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**TURKISH EXPERIMENTS IN DEMOCRACY:
THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND RELIGION IN POLITICS
THROUGH THE EYES OF FRENCH DIPLOMATS**

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Abstract: The Democratic Party (DP) government, covering the period 1950-60, is seen as one of the most important stages on the road to democracy in Turkey. The Republican People's Party (CHP), which ruled the country from the proclamation of the republic in 1923 to the end of World War II, found itself in opposition for the first time after the 1950 elections, and thus Turkish democracy was given a first chance to stand on its own feet. This work aims to read the era through the eyes of French diplomats, giving an external and disinterested perspective on DP power and the Menderes government, a critical time in the history of Turkish democracy. The study is based on the thoughts and analysis about the DP's representation of democracy and attitudes towards opposition from 1956 to the coup on May 27, 1960 written down by the 69th and 70th French ambassadors to Turkey, Jean Paul Garnier and Henry Spitzmuller. The reports that Garnier and Spitzmuller sent to Paris contain harsh criticism of the Menderes government for its authoritarian and anti-democratic practices and for its religious policies. These criticisms provide us with important clues about the ways in which the DP transformed the fundamental principles and policies of the Atatürk era.

Key Words: Democratic Party, Turkey, Adnan Menderes, May 27 Coup, Religion in Politics.

Introduction

If we exclude two very short experiments with multi-party regimes, the Republican People's Party dominated politics as a single party from its founding on September 9, 1923 to the end of World War II. The experiments with democracy that began with the transition to multi-party life in the 1940s and ended in a military coup set the stage for one of the most striking eras of recent Turkish history. Faced with various internal and external dynamics such as the emergence of a bipolar global system after the war and the wearing out of single party rule under the economic fatigue of the war years, President İsmet İnönü heralded the transition to multi-party life.¹ Turkey had already turned completely towards the west in declaring a republic, and after the San Francisco Conference of March 5, 1945, it desired even more to take its place in the western club. The Democratic Party (DP), founded by the Republican People's Party (CHP) opposition figures of Celal Bayar, Adnan Menderes, Fuat Köprülü and Refik Koraltan in 1946, took power in four short years. The Turkish constitution and democracy—of which historians have sought the first sparks as far back as the *sened-i ittifak* (charter of alliance between the Sultan and nobles); the eras of *tanzimat* (reform), *ıslahat* (improvement), *meşrutiyet* (constitutionalism), and finally the declaration of the republic—underwent a very important test with the change of government after the 1950 election. With Celal Bayar taking over the Presidency and Adnan Menderes the Prime Ministry, İsmet İnönü gave up political power held since the War of Independence years to the main opposition.²

The turbulent period of experimentation with multi-party democracy in the 1950s was burnt thoroughly into the memory of Turkish society through the May 27 coup, followed by the Yassıada trials and their outcome: the executions of Prime Minister Menderes, of Foreign Minister Fatin Rüştü Zorlu and Finance Minister Hasan Polatkan. In fact, the Menderes phenomenon and the May 27 coup retain their topicality even in the 2010s, having been evaluated and discussed from two different viewpoints from two different political poles over half a century, producing an immense academic and political literature.³ Since the topic is centred on internal politics, evaluations of the coup and two important political currents like the CHP and DP have largely been formulated in terms of the defence or antithesis of one of the sides.

This work aims to scrutinize the capacity of the French ambassadors in the DP era to report on and write about Turkish political life as individuals external to the debates about the DP power. Its fundamental purpose is to re-read important developments leading to the coup after the 1957 elections, the intricate relationship between the government and opposition and the high level of tension as well as the religious policies of the government through the eyes of the French ambassadors.

Some of the fundamental debates about the 1950s Turkey are to focus on how power suddenly transferred from the single party government to a new ruling party, without any constitutional change, questioning the ways in which power was used within the system, and the way in which the new rulers perceived opposition. They also question how the DP leaders of the generation of the single party era perceived opposition and what role they carved out for the opposition within the democratic system. Further on, they are to see how the French diplomats, who observed and evaluated events from a short distance, remaining outside the internal political dynamics, commented upon the relationship between government and opposition in the first true experience of multi-party life of Turkey. In order to answer these questions, this study aims to evaluate the government-opposition tensions and the religious policies of the DP through the events and phenomena mentioned frequently in the reports and writings prepared by the French diplomats on Turkish domestic politics after 1956.

Jean Paul Garnier, a French ambassador whose reports and views are frequently referenced in this study, was appointed the 69th French Ambassador to Turkey on September 10, 1955, and remained in post for two years.⁴ Henry Spitzmuller, appointed the 70th ambassador on June 8, 1957, continued this duty until 1963 and was witness to an extraordinary period, the 1960 coup, for NATO-member Turkey. Both emissaries made detailed analyses of the DP's philosophical underpinnings and view of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's principles, Menderes' character, the Uşak, Çanakkale, Kayseri and Istanbul events that marred the government's final years, the inquiries into them, and the critical matters leading to the proclamation of military rule. This study has been written to be read as an integrated account of the various phenomena and events during the period, in chronological order, within the context of various embassy reports between 1956 and 1960. In using all these data, a primary place has been given to the views and conclusions of the French diplomats on the aforementioned critical matters; in addition, starting from some hints in the texts, the present study infers about the nature of the government-opposition relationship in the DP era and about how the DP was viewed from outside.

The Democratic Party and the Opposition

In the early days of the government's second term, Ambassador Jean Paul Garnier analyzed the DP's policies in the context of Atatürk's principles. In a report Garnier sent to the French Foreign Ministry on July 17, 1956, entitled *The Collapse of Kemalism; Turkey At A Turning Point*, he described the main outlines of Atatürk's Turkey, and scrutinized the DP power in terms of Atatürk's basic policies—which he applauded.⁵ Garnier

saw Atatürk's fundamental policies for his new state as depending on two critical components; as keeping the country completely independent and nationalizing all resources, as opposed to the Ottoman Empire, and as establishing a modern, powerful Turkey through repressing religious groups and organizations according to a principle of *laïcité*.⁶ He saw Atatürk as aiming to alter eastern culture in his society, both in lifestyle and in terms of thought, in a western direction, whilst also introducing the Turkish nation to its roots in an effort towards building a great nation. In line with this internal policy, he saw Atatürk's foreign policy as maintaining friendship both with the great powers and with Turkey's near eastern neighbours, especially Soviet Russia. He saw Turkey turning its back on the east and its face towards the west.⁷

