A relatively newcomer to the Turkish political scene is the Labour Party of Turkey, which has shown considerable dynamism since its establishment in 1961. Because of a number of highly articulate spokesmen in parliament and in the press, it has attracted much more attention than has any other minor party and exercises greater influence than its voting strength would indicate. Its leaders are hopeful that it will develop into a mass party capable of coming to office via the electoral process. Alternatively, some Labour Party leaders believe their party's interests could be advanced by a coalition or popular-front government, arranged most probably with Left wing elements of the RPP.¹

As the first avowedly socialist party to function openly in Turkey, the Labour Party represents an important innovation in Turkish political life. Its emphasis on the class struggle, demands for widespread nationalization, anti-Western foreign policy and alleged attempts to incite the Kurdish minority of southern Turkey against the Ankara

government have led many to regard it not as the democratic socialist party that it claims to be but as a masked communist group. As a result, it has been subjected to considerable harassment, which has made the party more conspicuous.

The Turkish Labour Party vote, which was 3.0 per cent in the 1956 general election, rose to 4.7 per cent in the 1968 partial senatorial contest, although in the elections for provincial assemblies it polled only 2.6 per cent of the total. These results must have been somewhat disappointing to party leaders, who had announced their expectation of emerging from the elections as the third largest party and thus being in a position to become the major opposition party after the 1969 general election. They finished fifth, behind the hastily formed Reliance party and another small party. In the 1969 general election, the Labour Party share of the vote fell to 2.7 per cent and as a result of the elimination of the national remainder system the party elected only two deputies, as against fifteen in 1965. 2

Primarily a party of intellectuals and elitist in its outlook and despite its claim to speak for the peasant and the labourer, the Labour Party is doctrinairely Marxist.

2 Ergil, D. "Class Conflict and Turkish Transformation" Islamic Study XLI, 1975, pp. 20-27.
The difficulty is that the Marxist analysis, however accurately it may have described early nineteenth century England, which had just gone through the Industrial Revolution and on which Marx based his theory, is not applicable to contemporary Turkey. Turkish industrialization, such as it has been proceeding under circumstances very different from those that prevailed in England at the time of the Industrial Revolution or in the other European countries and the United States, which followed in England's path. In the first place, almost half of Turkey's factory industry (excluding small artisan-type workshops) three-quarters of its mining, the entire railroad, telephone and telegraph systems and virtually all of the electric power and gas industry are already in the hands of the government, which also controls, directly or indirectly a number of the larger banks. Secondly, domestic industrial entrepreneurs have only begun to emerge in Turkey since World War II, it makes no sense to argue that a group of Turkish factory owners controls a great segment of the Turkish economy, holds the labourers in virtual slavery, and exercises preponderant political influence. In its adherence to Marxism, the Labour Party was a century behind the time, in the sense that the class structure of a society composed of opulent factory owners and sweating proletarian workers subsisting at the survival

level, which they persist in talking about, no longer exists in the industrialized countries. It never did exist in Turkey and other less developed countries that did not participate in the industrial Revolution. 4

In illustration of the LPT's Marxist based ideology is its contention that foreign investment is coming to Turkey to take advantage of the country's cheap labour and raw materials. This is untrue; most of the relatively few European and American companies that have established branches in Turkey have done so neither because of Labour or raw material considerations but in order to be able to protect their sales position in the Turkish domestic market. They had previously serviced this market from abroad, but, given Turkey's tight foreign exchange situation and its official program of industrialization, they have seen their best opportunity to safeguard their sales position to be the establishment of a branch plant, frequently in partnership with their local distributors and in some cases including the general public as share holders. 5 The test of these investments being oriented to the Turkish market rather than to cheap labour or raw materials is that they don't export.


Rather than seeing Turkey as it is, the LPT leaders insist on forcing the facts to conform to what Marxist ideology tells them the situation should be. Because their diagnosis based on Marxism does not fit the situation in Turkey, their prescriptions are largely irrelevant. The LPT has been astute, however, in capitalizing on the resentment that many Turks, especially members of the intelligentsia, feel about the economic and social shortcomings of the present system. Among these are the inequalities in land ownership, especially in some of the more fertile regions, and the high speculative profits and habitual tax evasion of some businessmen. The LPT program thus includes land reform, although whether LPT leaders intend to redistribute the land that they propose to expropriate from large landowners is open to question. They advocate land for every peasant, but this is a manifest impassibility in view of the limited supply of land and the large number of peasants with little or none, unless the plots are to be so small as to make for uneconomic agriculture. It would be more consistent with their Marxist ideology, but not with their present desire to attract votes, to retain the expropriated land in the form of state farms. They also advocate nationalization of

With these measures, the LPT leaders expect to destroy the economic base of the growing class of industrialists and commercial farmers and inaugurate a new and more equitable social order organized for welfare of workers and peasants. The LPT Leaders demonstrate little compassion, however, for the poor, whose cause they espouse, their interest in improving the lot of the underprivileged seems essentially intellectual. To refer to the Justice Party as the party of exploiting capitalists or as a fascist party, as the LPT does, was absurd. The JP like its predecessor, the Democrat Party, is a mass party that receives broad support from workers and peasants as well as from businessmen.

