political character and their connection with the policies and system of exploitation of the

ruling class. We get stuck on the day-to-day level. It may not be the most appropriate example (we did work, but not enough), but it seems to me that this was somewhat the case in regard to the struggle for the 35-hour workweek, a struggle which is of great importance from the point of view of the world working class.

We were unable to *fully* explain how the workday is unlimited from the point of view of the working class and the bourgeoisie, how limits emerged in the course of the class struggle. A proposal for a 35-hour workweek was made and everyone adopted this as if it were the most progressive thing. Of course, we are involved in the 35-hour struggle. However, it was also necessary to show that, in fact, the demand for the 35-hour workweek is designed to obscure the demand for a 30 or 25-hour workweek, which is the right of the working class in Germany today. In dealing with concrete questions, we sometimes fail to sufficiently expose the connection between these and the need to change the system. But, if we want to fully explain concrete reality, we have to connect it with our general principles, ideals and aims.

On the other hand, we sometimes explain general ideas without connecting them with concrete reality. We start to talk in the abstract. If we want to impart our ideas, ideals and aims to the masses, we must definitely connect them with concrete reality. The two are inseparable.

In order to win the masses, we must do everything and get rid of all the shortcomings I have mentioned above. But this is not enough. However well organised and well presented our explanations, propaganda and agitation may be, they alone do not suffice to raise the level of consciousness and militancy of the masses. The masses learn first and foremost, and essentially, from their own experiences. Is there nothing then for communists to do in this sphere? There is. Our propaganda and agitation must be accompanied by *concrete actions* for economic rights, democracy and revolution.

If the communist party becomes only a propaganda organisation, it can never win the support of the masses. *The*

*communist party is an organisation of action.* It is the organiser of the people's struggle for their demands. It helps them draw the appropriate lessons in this struggle. In order to win the masses and raise their consciousness, it is vitally important to fight for their immediate economic, social and political demands and to organise these struggles. The ability to do this, to organise a united struggle by various section around common aims, will pave the way for the emergence of a higher level of class consciousness.

Particularly in Turkey, a country which has never experienced genuine bourgeois democracy, where everything was smothered under fascism, we are compelled to defend the democratic rights and freedoms of the people with special energy and dedication, with *action*.

There is one point that must not be forgotten when speaking of the vital importance in winning the masses of starting from their concrete and immediate economic, social and political demands, and organising the struggle around these demands. It is that failure to establish the correct balance between the struggle for these urgent demands and our longterm and ultimate aims would again mean imparting distorted consciousness to the masses. However, if we want to raise the revolutionary consciousness of the masses and to ensure that they follow us, we will organise the struggle for their immediate demands and definitely establish the connection between these struggles and our programme, our communist ideals.

In contemporary Turkey, where the means of mass communication, the press, have grown to such an extent, gained strength and indeed become a separate estate in themselves, a new and very important focal point of struggle has emerged for communists. It is essential that we grasp all aspects of this and address ourselves to it. To the extent that we are able to do this successfully, we will have made a corresponding contribution to the class struggle.

This new focal point of struggle is the democratisation of the press, the achievement of democratic supervision over it.

In this respect, there is the following mistaken idea: a

newspaper prints the views of whoever owns it. Not so! The press is not any type of private property. It is an instrument which affects, changes and determines the ideas of society. Consequently, no rational society can accept the view that what the owners says goes. In opposition to this, we must wage a struggle for democratic control of the press, for the advent of a press which publishes the truth in the popular interest independently of its owners.

This applies, not only to the press, but to radio and television, the film industry, educational programmes, and educational books in the schools. We must raise the demands and organise the struggle for democratisation and democratic control in all these spheres. None of these can be left to the well-known dictates of private property. This cannot be allowed. Let the owner pocket his profit as long as the system continues, but he cannot decide what is to be printed.

There is another aspect of the question of winning the masses which does not fully concern us today, but will concern us tomorrow. It is not a matter of winning the support of the masses once and for all. This support must be continuously renewed, continuously treasured. This is also extremely important. The history of revolutionary movements provides many examples of this support being won and then lost.

Perhaps what I have said does concern us today at a lower level. None of us can deny that whenever we engage in concrete mass actions (a meeting here, a march there), our mass work immediately rises. At such times, we seek out and talk to every sympathiser, every friend. But mass work is not work which can advance in intermittent waves. We must preserve and develop relations continuously. We must find ways of conducting this work regularly and rhythmically. Starting with sympathisers, we must constantly measure the reaction among the masses to any new views we bring, to our policies and slogans. We must rapidly pass these on to the party centre. We must look closely at the people whom we deal with, meet and know, and quickly inform the party of their moods and psychology. As long as we fail to perform this work regularly and rhythmically, instead of in

waves, it will be very difficult for us to achieve the successes in mass work required by our aims.

If a communist party wants to establish and develop close relations with the masses, it must work wherever they are. Communists can find them, educate and organise them, only in their work places and homes, wherever they work or rest.

Mass work is work which must be done by the entire party. It is work that must be done by all party organisations and every individual communist. However, the most important role in this work devolves on the cells, the *basic units* of the party. The following words of Lenin explain very well the importance of these basic units:

“In all organisations, unions and associations without exception, and first and foremost in proletarian organisations, but also in those of the non-proletarian toiling and exploited masses (political, trade union, military, co-operative, educational, sports, etc., etc.), groups or cells of Communists should be formed — preferably open groups, but underground groups as well, the latter being essential whenever there is reason to expect their suppression, or the arrest or banishment of their members on the part of the bourgeoisie; these cells, which are to be in close touch with one another and with the Party centre, should by pooling their experience, carrying on work of agitation, propaganda and organisation, adapting themselves to absolutely every sphere of public life and to every variety and category of the toiling masses, systematically educate themselves, the Party, the class, and the masses by means of such diversified work.” (Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. 31, pp.191-192)

For this reason, we must regard the basic units of the party, the cells, not as the “lowest units”, but on the contrary, as the *organs conducting the most important work of the party*, responsible for winning the masses. Accordingly, we must follow



their work very carefully and organise it in the best possible manner. The party will win the masses through the work of its basic units.

