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# Political Kidnappings in Turkey, 1971-1972

Margaret Krahenbuhl

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A report prepared for  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
AND  
DEFENSE ADVANCED RESEARCH PROJECTS AGENCY

**Rand**  
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PREFACE

This report on political kidnappings in Turkey is one of a series of case studies completed for the Department of State. It focuses upon three successive incidents that occurred during the period 1971-1972. The victims included four U.S. airmen, an Israeli diplomat, and two British and one Canadian civilian employees of NATO. The kidnappers were members of two leftist groups: the Turkish People's Liberation Army and the Turkish People's Liberation Front.

Since 1973, The Rand Corporation has been engaged in a study of international terrorism, sponsored jointly by the Office of External Research of the Department of State and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. The objective of this research has been to provide U.S. government agencies and officials directly concerned with the problem with a better understanding of the theory and tactics of terrorism, particularly as these may affect U.S. national security and the safety of U.S. government officials and other U.S. citizens abroad.

A primary focus of the research is on the problem of dealing with hostage situations in which terrorists have seized U.S. officials or other U.S. citizens abroad, or have seized diplomats or other foreign officials in the United States. The Rand Corporation was asked to provide specific recommendations concerning the policy and tactics of bargaining for hostages, and also to examine the experiences of the hostages themselves. The primary vehicle for this research was a series of detailed case studies of actual hostage events. These case studies are based on published accounts, a reconstruction of the cable traffic, and extensive interviews with key U.S. government officials who participated in the episodes, with officials of other governments, where possible, and in many cases with the hostage or hostages themselves. The studies are the most detailed accounts of these events. They not only have historical value but are instructive to anyone who may have to deal with any such event in the future.

Several of the studies were circulated in working-note form to a limited number of government officials. Considerable interest was expressed in making these case studies available to a wider government

audience as full Rand reports, and in March 1976 additional funds were made available by the Department of State for the necessary review, expansion, revision, editing, and publication.

The case studies follow a common format. Each discusses the political context in which the kidnapping or seizure of hostages took place, the existing government policies pertaining to hostage situations, developments within the government during the episode, the bargaining tactics employed, proposals and demands made and deadlines set by the participants, the disposition and activities of the local security forces, the terrorists' perceptions of the events, the means of communication, the use and role of public information and news media, the experience of the hostage or hostages, and the outcome and aftermath of the episode. Each includes an analysis of the episode.

These case studies provide the basis for many of the observations and policy recommendations made in classified Rand report R-1857-DOS/ARPA, *Dealing with Political Kidnapping*.<sup>\*</sup> That report also contains a history of the evolution of U.S. policy for dealing with hostage incidents based in part upon the case studies of incidents involving U.S. officials, as well as a chronology of all major international hostage incidents since 1968. A complete chronology of incidents of international terrorism is given in R-1597-DOS/ARPA, *International Terrorism: A Chronology 1968-1974*, and its periodic supplements.<sup>\*\*</sup> And for a general discussion of the experiences of hostages, the reader is referred to Rand paper P-5627, *Hostage Survival: Some Preliminary Observations*.<sup>\*\*\*</sup>

The authors of the case studies are indebted to officials of the United States and foreign governments whose cooperation and candor

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<sup>\*</sup> Brian Jenkins, David Ronfeldt, and Ralph Strauch, with the assistance of Janera Johnson, *Dealing with Political Kidnapping* (U), The Rand Corporation, R-1857-DOS/ARPA, September 1976 (Secret).

<sup>\*\*</sup> Brian Jenkins and Janera Johnson, *International Terrorism: A Chronology 1968-1974*, The Rand Corporation, R-1597-DOS/ARPA, March 1975; and *International Terrorism: A Chronology (1974 Supplement)*, The Rand Corporation, R-1909-ARPA, forthcoming.

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> Brian Jenkins, *Hostage Survival: Some Preliminary Observations*, The Rand Corporation, P-5627, April 1976.

allow a detailed reconstruction of the incidents. In most cases, these individuals have not been named, as their remarks were given in confidence on a nonattributable basis. The authors wish to thank them all.

