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from Republican People's Party:  
The Fear of Communism**

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## **The Policy Inherited by Democrat Party from Republican People's Party: The Fear of Communism**

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### **Abstract**

In the aftermath of Turkish-Russian hostility which lasted for centuries, Soviet Union that replaced tzardom regime in Russia provided the grandest friendship to new Turkey starting from War of Independence and covering the period up to proclamation of the republic. A treaty of amity was signed between two states in 1925. The fact that both states were sharing a common destiny of fixing new regimes made them closer. However, since the early 1930s, priorities of both states changed in parallel with the changing conditions in the world. Since the break out of Second World War, both states experienced nearly a return to conventional Turkish-Russian policy. As a result, the main threat for Turkey was neither Germany nor another European state but Soviet Union. As a matter of fact, Turkish statesmen realized that their worries were not in vain after the memorandum of Stalin who was the leader of USSR. Therefore, the factor on which the foreign policy was based – thus reflects the domestic policy – was the apprehension against Soviet, in other words apprehension against communism. This threat led to an exaggerated perception which even conceived the concept of “left-wing” as a threat. Having media in the first rank, all left wing publications were forbidden. During 1940s and 50s, many decisions were made to withdraw books, calendars and many other published texts from the market based on the reason that they were propagating communism. During the period Republican People's Party, many left wing newspapers and journals were closed down. Tan publication was even burned down. On the other hand, Democrat Party, for which left wing section of the society held hopes since its establishment in 1946, proved that it will follow no other track than that of Republican People's Party. Democrat Party did not leave the track of “struggle with communism” during ten years of power both in domestic and foreign affairs. It kept on with the witch-craft against left-wing intellectuals and publications which were regarded as a huge threat.

**Keywords:** Communism, politics, threats

## Introduction

During the War of Independence, Mustafa Kemal Pasha sent a telegram to Lenin dated as 26<sup>th</sup> of April proposing to take action together against imperialists. It was answered by Cicerin on 2<sup>nd</sup> of June in 1920 which officially initiated the diplomatic relationships between Soviet government and Grand National Assembly of Turkey (GNAT)<sup>1</sup>. The attempts to make an agreement with Soviets led to a sympathetic consideration of “leftist” ideology. Thus, leftist organizations showed up easily either secretly or explicitly. Leftist activities of this period were interrupted due to Çerkes Ethem incident and preparation of London Conference. Since the beginning of 1921, an oppression on left wing was observable. As a result of detentions which took place in Turkish People’s Communist Party (TPCP) and Labor newspaper, a large group of people were put on trial in Ankara Independence Tribunal.<sup>2</sup>

During the period between Sakarya and Dumlupınar battles, left wing was revived in Anatolia. This period was deemed as the spring season of Turkish-Soviet connections. Soviet government made military and financial help to GNAT government.<sup>3</sup> The course of their relationship changed the policy that GNAT employed against left wing. The leftists who were put on trial in Ankara Independence Tribunal were released.<sup>4</sup> Also in Istanbul, Turkish Socialist Labor and Farmer Party declared a manifesto in 1923 titled as “*To Turkish Laborers and Farmers and middle class communities*”. The party started to spread Marxist ideas via explicit publications such as Salvation, Daylight and Hammer and Sickle. However, its publications were blacked out within the scope of Law on Keeping the Peace. Besides, within the scope of Law on Treason, Dr. Şefik Hüsnü and 38 people were put on trial in Independence Tribunals due to their writings in Daylight journal. Nazım Hikmet was also one of them.<sup>5</sup>

Turkish-Soviet Non-aggression and Neutrality Pact which consisted of 3 articles and 3 protocols were signed in 17.12.1925.<sup>6</sup> While the relationship between Soviet Russia and Turkey were progressing positively, wide-scale arrests of those who engaged in communist activities were made in 1927 during the Republican period. In 1927, a brochure named “Bolshevik” which was supportive of strike and revolution was distributed to laborers. Upon this event, 89 people including Şefik Hüsnü and Hikmet Kıvılcımlı were arrested.<sup>7</sup> Until 1933, those who were engaged in communist activities in provinces such

<sup>1</sup>Mete Tuncay.1978. *Türkiye’de Sol Akımlar (1908-1925)*, Bilgi Publishing, 3rd Edition, Ankara, p.101-102.

