CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND TO TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY

The transformation of Turkey from a traditional Islamic country into a modern nation-state is one of the most impressive developments of our epoch. From the time when the Ottoman Turks crossed the Dardanells into Europe, the Ottoman Empire existed as an independent entity and yet a constituent of European political life. Although the bulk of its territorial possessions were outside geographical boundaries of Europe, the characterization of the Ottoman Empire as the “Sick man of Europe” implicitly recognized its role in the continent. Contemporary Turkey seeks to ‘flow into European civilization’, without abandoning the Quran altogether. Its endeavour is not only to adopt western technology but also the civilization of the west, while retaining its own techno-cultural identity. Turkey for five centuries a Hegelian antithesis to the European cultural and political-thesis, may be about to achieve a unique synthesis. Her foreign and domestic policies are principally dedicated to the attainment of this ambitious goal.

In terms of the size of her population and the volume of her economy, Turkey is not one of the great powers, though she is the strongest among the countries of the Middle East. However History has proved beyond any doubt, given the geostrategic position and the character of its people, Turkey has
always played a pivotal role and continues to enjoy such a position even in the present times and this cannot be substantiated in mere statistical figures. The "Turkish state holds the key not only to the Dardnelles but also lies along the roads from the Balkans to the Middle East and from the Caucasus to the Persian Gulf. Turkey is regarded as the southeastern redoubt of NATO and as the Inchpin between the Atlantic alliance and CENTO. Turkey is a member of most of the European organizations and is an associate member of the European Economic Community. Her Political involvement and exposed position confer on her an importance hardly matched by any other medium power. The objectives, approach, and ways of thinking of Turkey’s leaders are accordingly factors which transcend the confines of her own security and condition. The United States and its European allies have, to a considerable measure, placed their stakes on Turkey. Accordingly, the correct evaluation of that country’s policies is of crucial importance. Furthermore Turkey’s aspirations and achievements may set a good model for she is in many ways is a good example of a transforming Islamic nation adopted European civilization, acting as a bridge between East and West, a society engaged in a massive developmental process under a democratic form of governance. The foreign policy of Republican Turkey has alternated between neutrality and alignment, depending on circumstances. The versatility which characterized the Ataturk era was, despite Ankara’s Atlantic commitments, to a great extent
regained by Turkish diplomacy in the 1960s; it is another aspect of foreign policy which needs to be examined.

Although Turkey is an open country, her sincere ambitions and intentions are not clearly understood. Her image is blurred by visions of the past and illusions of the present. Moreover, the image that Turkey represents about her problems and intention cannot be accepted as they are. Her condition and aspirations must be appreciated in a manner in which they appear to her own leaders and not as they may appear to outside observers. The various aspects of Turkish foreign policy, though often interrelated, make a comprehensive presentation of the topic in which individual opinions have lot of room however it does leave enough scope for duplication.

Thinking the expensive epoch of the Ottoman Empire its foreign policy was ideologically motivated. Its Islamic universalist ideology determined its expansionist character, the main thrust of which was directed against the west. Subsequently, when missionary zeal eroded and stagnation set in the main foreign policy, objective was the preservation of the status quo by both diplomatic and military means. When finally, the Turkish nation-state was born out of the chrysalis of the Ottoman Empire, new vistas of foreign policy unfolded vistas prompted partly by territorial shrinkage and partly because of novel and imposed ideological ambitions. Nonetheless, the Turkish nation-state could not totally dissociate itself, in both internal and external respects,
from the Ottoman heritage. After all, new Turkey, the core of the former empire, possessed a geopolitical setting reminiscent of her territorial predecessor. The International environment in which the new Turkish state was born was no longer identical with that which existed prior to world war I. After world was II, the environment charged again. Although the 'looming shadow of the Russian colossus was less threatening in its soviet reincarnation, it regained the momentum it had lost in the inter-war period. In the meantime, Western Europe had suffered a loss of military and economic potentials. The ensuing power vacuum was filled by the American 'super state' it extended its arm of assistance into the Mediterranean and the Near and Middle East. Changes occurred within Turkey as well. Under the presidencies of 'Ataturk' and 'Inonu', foreign-policy making had remained the almost exclusive privilege of narrow leadership. The post-revolutionary period saw external politics turned into a topic for free discussion and criticism. Elite opinion scrutinized the domain, while democratization and the multiparty system exposed it to the influences of party rivalry. Although undertaken in a planned and systematic manner, the economic modernization and development of the nation also became an important subject of foreign-policy considerations. Long-term foreign policy goals notwithstanding, more transient policy goals were by no means neglected; this was demonstrated by the series of upheavals. Among the constant factors of external politics,
however, those imposed by Turkey’s geopolitical setting remained outstanding.