It will be apparent in reading some of these case studies that there were, and are, points of disagreement. The authors have not attempted to resolve the differences of opinion; rather, they have tried to identify the issues of contention and present the opposing points of view.

While Department of State sources were used for information, the study and its conclusions were prepared solely by Rand. This report does not represent the Department's official position on the issues discussed.





SUMMARY

Kidnapping as an instrument of terrorists seeking political objectives has become a recurrent phenomenon during recent years. United States citizens located abroad in connection with U.S. military, economic, and diplomatic activities present especially vulnerable targets. For this reason, the Department of State and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency have sponsored research into the problem of political kidnapping, with the goal of developing effective policy options. This is one of a set of case studies of actual political kidnapping incidents which was generated to form the basis for policy recommendations.

The Republic of Turkey, an ally of the United States and a member of NATO, was the scene of three major incidents of political kidnapping involving foreign hostages during the years 1971-1972. All the kidnappings were carried out by local terrorist groups drawn from an activist leftist student movement which opposed U.S. economic, military, and political influence in Turkey. This report contains a detailed narrative of the events surrounding each of the kidnappings, together with an analysis of key factors regarded as important for policy assessment, and some observations on the lessons to be drawn from the cases.

During the half-decade preceding the first kidnapping, polarization of the left and right elements of the Turkish political spectrum had deepened. Domestic issues in dispute centered around the degree of social reform in labor, agriculture, education, and business the expanding but still essentially conservative Turkish polity could tolerate. A large and activist leftist student movement organized itself as the Türkiye Devrimci Gençler Federasyonu--the Federation of Revolutionary Turkish Youth, or Dev Genç (pronounced *dev gench*); its members demonstrated against Turkish membership in NATO, U.S. pressure on Turkey's Cyprus policy, and the presence of 15,000 to 20,000 U.S. military personnel stationed on Turkish soil, and in support of Marxist-Leninist social and economic goals.

Fundamental economic and political problems associated with industrial development underlay the student protests, in particular, the

inability of the higher educational system to meet the expectations and the needs of Turkish youth. Educational reforms had been stymied in Parliament by the opposition of the moderate-conservative Justice Party cabinet headed by Suleyman Demirel.

Beginning in 1970, the level of violence in the confrontations between students and government sharply escalated as public buildings were bombed, police posts were fired upon, and armed bank robberies were carried out. Then, on March 4, 1971, five members of a group calling itself the Turkish People's Liberation Army (TPLA) kidnapped four American airmen as they were returning home from late duty at an isolated U.S. intelligence-gathering facility outside of Ankara. The captives were taken to an apartment in town, where they remained for five days.

Demands by the TPLA included public broadcasts of an anti-American political manifesto and payment by the U.S. government of \$400,000 ransom within 36 hours, upon penalty of death for the airmen. A second note, addressed to the U.S. embassy, extended the deadline for 12 additional hours.

Refusing to do more than broadcast a summary of the manifesto, the beleaguered Turkish government (GOT) sent a large force of police and militia to search areas of the city and a local university campus where they suspected the airmen might be held. Two people were killed in the hours-long fire fight between officers and students on the campus, after which 2,000 students were detained. Meanwhile, Turkish officials requested that the U.S. government not grant any concessions to the kidnapers. Turkey experts in Washington supported the GOT position.

William J. Handley, the U.S. ambassador in Ankara, was informed from Washington that the U.S. government would not pay ransom in such cases. At a news conference, President Richard Nixon expressed confidence in the local government's ability to handle the incident. This policy represented the results of a reformulation process that had been going on within the State Department for some time. Embassy officials issued brief public statements couched in humanitarian terms expressing concern for the safety of the hostages; these were aimed at Turkish public opinion. Privately, the staff urged Turkish leaders to speak

out and condemn the kidnapping, and to publicize the identities of the kidnapers when they became known. The GOT was reluctant to implement these suggestions and maintained near total silence, devoting all its efforts to locating the hostages and their captors.

On March 8, local police unwittingly visited the TPLA hiding place on unrelated business, causing the kidnapers to suspect that authorities might be converging on the area. The TPLA members abandoned their hostages and left them to walk out safely.