<sup>2</sup>Tuncay., p.123-141.

<sup>3</sup>Tuncay, p.131-132.

<sup>4</sup>Tuncay, p.137; Grant National Assemble of Turkey (GNAT), B:37,O:1,29.01.1947, p.67.

<sup>5</sup>GNAT, B:6, O:2-3, 19.11.1951, p.12.

<sup>6</sup>Cenk Şen.2006. *Stalin Döneminde Türk Sovyet İlişkileri (1923-1953)*, Master Thesis, SDÜ Institute of Socail Sciences, Isparta, p.58; Kamuran Gürün. 2010. *Türk -Sovyet İlişkileri (1920-1953)*, TTK, Ankara, p.109-118.

<sup>7</sup>GNAT, 37/1,29.01.1947, p.67.

as Bursa, Izmir, Samsun, Zonguldak and Trabzon were arrested.<sup>1</sup> However, with the amnesty law that was enacted in the tenth year of Republic, people who were under arrest in prisons due to communist activities were released. Despite the oppressive practices against the left wing and either explicit or implicit leftist activities, until the late 1930s communism had not yet been considered as a huge threat against the government. As a matter of fact, deputy of Izmir, Halil Mentese, claimed that communism was becoming more and more common among laborers and teachers, and mentioned the threat of communism in GNAT. However, Minister of National Education of that period, Abidin Özmen, stated that the number of teachers who adopted communism might be a few and the state indicated no such threat.<sup>2</sup>

### **Republican People's Party's Attitude towards Leftist Activities (1938-1950)**

The developments which took place since the early 1939, the quest for new alliances deeply influenced Turkish-Soviet relationships.<sup>3</sup> Russia demanded 1925 treaty of neutrality to be renewed. However, it was unnecessary for Turkey to renew a treaty which was already in force. Russia accused Turkey of adopting a hostile policy against Russia. On 19<sup>th</sup> of October, 1939, a reciprocal assistance treaty was signed in Ankara between Turkey, Britain and France. This treaty was the indicator of Turkey's hostility towards Russia according to Russian government. However, it was acknowledged that Russia was holding up Turkey while it was seeking an agreement with Germany<sup>4</sup>.

While there were interruptions in Turkish-Russian relationship, there was also a harsh attitude towards leftist movements in Turkey. As a result of inquiries, it became obvious that Socialist Laborer and Peasant Party, which took the advantage of 1933 amnesty, was trying to broaden its field of activity by placing its subsections into various offices, institutions, state organizations, schools and army.<sup>5</sup> In this sense, there was a fear that communist activities would penetrate into army. Trials of military academy and navy were brought to agenda within this atmosphere. In 1938, a military student named Ömer Deniz, visited Nazım Hikmet whose poems he was reading. This event initiated the Military Academy Trial. At the end of the trial, Nazım Hikmet was sentenced to 15 years of imprisonment. A sergeant named Hamdi Alevdaş, who was working in Yavuz Ship, said that he knew Nazım Hikmet and they were corresponding. This gave a start to Navy Trial. According to allegations, those who adopted communist ideology aimed at breaking out a riot by penetrating into the army. There were many arrests. Nazım Hikmet was

<sup>1</sup>GNAT, 37/1,29.01.1947, p.67; Gürün, *a.g.e.*, s.121.

<sup>2</sup>GNAT, 29-1, 25.05.1935, p.265; GNAT, 5/ 2-16, 05.02.1937.

<sup>3</sup>Gürün, p.184-185.

<sup>4</sup>Gürün, p.197-214.

<sup>5</sup>GNAT, 6/2-3,19.11.1951, p.13.

sentenced to 20 years of imprisonment. During the trials, Nazım Hikmet tried to prove that there was a conspiracy against him. However, he was sentenced to 28 years and 4 months of imprisonment in total considering his 15-year punishment from Military Academy Trial. Hikmet Kıvılcımlı and Kemal Tahir were some other popular defendants who were convicted in navy trial.<sup>1</sup>