By way of concluding what I have said up until now, let me stress the following four aspects of our political work in the forthcoming period:

1. A struggle for democracy which will be waged in every sphere using active, militant, proletarian methods.
2. Concentration on the immediate, urgent problems of the working people.
3. Work within the legal structures which are emerging. Alongside the working class, concentration on youth in particular, then intellectuals and artists.
4. Care not to allow increasing legal opportunities to lead us to underestimate the repression continuing against the working class and communists. Raising our level of discipline and conspiratorial work.

\* \* \*

The free and independent life of the people of Turkey, their happy future, depends on one condition: on working class hegemony in the struggle against reaction. In order for the working class to be able to establish this hegemony, what is needed is a party, a communist party which has correctly grasped and correctly applies the genuine social science known as Marxism, which is able to unite it with the art of politics.

Without any hesitation, we declare that we are candidates for this job!

The herald of Latin American freedom, Jose Marti, who was shot and killed on Cuba's Dos Rios plains on 19th May 1895 during the struggle against Spanish colonialism, declared: "patrio i muerta", "my country or death".

In the struggle to eliminate exploitation in Anatolia, we say: Revolution or death!

## APPENDIX I

Chronology of the disintegration of fascism in Turkey and of the reactionary regime which followed it.

**5 November 1982**

Evren announced that he was receiving death threats daily.

**7 November 1982**

The Constitution was adopted.

**12 November 1982**

Lawyers in the Peace Association trial left the court, saying that the treatment of prisoners who were refusing to wear uniforms was hindering the defence.

**15 November 1982**

Evren proclaimed his "Democracy calendar."

**19 November 1982**

Sharp arguments took place at the general session of the Consultative Assembly.

The Interior Minister was requested to resign.

The Assembly split over the date of the elections.

#### 20 November 1982

Nine members of the teaching staff at Gazi University resigned. Their letters of resignation stated that they had been influenced by the sacking of 18 teaching and other staff and by the tendency of forming political cadres at the university.

#### 22 November 1982

The Interior Minister, Selahattin Çetiner, was once again requested to resign.

At this time trials which had been long postponed began to take place.

#### 23 November 1982

Some members of the teaching staff at the Aegean University applied to the rector and to the Martial Law Command for the withdrawal of the practice of "drawing names", declaring it to run counter to the law.

Reaction against the Supreme Education Council Law was mounting in the universities.

Two members of the teaching staff at the Middle East Technical University in Ankara resigned for non-compliance with the Supreme Educational Council Law.

#### 24 November 1982

Professor Sadun Aren was acquitted.

#### 29 November 1982

"Political life has revived in the capital."

Three political parties are formed:

1. A party of the centre
2. An extension of the former Justice Party
3. An extension of the Republican People's Party.

### 2 December 1982

The trial of members of the Writers' Union of Turkey began.

### 7 December 1982

The Interior Minister announced that investigations had been started into 117 former and *new* provincial governors and 171 district governors.

### 9 January 1983

Nazlı Ilıcak wrote: "We are making do with what we find, rather than with what we hoped," and "Both the first and last words of the constitution conflict with the democratic principles which we defend."

In the DİSK trial, it was decided to release a defendant for the first time.

### 13 January 1983

The Ministry of National Education issued a statement. It was declared that if any teachers, students or personnel at educational institutions attached to the ministry received any banned publications from abroad, they must report it immediately.

An interview that Minister of State İhsan Öztırak gave to the *Times* about political parties and the election laws became the subject of discussion.

While some members of the Consultative Assembly found the statement anti-democratic, others said that he should not interfere in their work.

### 14 January 1983

14 January 1983

The TARİŞ trial came to an end with the acquittal of 143 out of 167 defendants, life sentences for 4, and 20 defendants sentenced to prison terms of from 4 to 20 years.

24 January 1983

The draft Political Parties Law led to various interpretations. Some members of the Consultative Assembly declared that the draft had been prepared hastily.

28 January 1983

Leaders of the Bar were brought to trial for having failed to strip Orhan Apaydın of the right to practice law.

5 February 1983

Justice Minister Cevdet Mendes resigned in connection with a disagreement that emerged within the government.

7 February 1983

The Executive Committee of Türk-İş published its views on the trade union law: "The right to strike must be recognised without any hindrance".

10 February 1983

The tenure of 10 professors and assistant professors was ended.

The Financial Affairs Commission turned down the draft giving authority to the government.

11 February 1983

Students at the Arts and Science Faculty boycotted lessons and meals in protest against the junta's sacking of 13 instructors.

23 February 1983

The Political Parties Law is still being discussed.

Yılmaz says that the "question of the regime cannot be solved

without solving the workers' question."

### 9 March 1983

Prison sentences of 5 and 6 years are demanded for Nadir Nadi and Oktay Gözersin in connection with an article by the former entitled "A strange draft".

### 14 March 1983

In Adıyaman, Evren says: "There are some who want to put a spoke in the wheel. Do not think that this constitution will solve everything."

### 26 March 1983

Three security police were killed in a clash in Istanbul.

### 8 April 1983

A clash took place involving militants in Istanbul.

### 20 April 1983

Prisons were warned that militants are communicating with each other using morse code.

The former political parties are trying to establish new parties. Mergers are being talked of on both right and left.

### 26 April 1983

The political parties law came into effect. Decree no:70 of the National Security Council forbidding the functioning of political parties was lifted.

### 4 May 1983

Former Republican People's Party governors issued a statement saying that new parties should arise from the rank and file.

### 5 May 1983

The trial began of 5 teachers who had been sacked.

**6 May 1983**

Lawyers in the DISK trial stayed away from the session in protest against the restriction of defence rights. They set out their views in a written document.

**8 May 1983**

In Çankırı, Evren said that some people are already contravening the laws, decisions and statements of the National Security Council and declared: "We are facing a scene similar to that before 12th September." He issued a stern warning to politicians.

**16 May 1983**

The Nationalist Democracy Party was founded.

**23 May 1983**

133 former parliamentarians joined the Great Turkey Party.

**26 May 1983**

The Motherland Party, Populist Party, and Great Turkey Party were founded.

**28 May 1983**

Former Youth and Sports Minister, Yüksel Çakmur, was arrested together with 4 friends on a charge of having held a political meeting without permission. The reason given was that Çakmur and his friends had conducted propaganda in a garden about the party İnönü was going to form.

