

Turkey's Invisible Prime Minister

EXCLUSIVE

The Turkish National Security Council met last week in a special five-hour session and warned Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel that the Turkish military is growing increasingly impatient at his inability to curb the increase of bloody clashes in universities and work places throughout Turkey.

Participating in the meeting was Deputy Prime Minister Alpaslan Turkes, a ruling coalition partner of Demirel, who for 20 years has acted as top coordinator of Interpol's destabilization operations against the Turkish government. A self-avowed Nazi and open admirer of Adolf Hitler and Bavaria's Franz Josef Strauss, Turkes (pronounced Turk-aysh) over the years has built up a vast network of paramilitary commando units. At the appropriate political time, he has let these thugs loose throughout the country to stage terrorist attacks against students and workers, and political opponents.

The current chaos in Turkey is directly the work of Turkes. As "Prime Minister" of Turkey's invisible government and the official head of Turkey's internal security apparatus, Turkes has fully mobilized his shock troops — which by some estimates number in the tens of thousands — to throw Demirel off course and disrupt the growth of Turkish-Soviet relations.

Should Demirel not be terrorized into submission, Turkes is prepared — as evidenced by the latest outbreak of violence that led to the near shut down of Turkey's university system — to provoke the military to seize power.

So far, Demirel has held back from moving against Turkes and dismantling his Interpol apparatus because he fears it would collapse the government. Turkes' neo-fascist National Action Party now holds four parliamentary seats, which Demirel needs to maintain a majority in Parliament.

Turkes maintains close links to Interpol via his state security apparatus, and more often than not, his thugs are backed up by the local police. Turkes' shock troops currently operate out of more than 35 camps around the country. Unemployed village youth, mostly from Turkey's backward east, are recruited into the camps and drilled in martial arts. Thoroughly indoctrinated into Turkes' brand of fascism, the youth are armed with guns and knives and sent out to universities to kill leftists, to shoot indiscriminantly into classrooms or crowds, and to incite riots. Turkes also sends his troops to the factories organized by DISK, the pro-socialist trade union confederation.

Turkes the Turanist

A Cypriot by birth, Turkes emigrated to Turkey in 1932 where he entered the military academy, graduating in 1938. In an effort to blend into mainland Turkish society and become a "real Turk," Turkes adopted a militant, super-patriotic posture to compensate for having been born outside of Turkey. In 1944, as a young officer, he was

arrested for his participation in anti-communist demonstrations and for publishing poems he had written advocating racist pan-Turanism, a doctrine espousing the unity of all Turks. Turkes's Turanist organizing was a barely veiled attempt to stir up divisive nationalist hysteria, not only in Turkey but also in the Soviet Union, where the majority of Turkish-speaking people in the world live.

Since the 1940s, Turkes' primary assignment has been to block the growth of Soviet-Turkish relations. Following World War II, the U.S. used NATO, the Truman Doctrine, and the Marshall Plan to try to take over the Turkish economy and destroy Turkey's state-sector enterprises set up by Kemal Ataturk, the bonapartist, pro-development founder of the Turkish Republic. In 1950 the U.S. State Department in collaboration with the American Information Service, rigged the national elections and put its own group in power. Among other dirty tricks, the U.S. distributed leaflets calling for the removal of the incumbent Republican People's Party, the party of Ataturk in power since the formation of the Republic. The newly formed Democrat Party, a creation of NATO, "won" the election and pledged to carry out U.S. policy to destroy the state sector as well as the People's Party and open up Turkey for looting by private enterprises.

The 1960 Coup: A Case Study

By the middle 1950s it became clear that the Democrats were unable to break internal resistance and implement U.S. policy; the Ataturk legacy was too deeply ingrained in the Turkish population. Turkey's debt soared, the economy plunged into bankruptcy, and, according to one account, the International Monetary Fund became "terrified." By 1959, Prime Minister Menderes, faced with growing unrest at home, began to look toward the Soviet Union for assistance.

At this point, Turkes was ordered into action to pull off a coup against Menderes. As early as 1957 Turkes had been involved in a clandestine movement to stage a coup d'etat. Following a stint in Washington as Turkish Military Attaché in 1957-58, Turkes returned to Turkey to coordinate NATO's plans for a military takeover. On May 27, 1960 Turkes personally made the announcement on state radio that the military had seized power. There was no doubt that the coup was run out of NATO's offices. Turkes just prior to the takeover was officially assigned to the NATO Land Forces Command in Ankara.