Socialist activities in Turkey were started to be regarded as a “huge threat” which was also a result of the course of relationship with Russia. Meanwhile, II. World War was proceeding at full steam. Until its participation, Russia was content with neutral attitude of Turkey. However, Russia was included in the war upon the attack of German in 1941.<sup>2</sup> On contrary to Russia’s wishes, Turkey kept its neutral position. This increased the tension with Russia. In the meantime, leftist activities were spreading within the state. In the years of 1943-1944, leftist activities took effect in Istanbul University by means of Youth Organizations Subsection. As a result of activities carried out by Higher Youth Union, 60 people led by Assistant Mihri Belli were arrested.<sup>3</sup> During this period, some developments took place which urged the government to worry. Through the late 1943, a student of Officer Candidate School in Ankara was caught with a bulletin named “*and Saraçoğlu Government*”. At the end of the inquiry, three cells were revealed. Two of them were formed of students while the other one was formed of private soldiers. It was revealed that this subsection, which was functioning as secret cell organization, reached Faculty of Humanities and Agriculture. Also, it was detected that the bulletins which were delivered to faculties in Ankara were actually sent from Istanbul.<sup>4</sup> At the end of the inquiries held in Istanbul, activities of Central communist provincial committee whose subsections were connected to laborers in Karabük Factory and Akhisar Secondary School, and activities in Istanbul, Beyoğlu, Kadıköy and Usküdar regions were revealed. A group of 31 was caught whose majority were students. Besides, bulletins propagating communism which were written by Reşat Fuad and Suat Derviş were captured. There were arrests and at the end of the trials held in Ankara Garrison Military Court No. 2, 32 people were sentenced to various punishments.<sup>5</sup> The investigation revealed that people who were engaged in communist activities were communicating in codes. Tevfik Dilmen, who was one of Managers of Post Office and Telgraph, was making communication available. A note was caught in his notebook stating that new armoured units were about to be formed.<sup>6</sup>

In 1945, Turkish-Russian friendship was terminated with II. World War. As a matter of the fact, Russia sent a memorandum to Turkey on 19<sup>th</sup> of March in 1945 regarding the invalidity of 1925 treaty. In order to renew this treaty,

<sup>1</sup> Okan İrtem, 1938 Harp Okulu ve Donanma Davası, *Aydınlık*, 30.07.2012; Abdullah Köktürk, Abdullah Köktürk, Donanma Davası ve Nazım Hikmet, 21.04.2014, *aynahaber.org*; Cemil Koçak. 2011. *Tek-Parti Döneminde Muhalif Sesler*, İletişim, 2nd Edition, İstanbul, p.141-142.

<sup>2</sup> Gürün, p. 239.

<sup>3</sup> GNAT, 6/2-3,19.11.1951, p.16.

<sup>4</sup> GNAT, 6/2-3,19.11.1951, p.15.

<sup>5</sup> GNAT, 6/2-3,19.11.1951, p.15; GNAT, 37/1,29.01.1947, p.68.

<sup>6</sup> GNAT, 6/2-3,19.11.1951, p.16.

Russia asked for privilege from Turkey in relation to Kars, Ardahan and Straits which indicated that Russia re-adopted its previous traditional policy.<sup>1</sup> Previous friend and ally, Russia became the biggest threat for Turkey from that time on.

As for internal affairs, the year 1945 was an important corner for Turkey to make transition to democracy. While political parties were being founded, leftist organizations benefited from this atmosphere as well. Moreover, pursuant to the decision made by Republican People's Party (RPP) dated as 1946, the article stating that no organization was allowed to spread ideas on class and struggle of classes was removed from the party program.<sup>2</sup> Being one of the most notable names of Turkish Communist Party, Tan newspaper's owner Zekeriya Sertel started to make courageous publications appropriate for his ideology. Turkish Socialist Party belonging to Esat Adil was founded, and it was followed by Dr. Şefik Hüsnü's Turkish Socialist Laborer and Peasant Party. According to government, these two parties were in service under the cover of Turkish Communist Party. Since their activities were striking, both of them were dissolved by Marital Commandership. Their founders and some of the members were sent to Marital Court. While their trials were approaching to an end, marital law was abolished and trial files were transferred to High Criminal Court. Some of the party members and Şefik Hüsnü were sentenced while Esat Adil was released.<sup>3</sup>