"One of the curious aspects of the LPT is that its ideologues appear indifferent to, or perhaps even unaware of, the reformist currents that are sweeping the Eastern European countries. The new interest in these countries in the market and the price mechanism, profitability, enterprise autonomy, foreign-investment and licensing arrangements, and generally increased flexibility in the management of the economy seem to be almost studiously

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ignored by the LPT leaders. One observer long and deeply familiar with both Eastern Europe and Turkey remarked in 1967 that the Yugoslavs and Czechs would laugh at the old fashioned ideas still professed by LPT spokesmen. 9

The newly emerged Left put heavy opposition against foreign domination in Turkey and observed total destruction of signs of it. The LPT a party of Left wing intellectuals, primarily concerned with the Labouring Masses have always been anti-American in approaches.

It is also outspokenly hostile to the Justice Party government which it accuses, among other things, of serving American rather than Turkish interests. The United States, the LPT charges, has been attempting for its own selfish purposes to sabotage Turkish development and keep Turkey in a state of permanent economic dependence as a market for its industrial products and a source of cheap raw materials. 10 Only when Turkey has withdrawn from NATO and the common market, when the NATO facilities and foreign investments have been liquidated, when the predatory domestic business class allied with foreign capitalism has been suppressed and its factories and banks nationalized and when other types of


'capitalist-imperialist' domination have been removed will it be possible, in their view, to develop a prosperous, just, socialist Turkey. Socialism in Turkey appeared after the revolution of 1960, both as an ideology and a technique of action designated to achieve rapid modernization through the rational organization of economic life. Some of the urban intelligentsia, notably university professors, teachers, writers, journalists and old time Marxists, became spokesmen of socialism. The expansion of production, increased popular participation in economic and political life, respect for work and especially social justice -- all to be achieved through state planning - were the chief goals of this socialism.

The social awakening which swept Turkey after the coup of 1960 was the outcome of structural differentiation, change of roles and statuses among social groups, and the increase of political activity which occurred in the decades preceding the coup d'etat. The downfall of the intellectual bureaucratic order which ruled the country until the end of the 1940s, and the subsequent rise to power of agrarian entrepreneurial groups, appeared as the initial phases of a process of change leading to mass participation in political

and economic decision making. The function of socialism, as viewed initially by its proponents, was to formulate scientifically the rising demands and expectations among various social groups and incorporate these demands into the political system. Consequently large segments of the intelligentsia and bureaucracy as well as Labour Leaders, and professional organizations sharing in various degrees the demands for social justice, economic development and the establishment of a political system with broad social bases, supported this socialism. Even the influential newspapers, Cumhuriyet, Milliyet, and later, Aksam, owned by the upper class families, as well as the central bodies of the Republican Party backed by its youth branches, became advocates of social reforms included in the practices of socialism. The term 'socialism' used publicly by President Cemal Gursel was quickly adopted by all those desiring rapid progress. The emphasis at this stage was on 'social' rather than 'ism'. The constitution of 1961, which defined Turkey as a secular, national, social and democratic republic, expressed rather well the general state of mind prevailing in 1960-61. The second stage in the evolution of Turkish socialism, which marked its shift towards formal doctrine, occurred through the declaration of 500 intellectuals


published in the review Yon.\textsuperscript{14} The latter became the mouthpiece of the intellectual groups such as teachers, some professionals and left wing members of the Republican Party desiring to establish a socialism based on supremacy of the intellectual. The declaration included the social arm mentioned above and made a special point of describing the ruling circles as deprived of a 'development philosophy', and hence incapable of bringing Turkey into the modern age. The socialism envisaged by Yon, other publications and organizations, including the socialist cultural society established in 1963, despite opposition to free enterprise, parliamentary democracy and to the West, appeared likely to improve, consolidate and preserve rather than drastically to change the basic structure of the social group, the socialism of Yon was destined to remain a current of thought which would compel the existing political parties to consider the causes of the increasing social unrest and takes measures accordingly. It thus seemed fairly certainly that the socialist would turn sooner or later, to enlist the support of the labouring class.\textsuperscript{15}

The possibility of facing Labour opposition compelled the government and practically all political parties to


\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., pp. 57-68.
adopt a conciliatory attitude towards Labour Unions and meet their economic demands. The attitude of compromise was at least partially instrumental in consolidating further the Labour leaders' decision not to become involved in politics, though individual workers were free to join any political group. Acting as a pressure group, the confederation of labour secured important concessions from parliament, notably the right to collective bargaining and to strike, granted in 1963, owing in large measure to the efforts of Bulent Ecevit, the Republican Minister of Labour, short of a new social and political drive, the workers appeared oriented towards a policy of material betterment within the existing political system and through its methods. 16

Thus, in its initial phase, socialism seemed to have helped broaden the social and economic scope of modernization and appeared destined to lose its intensity and drive after diffusing its ideas in the society at large.