All of the kidnapers in this case were eventually either shot resisting arrest or imprisoned, and three were sentenced to death and hanged. The outcome may have acted as an immediate positive reinforcement for the new U.S. no-concessions policy on political kidnappings of American personnel, as well as for the GOT's no-bargaining position.

A few days after the airmen's escape, the Turkish military intervened, calling for the replacement of Demirel's cabinet with an "above-party" government which would be more effective in restoring public order. The new regime, under centrist prime minister Nihat Erim, began immediately to round up suspected supporters of the leftist movement. On April 28, martial law was declared in key provinces, permitting extraordinary legal measures to be taken in dealing with the terrorist problem.

In spite of the military's involvement and the new regime's determined efforts, another kidnapping occurred. On May 17, at about 1:30 p.m., five members of the Turkish People's Liberation Front (TPLF) captured Israeli Consul-General Ephraim Elrom in Istanbul as he returned to his apartment for lunch. The kidnapers demanded release of all captured "revolutionaries" by 5:00 p.m., May 20, and periodic broadcast of their declaration of ideological goals. Noncompliance would result in Elrom's death. The next day, a letter signed by Elrom arrived at the consulate, assuring his wife that he remained in good health.

Supported by the Israeli government, the GOT rejected the idea of negotiations and arrested over 400 leftist students and intellectuals. Government counterdemands were issued to the kidnapers via the public press: release the hostage and surrender at once or members and associates of the organization would be imprisoned; if the hostage were harmed, a law requiring the death penalty for political kidnapping or

for sheltering or supporting kidnapers that was to be submitted to Parliament would be made retroactive. The GOT's initial response was shaped to some extent by the belief that the terrorists were wayward youths led astray by Marxist professors and sinister foreign influences-- probably Soviet communist currents entering via Iraq and Syria. This view hardened drastically as events unfolded.

During the next three days, TPLF members used forged identity papers and disguises to circulate freely around the city, meeting at various apartments secured in advance of this well-planned operation. They did not respond to government threats, choosing instead to await revolutionary developments from the people; the developments never transpired.

On May 22, Istanbul Martial Law Command announced a total curfew of the province, during which time a house-to-house search would be conducted. The prospect panicked the TPLF members. After an abortive attempt to transfer their hostage to another location, they voted to kill him and then dispersed to various hiding places in the city, leaving their leader to carry out the decision.

All of Elrom's kidnapers were ultimately hunted down, imprisoned, or killed in the months following, as military and civilian authorities cracked down severely on anyone suspected of participating in or supporting violent acts. Over 4,000 individuals were arrested, newspapers and publishing houses were closed down, and various civil rights were modified through constitutional amendment. Even these drastic steps, however, did not prevent yet another kidnapping.

On March 26, 1972, five members of the TPLA and TPLF who had escaped together from an Istanbul military prison jointly kidnapped three civilian NATO technicians, two British and one Canadian, from their quarters near the Black Sea town of Ünye. Tight security prevailing in the larger cities had eliminated several other more likely targets from the terrorists' consideration.

Four days later, government forces surrounded the group with its hostages in the house of the head man of a small inland village. The kidnapers demanded the release of the three TPLA leaders sentenced to death for the earlier kidnapping of the American airmen; government officials refused that demand as well as a later request for safe

passage to the Syrian border. As the kidnappers responded with grenade and other weapons fire, an explosion was heard from inside the house. The commandos rushed the house, assuming that the hostages had been killed. They found all three hostages and nine terrorists dead. A tenth terrorist was found alive the following day.

After their comrades failed in two more attempts to free them, the three TPLA leaders were hanged on May 6, 1972. With its leaders dead or imprisoned, arms caches confiscated, and local support groups broken up, the radical student movement lacked the resources to sustain its anti-government campaign.