The decision made by Marital Commandership and Court dated as 16.12.1946 regarding the dissolution of two socialist parties and unions, publications and etc. affiliated with them was discussed in General Congress of GNAT upon an oral question. Minister of Internal Affairs, Şükrü Sökmensüer, claimed that the parties were dissolved since they benefitted from the democratic steps taken by RPP: "*Communists in Turkey adopted the strategy of liberty as the most influential caution to choke the liberty... They did not hesitate to take the advantage of each step taken by People's Party on the way to improve democracy.*"<sup>4</sup>

The minister announced some documents belonging to year 1945. First of these was the document covering the instructions given to youth organizations and was alleged to belong Şefik Hüsnü. This document was found during the searches conducted with order of Marital Commandership. According to the government, the document had a threatful content. It included issues such as democracy's establishment, formation of parties, and struggle against fascist activities.<sup>5</sup> The second document was claimed to cover conditions of TCP to transform Turkey into a Soviet Republic. It was claimed that Homeland, World, Steps newspapers in Ankara and Tan newspaper in Istanbul were used for this purpose. Other documents were letters sent from Tevfik Rüştü Aras to Sabiha Sertel and Zekeriya Sertel containing information on the fact that

<sup>1</sup> *Cumhuriyet*, 27.06.1945; *Cumhuriyet*, 28.11.1945; *Akşam*, 08.01.1946; *Vakit*, 23.08.1946; Gürün, a.g.e, p.278.

<sup>2</sup> *Son Posta*, 12.05.1946.

<sup>3</sup> *GNAT*, 6/2-3,19.11.1951,p.16; *GNAT*,37/1,29.01.1947, p.68..

<sup>4</sup> *GNAT*, 37/1,29.01.1947, p.68.

<sup>5</sup> *GNAT*, 37/1,29.01.1947, p.69.

certain people including Celal Bayar and Adnan Menderes were corresponding with Sertels. In the letter dated as 02.09.1946 to Marshall Fevzi Çakmak from Cami Baykurt and Zekeriya Sertel, there were claims that RPP and Democrat Party (DP) were acting together to discredit Fevzi Çakmak in the eyes of public.<sup>1</sup> Sökmensüer claimed that supporters of communist ideology were trying to form an alliance against RPP led by Sertels by gathering DP managers on their side as well as Fevzi Çakmak. Tevfik Rüştü Aras was assisting Sertels in these activities. In another letter dated as 09.09.1946, Aras addressed Cami Baykurt and Zekeriya Sertel as “*Dear Friends*” and informed them of the fact that he personally delivered the letters to Marshall.<sup>2</sup>

According to the government, leftist movements emerging in various places within the country and spreading gradually were being organized by TCP which was working in confidence. Within this sense, founders of “Socialist, Laborer and Peasant Party” in Gaziantep and “Union of Free Industry Laborers” in Eskişehir were arrested being accused of making communist propaganda and disrupting the order and sentenced to imprisonment.<sup>3</sup> Tan publishing was attacked by thousands of people with stones and rods in 04.12.1945. The event took place within the knowledge of government. Two important names for the next years of Turkish policy, Suleyman Demirel and Necmettin Erbakan, participated in the event as well.<sup>4</sup> Thus, it became clear that RPP was supporting nationalist youth against leftist youth in the struggle against communism. As a matter of fact, in 22.12.1947, RPP's Yozgat representative İhsan Olgun, expressed this attitude of RPP in Plenary Session with the following words: “... *the only castle to protect borders of the country against communist movements is the nationalist shield...*”. In this sense, the youth in Ankara and Istanbul universities were encouraged to react against communist propaganda.<sup>5</sup>

Struggle against communism led to a strict control of publishings. That is because according to the government, poets and novelists were spreading communist ideas and beliefs under the cover of art while daily newspapers were delivering the ideas of Marx and Engels to large groups of people. As a matter of the fact, Communist Party kept its activities more through publishings and progpaganda during the years of II. World War. Since 1939, an explicit publishing acitivity was initiated with the team of “New Men of Letters”. Poems and writings were published in the magazines such as New Voice. Marital Commandership kept a close watch on the magazine and sent the writers whose writings were inconvenient to the court such as Suat Derviş, Hasan İzzet, Dinamo, Rifat Ilgaz, and Ömer Faruk Toprak. These writers were imprisoned at the end of the trials. However, Military Court of Appeal quashed the provision of the court due to six-month prescription.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>GNAT, 37/1,29.01.1947, p.71.