Consequently, the doctrinaire minded socialists, included the small but active group of Marxist intellectuals, had either to acquiesce to 'socialization' according to liberal democratic ideas and accept the existing social structure, or attempt to rehold the social

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thought and direct it according to their own ideology. Already some Marxists, while supporting all social movements in the hope of preparing the ground for their own ideology, made it clear that they were interested in political action rather than social reform. Samin Kocagoz, paradoxically enough a rich landowner and now member of the Labour Party, signing the socialist declaration of Yon, expressed his hope that: all intellectuals who signed the declaration should shape these ideas into a party program. They should give the proper name to statism to a progressive statism, according to the conditions and ideas in the country and came out with a party capable of undertaking profound reforms and revolving the country's main problems. In my view this party should be established with a socialist orientation and give a direction to the statism mentioned in the declaration. The party should gather all workers from the intellectual to agricultural workers, from agricultural workers to industrial workers, shortly it should become a workers party as dictated by country's conditions.17

LPT must be viewed therefore as an attempt to capture the leadership of the socialist movement and to organize and use it for its own ideological purposes. The party was originally established by a small group of trade unionists on February 13, 1961, with the idea of sending workers' 

representatives to parliament. The Party met with some negative reaction from the main body of trade unions but was soon ignored, since it seemed as innocuous as many other similar organizations, despite the fact that it had opened branches in several provinces by May, 1961. A drastic change occurred in 1962, when the party leadership was assumed. There are a few indications showing that the first founders, some without knowing it, were a front for the Marxist socialists. It is reliably reported that Aybar is basically speaking on behalf of a policy making group which would rule the central bodies. The party was established on the same day the Ministry of Interior lifted the ban on political activities.18 The 'offer of party leadership' to Aybar came only a few week after Yon issued its 'socialist' declaration and seemed to have taken the lead in developing socialism. Some of the founders of Yon had held talks with trade union leaders at the end of 1961, hoping to establish a socialist party of their own. The proposal for a working men's party was defeated in a trade Union convention largely through the efforts of Labour Party members from the provinces. Another attempt to establish a Social Security Party, by 293 trade unions with approximately 300,000 members, was not carried out, lest it destroy the economic orientation of Labour. These attempts to establish Labour

Parties were described by Behice Boran, a former sociology professor and leader of the Labour Party, as a capitalist plot engineered to oppose and defeat the real workers' parties. Yon itself was looked upon with suspicion by Labour Party leaders and minimized as a pseudo-socialist organ, though their differences were not publicly aired.19

Immediately after taking over the party leadership Aybar engaged in strenuous activity to establish branches in the countryside and publicize the party's views. He had little success at the beginning. Meanwhile, a bitter struggle developing between right and left wing intellectuals ended with the apparent victory of the latter. The Labour strikes, workers' demonstrations for employment in the summer of 1962, and the passiveness of Parliament further prepared a suitable atmosphere of the activities of the Labour Party. In August 1962 Aybar was formally approved as chairman along with Rustu Guneri as Secretary General and Orhan Arsal, Ibrahim Denizcier, Ismail Topkar, Riza Kaus and Kemal Turker as members of the Central Executive Committee.20


In November 1962, the party engaged in a campaign to delete articles 141 and 142 from the criminal code, hoping thus to be free to propagate the concept of class struggle forbidden by these articles. The campaign was well organized and supported by all leftist publications, including the Bizim Radio, 'Our Radio', the clandestine broadcasting station located in one of the Eastern European countries. However, it began to backfire when nationalists broke up the protest meeting. Several members of the Labour Party resigned, protesting the forceful manner in which the leaders had been chosen. The Labour confederation itself organized counter demonstrations condemning communism, in an oblique warning to the Labour Party to limit its propaganda. Harassed by these attacks, a Laborite delegation visited Premier Inonu and secured from him a promise that the constitutional rights granting freedom of thought would be extended to their party.21

Subsequently, the Labourites, supported by the socialist society and several new members including Niyazi Agirnasli, a senator from Ankara, resumed their activities, chiefly in the form of press conferences and panel discussions. They criticized the five year economic plan as being inadequate, and opposed Turkey's entry into the common

Market as infringing upon national independence and 'consolidating the country's economic and social structure responsible for the society's backwardness. The party concentrated its efforts on gaining a favourable public image. It rejected implicitly any association with communism in order to attract the Workers and the uncommitted, social minded intellectual.