Garnier underlined two important violations of the Atatürk era practices by the DP. The first one was the infringement of the principle of full independence by Menderes in relation to foreign debt. The DP shaped its economic policies in a way more influenced by its creditors. However, one of the most fundamental features of the Atatürk era had been sensitivity to dependence on the outside world in basic areas such as the economy.⁸ The second matter the ambassador underlined was secularism. He claimed that the DP had imposed a series of changes in Atatürk's Turkey since coming to power in 1950 in the name of appeasing their base, and that these had continuously violated the principle of secularism, which Mustafa Kemal had seen as essential for his nation's rise. Finally, the highest DP authorities had regularly repeated that Turkey was a Muslim state and that it would always remain as such.⁹

Garnier mentioned that various indicators suggested that Turkey was in despair in the foreign policy realm, either because of the American reluctance to provide the country with credit or because of its lack of support in the Cyprus issue. Despite avoiding to admit that, he said, Turkey was searching for new policies that would provide some escape from these threats. France—with which Turkey had no serious problem—was a candidate to take the place of the US in Turkey's foreign policy.¹⁰ Garnier wrote that France could provide the support Turkey was seeking, but warned over the DP's political stance, “however, as opposed to France, which underwent the 1789 revolution and propounded the charter of human rights and the fundamental principles of democracy, the Menderes government's present policies offer a dictatorial outlook.”¹¹

The French ambassadors regularly wrote on the topic of opposition to the DP government. The final five years of the DP government leading to the coup saw increasing conflict between the government and the opposition with increasing attendant violence.¹² From 1956 onwards, the three opposition parties, which left the parliament after the passing of the law on meetings and demonstration marches, moved towards pursuing a type of alliance. Ambassador Garnier said that CHP leader İsmet İnönü, Nation Party (MP) leader Osman Bölükbaşı and Freedom Party (HP) leader

Fevzi Lütü Karaosmanoğlu had made attempts in this regard but they had not given rise to an alliance.¹³ The DP's moves against press freedom and meeting and demonstration rights were described as anti-democratic and illegal by the opposition who accused the DP leadership of dictatorship and intolerance of the opposition. Garnier saw the opposition as having taken the decision to restore democracy, despite not even having a doctrine in their manifestoes or taking united action.¹⁴ On the other hand, Menderes had two powerful weapons against the opposition in the circumstances: the press and meetings laws. These laws, which were implemented in full, were an important component of the repression of the opposition. For example, Osman Bölükbaşı had to address his party's general congress in an empty room in Samsun, as party members were not given permission to attend.¹⁵

Ambassador Spitzmuller, who took the position from Garnier in June 1957, presented a report, in November that year, containing comment on many important affairs including justice, press freedom and freedom of speech in the context of the DP-opposition relations. Spitzmuller wrote that the DP, who had come to power on a liberal program in 1950, had signed off on several authoritarian practices since 1954 that resembled those of the single party era.¹⁶ Among the most important antidemocratic practices there were state radio broadcasts on behalf of the government during the election periods and state employees used for the government's ends.¹⁷

The DP government engaged in serious repression of the opposition press, severely limiting freedom of expression.¹⁸ Spitzmuller underlined that the opposition press had recently been waging an important fight against violations of freedom of expression. While the press regularly published statements given by opposition parties in commissions and the parliament, as it was an offence, they tried to protect themselves from legal sanctions while criticizing the government by expressing their criticism as questions.¹⁹ He said that horizons were dark for the press organs that were not obedient to the DP. The Menderes government appeared indifferent to the criticism about the practices that the opposition press called unconstitutional.²⁰ Spitzmuller wrote about the censorship of the press in his report on the DP government's fight against communism and opposition.²¹ Following a statement by Prof. Kubalı of Istanbul University and two colleagues in *Cumhuriyet* newspaper, the parliament imposed a series of new sanctions on the press and tried to influence public opinion towards banning educators from engaging in political activity. The ambassador claimed that the press card regulations had no legal status and were unconstitutional.²²

A law which came out in 1956 became a big obstacle to opposition parties reaching the people and their base outside the election periods. It presented great difficulties for CHP General Secretary Kasım Gülek on his tour of the Black Sea region in August 1956. Police prevented Gülek from

acting by claiming that party members who wished to meet him were engaged in an *unauthorized demonstration*. In addition, MP president Osman Bölükbaşı was kept under arrest for four months for harshly criticizing and accusing the DP members of the parliament following the gerrymandering of Kırşehir into two different districts.²³

In addition to all this, according to Spitzmuller, there were very important interventions into the judiciary, and members of the judiciary began to take sides. On the one hand, the head prosecutor, who had dared to temporarily release Osman Bölükbaşı, was removed from his post; on the other hand, a penalty of a few weeks in jail given for a sermon accusing opposition parties with irreligiousness was quashed after the intervention of a high court. Aside from the legal system, another set of important targets were universities which did not share the views of the government. Prof. Feyzioğlu's 1956 sacking from the post of dean of the Ankara University Political Sciences Faculty provoked reactions from a large number of academics, yet the same year an associate professor at Istanbul University lost his job on being accused of interfering in politics.²⁴

In the same report, Spitzmuller analyzed the conduct of the army towards the DP and anti-government attitudes among soldiers. Menderes had dictatorial policies towards the army, which had cultivated sympathy for the CHP under İsmet İnönü ever since Atatürk's death. For example, in the midst of the October elections and following the arrests of two members of the military who wished to overthrow the government, soldiers demonstrated their anti-government attitudes in Gaziantep.²⁵ Spitzmuller's report also noted the disquiet in the army about the arrest of 9 officers on January 20, 1958. The DP did not want to enlarge the issue of the officers, arrested on the grounds of conspiracy against Menderes; however, the ambassador believed it highlighted various fundamental problems. It was an incontestable fact that many military personnel sympathized with the CHP and felt loyal to İnönü as the comrade of Atatürk, the victorious leader of the War of Independence.²⁶