GEOPOLITICAL FOUNDATIONS

The most important geographical determinants of Turkish foreign policy are the straits, the Bosphorus and Dardanelles. These are the routes from the Russian plains to the Mediterranean and to the Persian Gulf, as well as routes in the opposite direction. Post-world war I Turkey, was stripped of the peripheral burdens of the Ottoman Empire. Anatolia (Asia Miron) which makes up the major part of Turkey, extends eastward to the mountains of Kurdistan and westward to the narrow waters dividing Europe and Asia. In the West is the nodal area of Istanbul which with the straits make up a region extremely sensitive to external political-stimuli. It should be noted here that the straits are composed of the ‘Bosphorus’ and the ‘Dardanelles’ connected by the oblong sea of Marmana. On the European side of the straits is eastern Thrace, the southeastern corner of the Balkan peninsula, with this territorial heritage, contemporary Turkey succeeded to many of the advantages and disadvantages of possessing a highly strategical area, the defense of which is important for survival.

The old strategic axiom that points of strength are simultaneously points of weakness applies to the straits region. As guardian of the straits,
Turkey can deny passage through these waterways and would do so if this were required for her safety in times of war. Turkey would be ill-advised to do so in times of peace, for such an action would isolate the international convention concerning the navigation of the straits. Istanbul and the straits are also very vulnerable to air attack. Accordingly, possession of this strategic area conveys political and military advantages, simultaneously invites potential aggressions. The Anatolian part of Turkey is a highly "strategical region" from the point of view of defence, and the capture of straits would only be the beginning and not the end of a struggle. Asian Turkey has natural boundaries and a fortress-like interior. From three sides it is surround by the seat in the north by the Black Sea, in the west by the Aegean, and in the south by the Mediterranean. Eastern Turkey, protruding into the land mass of the Middle East, is protected by the mountains of Kurdistan and the return of the 'Kars and Andahan districts of Turkey, was along the fort of high mountain ranges now inside Turkey. Turkey has an advantage over many other European and Asian States. Her sea frontier is relatively long and much of her land boundaries run along sparsely inhabited and rugged mountaineous terrain. Nevertheless, not all parts of the sea frontier are equally favourable. The offshore islands of the Aegean Sea are mostly Greek controlled. The Greek archipelagoes in that sea, if under the domination of an enemy power, could easily prevent areas to the straits and to Turkey's two principal
harbours, 'Istanbul' and Izmir. In the past, Turkey was caught between the conflicting interests of the great powers. The Ottoman Empire at the time of its decline, was really a huge buffer state. In the inter-war period, new Turkey held a balancing position which became more difficult to maintain, the power structure shifted around her borders. The balancing operation came to an almost end when Soviet pressures pushed Turkey into the Western alliance system. It so developed that post-war Turkey became the exposed portion of the southeastern end of the NATO. "Turkey's guardianship of the straits and the provisions of the Montreux convention did not prevent, however, a concentration of Soviet wartime forces in the Mediterranean, Turkey's membership to NATO could lead to a foreseeable leapfrogging of Soviet influence into the Arab countries".¹ The geographical element is not the only significant factor in Turkish foreign policy. The quality of the population is a correlated agent in the shaping of such policy.

IDEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

'Kemalism', as the state philosophy of the new Turkish Republic as it is rightly called, wished to shake off the spirit and policies of the Ottoman past. It wanted to turn over a totally 'clean leaf' of Turkish history. Once unfettered by the memories and encumbrances of bygone centuries.

“Ataturk’s ambition was also to present the international world with a Turkey that would distinctly differ from the political structure of the empire”. The primordial tenets of Kemalist foreign policy were simple friendship with every nation, peace at home, peace in the World. This was to be a policy based on national interest, a status quo policy with no lust for conquest. At the same time, it was not to be an internationalist foreign policy, wishing to “embrace all mankind in perfect equality and brotherhood”. The dominant factor in Turkish foreign policy was Mustafa Kemal. He had a strong empirical side to his nature. He believed in the future of Turkey as part of European civilization but still free from European domination from which it had suffered in the past. Turkey must be able to exercise her own judgement without pressure from outside. He had the wisdom to induce his people to renounce a great Empire for the much humbler and more effective role of a strong national state. He was not fanatically tied to a theory of Government, nor had he a one way mind, like the Russian Communists. Wisdom rather than cleverness was his great characteristic Ataturk clearly envisioned the relationship that was to govern the internal organization and external foreign policy of the new republic. He also realized that, over and above the change in the system of Government a change was required in the mental disposition of the Turkish people. Ideological guidance was to be derived from the

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2 Ibid., p.54.
principles in the "Six arrows". These principles were "nationalism, secularism, republicanism, Populism, statism and revolutionis". The underlying motivation of these principles and of the policy of westernization was the goal of assimilating the Turkish people into the nations of developed Europe. Ideological questions, with foreign policy overtones centered on the following main areas, "the nature of Turkish nationalism and its relation to Ottoman-Islamic traditions, the secular character of the Turkish state, the meaning of democracy and social concepts in politics".

The fundamental goals of national policy as determined under Ataturk, have not changed, although they have become better defined and updated to meet the more exacting requirements of the world today. Policies for the promotion of these goals have been modified, and from this narrower point of view, it may be rightly stated that the foreign policy of Turkey has undergone considerable change since the death of the founder of new Turkey. Turkey's foreign policy must be appraised in terms of the national interest. But the evaluation of what is in the interest of the nation is often controversial and so beset with nuances that decision-making is often an individual action rather than a collective process. To attain national goals, in general, both domestic and foreign policies have to be employed. In the case of Turkey, in view of

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4 Op cit., n.1, p.56.
her far-reaching national goal, greater reliance was placed on foreign policy devices than in the case of many other nations. Turkey shares with all independent nations the security aim of preserving national territory, national wealth, and sovereign independence. Because of her exposed geographical location, post historical experiences and cultural ‘isolation’ Turkey is more conscious of independence than most other nations and more sensitive to any real encroachment on her sovereignty. Ataturk “believed that an uncommitted posture would best suit Turkey’s security needs, but the Soviet threat which arose in the post World War II period persuaded Ankara to seek politico-military alliances. The republic of Turkey unlike her Ottoman predecessor, is neither expansionist nor otherwise an imperialist power nor a static, complacent, self-satisfied country. Turkey seeks internal power, economic - industrial, scientific and intellectual strength as well as military impregnability. In other words Turkey seeks to acquire the technological - economic strength of western great powers. Turkey’s economic development is not only a social need it is primarily a source to strengthen the power of the nation as such. The Turks in addition to technological equality, wish to be recognized as Europeans to be assimilated into European civilization. The superiority of the West not only in its technology but also in the form of its civilization had been acknowledged by Ataturk. During World War II the paramount concern for security overshadowed other objectives, it was only