Despite these efforts the membership remained confined largely to urban intellectuals, white workers seemed weary of its growing dogmatism. Indeed, by September 1963 the Party had established organizations only in seven provinces and twelve towns, whereas the next smallest party had about 150 branches. It also adopted a rather friendly attitude towards Kurdish Communist and socialists, many of whom were striving to acquire national rights for their own group. 22

The campaign for municipal elections, held on November 17, 1963, gave the Labour party an excellent chance for propaganda on state radio during its legally allotted time. It vehemently attacked capitalists, landowners and the unjust distribution of national income. These had some effect on the public, but the party won only 34,301 votes or 0.36 per cent of all ballot cast. Almost, half of the votes 14451 came from Istanbul, notably from the well-to-do

22 Ibid., pp. 49-87.
sections of the city. It was certain that rigid dogmatism, predirections for theoretical debate and appeal to marginal group caused popular and official resentment. As early as March 1962, Sadun Aren, a professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Ankara who eventually became the head of the Ankara branch and deputy in 1965, had warned against excessive theorizing.23

Aren claimed that the ideological struggle between capitalism and socialism had lost its violent character because of a change in economic conditions, and that polemical discussion were useless. True, social conditions in Turkey were not yet stabilized and they provided ground for bitter ideological struggle. But the capitalist sector is so new, young and ambitious as to claim that it was offered no chance and that with such chances it would solve the country's problems still it would be an error to engage in an ideological struggle reminiscent of the 19th century type. A rigid doctrinaire struggle will create an artificial situation not corresponding to historical evolution and daily conditions, and will not involve and interest the large mass.

Any domestic problem, any social problem cannot be

solved without being based and directed by a world view. The practical aspect may lead to finding a new dimensional approach for Turkey by taking the inspirational source from the vibrant ideology of socialism. But this idea is unfounded and misleading socialism, as is known, is a system of values behind which there is a known method which analyzes and explains social change ... the value system consists of preventing the exploitation of man by man, of providing equal opportunities to everyone, ending contradictions of interests, so as to provide equality of opportunity and mutual assistance. There is just one socialism if understood as a system and a model. To talk about a different socialism for Turkey means to accept the fact that the Turkish man and society is subject to development laws and values different from other men and societies. It is true that in order to achieve the socialist model each country may take a different road in the solution of various concrete problems, but all these solution methods must work for the same purpose and be consistent with the ultimate goal. I want to repeat once more that our development can be achieved only by following a socialist model centered on a constructive popular statism.

Aren proposed to use statism as an ideology for

24 Ibid., pp. 31-35.
mobilizing the masses, and through it, make 'factories and establishment centers of civilization and culture, in fact, true schools. The emphasis on statism was legally concordant with the constitution, which had accepted the principle of a mixed economy granting equal place to private and state enterprises.25

The impact of these ideas was evident in the Labour Party's first national convention held in Izmir on February 9-10, 1964. The delegates were selectively chosen so as to allow those with 'political consciousness' to exercise leadership instead of having a large group without political consciousness who would give place to wavering. The delegate By-Law, Article 10 included all members of the Central and Disciplinary committees, the members of the provincial executive and disciplinary committees, and only one provincial delegate for each 1,000 members with paid dues. The latter's number would never exceed the number of deputy seat legally allotted to that province. The clause gave overwhelming power to the central bodies, that is, to those men deciding the party policy. This article, though criticized as undemocratic, was not amended. The Party opposed also the law on political parties as unconstitutional since this act was armed, among other

25 Lehmbruch, Gerhard, "Liberal Corporatism and Party Government" Comparative Political Studies, 10 April 1977, pp. 91-126.
things, to prevent small groups from controlling the organization.

The convention amended the by-Laws to strengthen the power of central bodies and define members' duties. The Member Article 7 was to follow faithfully the program and by-Laws, obey the decisions and directives of competent party organization and fulfill thoroughly the responsibilities assigned to him. He was to vote for party candidates and use every opportunity to enlist new members and disseminate information about the party's program and goals. He was to vote for party candidates and use every opportunity to enlist new members and disseminate information about the party's program and goals. He was to obey all decisions even if personally disagreed with them.  

A new voluminous party program was presented to the convention by Yahya Kanbelat, Sadun Aren, Fethi Naci and Behice Boran -- none of whom was a worker and at least three were known as dedicated Marxists. The first Turkish National Assembly on October 21, 1920 condemned capitalism and imperialism in its declaration. It also defined the party as being the political organization, marching to power through Legal means and based on history and science of the

Turkish working class and of the groups which arrived consciously at the happy conclusion of seeing unity of fate with it the working class and followed its democratic leadership such as socialist intellectuals, agricultural workers landlords and insufficiently landed peasants, craftsmen, small businessmen, and salary and wage earners, low income professionals, in a word all citizens leading a life based on their own effort. 27

The program stressed the party's desire to follow democratic ways and to respect the constitution. It gave an extensive analysis of Turkey's social structure in order to dramatize the country's backwardness, and the existence of an overwhelming number of workingmen, thus justifying the need for radical social reforms. The program also presented a doctrinaire interpretation of Turkish history and arrived at the conclusion that once workers became organized and 'acquired class consciousness nobody could oppose them for very long in carrying out their historical mission in achieving social progress and democracy.