**1 June 1983**

The Great Turkey Party was closed on the grounds that its behaviour was contrary to the articles of the constitution.

16 people, including Demirel and members of the Great Turkey Party were placed under house arrest in Çanakkale for having attempted to perpetuate a former political party. 268 provincial leaders and 2,948 members of the provincial executive councils of

4 pre-September 12th political parties were added to the list of those banned from taking part in politics.

Evren says: "If necessary, the elections can be postponed."

**6 June 1983**

SODEP was established.

The Glorious Task Party was established.

**7 June 1983**

Nazlı Ilıcak spoke about a political vacuum in the country. Looking for a solution, she declared that "sham parties like the Nationalist Democracy and Populist parties will not be able to fill this vacuum."

**9 June 1983**

The National Security Council vetoed 7 people from the Motherland Party and 6 from the Populist Party.

In 5 days, three founding members of the Nationalist Democracy Party were changed.

**16 June 1983**

Four policemen were sentenced to 30 years for torture.

**19 June 1983**

In a report on the draft press law sent to the prime minister, the Union of Journalists declared that "the draft reflects an obsolete understanding".

**20 June 1983**

The New Birth Party was established.

**23 June 1983**

The Correct Way Party was established



**25 June 1983**

The vetoing of Erdal İnönü and 20 of his friends threatened the legal recognition of SODEP.

Six founding members of the New Birth Party were banned from founding a party on the grounds that they had "benefitted from an amnesty."

The General Secretary and 29 founding members of the Glorious Task Party resigned.

In Mardin, Evren declared: "Claims that there is a vacuum and that the rank and file are with them are deceptions. The people making this type of insinuation are thinking about themselves, not the country."

**26 June 1983**

62 members of the Glorious Task Party were vetoed.

**29 June 1983**

The Nationalist Democracy, Motherland, Populist and Social-Democratic parties all declared that they wanted free trade unionism.

**1 July 1983**

The New Order Party was established.

**3 July 1983**

Transfers in the army. Evren stepped down as Chief of General Staff.

The vetoes continued. 30 founding members of the Correct Way Party were vetoed. Only 4 of the party's founding members remained.

**6 July 1983**

Decree no:91 of the National Security Council states that those

given suspended sentences will be able to establish parties and be elected to parliament.

7 July 1983

The Republican Conservative Party was established. Court proceedings began to close the Glorious Task Party.

8 July 1983

2500 prisoners at the Istanbul Military Prison started a hunger strike.

Thirteen founding members of SODEP were vetoed, together with 38 founding members of the New Birth Party.

"Our Party" was established.

15 July 1983

A sub-commission of the Consultative Assembly opposed a draft law to transfer prisons to the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

20 July 1983

The general Council of *Türk-İş* held an extraordinary meeting. Yılmaz said "There can be no democracy without trade unions."

21 July 1983

The Welfare Party was established.

25 July 1983

Evren says, "The most critical period is the transition to civilian rule."

9 August 1983

A letter signed by Demirel, Baykal and 14 prisoners was printed in the foreign press.

15 August 1983

The hunger strike in Istanbul came to an end. A new action

began in Erzurum.

**16 August 1983**

Evren says, "The period after the elections is a critical transition period."

**18 August 1983**

57 more people were vetoed from three parties.

**25 August 1983**

It became definite that three parties would run in the 6th November elections: the Motherland Party, the Nationalist Democracy Party and the Populist Party.

**29 August 1983**

The main topic of Evren's August tours was "do not believe the traitors".

**1 September 1983**

2,119 prisoners went on hunger strike in Diyarbakır, 110 of them until death.

**8 September 1983**

The Correct Way Party and SODEP issued a joint statement declaring that they had discussed common problems.

**9 September 1983**

The President of the Balıkesir Bar stated that "the mechanism of justice has become completely outmoded."

**13 September 1983**

Some members of the Consultative Assembly declared that they would work with all their strength to have articles banning freedom of the press removed from the draft press law.

**22 September 1983**

A total of 672 parliamentary candidates was vetoed: 74 from the

Nationalist Democracy Party, 89 from the Motherland Party, 81 from the Populist Party, and 428 independents.

### 28-29 September 1983

The hunger strike in Diyarbakır came to an end. In the courts, it was announced that the prisoners' demands had been met by the prison administration and the martial law command.

### 30 September 1983

A sub-committee of the Consultative Assembly declared that the proposal of Vice-Admiral Tümer for tri-party local elections contravened the constitution.

### 1 October 1983

The Constitutional Committee also turned down Tümer's proposal.

### 2 October 1983

Demirel, Baykal and 14 former politicians were released.

More candidates were vetoed: 2 from the Nationalist Democracy Party, 8 from the Motherland Party and 11 from the Populist Party.

### 3 October 1983

Evren said, "Due to incitement by some states, we have been unable to completely root out terrorism".

Resistance in the Buca prison has been continuing for eight months.

### 4 October 1983

Tevfik Fikret Alpaslan, a member of the Consultative Assembly, said that "the press law does not accord with the spirit of the transition to democracy".

### 8 October 1983

8 October 1983

A court case about the Motherland Party was started on the grounds that the party was distributing badges.

9 October 1983

In Muğla, Evren declared: "Efforts to encourage spoiled votes are a communist trick. Do not fall for it."

14 October 1983

The procedure for "security investigations" of workers going abroad was abolished.

15 October 1983

The Consultative Assembly has turned into an opposition assembly. Most recently, the Prime Minister said: "The Consultative Assembly which turned down the Value-Added Tax and the Chartered Accountants Law previously raised retirement benefits despite the government."

16 October 1983

The Ministry of Internal Affairs issued a statement demanding that measures be taken against incidents during the election period and on election day.

27 October 1983

The Tranquility Party was closed by decision of the Constitutional Court.

6 November 1983

The Motherland Party won the general elections. The results were: 5.4% invalid votes; 7.2% abstentions; 6.1% deprived of the right to the vote; discounted votes, 3.7%. Total: 22.4%.

14 November 1983

The Union of Bar Associations demanded a general amnesty.