Spitzmuller made important points about the attitude the Prime Minister should have taken towards ongoing political tensions. For the previous year, Turkey's internal politics had seen an unending war with criticism, insults and accusations traded between the government and the opposition and there had been no sign of any constructive approaches. Spitzmuller's November 29, 1958 report entitled "Menderes at a Turning Point" first described the conflict between the government and the opposition, and later underlined that the prime minister found himself at a critical turning point. While CHP partisans criticized Menderes for his economic policies and limitations on freedom of expression and freedom of the press, claiming that he was establishing a dictatorial regime in Turkey, the prime minister saw the accusations of despotism as a coup attempt by CHP leaders. In short, the tensions between the two political positions only grew, and their differences deepened. The opposition, well

aware of the threat Menderes posed, united to fight his government. The two lawmakers from the Republican Villagers Nation Party (CKMP), formed from an alliance of the MP and Villagers party, the four HP lawmakers and the CHP formed an alliance in November 1958.²⁷ In particular, the DP responded to a 50 percent increase in inflation in essential products and nationwide economic crisis immediately after its August 4 economic decisions by both giving civil servants a 100 percent pay rise and intensely hardening its attitude to opposition. Facing ceaseless criticism from the opposition, the DP accused it of bad will and its journalists of lying. Yet, the great deal of discontentment with the prime minister's policies and arbitrary authoritarianism must also be considered. It must also be taken into account that there were critics of Menderes among the new intake of the DP members of parliament at the most recent elections. Many DP representatives, who had exchanged views with electors while the parliament was out of session, began to openly criticize Menderes' policies at party group meetings.²⁸ Hence, the resignations of Industry Minister İbrahim Sıtkı Yırcalı, Minister of State Emin Kalafat and Transport Minister Fevzi Uçaner must be linked to the strength of the criticisms of the DP's opponents and to differences of opinion within the party.²⁹

Spitzmuller said that in these circumstances Prime Minister Menderes had to decide between two choices: the first was to continue the authoritarian policies of that time, acting dictatorially against other ideas, including those within his own party, knowing that he was backed by the U.S., which had supported him faithfully up until that point. The second option was to reduce the behavior which provoked these waves of criticism and complaint and to change gear, at the very least by softening his image and pardoning the accused in the press, reducing sanctions against opposition, making slightly or largely symbolic cabinet changes and hence gaining time to calm down society.³⁰

Rather than a change of gear, this was the time in which polarization most increased. In November 1958, with the formation of the Nation and United Power fronts, Menderes and İnönü brought society to an advanced level of separation through struggling with one another in the name of concentrating power in their own fronts.³¹ Spitzmuller noted how the propaganda centers formed in several large cities in the name of these fronts caused division and alarm in society.³² In March 1959, Spitzmuller said that the past 6 months of agitation on issues surrounding religious beliefs had deepened the internal crisis further, underlining how the war between the United Power and Motherland fronts was heavily dominating the press. The ambassador's comment on the issue of forming fronts was of this nature: first the CHP's supporters, and then the DP's supporters had begun the tension between the two sides in forming fronts in order to collect sympathy and attract more partisans to their own ranks. The first step was taken by CHP leader İnönü in beginning an initiative under the

name of “United Power” as the HP broke up in Fall 1958, calling on all opposition parties to unite under the CHP banner with a call for unity. A few days later, Prime Minister Menderes announced that he had formed a new group under the name of the “Motherland Front”.³³ Thus, two camps were formed and both groups began to fight with one another in order to gain supporters from one another and the smaller parties.³⁴

The DP's Policies on Religion

Ambassador Spitzmuller regularly reflected on the DP's policies on religion and the reaction of the opposition to them in his reports from 1959 onwards.³⁵ In his reports, Spitzmuller harshly criticized the DP government for abusing the religious feelings of villagers for its own ends. For example, in March 1959, he chose the suggestive title *Welcome to Menderes and a Return to the Middle Ages* for one of his reports. In this report he said that on Menderes' return after a plane crash in London in which 14 of his colleagues lost their lives, Istanbul and Ankara played host to scenes resembling ancient times. Menderes was presented nationwide as a hero who had defeated both the *Cyprus War* and *death*, while a strong feeling that Menderes had been saved by a miracle and that a divine power was protecting him was encouraged.³⁶

Spitzmuller portrayed the scenes of Menderes being met by the crowds in these harsh terms: And worse still, the uncultured Anatolian Turks who make up 94 percent of the country sacrificed countless sheep, cows and camels from end to end of the Atatürk Boulevard, which is Ankara's equivalent of the Champs Elysees. A country that makes claims of modernity and where secularism has an important place in the constitution allows this type of ancient-archaic practices, and further, its Prime Minister takes pleasure in them. At heart, all these may be seen as normal and slightly inescapable in the context of the practical policies that have been carried out by the governing party since 1950. The DP, in fondling the religious feelings of the illiterate village masses for 9 years in order to attract them to the party, has ensured the return of old beliefs and superstitions, and has itself caused the scene last week on the streets of Ankara. Fundamentally, the modern and western lifestyles seen in large cities such as Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir are replaced with a Medieval outlook on the Anatolian plateau. You meet a way of life frozen from ten centuries ago. Then these stupid and bigoted provincials have flowed to the cities, bringing with them the irrational traditions of an archaic life. The woolen scarves like shawls the villagers put over themselves so that they cannot be seen are a type of clothing the minority of cultured people cannot swallow. The community centers established by Atatürk in the provinces and especially the fear of the gendarmes has ensured that over around 30 years the Anatolian villagers have appeared to abandon certain

traditions and postpone others. The events we have witnessed and watched for 8 days show that the Anatolian villager is not at all open to Atatürk's modern ideas.³⁷

Although the law was an obstacle to the construction of places of worship with public funds, the government took it upon itself to erect and repair mosques. The funds for this came from donations made in the name of appropriate ministries to the Vakıflar (Foundations) Bank. Spitzmuller believed that this type of policy increased fondness for the DP among the masses by meeting their demands for superstitious traditions.³⁸

The Ambassador attributed other criticism of the Menderes' reception to the press. He said there was a discontentment in the media to so many animals having been sacrifices. Akşam newspaper compared the sacrifice of countless camels – which were 7,000 lira a head – sheep and cows to famous primitive ceremonies on the shores of the Nile or Ganges. Akşam claimed that Menderes was using his return to the country in this way as propaganda. The weekly Kim magazine quipped that, “Atatürk had conquered the homeland, and Menderes Cyprus! God had sent the victorious conqueror of Cyprus, veteran Menderes!” However, Spitzmuller continued by saying he did not see much reflection on this kind of criticism in government circles:

„A few days ago, 600 Aydın residents brought 60 cattle to slaughter in front of the Prime Minister's residence by special train, organized by the governor and Members of Parliament. The completion of the year-long restoration work on the Eyüp Sultan Mosque ordered by Menderes gave the government another opportunity for a display of religion. At the first iftar [fast-breaking meal] of Ramadan, many government members, high-ranking Istanbul authorities and Muslim diplomatic representatives came together for a feast.”³⁹

Spitzmuller emphasized that Islamic mysticism was more an Arab or Persian trait than a Turkish one, and said that Turkey's return towards this type of belief system equaled the abandonment of the secular understanding that forms the foundation of efforts carried out in the Atatürk era.⁴⁰ All westernized individuals were products of the Atatürk era, and they were aware of the insidious threat lurking in the reforms.⁴¹

In another report Spitzmuller wrote in March 1959, he conveyed the opposition and independent media's accusations of the DP using religion for political purposes and the government's response. According to the opposition, the DP especially abused religion for political purposes in the month of Ramadan, and they put Atatürk's reforms in danger.⁴² The DP did not leave these criticisms unanswered. The Interior Minister claimed they were the protectors both of Atatürk's reforms and of freedom of

conscience:

“The moral and material values of the nation are under the special guarantee and protection of our reforms, laws and government. At the same time, we are determined to protect freedoms of conscience and belief within the context of laws, no matter what.”

Spitzmuller said that even if the government knew that it would not satisfy the opposition without making important changes to its existing position, with this statement it attempted to appease both the opposition and the village voters with the most primitive traditions. Another attempt to lighten criticisms on the subject of religion, in addition to the minister's announcements, was the raid and arrest of around 60 Bahai at a house where they had gathered. Through this move, by proceeding against a religious group of limited numbers and no influence, the government wished to give a message that it was vouchsafing for the nation's secular principles while not drawing the attention of conservatives. However, the ambassador added that, though the tactic may have seemed extremely clever, the government was unable to persuade or appease public opinion.⁴³

The Uşak, Çanakkale and Kayseri Incidents

Spitzmuller also analyzed the Uşak and Çanakkale incidents of 1959, which are frequently mentioned in literature. Following the disappointment of the CHP's “Spring offensive”, it organized a Big Aegean Charge on the Uşak-Manisa-Izmir route. CHP leader İsmet İnönü and around 60 determined party members went to “conquer” Uşak on April 29.⁴⁴ When they arrived in the city, they were stopped by the police on the basis of the marches and meetings law, provoking a commotion between police on the one side and the party members and the people wishing to meet the party leaders on the other. İnönü spoke at the youth center, saying that the government needed to be changed and that the time had come for the country's affairs to be put in order. These words very much disturbed the DP leadership.⁴⁵

On May 1, as 4,000 party members were massing, soldiers who had earlier used violence were trucked into the vicinity, so the police and gendarmes did not intervene in the crowd this time. The DP wanted CHP members holding “We do not want Atatürk to be kicked out” placards to leave the city. During the struggle between the two groups, a stone lightly wounded İsmet İnönü and he escaped to the train station under police supervision. Following these events, the government banned political meetings and demonstrations on May 1 throughout the Aegean region.

Additionally, the CHP leader's words and statements were not to be published in any newspaper. In response, some newspapers protested silently with empty columns and pages. The protests of four CHP MPs against the violent events at Uşak and the attacks on freedom did not reverberate and, in addition, the Interior Minister blamed the CHP leadership for provoking the protests. On the other hand, pro-government journalists and state radios considered these events were the result of the CHP leader's agitation.

General İnönü began at Uşak, where Greek Commander Trikoupis had been captured in 1922 during the War of Independence, and continued on to İzmir. The pro-government Zafer newspaper claimed that İnönü had wanted to follow the route Atatürk had taken to liberate İzmir in the War of Independence for propaganda purposes.⁴⁶ Here are Spitzmuller's considerations about the scenes of the Uşak incidents:

„Today, when paying attention to the unorganized social structure in Turkey, we see that democracy has become a monopoly in the hands of director Adnan Menderes. On the other hand, İsmet İnönü, who is known for his wisdom, has begun a merciless political campaign under the effects of the extremists who surround him. The DP-supporting masses who used to respect him a few years ago now scorn and boo former President İnönü: it is unclear what he expects from this tour, which is causing more and more fuss. There can be no question of any gains in the name of a national democracy in an environment of strife, since neither party has a consistent party program, it's not easy to make out who is against what fundamental principle. At present, both parties have merciless and systematic policies of criticism.”⁴⁷

The ambassador referred again to the Uşak incidents at the end of 1959. In December 1959, the incidents returned to the news after the press reported the gendarme commander as saying the governor had told him to open fire if İnönü wanted to visit the house where Trikoupis was caught. The governor attempted to refute this and clear his name by making a hasty statement that Spitzmuller believed would convince no-one. The opposition press, which had followed the incident closely, published a photocopy of the court minutes. In them, Nadir Nadi said, “We must not cover up this illegal reality that harms our citizens' safety and our national honor in this way.”⁴⁸ CHP Deputy President Çelikbaş then asked for Interior Minister Namık Gedik's resignation, claiming that the proposal to investigate the Uşak incidents had not been acted on for

months, and that crimes had been covered up. However, Spitzmuller opined that Namık Gedik had no intention of resigning and hence, he did not expect any of the governing party representatives responsible for the Uşak incidents to be punished.⁴⁹

Another important issue of 1959, which shaped the agenda at the Yassıada trials, was the attack on CHP General Secretary Kasım Gülek and his team in a September trip to Çanakkale. Spitzmuller conveyed that, after a temporary lightening of the political atmosphere over the preceding few weeks, aggressive displays by both sides at regional congresses revived political tensions. In the weeks after, some DP extremists claimed that the CHP was illegal and should be closed, while on the other hand, former MP Cihat Baban wrote an open letter calling for Menderes' resignation on the grounds of wrongheaded policies and failures. The opposition newspapers also renewed their criticism of the DP, as usual on the basis of pro-government broadcasts on state radio. In this tense political atmosphere, Kasım Gülek got an angry reception for a speech on İmroz island saying that the DP had now lost its legitimacy, that its end was nearing and that soon the CHP would form the government. The government reacted harshly to this announcement, calling it an invitation for the people to riot and an attempt to destroy the established legal order.⁵⁰ Although Gülek and his team experienced no problems during their visit to İmroz, when they reached their next stop, Geyikli, they met truckloads of DP supporters armed with stones and clubs.