The Labour Party was the living symbol of the fact that workers were becoming politically conscious and were bound to mobilize all toilers despite a regressive trade unionist

leadership serving the ruling classes. The Party was political means for achieving a workers' democracy, while statism represented its social and economic dimensions. The main solution to Turkey's problems according to the program, lay in the political field namely, in bringing workingmen to power through political education by the party, under the protection of rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution. The key production and exchange means were to be nationalized. The program rejected Western methods of development as being inapplicable to Turkey and advocated a planned economy siding with labour and being implemented and controlled through workers participation. Private enterprise was to be an auxiliary of the state economy in this planned framework and gradually limited as its functions were taken over by government enterprises.28

The state was to establish basic industry and operate it as state property, distribute land to peasants, and adopt a program of land cultivation through a system combining state, cooperative and private farms. Economic Education was to be implemented according to the principle 'income according to effort' culminating eventually in the abolition of a system based on the exploitation of man by man. The program claimed that the party believed in the existence of social laws similar to physical laws above man's will power,

28 Ibid., pp. 88-90.
but that this would not prevent outside intervention in order to achieve rapid harmony between historical conditions and social evolution. Science was the only road to follow, the Party policy was to be defined according to scientific realities. The program defined in detail the question of education and culture and reinterpreted the principles of the Turkish Republic - nationalism being defined as opposition to foreign domination. It expressed the deepest respect for religious and philosophical beliefs and especially stressed the fact that the party's struggle against backwardness should never be understood as struggle against religion although its commitment to keep religion out of politics was firm. The Party recognized private property and the right to inheritance, subject to legal limitation only when necessitated by public interest.29

The program in general was consistent with the Party's outward idea of establishing a system based on the leadership of the working class. The doctrinaire deterministic view of society and history was accompanied by various side interpretations and formal concessions to prevailing ideas in society and formal respect for the constitution in order to enjoy its protection.

Basically the program sought several practical aims

first to present a broad and cohesive interpretation of socialism, in order to attract all intellectual groups and prevent the rise of another form of socialism; second to acquire a large popular following in order to assert its place among the other parties and forestall any effort to outlaw it; third to claim intellectual superiority by presenting a total interpretation of society and make this interpretation a standard idea for upcoming generations and fourth, to emphasize it preoccupation with national problems and thus avoid being discredited as a tool of a foreign power as has happened to other leftist parties in the past. 30

The party convention accepted the program unanimously and elected a new central committee of 41 members and an Executive Committee; the latter—the most powerful body—consisted of Behice Boran, Cemal Hakki Selek, Riza Kuas, Kemal Sulker, Salih Ozkarabey and Sina Pamvkev. The Party claimed as unusual that it was led by workers but almost two-thirds of the membership in the Central Committee consisted of intellectuals, mostly writers or university teachers known as Leftists. The by-laws stipulated that 21 members of the Central Committee consisted of intellectuals, mostly writers or University teachers known as leftists. The by-laws stipulated that 21 members of the Central Committee consisted of intellectuals, mostly writers or University teachers known as leftists. The by-laws stipulated that 21 members of the Central

30 Ibid., pp. 174-190.
Committee should be workers. Thus the intelligentsia assumed a leading role in this workers' party and perpetuated the traditional elitist organization despite the party's express intention of eradicating the intellectual Labour dichotomy.

The convention displayed outward unity but internally was torn by a series of problems and divisionary activities. These consisted largely of different interpretations of social classes of leadership. It was obvious that various groups of workers some still in traditional forms of occupation and often related to their employees by non-economic ties, could not be lumped together with those supposed to lead the fight for a workers' democracy. Since the workers' elite was in trade unions and apathetic to organized politics, the party had to devise a comprehensive sociological rather than professional-definition of 'working men'. Finally, several party members, following Bin Bellas' ideas, proposed to make the peasants the Leaders of the social movement.31

After the convention a few members resigned from the Central Committee. Esat Caga, appointed to the senate by the President, denounced the dogmatic imitation of foreign

models adopted without regard for their compatibility with Turkey's realities and continuous change of social conditions. The extreme Marxists, usually urbanite intellectuals, also denounced the party's opportunism and compromise in favour of popular support. Some of the critics were soon expelled from the Party as voicing the 'ruling circles views'.