18 November 1983

18 November 1983

In an interview with *Time* magazine, Özal said martial law was not permanent.

25 November 1983

Ecevit went to Brussels to take part in a meeting of the Socialist International.

30 November 1983

It was announced that former mayors and provincial leaders of parties which had been closed could take part in politics once again.

1 December 1983

Members of the National Security Council, now the "Presidential Council", gave up their military duties.

5 December 1983

The new Social-Democratic Party which is to be established, will join the Socialist International.

Kaya Özdemir, *Türk-İş* educational secretary, said: "The workers will now be saved from having to remain silent. For three years we have fought to stay on our feet. Henceforward, we will fight to gain rights".

6 December 1983

Uluslu did not take part in the elections for speaker of parliament.

23 December 1983

*Türk-İş* held its congress. It was very eventful, with Halil Tunç and Motherland Party MP's clashing in full public view. During the congress, the Petrol Workers' Union protested against Yılmaz. 50 delegates left the hall.

**25 December 1983**

Sunalp repudiated the demand by 35 provincial leaders of the Nationalist Democracy Party to unite with the Correct Path Party. Resignations from the NDP are taking place continuously.

**29 December 1983**

The Populist Party declared, "we support a broad amnesty".

It was announced that the name of the new party being established would be the Democratic Left Party.

The President of the Constitutional Court stated: "It would be unconstitutional to prevent some parties from taking part in the elections. All the parties can run in the local elections".

**2 January 1984**

A hunger strike began in Mamak prison.

**3 January 1984**

The Union of Turkish Judges stated: "We support a considered amnesty."

**5 January 1984**

There is another hunger strike in Diyarbakır Prison.

**6 January 1984**

National Defence Minister Yavuztürk: "I consider those convicted of crimes of the press and of thought to be victims of fate, and we support amnesty for them."

*(Everyone is talking about amnesty.)*

**7 January 1984**

SODEP and the Correct Way Party joined in the local elections campaign.

**17 January 1984**

17 January 1984

A Populist Party MP is preparing a bill to change the Supreme Educational Council.

Evren: "The Supreme Educational Council cannot be abolished as long as the Constitution does not change."

18 January 1984

Discussions of the minimum wage have begun. Workers demand a minimum wage of 55,000 TL.

Interest in the Correct Way Party is increasing.

3 February 1984

The Populist Party MP for Adana proposed an amnesty for crimes of thought.

6 February 1984

Calp: "The continuance of democracy would be endangered if we unite with SODEP.

22 February 1984

The opposition parties, the Nationalist Democracy Party, the Correct Way Party, SODEP and the Populist Party, announced that they would support *Türk-İş* on the question of wage increases.

Resistance to the imposition of uniforms is rising in the prisons. Some prisoners shouted slogans and tore their uniforms in court.

The families of prisoners on hunger strike in Mamak went to the Prime Minister after visits were banned. A six-member group met with Speaker of the Assembly Karaduman. The families demanded the improvement of prison conditions. One week after the event, the families went to the Prime Minister carrying torn and bloody clothes.



27 February 1984

The *Türk-İş* representatives left the Supreme Arbitration Council.

11 March 1984

Erdal İnönü stated that his first act on coming to power would be to "change the laws governing trade unions, collective bargaining, strikes and lock-outs and laws which do not accord with the human rights and freedoms of a democratic regime".

12 March 1984

İnönü: "We support an amnesty including those convicted of political crimes and crimes of thought."

14 March 1984

İnönü stated that restrictions imposed by some laws adopted during the emergency period would have to be lifted: "The laws governing the press, the Supreme Educational Council, political parties, associations, meetings, demonstrations, trade unions, collective bargaining, strikes and lock-outs, will have to be redrafted".

Özal stated that the laws passed after 12th September would have to be applied for some time yet: "Whether or not they are appropriate must be tested in their application".

21 March 1984

A clash took place in Tarsus between the Motherland Party and SODEP. Four people were injured.

Discussion of an amnesty was banned.

Five hundred people demonstrated in the Akdere district of Ankara in connection with the elections.

25 March 1984

Local elections were held.

Votes for the Nationalist Democracy Party fell from 23 to 7.1%, for the Motherland Party from 46 to 41.1%.

The opposition outside parliament gained 40% of the votes.

#### 4 April 1984

Sixty-three lawyers presented a petition to the Istanbul Martial Law Command stating that "there are laws which prevent advocacy and which hinder the right of defence". The same petition was also handed to the President, the Prime Minister, the Chief of the General Staff, the political parties and the Union of Bar Associations.

#### 25 April 1984

*Türk-İş* proposed changes in six laws governing trade unions, collective bargaining, strikes, lock-outs and employment.

The President of the Union of Bar Associations criticised changes in the advocacy law. Referring in particular to article 154, he said: "... this is the greatest blow dealt to independent defence ... such a law does not accord with the honour of the Bars and the Union of Bar Associations of a supposedly democratic country".

A new amendment to article 154 reads: "It is compulsory to ban from practice any lawyer who is brought to trial for offences against the person of the state."

#### 6 April 1984

The hunger strike in Mamak ended.

#### 15 April 1984

The municipality law is being changed.

#### 18 April 1984

News of the hunger strike appeared in the newspapers.

20 April 1984

Twelve people on trial for torture were acquitted.

22 April 1984

The Labour Minister said: "The labour laws must be changed".

27 April 1984

Evren: "Needs that may appear in future years may necessitate some changes in the constitution. But this is not the time for it now."

1 May 1984

*Laws governing the executive* — The Finance Minister said: "We want a constitutional executive". Özer Gürbüz (Populist Party) asked: "If the government comes forward with a new executive law every day, will we not have a half-veiled government dictatorship?"

Calp demanded the redrafting of the article in the constitution concerning the executive.

All the opposition parties are opposed to the law governing the executive.

3 May 1984

The Constitutional Court rejected the Populist Party's request to cancel the local elections.

Two members of the Constitutional Court, Nahit Saçlıoğlu and Yetka Güngör wrote dissenting opinions.

To date, the Özal government has adopted 25 laws and issued 31 decrees having the force of law.

9 May 1984

On the proposal of Evren, the Justice Commission redrafted the law concerning the acceptance of a decree having the force of law

to make changes in the advocacy law. It will be submitted to Evren once again.