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through skilful balancing diplomacy that Turkey avoided entering a war which involved considerable risk. Because of the Soviet menace after the war, she had to throw in her lot with the west. A community of interest among the US, the other NATO powers, and Turkey demanded the creation of a strong Turkey. Ties with the western powers principally the US, also served the purpose of speeding up Turkey’s modernization and European acculturation. The integral alignment with the US and NATO, prompted by the fear of Soviet aggression and by the immense advantages of the partnership created an illusory belief that America would support any Turkish policy objective. Turkey is also intent on scrupulously carrying out her international commitments. In fact the foreign policy attitude toward international question is often too legalistic, perhaps the heritage of Ottoman times when reliance on international agreements was for lack physical or economic force, the defensive weapon of its diplomacy. The Turkish foreign service has managed to stay outside domestic political squabbles. In view of the cleavage between opposing views on foreign policy, this has not always been an easy task. It has been made possible by recruitment not on the pressures of party politics. Turkish foreign policy ultimately depends upon the will of the electorate. In the recent past, the Turkish state’s anti-Saddam position in the Gulf War, and its close alliance with the Western bloc have also influenced its relationship with “Saudi Arabia and Western countries, both having indirect impacts on
the Islamic movement at home".\textsuperscript{5} The presence of a durable climate of supportive, positive relations with Europe, however, can only be expected to develop on the basis of universally shared principles and values. The ascending ideology of the present decade in Turkey is shaped by pluralist democracy and civil society values and incorporates secular and Islamic contingents in peaceful coexistence. Therefore Islam in Turkey should not be expected to exert a negative force on Turkey’s democratization potential and her integration chances with Europe. The institutional structure of a secular state, the sociological reality of significant non-Islamic population groups and a working competitive democracy have been important contributions to the outcome in the Turkish case. The economic conditions of the country, particularly the danger of deteriorating income distribution remains a non-negligible force. They have the potential for creating socio-economic circumstances where closer and exclusive ties between “the Islamist opposition and poor population groups may be established, providing Islamist forces with the strong power to mobilize economic as well as social protest”.\textsuperscript{6}

From the cultural-religious point of view, the Ottoman Turks formed the outstretched arm of Islam into Europe. And as long as the Turks were inspired by a militant Islamic spirit, they could draw strength from their


\textsuperscript{6} Ibid., p.234.
coreligionists in the east. Even though their linguistic-ethnic groups especially in the ‘Balkans’ were surrounded by ethnically and culturally different groups, Muslim Ottoman Turks fought their way into Europe. Present-day Turkey has cut off many of her cultural ties with the Islamic east and wishes to lean on European-western civilization. And unlike the Ottoman Empire, Turkey is a fairly homogeneous nation-state, with a fast-growing population. While its is becoming easier to refer to the “existence of Kurds in Turkey there is still no official acknowledgment that they are culturally or even ethnically distinct from the Turks.” 7 Separate cultural and linguistic rights have been formally divided, more out of the insecurity than the perversity of the majority. The geographical concentration of much of the Kurdish population, however draws attention to them as a discrete group. In policy terms, the existence of this community is difficult to ignore. No doubt the restlessness of the Kurdish minority could affect Turkey’s power potentials and “the Kurdish nationalism, strengthened by the suggestion of the ‘Treaty of severs’ that an independent Kurdistan be created, remains a problem which Turkish policy-makers cannot ignore”. 8 In Turkey, the Kurdish language, tribal sentiment and other Kurdish values are gradually losing ground against the simultaneous pressures of modernization and


Turkification. The undeveloped, archaic status of the average Kurds makes them particularly vulnerable. Economic and technological development, compulsory military service and education serve the purposes of both modernizing and merging them into the Turkish ethnic stream. "As soon as a Kurd is linguistically and educationally adapted to be Turk, he will be accepted as such even if he harbours a clandestine attachment to "Kurdism". 9 And the latent Kurdish separatism certainly impairs the otherwise well-nigh ethnic homogeneity of Turkey's population. Ethnic Turks are Muslims, even those who are religiously indifferent would not deny this identification. The present Turkish population, includes many "assimilated Greeks and Armenians as well as descendants of deported, enslaved or fugitive persons who were settled there during the heyday of Ottoman expansion". 10 And during the period of shrinkage of the empire, there was a considerable influx of refugees and resettlers from other regions. Though the Kurds are by far the largest ethnic minority in Turkey, others are also significant. Turkey contains a small but important Arab minority. The ethnic question cannot be confined to the situation inside the Turkish state. Just as not all the citizens of Turkey are Turks, so not all Turks are located inside the Turkish state. More importantly, large numbers of Turks are located to the east, both in Arab