Aybar's group took firm control. The efforts of others together a new convention failed. The new program, the party's formal effort to uphold the constitution, and its outward moderation produced excellent results as the bulk of uncommitted, social minded intellectuals began to side with it. Meanwhile, the Cyprus dispute enabled the party to inject a much needed nationalist ingredient into its propaganda and thus expand its own influence. This dispute, causing growing deterioration in Turkey's relations with the West, led to a rapprochement with the Soviet Union. Consequently, the controls over leftist activities lessened and the Soviets took full advantage of this in inviting neutral and socialist writers to Moscow; the latter dutifully publicized the Soviet achievements under socialism. 32 The Moscow visits of Turkeyi's Foreign Minister -- and afterwards Premier, Suat Hayri Urguplu,

returning the visits to Ankara of Andrei Gromyko and a Soviet Parliamentary delegation, played their part in melting away suspicion towards the Soviets, especially after the latter came fairly close to supporting the Turkish view on Cyprus. The signing of a protocol on November 12, 1965, according to which the Soviets were to open a credit for 200 million dollars, seemed to consolidate this friendship. Subsequently the labour Party turned its wrath on the West as the source of all evils fallen on Turkey. The West had supplied the economic aid which benefited the rising aggressive entrepreneurial groups and offered different ideas on social organization and economic development as alternatives to the Soviet blueprints. All this would greatly strengthen the position of the Labour Party.33

The Republican Party, which headed three coalition governments until 1965, viewed sympathetically the labourites efforts to attract the peasants and workers. It hoped that this would weaken the popular support of its main opponent, the Justice Party. Indeed, the accusations of communism and after that physical attacks on the Labour Party by rightist groups, caused negative reactions among the public after these outbursts of violence were described as the Justice Party's desperate efforts to preserve its

control over the lower classes. Consequently, the Labour Party intensified further its activities.

Following the above developments a large number of intellectuals, some senators, former officers, many of whom had only a normal yearning for social progress, joined the party. Yet, despite a drive to expand its organization, the party failed to establish enough provincial branches and thus qualify legally to enter the senatorial elections held on June 7, 1964. But it intensified its efforts and qualified for participation in the national elections held on October 10, 1965. In this last election the party tried to assure itself of representation in the Parliament. It avidly sought publicity and complained that the Press ignored it, though in reality it received far more coverage than its due. 34

The Party aimed at securing the highest possible number of ballots in order to divide the popular vote and bring about a coalition government since weak government ruling in Turkey in 1961-1965 and thus, as the chairman put it, 'to bring through vote the working popular masses to power. This would have a world wide importance, for such an experiment occurred nowhere. Indeed there is not yet any

34 Official listing in Resmi Gazete, 12099 of September 13, 1965 and Sosyal Adalet September 1965, p. 42.
Marxist regime which has reached power by popular vote.\textsuperscript{35} The Party entered the elections in 51 provinces out of a total 67. Its 382 candidates, according to the Party's own classification, were grouped as follows: 101 workers, farmers and agricultural employees, 27 trade unionists, 27 craftsmen, 23 small businessmen, five drivers, four women 20 journalists, three artists, 18 teachers, 14 officials, 21 technicians, four professors, 15 retired officers, 11 engineers, 36 lawyers, 22 liberal professions, ten businessmen and contractors. The top places on the provincial electoral lists, however, were usually given to intellectuals and spokesmen for the party's central bodies in order to assure their election to the parliament. The Chairman, Mehmet Ali Aybar, opened the campaign in Istanbul with a strong denunciation of the United States for its bases in Turkey, its imperialistic policy and its opposition to the Turkish cause in Cyprus. Americans have seized all our national resources, he declared; oil companies dare to send insolent cables to our government and threaten the state. In these circumstances, brother workers, citizens, your first duty is to deliver the country from foreign occupation. Forty three years after winning the war of liberation, all we citizens from seven to 70 years of age, shall again mobilize. Turkey can not become the satellite

\textsuperscript{35} Millen Bruce, The Political role of Labour in Developing Countries, Washington: The Brooking Institution, 1969, pp. 70-130.
And however, demanded the abolition of all agreements giving privileges to America and urge to establish independent autonomy to various sectors. Without independent autonomy one cannot have land reform, industry, employment and social justice because America heavily relies on country's landlords, speculators. The foreign policy of Turkey, made stringent attacks on oil companies which in turn helped to crystallize the Labour Party's ideological stand. The Party welcomed the efforts to improve relations with the Soviets, the Balkan countries and all neighbours, land proposed to follow a policy likely to prevent a Third World War. Internal development was to be achieved rapidly through state intervention. All major private enterprises including trade banking and insurance and all foreign firms, were to be nationalized. The Law on foreign investment was to be abolished and Turkey was to resign from the common Market. Land reform was to be carried out, workers were to be granted full rights and the lockout abolished. Education was to be reformed and universalized according to a new economic and social philosophy. The village Institutes were to be reopened and any youth group, which was anti-imperialistic and populist reorganized accordingly. Human