<sup>2</sup>GNAT, 37/1,29.01.1947, p.76.

<sup>3</sup>GNAT, 37/1,29.01.1947, p.72.

<sup>4</sup>Arda Uskan, *Takvim*, 05.12.2010.

<sup>5</sup>GNAT, 20/1,22.12.1947, p.139.

<sup>6</sup>GNAT, 6/2-3,19.11.1951, p.14.



Afterwards, in the lifetime of Atatürk, Minister of Internal Affairs and General Secretary of RPP Şükrü Kaya, sent a note to community center presidencies in 08.04.1938. The note included the names of 19 illegal books for libraries of community centers. All of the books were about communism and socialism. 5 of them were written by Hikmet Kıvılcımlı; one of them was written by Nazım Hikmet and two were written by Sertels.<sup>1</sup> In the upcoming years, prohibitions continued. Written by Cahit Saffet Irgat and published in 1946, “*My Winds are Speaking*” poem book became the subject of investigation due to making communist propaganda.<sup>2</sup> Also, the calendar belonging to year 1947 published by Baha Töven in Istanbul and translated by Emin Türkkelçi from German to Turkish, “*Golden Chain*”<sup>3</sup> were only some of the publications which were prohibited by Marital Commandership due to communism propaganda.

### **Democrat Party and Communism**

In 1950, the year that DP won the elections, Turkey was benefiting from Truman doctrine and Marshall plan. This was opposed by Russia through its reactions towards these alliances. Russia was threatening Turkey via diplomatic notes it had been sending since 1946. The level of tension between Turkey and Russia was at its peak.<sup>4</sup> Turkey was in need of securing its safety. The application of Greece to NATO was also harshly responded by Russia. Once again, Russia sent threatening diplomatic notes to Turkey. As for Turkey, it stated that its application to NATO carried the intention of safety not enmity. During the governance of DP, an attempt was made to establish a Middle-East commandership led by USA, Britain and France. They wanted to make Turkey side with them. Upon this attempt, Russia sent two more threatening diplomatic notes to Turkey. Following these, Turkey was granted with permission to NATO as a reward for sending soldiers to Korea.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the relationships between two states were shaped by traditional policy of enmity. Upon the death of Stalin on 5<sup>th</sup> of March in 1953, Russia published a declaration to improve the relationships with Turkey on 30<sup>th</sup> of May.<sup>6</sup> However, Turkey ignored this attempt though it responded on 18<sup>th</sup> of July. Turkey kept its USA and West oriented path. DP’s approach to Soviet Russia in terms of foreign affairs shaped its internal affairs towards left wing people.

In fact, the support of leftist intellectuals like “Sertels” was effective for DP to come to power. However, Cami Baykurt, Zekeriya Sertel and Tevfik Rüştü Aras encouraged DP Group to leave the Assembly to demonstrate that GNAT is illegal. The Group responded negatively which led them to win

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<sup>1</sup>Koçak, p.155-156.

<sup>2</sup>Başbakanlık Cumhuriyet Arşivi (B.C.A),030.10/87.576.1, 30.12.1946.

<sup>3</sup>B.C.A.,030.10/88..572.3,19.02.1947.

<sup>4</sup>*Ulus*,13.03.1947; *Cumhuriyet*, 23.04.1947; *Son Posta*, 03.05.1947; *Ulus*, 05.02.1948.

<sup>5</sup>*Son Posta*, 28.07.1950.

<sup>6</sup>Gürün, p.308-311.