Spitzmuller related that the police did not intervene and the press were unable to publish anything on the incident due to a legal ban. Moreover, two CHP MPs who wanted to enter the region, examine the area where the incidents occurred and see that security forces had stood against any attack, İbrahim Saffet Omay and Daniş Yurdakul, were not given permission by the Çanakkale police. In the end, the CHP MPs returned to Istanbul and met with hundreds of party supporters. Police intervened in this meeting on the basis of the meetings law and arrested 11 people, including two journalists. Both sides advanced different views of what had occurred. The Democrats said that the tour intended to create illegal provocations and overthrow the government.⁵¹ The government once again showed through the meetings and marches ban that it would definitely not tolerate these types of movements. The opposition, for their part, claimed that this policy of violence against personal freedoms reminded them of Himmler and the Gestapo. Falih Rıfkı Atay, writing in *Dünya* newspaper, said that Turkey's democracy had turned into a laughing stock on the streets. Pro-government newspapers reported through official DP statements that the incidents had been an application of existing laws. The ambassador, however, said that the violence and mutual accusations over the Çanakkale event demonstrated that two political forces were waging a violent war against one another, and both

powers used injustice as an instrument in this war. In his eyes, this showed that democracy in Turkey had still not matured.⁵²

The Committee of Inquest and the Coup Process

Several extremely important events on the road to the May 27 coup took place in Spring 1960. These accelerated thanks to İnönü's tensions with civilian and military authorities in Kayseri, student-led events in Istanbul and hence the incidents of April and May 1960 that led to The Committee of Inquest and the declaration of martial law.⁵³ İnönü decided to go to Kayseri on April 2 to examine the area where guns had been seen aimed at CHP supporters 15 days earlier in Yeşilhisar. The tension was increased as İnönü entered the city, as the Governor of Kayseri requested that the armed forces prevent him from carrying out his visit to İncesu the next day.⁵⁴ The DP were enraged when they heard that the military officer who had obstructed İnönü had been forced to resign for breaking military rules. This event is felt to be the most important of İnönü's series of trips that year because the military showed their true colors for the first time in Kayseri.⁵⁵

The official radio accused the opposition party leader of going to Kayseri to provoke demonstrations against the state authority. A five-hour meeting of the DP parliamentary group on the issue on April 7 produced a statement criticizing the opposition and proposing the repression of anti-government activities. According to the DP, the opposition party prepared an armed rebellion against the state authority throughout the country and secretly organized inside cells according to the communist formula. In addition, they accused the opposition press of obstructing the work of the security forces and of publishing false news. In the statement, they announced that they would take legal and administrative precautions against all of these offences.⁵⁶ Spitzmuller commented that these developments were aimed at making the CHP incapable of functioning through reducing its freedom of action and expression inside and outside the parliament using the state power by taking new precautions against an opposition they accused of provoking rebellion against the state order.⁵⁷

The DP's April 14 proposal to investigate the opposition's illegal actions included the stipulation for an investigative commission to be formed. This commission would have the power to take any type of decision without consulting the parliament for a period of 3 months.⁵⁸ The commission, which was formed of 15 of the most fanatical DP members of the parliament, was accepted by the parliament on April 18 and fast began its work. In two announcements, the commission stated that whilst it was working, all types of political meetings, party congresses and the formation of new parties would be banned. All types of news about

commission activities and parliamentary decisions would also be prohibited.⁵⁹

This construct, which Ambassador Spitzmuller very clearly called illegal, immediately began to provoke intense responses. While former MP and Cumhuriyet newspaper owner Nadir Nadi claimed that Menderes would not be able to bring peace to the nation with this type of unconstitutional practice, İsmet İnönü said in the April 18 speech to the parliament that a commission equipped with such extraordinary powers was illegal and it was an attempt to rule the country through a body independent of the parliament. He said he did not recognize such illegal bodies and also asked all his parliamentarians not to recognize what he called an unconstitutional organism produced by a dictatorial regime. Spitzmuller saw the speech as a call to rebellion. İnönü also added that the government had formed a terrorist and oppressive regime through the investigation commission and that the whole nation should oppose it. In addition, he claimed that under the conditions, an insurrection would be legal and that “if governing parties continue down this road, they cannot be rescued, even by him”. The CHP also proposed a parliamentary investigation into the activities of the DP.⁶⁰ The pro-DP press and state radio received the commission optimistically and underlined that democracy in Turkey was going through a historical stage.⁶¹

Spitzmuller believed that the government, removing all the opposition parties' means and opposing them with such determination and harshness, would make the situation worse. It was clear that İnönü would not take a step back due to the threats – trusting his support from the army, universities and people – and that new tensions would emerge, since he would fight. Hence, various generals came to visit İnönü during this period. The CHP had not seen a drop in support despite the DP repression; on the contrary, it saw a revival of formerly unseen proportions.⁶² In the light of such societal tensions, Spitzmuller did not see exceptional measures by the existing government such as the investigation committee as a realistic prospect for restoring peace in the country.⁶³ The commission, which had all the powers of the military, prosecutors and judges, could stop all publications, restrict all documents, ban demonstrations and carry out all necessary precautions in order to ensure order. The commission's decisions could not be appealed, and its work was done in the utmost secrecy. The opposition struggled to stop laws being hastily passed by the commission, but had no success. On top of all this, the opposition leader and several other MPs were barred from the parliament for 12 sittings.⁶⁴ The extraordinary rights given to the investigation commission led to violent protests in Istanbul, which ended in the deaths and wounding of protesters. These events led to martial law declared in Ankara and Istanbul. Spitzmuller reported in a May 1 telegram that under martial conditions, the military authorities had temporarily closed three important press organs – Yenigün, Dünya and Cumhuriyet –

in order to prevent the reporting of recent events, and hence that it was now not possible to mention any publication worthy of the name and that only government media were now available from the perspective of the "diversity of ideas". Thus the DP, he said, had finally reached one of its goals through giving the investigation committee extraordinary powers: it had erased the opposition.⁶⁵ The ambassador underlined that the state had become one that had internalized all types of repressive measures, whether they be recent decisions passed into law, imprisonment without trials or the removal of parliamentary immunity. All these measures caused alarm among democratic countries and especially among Turkey's allies.⁶⁶

Spitzmuller's final conclusions about the general state of the country, two weeks before the coup, were extremely interesting. On May 11, on a day when the CHP boycotted the parliament, officers, the DP tried to win the sympathy of officers, NCOs and other armed forces through improving clothing and providing a greater supply of official lodgings.⁶⁷