36 Ibid., pp. 70-130.
37 Ibid., pp. 70-130.
effort, being the creator of all value, was to be appraised and rewarded, and made the foundation of the new system. The platform reiterated the Party's views on science, populism, religion, property and family as expressed in the program. Democracy, being the government by the people and for the people, necessitated the eradication of all economic, social and political obstacles preventing working people from leading a humane, democratic life. This was to be achieved by sending people's representatives to the National Assembly. 38

The platform, after supporting the Republican Party's leftist orientation, especially its foreign policy toward the Soviets, still dismissed it along with all other parties as defending the interests of landlords and other upper groups. The ideas in the platform, repeated by party candidates over the radio and in the press, as well as at rallies, tended to awaken some interest and led the optimists to believe that the party would receive a great number of votes and became Turkey's third major party and even join the coalition government. 39


The opposition parties, especially the wing groups, responded to this campaign by publicizing the name of Labour Party candidates who had been prosecuted or condemned for communist activities and went to great efforts to identify the party's tactics with those of communists. Some ill-timed actions by some labourite candidates, such as the claim of Cetin Altan, the popular columnist of Aksam and then deputy from Istanbul, that Ataturk's written condemnation of communism was a forgery reinforced the anti-leftist position. The Leader of the National Party, Osman Bolukbasi, produced an instruction allegedly issued to an international writers' conference held in Moscow in 1955. The eighteen articles of the declaration supposedly coincided with the tactics used by the Labour Party. Alpaslan Turkes, a former member of the military junta and by then the leader of the rightist Republican Peasant National Party, accused some Labour Party candidates of being 'sold lackeys trying to divide, in fact put an end to, an independent Turkey. It is now very easy, he declared "to recognize these people with sick mind, souls and character by their mustache, special words and broken dialects which bear no resemblance to Turkish. These have never in their lives handled a shovel. Their monthly income does not fall below 55,20,000 liras. They live in comfortable quarters in Ankara and Istanbul and never go to and could never stand to see the poor districts inhabited by the Turkish worker and peasant. These Pasha (noble) offsprings shall not deceive
the people. Be they masked or unmasked we shall always oppose the communists and destroy their insidious plot. Turkes represented the rightist school of thought which regarded as potentially subversive any proposals for social progress. 40

The Labour Party tried to counteract these accusations by rejecting communism and subservience to the Russians. It upheld religious freedom at one point there was a question of prosecuting it for using religion for political purposes in a desperate effort to maintain its self-created image as genuine spokesman for the commoner. Neutral intellectuals, asked to analyze the platforms of all political parties, found that the Labour Party's views on economic and social policy and foreign affairs contradicted present conditions and democratic principles. The elections were held on October 10, 1965. The Labour Party won 276,0101 votes and elected two deputies directly. Owing to the cumulative vote system it was awarded 13 more seats in the Parliament. Almost half of its votes came from the three big cities, Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir. Most of its deputies were known leftists -- intellectuals rather than workers. The party, despite its expectations, gathered only three per cent of the total vote and disqualified itself for financial

assistance from the budget. It ran behind the National Party 31 seats and New Turkey 19 seats but ahead of Turkes Party 11 seats. However, the labourites' chief target -- the Justice Party and its leader Suleyman Demirel, accused of being a stooge of the West won 239 seats. This was enough to form an independent government. The Republican Party which had campaigned on a 'Left of centre' platform suffered its worst defeat in receiving only 134 seats, or 28.75% of the total valid votes. These results, despite reassuring comments, constituted a reversal for the Labour Party. It had the best organizers and speakers, an enthusiastic, dedicated organization and the sympathy of some of the most influential newspapers. Moreover, it enjoyed the tacit support of the Republican Party and a general sympathy among the social minded who hoped to see a socialist group in Parliament. The Party, in addition to a shortage of funds, indiscriminate accusations and some social pressure, was handicapped by its own inner shortcomings. First, its program drawn along orthodox Marxist ideas, conflicted with its opportunistic policies aimed at securing votes at all costs. Second, it had the most heterogeneous social structure of all Turkish parties and had but little relation to working

41 Ibid., pp. 33-98.
42 Ibid., pp. 30-98.
classes. Its rallies were often attended by well dressed intellectuals, ladies in furs and men using private cars, while the Justice Party rallies appeared as strikingly popular gathering. Third, the party assembled individuals with political grievances against other parties, even the Republican regime and the trade Union Movement. Fourth, the Party leadership was in the hands of extreme leftist intellectuals with elite attitudes, whose interest in labour was motivated by opportunistic, political reasons. Fifth, the party used foreign policy as a main issue and thus consolidated the strong suspicions about its Soviet orientation. Sixth, it made a capital error in minimizing the dynamic and highly capable leadership of the middle classes and their influential working relations with other social groups. The Party's advocacy of tactics based on history and science proved to be a lifeless political dogma.43