#### 14 May 1984

While, according to the law, house rents can only increase 20% per year, it is being said that they have increased more than 40% and that in some districts rent is being paid in dollars or in gold.

Clashes that began in the government and the Motherland Party broke out into the open.

#### 15 May 1984

113 prisoners in Metris, 26 of them women, and 153 prisoners in Sağmalcılar are on hunger strike.

1383 intellectuals presented a petition for democratic rights to Evren and the speaker of the Assembly Karaduman. 1256 had signed the petition while the names of 127 more who had been unable to meet with the notary were added later.

#### 19 May 1984

Four tendencies on the subject of amnesty emerged within the Motherland Party:

(1) 48% found the talk of an amnesty premature; (2) 10.3% opposed an amnesty; (3) 26% wanted an amnesty; (4) 14% were undecided.

#### 21 May 1984

An investigation was begun into the "Intellectuals' Petition" with 1383 signatures.

#### 25 May 1984

The newspapers headlined "Balloon terrorists apprehended" as *Worker's Voice* members were arrested in İzmir.

#### 30 May 1984

Evren said: "Turkey's enemies at home are once again going into

action."

### 1 June 1984

In a speech in the Assembly, Finance Minister Vural Arıkan said, "The ruling forces have formed a lobby to prevent the adoption of any law against themselves."

The Nationalist Democracy Party group in the assembly published a sharp statement: "With this attitude, the government is killing the supremacy of parliament and confirming its disbelief in democracy."

The trial opened of 3 members of SODEP. (In connection with speeches they made in an area of Üsküdar prior to the elections.) Prison sentences ranging from 9 months to 3 years are being demanded.

SODEP said: "We do not want the constitution to be changed. We believe that democracy will gradually develop within the framework of the constitution."

### 2 June 1984

The President of the Constitutional Court: "The present laws do not suffice for the financial supervision of parties. A new law is necessary."

### 3 June 1984

38 revolutionaries were arrested in Ankara.

Özal held a meeting about the crisis in the party, saying: "It is clear who will come to power in the country in a new crisis. Be patient."

### 4 June 1984

At a *Türk-İş* open air meeting in Istanbul, workers shouted the slogan: "We have the right to strike. We will take our right!" (12,000 workers were present.)

Three founding members of SODEP spoke in Diyarbakır: "First

a National Coalition, then early elections.”

In response to SODEP's call to unite forces, the Nationalist Democracy Party said: “First let them enter the Assembly.”

8 June 1984

Evren met with the leaders of the opposition. Calp said, “We are not thinking of either a coalition or early elections.”

13 June 1984

The Chief Prosecutor of the Republic once again demanded the closure of the Correct Way Party.

16 June 1984

The Izmit Prison Director was sentenced to death for having conducted torture.

17 June 1984

The Central Decision and Administration Council of SODEP issued a statement criticising the decision that the treasury would distribute aid to parties in proportion to the number of votes they had gained.

State bodies are being reorganised.

18 June 1984

The Nationalist Action Party — National Salvation Party dispute within the Motherland Party flared up.

20 June 1984

The hunger strike in Metris continued.

The Martial Law Command announced that 3 people on hunger strikes in prisons had died.

21 June 1984

In connection with the resignations from the Anatolian Agency,

Özal said: "There has been a mistake. There will be no interference with the Anatolian Agency. No article concerned with the Agency will be included in the decree having the force of law about the Press and Information General Administration."

23 June 1984

Three parties (the Motherland, Populist and Nationalist Democracy Parties) established a joint team to investigate the prisons.

25 June 1984

Three revolutionaries involved in a clash were killed.

26 June 1984

There is "open visiting" in the prisons on the holiday. (The number of open visits increased.)

Özal said, "We are walking with a knife in our backs."

At the end of June, workers at the Arı factory, most of them women, protested against their employer by sitting in front of the factory knitting.

30 June 1984

Martial law was lifted in 13 more provinces.

2 July 1984

Prison sentences ranging from three months to one year are being demanded for 56 of the 1383 intellectuals who signed the petition.

4 July 1984

*Türk-İş* demanded new revisions in the labour laws. (There are 21 laws, firstly those governing trade unions and collective bargaining.)

6 July 1984

### 6 July 1984

The Teachers' Training Commission stated that the proposal of the Ministry of National Education, Youth and Sport for compulsory religious instruction ran counter to the constitution.

### 8 July 1984

The First Grand Congress of SODEP was held on 7th July. E. İnönü stated: "We are ready for early elections. We are ready to unite with the Populist Party ... Postponing our unity only benefits the regime."

N. Calp: "I too cannot understand why we do not unite."

The clash between Özal and Uluşu continued. In his speech, Uluşu remarked: "They say we printed 2 billion in excess currency, and that we did not register it". — Özal responded: "I have conclusive proof, but it would not benefit the country for me to publish it. Don't ask what it is."

### 10 July 1984

The SODEP congress ended. İnönü was given two responsibilities: 1. To establish unity among the social-democratic rank and file. 2. To make the party, its cadres and programme, worthy of power.

Özal: "The merger of the Populist Party and SODEP cannot be realised because of the constitution. Only independent MP's ... can take this path".

### 12 July 1984

A cry for unity on the right. (N. Kemal Şentürk and Memduh Yaşa of the Nationalist Democracy Party proposed this to the Correct Way Party.) The Motherland Party has its eye on the Nationalist Democracy Party. In regard to SODEP — Populist Party unity, Özal reminded the Populist Party of 154 million in financial aid. The Populist Party said: "first unity of forces, then merger".



16 July 1984

About the Kafaoğlu-Pakdemir dispute) Kafaoğlu said: "They committed a crime against everyone and violated the constitution."

Kafaoğlu is relying on the 15th article of the constitution in the discussion about the possible launching of an investigation into his actions in regard to the operation to rescue companies. Ulusu supports him: "The 15th article prevents the minister from resorting to the Council of State. An investigation cannot be launched." The former president of the Constitution Commission, Aldıkaçtı, said, "The Constitution Commission did not write the 15th article which contravenes democratic rules."

17 July 1984

A pamphlet entitled "Appeal to Leaders of the Democratic Left Movement" began to be sent to 18,000 candidates.