The Ambassador claimed that Menderes was aware of the weakness of unresponsive, ignorant popular movements in Turkish society from the sultans' times onwards. Even the Byzantine populace had been quicker to protest than the Turks. From the Ottoman era onward, only the army had managed to bring about anti-government movements: soldiers returning from campaigns, janissaries or the Salonica army which declared constitutionalism in 1908. An uneducated people was far from understanding abstract concepts like press freedom, personal freedoms or trespass. They showed an astonishing level of obedience to authority. Only in the events of the final days did an incredibly humble movement of a few thousand people from the intellectual minority emerge. There was no question of the people joining. Faced with this, the government announced martial law and formed a large-scale mechanism of repression against this movement, which was limited to the country's two largest cities. The old capital looked to NATO members attending the Spring ministerial summit from the 2nd to the 4th like a ghost town with military tanks in the streets and police forces taking disproportionate precautions.⁶⁸

As opposed to what the government claimed, the events that played out in Ankara and Istanbul did not develop entirely under the opposition's control. The CHP-organized student protest movement did not carry the intention of a general boycott. However, when the government responded extremely harshly, a great discontentment arose with Menderes and his party, and developments lead to a big loss of prestige for the President and the Prime Minister for their oppression of the opposition.⁶⁹

The ambassador said that, according to the information he had received, in recent days the great majority of the DP members of parliament had been strongly critical of the repressive precautions taken due to the influence of those on the party's extremes and had called on Menderes to moderate them. The chances of these reaching Menderes'

ears were very low. By then, he was entirely under the influence of the party's extreme fringes. While the Democrats took their power from the votes of the masses and the countless opportunities resulting from holding power, the CHP got theirs from the residents of the big cities, from countless intellectuals and students, and from the army, which still stood outside the political fight. Spitzmuller said, commenting on the tensions, that as there was no great difference between the ideological fundamentals or the party programs of the two sides, the struggle was waged more over personal hatred. Under these conditions, there was no way to reduce the tensions and bring about calm to political life other than to restage elections.⁷⁰

In his report on May 15, Spitzmuller wrote that Menderes was most of all under the influence of Celal Bayar. In an interview with Foreign Minister Zorlu, the minister told the ambassador of his concerns about the situation. In veiled terms, he said that Celal Bayar was responsible for all the repression and violence against those who caused disturbance or noise. Minister Zorlu added that Bayar had used all means in the DP's hands to make its rivals feel they were crushed.⁷¹ Three days before the coup, Spitzmuller related that the Turkish administration and especially the prime minister did not look as if they would give up their stubborn habit of stigmatizing groups, most of all academics, students and intellectuals. The prime minister harbored complex feelings of hatred towards universities.⁷² But despite the effect of sanctions diminishing as their number increased, the DP put them more and more into practice as the final weeks went on.⁷³

Garnier and Spitzmuller, who regularly commented on Menderes' personality in their reports, often emphasized the prime minister's authoritarian attitudes.⁷⁴ Spitzmuller related that Menderes' ministers were reduced to the status of general secretaries rubber-stamping all his decisions and never taking the initiative.⁷⁵ Many ministers, he said, among them Abdullah Aker, Esat Budakoğlu, Muzaffer Kurbanoglu, Hadi Hüsmen and Nedim Ökmen, had neither any expertise nor any talent. If Etem Menderes and Namık Gedik were ministers, it was only because of their close friendships with Menderes.⁷⁶ Spitzmuller continued by opening the debate on Menderes' working practices as follows: "Another problem with the *Democrat system* is this: Menderes has never felt the need to work closely with anyone qualified in a technical sense or with a strength of character and personality. He has preferred to work more with obedient people."⁷⁷ "Thus, these people had the best suited structure for a centuries-old autocratic system. This structure rested on the army system of orders and commands in form. It is understood when you notice the way the ministers bend before Menderes and the bureaucrats' stance of [military] attention, that Menderes will not tolerate any expression of ideas or suggestions."⁷⁸

Conclusions

In reading the French ambassadors' reports over the final four years of the DP power, three important aspects are worth noting. The first is the negative tone they use about Menderes and consequently his DP government, as well as the repressive and authoritarian attitude they ascribe to him. Here it must be noted that the ambassadors evaluated DP policies more according to Prime Minister Menderes himself than to the philosophy of his party. Whilst the party in power usually stayed in the background, Prime Minister Menderes came to the forefront as the main actor within events. In this context, Ambassadors Garnier and Spitzmuller underlined the approach and recommendations of the moderate wing of the party against the harshness which they attributed to Prime Minister Menderes as well as the authoritarian policies of the government. If we look at the ambassadors' comments and analysis in the framework of a narrative whole, we clearly understand that they had no sympathy whatsoever for the Menderes government. In the ambassadors' reports, Menderes is pictured as a character who is authoritarian, repressive, distant from democratic values such as freedom of thought and expression, heavily using religion as a policy tool, not an intellectual or an educated person, as an individual who prefers to work with obedient rather than capable people.

The second noteworthy aspect of the ambassadors' reports is on the DP's attitudes to Atatürk's Turkey and his principles before being replaced by the CHP. Garnier and Spitzmuller mostly compared the policies of Atatürk with the practices of the Menderes era, emphasizing that a deep change had occurred, especially in terms of economics and the principles of secularism. In this context, the ambassadors describe the DP's religious policies as aimed at those with low levels of education in order to obtain the support of rural groups, and as an important obstacle to the modernization campaign that Atatürk had begun. In discussing religion, they consider the DP's mosque-building and renovation, the foundations established to do it, state iftar ceremonies in Ramadan and the religious narrative that consistently favors these things. Ambassador Spitzmuller thought that the rural inhabitants of the nation in general, aside from a few big cities such as Istanbul and Ankara, were heavily ignorant and that several widespread Islamic practices were anachronistic. He claimed that the DP won support by appealing to the religious longings of these groups, who were made to give up some of their outdated or traditional values in the Atatürk era by gendarme forces. Thus the ambassador characterized the scenes of sacrifice on the Prime Minister's return after his plane crash in London as a return to the Middle Ages.