It may be said further that much of the Labour Party's dynamism was provided by the able, young, social minded members of the Republican Party. These, encouraged by their own Party's lukewarm attitude towards the left and its ambiguous idea of statism, went fully to the support of the Labour Party. But these intellectuals, who were effective

43 Heper, Metin, "Negative bureaucratic politics in a modernizing context: The Turkish case", Middle Eastern Studies, 1977, 1(Fall), pp. 65-84.
as long as they spoke moderately for their own party, lost their popular following in siding with an abstract extreme left. Yet, the establishment of the Labour Party and its activities must be viewed as an important milestone in Turkish politics. For the first time in history socialist ideas found formal representation in the Parliament. One may question the laborites' social origin and occupation, but the fact remains that they spoke on behalf of groups hitherto deprived of formal representation in the legislature. This in turn forced the other political parties to reshape their views on economic development and social justice according to the specific needs of various social groups as is now evident in their programs.

Socialism, as indicated in this study appeared as a program of social and economic reform. It began as a general current of thought among intellectuals and was shaped gradually into a social ideology. A few groups among the intelligentsia especially those in universities and the press used socialist ideology both as program for radical structural changes and as a technique to acquire power. The bulk of the intellectuals of the bureaucracy, the trade unions and professionals, however, remained sympathetic more to a democratic flexible program of social and economic action, rather than political dogma. An organization likely

to answer the social yearnings of these groups has not been established. A newly formed social Democratic Party under senator Sitki Ulay, a former general, does not seem to have the organizational and ideological capacity necessary to embody the intelligentsia's wish. The chances are that the people's Republican Party of Ismet Inonu moving ideologically to the Left under prodding from its own socialist wing, may subdue its arch conservatives and becomes a truly socialist party. If this occurs, then several groups, such as those around Yon and the universities, and even the rank and file members of the labour Party, would join it and make the Republican Party a truly social minded democratic party. If this does not materialize, the Republican Socialist group may resign and form their own independent body. They would probably secure considerable backing from Labour. The Labour Party in this case probably will move further to the left and - leaving aside its revisionist views - become a truly orthodox Marxist Party, especially if the formal ban on communist parties is lifted.45

However, most Turkish political parties have been internally created. With the exception of the Turkish Labour Party, which was founded by several trade union

leaders, indirect parties have failed to play any significant role in electoral competition. Hence, party leadership rest with members of the National Assembly and new parties usually evolve out of factional splits from parliamentary party groups.

The formal structural characteristics of Turkish parties are quite similar. In terms of a functional classification, party organizations include central executive bodies, disciplinary organs and parliamentary groups. With respect to territorial and hierarchical structural, they extend from national head quarters in Ankara down to provinces and subprovinces. The 'Cetin Altan affair' is symptomatic of the LPT's aggressiveness and of its rivals' response. The year 1968 seems to have been a high point in inter-party strife, at least judging from the quantity of publications and their virulence. They were further exacerbated by the struggle over the amendment to the electoral law for the National Assembly and by the senate election campaign.46

Uludogan in his page booklet promised to show what kind of party the LPT was - that it was not a worker's party. He analyzed the LPT booklet New Order' and its claim that Turkey was for the workers. He also took issue with

46 The Times (London), March 4, 1968.
the LPT's slogan of 'Land for the peasant' and asked who would then pay the peasants for their work, should the LPT's promises he realized. Uludogan ended by asserting that nobody should exchange reality for empty slogans.

This appeal to continue the status quo and ignore the LPT's radical propaganda was buttressed with further accusations. Turkey's Minister of the Interior spoke in the Parliamentary budget commission about 'extreme trends' and his speech was then published by his party, the Justice Party, as a 28-page booklet. Sukan stated that there was a movement afoot to destroy the state. Lately, the LPT had arranged numerous meetings in Ankara and the eastern parts of Turkey suggesting that the inhabitants of this area were not Turks, but Kurds or Alevis - a sensitive matter. Sukan denied that the LPT spoke for 'scientific socialism', he considered the LPT Marxist, for its methods were identical to those of the Turkish Communist Party (TCP), and its contacts were with communist parties abroad. He concluded by asserting that the LPT's ideas conflicted with Turkey's constitution that their Allah was Stalin and their Ka'ba was Moscow.

An equally aggressive tone characterized a 161 page book written by Nural Cengiz Yamakoglu who claimed he had been a member of the LPT. The book started by saying that it was a duty to unmask Turkey's enemies -- the communists -- who had kept quiet until the 1960 Revolution, after which
they had begun open activity. He called the members of the LPT communist and traitors, accusing them, of using communist methods and selling communist propaganda. All they wanted was to break up Turkey into hostile camps and destroy it, along with everything that was sacred to it. All the LPT's leaders were known communist and they had contacts with communist parties abroad, land that socialism, although it talked about social reform was nothing but a disguise for communism.