9 Ibid., p.52.
10 Ibid., p.53.
countries such as Iraq and in the southern (former) Soviet republic.\textsuperscript{11}

A common heritage of past experiences and shared traditions is one element in the forming of a nation. But for the Kemalists, who wanted to speed the development of Turkish national sentiment, eliminating the Ottoman past, or rather degrading it in the minds of the Turkish people was the primary endeavour. Turkish youth were to be divorced from the Ottoman historic and cultural heritage. Their interest was to be focused on pre-Islamic Turkish precedents and on a language clean-evidence of Turkish national identity.

The doctrines of “nationalism were expounded by the state through the press, the schools and various branches of government through the Republican Peoples Party and through the Turkish Hearth Organization inherited from the Young Turks”.\textsuperscript{12} The main problem that had to be overcome was the feeling of scorn heaped on ‘the Turk’ by Ottomans and foreigners alike over the centuries. In reaction, the Kemalist tenets asserted that the Turks were the direct descendants of the world’s greatest conquering race, that they had played a leading role in the origins and development of world civilization. And that it was the Turks who had contributed most to

\textsuperscript{11} Philip Robins, Op cit. n.7.

what had been great in the Ottoman Empire. Nationalist theories of language and history were expounded which maintained that Turkish was the first language on earth and that all other languages developed from it. Turkish nationalism encouraged the Turks to build their own land without fostering aggressive irredentist aspirations. Turkish nationalism was not imperialistic and it did not seek to achieve greatness by regaining lands once ruled by the Ottomans.

Secularism involved not just separation of the state from the institutions of Islam but also liberation of the individual mind from the restraints imposed by the traditional Islamic concepts and practices, and modernization of all aspects of state and society that had been moulded by Islamic traditions and ways. Liberation of the state had to come first. Abolishion of Caliphate was followed by a series of reforms to end the union of state and religion that had characterized the Ottoman Empire thus in turn to end the ability of the religious class to limit and control the state. Though the secularism of the Republic was aimed at lessening the influence of the clergy and creating an environment in which the individual could follow his religious beliefs without having to embrace predetermined dogma, and conform to strict rules, it did not intend to abandon Islam as some of its opponents have claimed. The secularist programme never opposed religion as such. To achieve these a "synthesis between the requirements of
Westernization and the tenets of Islam is a challenge which has not been met successfully in any Muslim country. The Turkish experiment is, therefore, of an importance which surpasses the borders of Turkey. To reconcile secularization with the Islamic faith is a task Turks can accomplish easier than Arabs, whose culture and ethos are almost inseparably welded to the creed of the Prophet."\(^\text{13}\)

And under the present democratic form of government in Turkey, the transformation of Islam into a spiritual dispensation severed from political, social and economic implications is, one would hope, being achieved by the people themselves, and not by the dicta of an autocratic ruler.

The decision to transform Turkey into a democracy was prompted partly by foreign policy motivations. The timing was exclusively due to the international scene following World War II. In the past also the Ottoman Empire had to endure numerous interventions by foreign powers which forced it to introduce liberal reforms. The foreign policy reasons for becoming democratic were however compelling only one of many motivations. The "American diplomatic, military and economic assistance, preferred from 1947 onwards was a further impetus to liberalization. In 1950, under the new electoral law, the Democratic Party won a sweeping victory that ended the

\(^{13}\) Ference A. Vali, Op cit., n.1., p.63.
monopoly of the Republican People’s Party.”¹⁴ In this process of redemocratization, the Turkish leaders had one eye on their western friends and the image of the country all over the world.