Finally, another eye-catching aspect of the French ambassadors' analysis is on the nature of the government-opposition conflict in Turkish political life. The ambassadors say that political clashes are rather

motivated by personal differences than by programmatic or philosophical ones. Hence, names like Celal Bayar, Fuat Köprülü or Adnan Menderes, who had been active in CHP politics for years, conserved their political centralism under the DP banner. The series of political tensions based on personal hatred and polarization between the government and the opposition ended with the formation of the investigative commission with its extraordinary powers, the declaration of martial law, and finally the military takeover of the government.

In conclusion, the image of the DP government and Prime Minister Menderes was completely negative in the eyes of the French ambassadors of the time. They rarely noted the Menderes government's successes in areas like construction, the building of motorways and dams and the improvement of physical conditions, but they regularly criticized the DP for its incorrect cultural policies, restrictions on the opposition and press, and violation of the democratic values. Finally, in addition to the findings and analyses presented in this work, in order to better develop our understanding of the views of the French ambassadors on the DP era, it would also be worth examining the embassy reports on the May 27 coup and on the relations of the DP with the press.

Notes:

¹ For the history of the CHP, its policies in the Single Party era and the period in which the opposition developed to the CHP, see: H. Uyar, *Tek Parti Dönemi ve Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* (Single Party Period and the Republican People's Party) (Istanbul: Boyut Yay., 2012).

² D. J. Simpson, "Development as a Process: The Menderes Phase in Turkey," *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 19/2 (1965), 141-152:141.

³ One of the most comprehensive academic work on the 27 May coup is Ü. Özdağ's work entitled *Menderes Döneminde Ordu Siyaset İlişkileri ve 27 Mayıs İhtilali* (May 27 Coup and the Civil-Military Relations in Menderes Era). Özdağ presents information not only on the reasons for the coup and an analysis of the revolutionary organizations involved, but also on the National Unity Committee after 27 May and many different political factions. Bedri Baykam's work, based on the interviews entitled *27 Mayıs İlk Aşkımızdı* (May 27 was Our First Love) (Ankara: Ümit Yayıncılık, 1994), is an important example of the pro-coup literature. Baykam produced the work in order to show the positive side of the 60 coup to new generations, seeking to answer fundamental arguments about the era through interviews with several people who played an active role in the process. The book *27 Mayıs İhtilali ve Sebepleri* (May 27 Coup and Its Reasons) by Ali Fuat Başgil, a constitutional professor of the time, is an example of one of the basic anti-coup approaches. In this memoir-type work, Başgil refers to the problems of the Menderes government and at the same time constructs a narrative that coincides with the Democratic Party's official statements with a largely anti-CHP take on the coup era.

⁴ France has been on the Ottoman stage more or less continually from the year 1525, in the time of Süleyman the Magnificent, when it first sent diplomatic

representation, to the present day. For a list of French diplomatic representatives, see: <http://www.ambafrance-tr.org/1525-ten-itibaren-Buyukelciler>. For the roots of the historical relations between Turkey and France in the Republican era, see: B. Yavuz, *Kurtuluş Savaşı Döneminde Türk Fransız İlişkileri* (Turco-French Relations during the War of Independence) (Ankara: TTK, 1994).

- ⁵ Les archives diplomatiques du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères à La Courneuve (MAE), *Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960*, Vol 64, No: 46. "M. Jean-Paul Garnier Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 17 July 1956.
- ⁶ In parallel with Garnier's analysis, John M. Vanderlippe's work on the İnönü era sees Atatürk and İnönü's fundamental concerns to put the country on a westward route, ensuring its economic and physical development and securing the national interest through independence. J. M. Vanderlippe, *The Politics of Turkish Democracy: İsmet İnönü and the Formation of the Multi-Party System, 1938-1950*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005).
- ⁷ MAE, *Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960*, Vol 64, No: 47. "M. Jean-Paul Garnier Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 17 July 1956.
- ⁸ MAE, *Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960*, Vol 64, No: 48. "M. Jean-Paul Garnier Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères" 17 July 1956. In addition, Garnier mentions foreign policy events in the conditions of a changing world. Today's Turkish foreign policy is very different from that of 30 years ago. To carry out its internal reforms, Turkey needed a safe outside world but after World War II, a series of foreign threats emerged. Soviet threats represented an important problem for Ankara. On the other hand, ties with the US still tightened. However, relations were somewhat soured when Turkey was one of the two countries whose \$300 million credit was delayed, and the US policy over Cyprus exacerbated this even more. Also because of Cyprus, the DP government's mistrust of Britain increased, along with the anti-Greek sentiment and actions across the country. It could be said that as fellow members of the Baghdad Pact, Cyprus alone would not be able to upset relations between Britain and Turkey, but the Baghdad Pact was never operational, nor as important as predicted. MAE, *Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960*, Vol 64, No: 50. "M. Jean-Paul Garnier Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères" 17 Temmuz 1956.
- ⁹ MAE, *Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960*, Vol 64, No: 48. "M. Jean-Paul Garnier Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 17 July 1956.
- ¹⁰ MAE, *Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960*, Vol 64, No: 51. "M. Jean-Paul Garnier Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 17 July 1956.
- ¹¹ MAE, *Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960*, Vol 64, No: 52. "M. Jean-Paul Garnier Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères" 17 July 1956. 1945-1960 yılları arasında DP dönemi demokrasi algılaması üç ayrı dönem halinde inceleyen Pınar Kaya Özçelik, 1954-60 dönemini demokrasiden uzaklaşılan otoriter yıllar olarak nitelirmektedir. P. K. Özçelik, "Demokrat Parti'nin Demokrasi Söylemi,"

(Democracy Discourse of the Democratic Party) *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi* 65/3 (2010), 163-187.