Marshall Fevzi Çakmak.<sup>1</sup> There were indeed evidence of correspondence indicating that left wing was trying to win DP and Marshall Fevzi Çakmak in opposition to RPP. Şefik Hüsnü was telling the things below in his writing dated as 29.07.1946:

*"We have to support Marshall and DP. Also we have to arrange our organization and activities. We have to pay attention to draw the nominees of DP executives into Socialist democracy as much as possible. Also, we have to be careful to hide the elements personally interfering in this constitutional changes..."*<sup>2</sup>

DP enacted a rather comprehensive amnesty law in the second month of its governance. Following intense arguments within party group, it was decided that those who were sentenced due to communism propaganda were also included within the amnesty law.<sup>3</sup> Thus, Nazım Hikmet, who could not take the advantage of the amnesty law enacted during the period of Şemsettin Günaltay, was released from prison on 15<sup>th</sup> of July thanks to this law.<sup>4</sup> However, soon after his release, he was denaturalized pursuant to cabinet decision dated as 25.07.1951 based on the allegations of spreading communism, serving for Soviet government and etc.<sup>5</sup> Obviously, it would not take too long until DP's declaration of war against socialist intellectuals and institutions just like RPP. Hereafter, bringing and distributing the book named "*Notes of an Imprisoned but Free Turkish Communist*" in Turkey was prohibited during the period of DP as well as other leftist publications.<sup>6</sup> Besides, newspapers like "Afresh", "Nazım Hikmet", "Free Marko Pasha" and journals like "Free Youth" were closed down due to their publications against national interests. In addition, writers were arrested. There were often news on the arrests of leftist writers and intellectuals in the newspapers.<sup>7</sup>

The first step in struggle against communism was taken during the period of RPP. In 1947, "Anti-Communist Action Commission" was founded within the body of National Turkish Students Union. In 1948, an application was made in Zonguldak for Anti-Communist Struggle Union which entered into service unofficially in 1950. The union's efficiency would increase during the period of DP. Its first branch was founded in Istanbul on 7<sup>th</sup> of December in 1956.<sup>8</sup> DP members clarified the concepts initially. They decided to use the concept "communist" instead of "extreme leftist".<sup>9</sup> A commission was created

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<sup>1</sup>GNAT, 37/1,29.01.1947, p.73.

<sup>2</sup>GNAT, 37/1,29.01.1947, p.72.

<sup>3</sup>DP Grup Tutanakları, 11.07.1950.

<sup>4</sup>Şerafettin Turan. 1999. *Türk Devrim Tarihi 4th Book*, Bilgi publishings, p.30. *Hürriyet*, 06.07.1950; *Milliyet*,16.07.1950.

<sup>5</sup>T.C.Resmi Gazete, Issue:7885, 15.08.1951 ; *Cabinet Decision*, Issue: 13401, 25.07.1951.

<sup>6</sup>B.C.A.,030.18.01/130.90.14, 18.09.1952.

<sup>7</sup>*Milliyet*,08.08.1950; *Milliyet*,09.08.1950.

<sup>8</sup>[http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Komünizmle\\_Mücadele\\_Derneği](http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Komünizmle_Mücadele_Derneği); *Cumhuriyet*, 27.01.1948.

<sup>9</sup>DP Grup Tutanakları,02.06.1950.

within the body of Ministry of Justice to set the path for struggle against communism. They decided that communism was a treason against the nation.<sup>1</sup>

In a closed-door meeting of GNAT in 19.11.1951, Military Judge informing the Assembly, Şevki Mutlugil, stated that communism, which was invading whole world was active in Turkey as well.<sup>2</sup> Since the explanations were being made in the name of government, they were of importance for they were reflecting the view and stance of the government. As a matter of the fact, Adnan Menderes stated his views on communism in the same meeting with the following words: "... currently, communism has already gone beyond being a freedom of idea...Its first purpose is to capture our lands...". Minister of National Education, Tevfik İleri, also asserted that all parties had to unite for such a struggle as against communism.<sup>3</sup>

To DP government, communism was not a political and economical doctrine, but it was beyond those concepts. It was the initiator of imperialism. It was even regarded as the fifth column of imperialism and a spy ring. It had an aim of penetrating into all the free regions of the world and dominate them. Supporters of communism which were trying to organize in Turkey had to be regarded as "traitors".<sup>4</sup> TCP being in the first place, supporters of this ideology such as socialists Nazım Hikmet and Hikmet Kıvılcımlı had the intention of replacing the regime and making Turkey a socialist republic just like Soviet Russia. At this point, it was claimed that both TCP's secret instructions sent to its organizations in 1945 and the texts written by leftist intellectuals were explicitly expressing the intentions of creating a clash between classes in Turkey, alliance with USSR, achieving communism and struggle against USA oligarchy. The allegation that those who adopted communism like Nazım Hikmet were imagining "Turkish Soviet Republic" was reinforced by the examples taken from TCP's activity report dated as 1936. The first, tenth and eleventh articles were the evidences.<sup>5</sup>