The Kemalist principle of statism was a kind of state capitalism. Its purpose was to strengthen the economic power of the state. In the post-World War II period, the idea of democratization prevailed over all other domestic concerns; foreign aid was required to enable Turkey to withstand Soviet threat. Like all Western ideas, the concepts of social progress and social justice have taken root among the leading intellectuals in a significant way. The “foreign policy implications of Turkey’s ideological attitudes were obvious, the protagonists of socialist thought were, to a greater or lesser extent anti-American or anti-NATO, whereas their adversaries were more or less committed to the official western orientation. Simultaneously, the pro-socialist group was more lenient or directly sympathetic toward the Soviet Union and what it stood for, whereas their opponents were either vehemently anti-Soviet or anti-Communist”.¹⁵ These ideological attitudes greatly influenced the postures of political parties but did not very significantly affect the basic foreign policy line of the government. However, after the disintegration of the erstwhile Soviet Union and the end of the cold war, the

¹⁴ Ibid., p.64.
¹⁵ Ibid., p.68.
policy-decisions of the Turkish Government were primarily to enhance Turkey's national interest vis-a-vis Eastern-Europe.

The fundamental goals of national policy, as determined under 'Ataturk', have not changed, although they have become better defined and updated to meet the more exacting requirements of the world today. Policies for the promotion of these goals have been modified. And from this narrower point of view it may be rightly stated that the foreign policy of Turkey has undergone considerable change since the death of the founder of new Turkey. All of her foreign policy moves must be appraised in terms of the national interest. But the evaluation of what is in the interest of the nation is often controversial and so beset with nuances that decision-making is rendered highly individual. To attain national goals in general both domestic and foreign policies have to be employed. In the case of Turkey, in view of her far-reaching national goal, greater reliance was placed on foreign policy devices than in the case of many other nations. Turkey shares with all independent nations the security aim of preserving national territory, national wealth and sovereign independence. Because of her exposed geographical location, post historical experiences and cultural isolation, she is more conscious of independence than most other nations. That is more sensitive to any real on implied encroachment on her sovereignty. And 'Ataturk' believed that an uncommitted posture would best suit Turkey's security needs, but the
soviet threat which arose in the post-World War II period, persuaded Ankara to seek politico-military alliances. But after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the security perspective in that region also changed. By which Turkey will try her best to maintain a image which will provoke other nations in that region to follow the path of Turkey.

And it is however, clear that in a changing world, “especially one which has altered so profoundly on the threshold of the new decade, there will be modifying pressures on even the most basic principles of foreign policy.”\textsuperscript{16} However, the Republic of Turkey, unlike her Ottoman predecessor, is neither expansionist nor otherwise an imperialist power, nor Turkey is a static, complacent, self-satisfied country. Turkey seeks internal power that is economic, industrial, scientific and intellectual strength, as well as military impregnability. The Turks, in addition to technological equality, wish to be recognised as Europeans, to be assimilated into European civilization. The superiority of the West not only in its technology but also in the form of its civilization had been acknowledged by ‘Ataturk’. The geographical location of Turkey, compelled her to pursue a prudent, expedient foreign policy in which long and short-range objectives must be subordinated to the fundamental national purpose. The same fundamental goals of national policy were supported by the policy decision-makers throughout the history of the

\textsuperscript{16} Philip Robins, Op cit., n.7, p.65.
First and Second Turkish Republics. It was only then that the range of foreign-policy makers widened considerably in the period of democratization. During World War II, the paramount concern for security overshadowed other objectives, for it was only through skilful balancing diplomacy that Turkey avoided entering a war which involved considerable risk. Because of the Soviet menace after the war, she had to throw in her lot with the West. A community of interest among the US, the other ‘NATO’ powers and Turkey demanded the creation of a strong Turkey. Ties with the western powers, principally the US, also served the purpose of speeding Turkey’s modernization and European acculturation. The integral alignment with the US and NATO, prompted by the fear of Soviet aggression and by the immense advantages of the partnership, created a somewhat shortsighted and unrealistic identification of Turkey’s national interests with those of her partners. It also created an illusory belief that America would support any Turkish policy objective.