18 July 1984

Kafaoğlu: "I know that the target is greater than myself. The 1982 Constitution and the established order are the target."

19 July 1984

Stating that much ground had been covered on the topic of unity, İnönü said: "The constitutional difficulties can be overcome."

20 July 1984

Martial law was lifted in 13 more provinces.

22 July 1984

While the President of the Nationalist Democracy Party, Sunalp, was saying that he was prepared to discuss if such a request came from the Correct Way Party, the Vice-President of the latter party, Ergenekon, said, "There is no need for an artificial political chart. The merger subject is an operation to save the Nationalist Democracy Party."

23 July 1984

Inönü: "We are setting up a shadow cabinet."

24 July 1984

Aydın Gürkan, vice-president of the Populist Party, "We oppose many of the laws that have been adopted."

26 July 1984

In Bitlis, Özal said: "We do not want the constitution to change for some time."

The establishment of the Democratic Left Party was put off until the autumn.

30 July 1984

The MISK trade union confederation is preparing for its congress.

1 August 1984

Although its application had been accepted by the Supreme Election Council, SODEP decided not to participate in the propaganda for the Ağrı elections in order not to "wear itself out".

2 August 1984

Evren: "In order for political prisoners to be amnestied, it is necessary to change the constitution. But you too accepted the constitution."

There is a difference of opinion within the Populist Party on the question of lowering the voting age to 18. While this is supported by the General Secretary, A. Gürkan, N. Calp recalled Evren's words in Manisa on 28th May 1984 that he would "not allow any holes to be opened in the constitution", and said that Motherland-Populist Party cooperation would be necessary to pass such a law. He did not support the lowering of the voting age. The difference of opinion also exists among MP's.

**3 August 1984**

The Security Director in Ankara beat up the mayor in the middle of the street, sending him to hospital.

**4 August 1984**

Collective bargaining discussions have begun for 80,000 workers in the textile industry. Some negotiations have reached the strike stage.

**5 August 1984**

Municipal workers in Manisa stayed away from work in protest against the sub-contracting system.

**6 August 1984**

TEKSIF demanded a 110% wage increase.

**8 August 1984**

Women organised a protest march in Istanbul after a fight broke out in a queue for water.

**9 August 1984**

*Türk-Metal* demanded a more than 100% increase in the minimum wage.

**13 August 1984**

In regard to democracy lessons being given in schools, the Correct Way Party president, G. Ergenekon, said: "lessons in democracy cannot be given with an understanding that kills democracy."

**14 August 1984**

The opposition won local elections in 5 municipalities.

When parliament opens, the Populist Party will propose changes in article 91 of the Constitution (the article dealing with decrees having the force of law).

**18 August 1984**

At his 6th press conference, Özal said, "I am not the deputy prime minister of the 1950's, but the prime minister of 1984. I am very well aware of the forces opposing me."

**19 August 1984**

The operation in the south. Reinforcements were sent into the region. Those responsible for the actions in Eruh and Şemdinli are being sought. (The police station was attacked. One officer, one sergeant, 7 enlisted men and 3 civilians were wounded.)

Özal took measures against those attempting to seize control of the party by "force".

Group affiliations to the Motherland Party were banned.

**20 August 1984**

İnönü said that he wanted a review of the application of martial law and of some laws hindering democracy. For the sake of "cooperation for democracy", he extended an olive branch to the Motherland Party.

**21 August 1984**

Collective bargaining negotiations between the Print Workers' Union and the Director of A.Ü. Basımevi (printing house) headed towards an impasse.

**24 August 1984**

None of the defendants in the DISK trial remain in prison.

Bakers in Iskenderun halted production when they were refused the wage increase they wanted.

It was demanded that the leading cadres of the Union of Bar Associations be changed on the grounds that their attitude towards the economic policy being applied was not approved of. For this reason, those demanding a general meeting stated: "A

more effective attitude towards the regime's policy will be adopted after the leadership is changed."

### 27 August 1984

There is a serious rupture in the Populist Party.

The establishment of the Democratic Left Party was put off until 1985.

### 28 August 1984

During a visit by Özal, the SODEP mayor of Marmaris was arrested for having hit a car belonging to the Motherland Party governor and for having created a disturbance.

### 29 August 1984

Özal said that there were those who wanted parties that had been closed after 12th September to re-enter the political process and who were conducting this opposition within the Motherland Party.

### 2 September 1984

Can Polak, Deputy Director of the Anatolian Agency, announced that he had left his post even though his resignation had not been accepted. He resigned together with the Director, Hüsamettin Çelebi and other members of the Executive Council over a decree foreseeing the subordination of the Agency to the General Directorship of the Press.

### 5 September 1984

The charge that Finance and Customs Minister, Vural Arıkan, and the Yeşilköy Customs Director had been arrested and tortured without the knowledge of Istanbul Governor Ayaz was taken to the Assembly.

In an interview with the press, V. Arıkan threatened: "things are happening in Turkey that I do not like; I will hold a press conference and tell everything like it is."

**6 September 1984**

The *Tercüman* newspaper was closed indefinitely.

The appointments made at Turkish Radio and Television became the subject of discussion. Ahmet Abakay, President of the Society of Contemporary Journalists, said, "The TRT cannot be turned into a National Front."

**8 September 1984**

The Populist Party charged that the border operation was a political question and V. Arıkan demanded that the Assembly be informed of what was happening in a closed session.

## Appendix II

Chronology of the disintegration of fascism in Spain and of the reactionary regime that followed it

1898

1898

Spain was defeated in war with the US and lost Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines.

13 September 1923

The military coup by General Primo de Rivero.

30 January 1930

General Berenquer succeeded Primo.

14 March 1931

Ramiro Ledesma Ramos established La Conquista del Estado.

14 April 1931

Alfonso XIII was overthrown and the Second Republic established.

26 April 1931

**26 April 1931**

Accion Popular was formed.

**10 October 1931**

Onesimo Redondo and Ramiro Ledesma Ramos established the Juntas de Ofensivo Nacional Sindicalista.

**15 December 1931**

The Accion Espanòla was formed.

**28 February 1933**

Acciòn Popular united with the other right-wing groups in CFDA.