After a short while following the meeting in GNAT, DP government made amendments in Turkish Penal Code Articles no. 141 and 142 which covered the punishments to be given to extreme leftist activities and propagandas. These activities were called "communism crime".<sup>6</sup> Those who were oppressing oppressing the social classes, founding unions which were creating disorders or the ones who were managing and administrating them would be sentenced to 15-years of aggravated imprisonment. Those who were managing more than one of these kinds of communities would be even sentenced to death. Those who were founding communities to eradicate national feelings would be sentenced to imprisonment until 3 years. Those who were founding communities against the qualities of republic would be sentenced to imprisonment ranging from 8 to 15 years. Managers of communities with the

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<sup>1</sup>Milliyet,12.08.1950.

<sup>2</sup>GNAT, IX-X, 2/3,19.11.1951.

<sup>3</sup>GNAT, 6/2-3,19.11.1951, p.39.

<sup>4</sup>GNAT, 6/2-3,19.11.1951, p.6-7.

<sup>5</sup>GNAT, 6/2-3,19.11.1951, p.10-11.

<sup>6</sup>GNAT, 21/1, 20.12.1950, p.273-274.

aim of destroying the order of the government would be sentenced to 15-years of aggravated imprisonment. Besides, being a member to such communities was imprisonment from 6 months to 12 years. Pursuant to Article no. 142, those who were propagating againsts political, legal order of the government, principles of republic, nationality and democracy would be sentenced to imprisonment ranging from 6 months to 10 years.<sup>1</sup>

Following legal amendments, the staff which were disbanded by military courts due to communism propaganda and the ones who were in service were punished strikingly. For example, Infantry Lieutenant Mehmet Ruhi Su was sentenced to 5 years of aggravated imprisonment in 1954. Also, in 1957, he was deprived of all the public service.<sup>2</sup> The reasons of punishment of military courts were mainly activities within Communist Party. Based on this reason, military teacher Abdülkadir Demirkan was suspended from the army.<sup>3</sup> Reserve Bulwark Sub-Lieutenant Hilmi Ertan was sentenced to 3 years of aggravated imprisonment.<sup>4</sup> Military teacher Behçet Pekmertol was sentenced to 4 months of imprisonment and suspension from the army.<sup>5</sup>

DP regarded communism and RPP as the cause for all the mischief that took place during its power period. Menderes being in the first place, government members even announced that the events took place on 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> of September were organized by communists. Therefore, all the institutions which were affiliated with communism and RPP, particularly Community Centers and Village Institutes, were declared as target of war.<sup>6</sup> According to DP, socialist ideas which were spreading spreading to Istanbul and Izmir due to dissatisfaction of teachers since 1926 in financial terms and personal benefits, reflected on Village Institutes. İsmail Hakkı Tonguç, who was managing the institutes, had left wing ideologies. The most interesting one was the claim that leftist works were sent to institutes by means of Ministry of National Education and these institutes were penetrated.<sup>7</sup> penetrated.<sup>7</sup> As a result of this perception, Institutes like Community Centers, which were being regarded as the backyard of communism and RPP, were closed down in 1954. Moreover, since 1950, Ministry of National Education being in the first place, clearance against leftist people was initiated in educational institutions and universities.<sup>8</sup>

DP took the advantage of religion and nationality for the struggle against communism in addition to legal cautions. Recep Peker, who was one of the prime ministers of RPP, stated that “*Religion is poison, communism is a posion as well. A poison cannot be cured with another poison*”. This expression was a reflection of his view on extreme ideologies like religion and communism. However, communism was the only poison for DP. The way leading to

<sup>1</sup>The Law on Amendments in Laws no. 141 and 142 in Turkish Penal Code, Number: 5844, 03.12.1951; Republic of Turkey Official Gazette, Issue: 7979, 11.12.1951.

<sup>2</sup>B.C.A, 030-0-011-001-000/263-5-11, 29.01.1957.

<sup>3</sup>B.C.A, 30.11.1/262.45.5, 02.11.1956.

<sup>4</sup>B.C.A, 30.11.1/262.45.6, 02.11.1956.