- ¹² The turbulent final five years of the DP government is seen by Cem Eroğul as an attempt to return to a single party rule. For his evaluation, see. C. Eroğul, "Çok Partili Düzenin Kuruluşu 1945-1971," *Geçiş Sürecinde Türkiye*, I. C. Schink&E. A. Tonak (eds), (Istanbul: 2013), 173-242. The same period is characterized by Tanel Demirel as The Autumn of Government. For Demirel's analyses of the era, see: T. Demirel, *Türkiye'nin Uzun On Yılı Demokrat Parti İktidarı ve 27 Mayıs Darbesi* (The Government of Democratic Party and the May 27 Coup) (Istanbul: İBÜ Yay., 2011), 247-310.
- ¹³ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 53, "M. Jean-Paul Garnier Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères" 18 July 1956. The leaders of the HP and MP heavily criticized the electoral system, which would not allow then to enter the elections in alliance. MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 65, "Charles de Bartillat Charge d'affaires de France A.I. en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 27 May 1957.
- ¹⁴ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 54. "M. Jean-Paul Garnier Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 18 July 1956.
- ¹⁵ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 59. "M. Jean-Paul Garnier Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 7 August 1956.
- ¹⁶ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 75. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 11 November 1957.
- ¹⁷ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 76. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 11 November 1957.
- ¹⁸ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 79. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 11 November 1957.
- ¹⁹ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 85. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 6 January 1958.
- ²⁰ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 87. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 6 January 1958.
- ²¹ On the fight against communism, in the course of the budget talks, the Interior Minister underlined the issue of "the urgency of the struggle with developments that would put the higher national interest, internal security and social security in the shade". MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 92. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères" 13 January 1958. For these purposes, the Interior Ministry would establish new units in every governorship to fight communism, and all publications connected to communism from abroad would be banned. The National Defense Ministry would prepare courses and films to educate and inform young people and

lessons would be given on the damage and negative aspects of communism in primary and middle schools. Finally, the government arrested 30 members of a secret communist organization called Vatan and tried them in a military court so that the inquiry should not get to the press. MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 94. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 13 January 1958.

²² MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 91. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 13 January 1958.

²³ Osman Bölükbaşı strongly protested against Celal Bayar's legal proposal to make Kırşehir into a district in 1954, and called the DP "persons devoid of self-respect". This expression was carried to court and he was placed in Ankara Prison on July 3, 1957 following court proceedings. M. Albayrak, *Türk Siyasi Tarihinde Demokrat Parti* (The Democratic Party in the History of Turkish Politics) (Ankara: Phoenix yay., 2004), 503. MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 79. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 11 November 1957.

²⁴ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 79. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 11 November 1957.

²⁵ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 94. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 13 January 1958.

²⁶ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 97. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Christian Pineau Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 20 January 1958.

²⁷ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 139. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Couve de Murville Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 29 November 1958.

²⁸ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 140. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Couve de Murville Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 29 November 1958.

²⁹ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 141. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Couve de Murville Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 29 November 1958.

³⁰ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 142. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Couve de Murville Ministre des Affaires Étrangères" 29 November 1958. Spitzmuller digresses on the second option, saying that if the Prime Minister stopped using dictatorial methods and began displaying a warmer attitude towards the opposition, it could be seen as a step backwards. In that instance, the opposition would have immediately begun to cry victory. This would have driven a wedge between Menderes and some of his colleagues, and it would have undoubtedly created, he says, a forceful resistance to him.

³¹ The CHP brought HP leader Fethi Çelikbaş, who had made the decision to merge the two parties, onto its board, and called for a big congress on January 12 to announce their new policies. According to the declaration made with this aim,

the coalition included within the CHP stated that they would call for the abandonment of the policies of violence against the government. Hence, the governing party was to prove that they were able to bring peace to the country. MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 148. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Couve de Murville Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 8 December 1958.

³² MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 157. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Couve de Murville Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 16 February 1959.

³³ For a detailed evaluation of the Motherland Front and its activities: A. E. Emre Kaya, Z. Avşar, "Demokrat Parti'nin Sivil Toplum Üzerinden Bir Siyasal İletişim Denemesi: Vatan Cephesi Örneği" (A Political Communication Trial of Democrat Party Over Civil Society: Motherland Front Example) *International Journal of Social Science* 6/2, (2013) 397-416.

³⁴ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 168. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Couve de Murville Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 28 March 1959.

³⁵ For a comprehensive analysis of the religious policies of the DP era, see: M. Pelt, *Military Intervention and a Crisis of Democracy in Turkey*, (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 46-88, S. Kal, "Demokrat Parti'nin 1950-54 Dönemi Din Siyaseti," (The Democratic Party's Policy Towards Religion between 1950 and 1954) *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Journal*, 60/3, (2005) 137-171, M. Çinar & I. G. Sezgin "Islamist Political Engagement in the Early Years of Multi-party Politics in Turkey: 1945-60," *Turkish Studies*, 14:2, (2013) 329-345, M. C. Şahin, "Demokrat Parti Dönemi Türkiye'sinde Din, Siyaset ve Eğitim İlişkileri," (Religion, Politics and Education Affairs in the Period of the Democratic Party) *Toplum Bilimleri*, 6/12, (2012) 31-54.

³⁶ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 162-163. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Couve de Murville Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 9 March 1959.

³⁷ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 163-165. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Couve de Murville Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 9 March 1959. The Ambassador believed that Prime Minister Menderes tried to create the image of a religious and committed person. Hence, when he returned to Turkey from London, he first went to Istanbul's Eyüp Mosque and then visited the tomb of the mystic Mevlana Celaleddin-i Rumi in Konya.

³⁸ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 164. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Couve de Murville Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 9 March 1959.

³⁹ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 166-167. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Couve de Murville Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 9 March 1959.

⁴⁰ Cem Eroğul formally describes the DP era as having an Atatürkist understanding. It was in the DP era that legislative punishments were introduced for attacks on the memory or statues of Atatürk and Atatürk's body was transferred to the Anıtkabir mausoleum. However, Eroğul claims that the DP government tried to seem Atatürkist while watering down his reforms. C. Eroğul, *Demokrat Parti: Tarihi ve İdeolojisi* (The Democratic Party: Its History and

Ideology) (Ankara: Sevinç Matb., 1970) 89.

- ⁴¹ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 163. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Couve de Murville Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 9 March 1959. On the other hand, DP officials responded to anti-government demonstrations by accusing the opposition who defended Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's secular understanding of atheism. MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 167. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Couve de Murville Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 9 March 1959.
- ⁴² MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 172. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Couve de Murville Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 27 March 1959.
- ⁴³ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 173-174. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Couve de Murville Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 27 March 1959.
- ⁴⁴ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 185. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Couve de Murville Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 5 May 1959.
- ⁴⁵ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 186. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Couve de Murville Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 5 May 1959.
- ⁴⁶ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 187. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Couve de Murville Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 5 May 1959.
- ⁴⁷ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 188-189. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Couve de Murville Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 5 May 1959.
- ⁴⁸ MAE, Série Europe 1946-1960, Turquie 1956-1960, Vol 64, No: 242. "M. Henry Spitzmuller Ambassadeur de France en Turquie à Son Excellence Monsieur Couve de Murville Ministre des Affaires Étrangères", 11 December 1959.
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- ⁷² According to the opposition, Prime Minister Menderes's hostility to universities is expressed through the legal regulations named *tasfiye kanunu* (law of

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