"On the whole, it may be said that foreign affairs were conducted in Ankara in a spirit of realism and with no ideological basis"\(^{17}\), by which the government tried to avoid giving the impression, either of chauvinistic narrow-mindedness or egoistic shortsightedness. This more flexible foreign policy was acclaimed by the critics of the government. They pointed out that

\(^{17}\) Ference A. Vali, Op cit., n.1, p.72.
it was wrong to adjust every step to the American, a policy which led to the isolation of Turkey demonstrated in many occasions. The official foreign policy continued to be carefully scrutinized by the parliamentary opposition and by the foreign policy elite outside parliament. The Turkish public-at-large should learn to distinguish between an exchange of opinions and a hostile break between opposing debaters. Turkey was earnestly endeavouring to improve her image in the international community, in other words, she cared for international public opinion, and the various international organizations with regard to peace and security. Turkey is also intent on scrupulously carrying out her international commitments. In fact “her foreign policy attitude toward international question is often too legalistic, perhaps the heritage of Ottoman times when reliance on international agreements was for the lack of physical or economic force, the defensive weapon of its diplomacy.”

Turkish basic policy formulations are made in the Cabinet, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and his Ministry are responsible for day-to-day operational functions. These are not, however, mere routine exercises, they also involve decision-making, analysis and faithful reporting. In fact, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its minister are in the position of exercising independent authority in matters of political detail and are able to influence the higher

\[18\] Ibid., p. 75.
level decision-making process. The office of the minister of foreign affairs is a political appointment, although the incumbents often are former diplomats. The career personnel of the Turkish foreign ministry feel more than anyone else the compelling urge to proceed toward the fundamental goals of national policy. They are fully dedicated to this ideal, but they experience enormous difficulties facing their nation in the achievement of such a Himalayan task. They are essentially Western oriented but advocate a flexible foreign policy that would keep open the avenues of rapprochement in every direction. They are fully aware of the usefulness of NATO membership and of American friendship but wish to reserve for their country a freedom of action within the limits of existing treaty obligations. They do not share the view that Western ties have turned Turkey into a satellite. They understand fully the basic differences between the character of the Atlantic alliance and the ties of bondage established between Moscow and its so-called allies. Since many of them had served at one time or another in Communist Capitals, they appreciate better than some of their countrymen the advantages of a free society.

The foreign service officers of Turkey, having had experienced abroad are less afraid than the staff of other ministries, of criticism on policy issues by opposition parties or of the interest of the general public in such affairs. They consider this a healthy development, one inevitable in the course of democratization and wish to be adaptable in every respect to the changes
inside their country, and to the evolution of the international scene. Even "to decide on basic questions of national security, Turkey, like the US, maintains a National Security council which is presided over by the president of the Republic and includes the prime minister and the minister of foreign affairs, the chief of the general staff and the commanders of the land, naval and air-forces". 19 The Turkish foreign service has managed to stay outside domestic squabbles. In view of the cleavage between opposing views on foreign policy, this has not always been an easy task and ultimately Turkish foreign policy depends, as does her domestic policy, upon the will of the electorate.

And it is too early to establish whether the Turkish stance towards the region more generally has been affected by its policy reevaluation in the immediate crisis. Much depends on the consequences of the crisis, and most importantly the postwar security arrangements. It is fair to "assume that the then President, 'Turgut Ozal' has a vision of Turkey's involvement in the determination and execution of such security arrangements." 20 And as long as Turkey is democratically governed, no decisive change can be expected in her course in international politics. The only force that could topple the present system of government is the military. However, barring an intervention by the military, the government of Turkey manned by whosoever the party may be in the future, will continue the present basic foreign policy.

19 Ibid., p.77.
20 Philip Robins, Op cit., n.7, p.73.