<sup>5</sup>B.C.A, 30.11.1/273.35.11,24.12.1958.

<sup>6</sup>Vakit, 08.08.1951.

<sup>7</sup>GNAT, 6/2-3,19.11.1951, p.32-34.

<sup>8</sup>Milliyet, 13.08.1950.

eradication of this poison was religion which was another poison for Peker. As a matter of fact, speeches given by DP members focused on inappropriateness of propagating communism from the aspect of Islam. This ideology was flowing from north to south like a crimson flood. The only way leading out of this trouble was being Muslim. DP representative Burhanettin Onat expressed DP's point of view with the following words...*if communism is a lightning, its conductor is religion. If communism is a posion, its antidote is religion. If communism is a virus, its serum, vaccine is again religion..*"<sup>1</sup>

In this sense, DP sought for alliance with Middle-East states in the struggle against communism. In 10.08.1957, a meeting was to be held in Tehran between Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Iran and Turkey with the theme of "struggle against communism".<sup>2</sup> USA Minister of Foreign Affairs suggested that "North Line" states beside the border of Soviets had unite to protect Middle East. Upon this claim, a reciprocal agreement was made between Turkey and Iraq in 24.02.1955 in the province of Baghdad. Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), pioneered by USA, was brought to life in 19.08.1959 through reciprocal treaties with the intention of eradicating the effect of Soviets in Middle East. DP signed a reciprocal treaty with USA in 1959. Apart from the fact that it was enacted without being approved in GNAT, this treaty was met with reaction in Turkey since it was regarded as being guided totally by this state due to foundation of USA bases in Turkey, benefiting from İncirlik air base and etc.<sup>3</sup> In a period full of such arguments, DP governance was put an end by Coup D'etat.

## Conclusion

Since II. World War, there had been a huge threat for Turkey both in terms of domestic and foreign affairs. Turkey regarded communism as an important threat. Since 1945, it was deemed as the primary threat. The crises with Russia brought a more skeptical and harsh approach to leftist movement in internal affairs. Thus, life grounds of political formations advocating communism and leftist ideology emerged and organized in Turkey were hindered by governments due to course of events with Russia. Acknowledging that they could not survive legally, some secret organizations were formed. Not only political formations but also leftist publications were also regarded as stealthy and dangerous. These kinds of publications, which were traced, were either closed or withdrawn. Leftist people who were siding with the opposition against the policies of RPP, adopted the same strategy against DP. They played an important role during the process leading to Coup D'etat. The struggle against left wing in Turkey could not put an end to left wing in the state. Instead, it grew stronger through media-publication-organization-secret propaganda and etc.

Though there were some differences, struggle against communism was the single aim for RPP and DP. Since the beginning of 1951, struggle against communism was a

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<sup>1</sup>GNAT, 48/1, 22.02.1951, p.446.

<sup>2</sup>B.C.A.,030.18.01/146.41.8.

<sup>3</sup>Turan, p.167-173.

national struggle according to DP. Therefore, disorders in press and other freedoms were regarded as the most natural right of the government. RPP regarded all the extreme ideologies as threats during the period between 1938 and 1945. Not only communists, but also Turkist intellectuals were put subject to all those heavy punishments due to Pan-Turanism. Following 1945, RPP started to change this attitude. It even considered to pose Turkish nationality as an opposition to communism. Contrary to DP, it also regarded reactionarism as a huge threat like communism. During the 9<sup>th</sup> Convention of RPP, communism was mentioned as matter of life and death. Thus, they agreed upon struggle against communism urgently. Different from RPP, DP gave prominence to the factor of religion against communism.<sup>1</sup>

RPP sought alliance with Western states, particularly with USA, against the threat of Soviet. DP continued this strategy. Relying upon USA and the West more than adequately, which was different from RPP, caused eyebrows to rise in left wing people. Literally, DP adopted a foreign policy centered around the USA. This situation created an anti-American approach in addition to anti-communist approach already present in Turkey. To sum up, oppressive policies against left wing in Turkey laid the ground for 1960-1980 period while anti-communist and anti-American dichotomies constituted the reason and became the result of this period.

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<sup>1</sup>Republican People's Party 9th Convention Statement and Report, 30.11.1951.