**1 March 1933**

Acciòn Espanòla established the political front known as Renovaciòn Espanòla.

**29 October 1933**

Josè Antonio Primor de Rivera started the Falange Espanòla movement.

**19 November 1933**

Josè Antonio was elected as deputy from Cadiz.

**11 February 1934**

The Falange and JONS united to form the F E de las JONS.

**6 October 1934**

General strike. Soon thereafter, a declaration of independence was made in Catalonia.

**16 February 1936**

The Popular Front won the elections.

**14 March 1934**

The FE de last JONS was banned and its leaders imprisoned.



**18 July 1936**

Military revolt. The civil war began.

**19 April 1937**

Franco, the Falange and the Carlists united with other right-wing groups in the FET y de las JONS.

**1 April 1939**

The civil war ended.

**13 June 1940**

Spain abandoned neutrality but announced that it would stay out of the war.

**14 June 1940**

Spain occupied Tanca.

**19 October 1940**

Himmler visited Madrid and cooperation began with the Gestapo to reorganise the Franco police.

**23 October 1940**

The Hitler-Franco meeting in Hendaye.

**12 February 1941**

The Mussolini-Franco meeting in Bordighera.

**25 November 1941**

Serrano Suñer's visit to Berlin and the renewal of the Anti-Comintern Pact.

**1943**

At the time of the defence of Stalingrad, a section of communists and anarchists established a guerrilla organisation and fought in rural areas for 5-6 years.

**3 October 1943**

3 October 1943

Spain abandoned its non-belligerent status and once again declared neutrality.

11 September 1945

The compulsory fascist greeting was abolished.

18 September 1943

Spain pulled out of Tanca.

13 December 1946

The United Nations recommended that ambassadors be recalled from Madrid.

1 April 1947

Franco's Succession Law declared Spain to be a monarchy.

1 May 1947

Strikes in Bilbao were successful. The "Adjustment of Wages" was applied on a nationwide scale. The government was compelled to take a step back. Trade unionism was led by the Catholic Movement of Labour Fraternity, the Catholic Movement of Working Youth and organised workers. The workers often sent respected figures such as priests to negotiate with the employers.

October 1948

The Spanish Communist Party and the Catalan Socialist Unity Party held a joint meeting. It decided that the experience of underground trade unions was unsuccessful. In the practical struggle, the following type of trade unionism developed: The workers sent trusted friends from among themselves to negotiate with the employers. Several resistances took place in this manner. As a result, employers could be compelled to make "wage adjustments". (This was illegal, since wages were actually set by the government. By giving higher wages, the employers were acting illegally.)

**4 November 1950**

The United Nations agreed that international organisations could accept Spain as a member.

**March 1951**

A strike in the Barcelona mass transit system. It continued until 1953. The strike was led by the Workers' Commissions both within and outside the official trade unions which opposed the strike. The Commissions appeared for the first time during the strike and disappeared when the strike finished.

**26 September 1953**

The Madrid Pact was signed which gave the US the right to establish bases in Spain.

**8 December 1955**

Spain was accepted into the UN.

**Spring 1956**

The entire industrial sector was on strike. In February 1957 it reached its high point with the mass transit strikes in Madrid and Barcelona. All the ministers in the government changed. The strike finished in the summer of 1958.

**December 1956**

Student events, and the Falange lost ground.

The *Opus Dei* technocrats joined the government.

**1958**

The government ceased to set wages. On the condition that the last word was reserved to the government, this authority was handed over to the official trade unions.

**29 January 1959**

97 leading businessmen and intellectuals founded the Union Espanola and recognised Don Juan as king of Spain. The person

who organised the meeting was merely fined 50,000 pesos.

### 1960

The Cuban revolution had a great impact. It became the fashion to grow beards like Castro's.

### 30 May 1960

339 Basque priests signed a statement demanding freedom of the individual.

### November 1960

200 intellectuals launched a campaign condemning censorship. At a meeting to commemorate the anniversary of the death of a Catalan poet, the Catalan national anthem, the words of which he had written, was sung. 100 people were arrested. Of these, the organiser of the meeting was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment while the rest were released! The Catalan language was left free until 1962. Even a Catalan daily newspaper was published.

### 1961

A disagreement emerged between Pope John XXIII and Franco. The newspaper failed to publish the entire text of an annual speech by the Pope. Without naming him, the Pope criticised Franco. Franco replied to this in a speech in the parliament, saying "the 'Movimiento' is catholic".

### March-May 1962

A strike wave in Asturias, the Basque region and Catalonia.

### 7 April 1962

A coal strike in Asturias soon spread to the entire country. Workers' Commissions were set up again. A wage increase of almost 25% was won. In this way, the Workers' Commissions gained acceptance and increased their authority.

### January 1962

### January 1962

The archbishops of Bilbao and Seville criticised the low level of wages and demanded an increase of 50%.

### 10 June 1962

Changes in the cabinet. Liberal tendencies were brought into the ministries of Labour, Education, Tourism and Information (dealing with censorship).

### September 1962

The penal code was revised. "Non-political strikes" were legalised. The number of strikes covered by this law were as follows:

1963	771
1964	484
1963	232
1966	179
1967	597 (in solidarity with 203 sacked miners)

### 1963

600 metal workers gathered in the official trade union building in Madrid. Included among them were progressive leaders of the official trade union. The Workers' Commissions were legally elected. This practice spread to the entire country. The workers set up Workers' Commissions outside the official trade union hierarchy in the same trade union building. In the Basque region, the Workers' Commissions were established outside the legal framework of the official trade unions.

### 20 April 1963

The communist Julian Grimau was executed.

### 28 April 1963

The First Development Plan was adopted.

### 1964-1966

The Workers' Commissions spread to the entire country. They

were now organised, not as before for individual actions, but continuously.

### 1966

*Official trade union elections:* The belief in government circles that the official trade unions were protecting their influence was shaken. A manoeuvre was launched to dissolve the Workers' Commissions within the official trade unions. In a definite concession, repression was lessened in the period leading up to the official trade union elections. The Workers' Commissions were allowed to become active and to run in the elections with an independent slate. Taking advantage of this opportunity, the Workers' Commissions emerged with good results from the collective bargaining negotiations. Participation in these elections was 83.3%, compared with 30% in the previous elections. Out of more than 200,000 workers' representative only 22.5% retained their positions. 3/4 of the representatives elected were from the Workers' Commissions' slate. All the metal workers in Madrid voted for the Workers' Commissions' slate. However, repression increased after the elections. Arrests began again.