From May through November 1960, Turkes ran Turkey, implementing the IMF's program for a "controlled economy." As member of the 38-officer National Unity Committee (NUC) and Special Counselor to Gen. Gemal Gursel, whom he had installed as head of the military government, Turkes was the driving force behind a massive purge of the armed forces that

“retired” 5,000 traditionalist, pro-Ataturk officers. His controlling role in the government was so open that at Gursel’s press conferences Turkes would sit beside him and tell him what to say in reply to reporters’ questions!

The more traditionalist officers in the military and the NUC favored giving up power to a civilian government, but Turkes and his 13 supporters in the NUC adamantly opposed the idea. On orders from the IMF, Turkes pushed for the reorganization of the Turkish economy, for the restraints on the state sector that the Democrat Party could never implement, and for other restrictive measures. He purged the universities; he proposed the extension of military rule for at least four years. But the issue that forced open the fight between Turkes and the traditionalists was the decree he proposed in November 1960 for the formation of a National Union of Ideals and Culture, a fascist superministry to take over the ministry of education, the media, and several other agencies. The fascist superministry was to operate as a police-style bureau, not responsible to any other ministry including the prime ministry, and was to be led by an immovable “minister” who would “take all necessary measures, free of political pressure and interference, to save the nation....” The outcry from political leaders, intellectuals, and traditionalist military layers against Turkes’s attempt to impose a fascist dictatorship was immediate. Gursel, a traditionalist, finally broke with Turkes, charging him with “endangering the country’s interests.” Turkes and 13 of his collaborators in the NUC were exiled.

The exiled Turkes surfaced in New Delhi, India and maintained close contact with the other 13 as well as with his collaborators still in Turkey. In October 1961, national elections brought to power a coalition government headed by Ismet Inonu of the People’s Party, Ataturk’s closest associate and Turkey’s leading pro-development figure. Following the election, 6 of the 14 fascist exiles met in Paris and denounced the civilian elections. In a joint communiqué they declared, “We do not believe that the important problems existing in our nation can be solved by a parliament which is established at this time....”

Three months after this announcement, in February 1962, a confidant of Turkes, Talat Aydemir, Commander of the Ankara War College, staged an unsuccessful coup against the new government. A year later, Turkes and his 13 cohorts were permitted to return to Turkey and immediately coordinated another coup attempt, again abortively carried out by Aydemir. Aydemir was arrested, tried, and executed; Turkes and 3 of the 13 were arrested for complicity but were acquitted.

A Party of His Own

Turkes was far from washed up. During his stay in

India, he had cultivated ties with the Union of Nationalists of Turkey, an avowedly fascist organization set up during his exile. After his return to Turkey, Turkes focused his energies on forming his own neo-Nazi party, the purpose of which was to sabotage Turkey’s increasing movement away from NATO and toward the Soviet Union. Turkes’s efforts paralleled a marked détente in Turkish-Soviet relations that took place after Inonu’s election in 1961. In response to growing NATO pressure to stay in line, Inonu threatened to leave NATO and set up numerous trade deals with the socialist bloc. In January 1965, he requested a moratorium on debt owed to European and U.S. creditors. Less than one month later, a contrived parliamentary crisis forced Inonu out of office. His successor, Prime Minister Urguplu, also worked to better ties with the Soviets. In October 1967, Prime Minister Demirel, who succeeded Urguplu, announced upon returning from Moscow that the visit had erased “the last traces of hostility” in Soviet-Turkish relations. Meanwhile, the pro-Moscow Turkish Labor Party, formed in 1961, continued gathering strength and for a while formed ties with several other parties, including Inonu’s Republican People’s Party.

To stop Turkey from bolting out of NATO, Turkes consolidated his allies. In March 1965 Turkes, along with 4 of his 13 NUC collaborators, joined the Republican Peasants National Party; by June, 6 more of the 13 had joined. The party chairman resigned and Turkes became inspector-general of the party, using the post to organize support for himself. At the August convention of the party, he became chairman and used the party as a springboard for establishing numerous neo-fascist organizations throughout Turkey, the most important being the “Union of the Hearths of Ideals,” a straight paramilitary operation modeled on Nazi Germany’s youth organizations of the 1930s.

In 1968, when international student unrest was at its peak, Turkes was ordered into high gear by his Interpol controllers. He changed the name of his party to the National Action Party, reorganized it around a new constitution, and published his neo-Nazi “theoretical” work, *The Nine Lights*. In the summer of 1968, Turkes received funds from the Central Intelligence Agency and opened three large camps in Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir for training commandos. The Izmir and Ankara camps were run by two of his NUC colleagues, Dunder Taser and Rifat Baykal. By the end of 1968, Turkes was launching large-scale commando raids against the Turkish left. The ensuing chaos ultimately led to a military takeover in 1971. Turkes openly supported the coup, and as a result his publication *Devlet* was the only publication not shut down following the coup.