### April 1966

The censorship of translations of Marx and Engels was lifted.

### 14 December 1966

In a demonstration of liberation, the Organic State Law (Constitution) was submitted to a referendum. Participation was 88.79% with a yes vote of 95.06%.

The constitution posited the uniting of "employers, technicians and workers" in organisations to "protect their interests". Thus, different interests in society were recognised for the first time! The workers' committees inaugurated discussions about the new trade unions and trade union law to be established according to the constitution.

16 February 1967

The Supreme Court declared the Workers' Commissions to be illegal.

April 1967

More than 1,000 representatives gathered in Madrid to determine their principles in regard to the trade union law. The representatives presented these principles to the speaker of the Permanent Assembly of Spain.

21 September 1967

Admiral Carrero Blanco was appointed deputy prime minister.

27 October 1967

Huge protest actions. More than 150,000 workers were on strike in Madrid. In these actions, the Workers' Commissions gained thorough acceptance among the people. Organisations began to spring up among the people: Peasants' and Agricultural Workers' Committees, District and Neighbourhood Committees were established.

17 November 1967

In a speech in the assembly, Franco said, "In the future there will be pluralism within reasonable limits."

30 January 1968

A son was born to Juan Carlos. When he came to Spain for the baptism, he was met by 15,000 people. Don Juan was given permission to stay in Spain until 11th February. He had two private interviews with Franco and also met with opponents of the regime.

28 March 1968

The University of Madrid was closed down.

1 May 1968

May Day strikes took place. The student events in Paris were

being followed closely. At the Third Congress of the Workers' Commissions it was declared: "our road lies through a general strike."

#### 21 December 1968

The Carlists around Prince Carlos Hugo united and went into open opposition. They put forth Carlos as a candidate in demonstrations. Carlos was exiled.

#### 22 December 1968

Police attacked a Carlist demonstration. Now the Carlists united around the candidacy of Prince Xavier and started anti-regime propaganda.

#### 27 December 1968

Prince Xavier was exiled.

#### 24 January 1969

Martial law was declared for two months throughout Spain.

For 2-3 months, the Students' Committees organised actions, boycotts and occupations. But they dispersed in the face of repression. The Workers' Commissions put up determined resistance. But the possibilities for coordination were weakened. In the end, these actions gained a marginal victory. Martial law was lifted one month early.

#### 22 July 1969

Franco named Juan Carlos as his successor.

#### 1970

The year was filled with overdue collective bargaining negotiations. Strikes started everywhere. Police opened fire on a demonstration by construction workers in front of the official union building in Granada. Three workers were killed. Protest strikes spread rapidly. Striking Madrid metro workers were drafted by force.



**3-8 December 1970. Burgos Trial**

The trial of 16 ETA Basque revolutionaries. A total of 6 death sentences and 752 years imprisonment was being demanded. Solidarity actions took place everywhere. Masses of people stayed away from work demanding a general amnesty. The church wanted an amnesty and the pope intervened. International pressure increased. Franco retreated and gave in on the death sentences. This incident opened a deep wound in the regime. Contradictions within the regime sharpened: A series of high-ranking generals in the army were retired.

**9 October 1971**

The leaders of the illegal Workers' Commissions were sentenced to 12-20 years imprisonment.

**8 June 1973**

Admiral Carrero Blanco was appointed prime minister.

**20 December 1973**

Carrero Blanco was murdered by ETA militants.

**29 December 1973**

Carlos Arias Navarro was named prime minister. He promised reforms.

**12 February 1974**

Arias declared that the regime "will be opened up".

**28 February 1974**

The bishop of Bilbao was placed under house arrest.

**9 July 1974**

Franco was seriously ill.

**19 July 1974**

Franco handed over power to Juan Carlos.

29 July 1974

The opposition established the "Democratic Junta". The P.S.O.E. (Socialist Party) held its 13th Congress. Phillip Gonzales was elected general secretary representing the "home front".

23 December 1974

A law on political organisations was adopted.

February 1975

Strikes spread across the country.

April 1975

Martial law in the Basque region.

June 1975

The moderate opposition established the "Platform of Democratic Convergence."

21 September 1975

Five ETA and FRAP militants were executed.

20 November 1975

Franco died.

22 November 1975

Juan Carlos was crowned king.

4 December 1975

Arias became prime minister.

13 December 1975

Arias established a government including reformers.

January 1976

An unprecedented strike wave.

**28 January 1976**

Arias submitted his programme to the assembly.

**3 March 1976**

Five workers were killed in clashes with the police in Victoria.

**26 March 1976**

The opposition united in the "Democratic Coordination".

**15 April 1976**

The socialist trade union confederation, the UGT, held its first congress in 40 years.

**1 July 1976**

Arias resigned.

**3 July 1976**

Adolfo Suarez became prime minister.

**30 July 1976**

The government declared a partial amnesty.

**10 August 1976**

Suarez met with the Socialists' leader Gonzales.

**10 September 1976**

The government accepted a Political Reform Law. (A democracy with two houses of parliament and universal suffrage.)

**15 December 1976**

A referendum was held on the Political Reform Law. Yes: 94.2%  
No: 2.6%.

**9 April 1977**

Suarez legalised the Communist Party of Spain.

**15 June 1977**

**15 June 1977**

The first free elections since 1936 were held.

**22 July 1977**

Parliament resumed.

**29 September 1977**

Devolution was recognised for Catalonia.

**15 October 1977**

A new amnesty was declared.

**25 October 1977**

The government and the opposition signed the Monclaa agreement.

**December 1977**

Events in the Basque region, Galicia and Andalusia.

**30 December 1977**

"Pre-autonomy" was given to the Basque region.

**January 1978**

Revolts in the prisons.

**February-March 1978**

The Workers' Commissions won the trade union elections.

**19-23 June 1977**

The Communists held their first legal congress and repudiated "Leninism".

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