Analysis of the three cases yields a number of significant points for comparison with other incidents of political kidnapping. The prevailing political climate, for example, influenced the actors in the kidnappings in a number of ways: The local government's inability to cope with political violence during the months preceding the first incident created a lack of public confidence which lent momentum to the terrorist movement; the possibility of gaining the support of significant segments of elite public opinion played a role in the kidnappers' selection of their first two targets and had important consequences for the hostages' fate as well; in at least one case, the local government's sense of its own precarious political position inhibited its flexibility of response and prevented the opening up of bargaining tactics which might have helped locate the hostages and their captors. In later incidents, after public confidence in the government had risen, the regime felt secure enough to try a greater variety of tactics.

An assessment of the kidnappers' objectives suggests that neither specific ransom demands nor long-range ideological goals necessarily reveal the true motivations for a kidnapping. Rather, the type of information on which an appropriate government response can be based comes from an understanding of the explicitly political tactical objectives of the kidnappers. For example, TPLA demands for \$400,000 ransom for the four kidnapped U.S. airmen were made not to obtain the cash but to involve the U.S. government actively, thereby focusing attention on American political influence in Turkey. A prime TPLF objective in kidnapping Elrom was to demonstrate the ideological virility of the leftist movement against its most powerful opponent, the Turkish military. With

its target audience reduced to only ideological peers, the combined TPLF/TPLA group chose to be martyred for the leftist cause in the incident of the NATO technicians after their demands for release of the three condemned TPLA leaders were rejected.

Expectations of favorable public response to their acts was an important factor in the kidnappers' handling of their hostages. In the first two incidents, the kidnappers appear to have truly expected to initiate a social revolution among the working classes. Instead, public opinion sympathized with the hostages, and the TPLA chose to let the airmen go unharmed. The highly ideological TPLF, disillusioned by overwhelming public condemnation, chose to kill its hostage. Isolated from public support, with a death sentence likely if caught, the TPLF/TPLA kidnappers had little to lose by killing their NATO hostages before government forces charged their position.

A significant characteristic of these Turkish terrorists' behavior was the involvement of leaders in the actual operations as well as the planning stages of the kidnappings. Drawn from the most ideologically committed leftist activists, these individuals regarded themselves as "professional revolutionaries" performing the role of "vanguard of the proletariat." Their mentality resembled that of soldiers in a war more than that of civilian criminals. Given this dedication to ideology, it is all the more remarkable that on two of the three occasions, the kidnappers chose to avoid suicidal confrontations with authorities. On the basis of these cases, it would be a mistake to assume that terrorists are irrational people who are either so ideologically brainwashed that they do not care if they live or die, or so criminally minded as to be beyond appeals to principle.

Although no fundamental policy differences existed between the hostages' governments and the GOT during these incidents, differences as to the appropriate tactical response did arise in the airmen case. The U.S. embassy staff did not equate a no-concessions policy with no contact and took advantage of its more flexible political position to use the local media to shape public opinion and establish at least one-way communication with the kidnappers. Although there is no way of knowing exactly how much the embassy's actions might have contributed

to the airmen's safe release, these actions do illustrate the kind of creativity on the scene that could increase the chances for hostage survival, especially in cases where the kidnappers are concerned with public response to their actions.

Being taken prisoner, for reasons that had nothing to do with them personally, was a truly traumatic experience for the American airmen. Cramped quarters and inadequate exercise and diet augmented the intense anxiety and discomfort they suffered. As has happened in other political kidnappings, the hostages developed a relatively comradely relationship with their captors. After their experience, however, they felt profound resentment, even hatred toward the TPLA. Military training and a practical sense of duty helped the airmen cope with their experience, as did the company they offered each other, the opportunity to play chess and read for relaxation, and their religious faith.

Finally, in considering the question of what deters political kidnapping, several observations can be drawn from the cases reviewed: First, increasing security precautions for potential target areas and individuals did not deter further kidnapping, but instead forced the terrorists to choose other locales and other targets. Second, imposing the death penalty for political kidnapping was not effective in deterring the act, in light of the terrorists' "war perspective." In fact, the death penalty served as a provocation in that three terrorist acts were aimed at freeing leftist leaders sentenced to death. Third, the local government's relentless pursuit of the kidnappers and elimination of their support network and arms sources were primarily responsible for ending the terrorist threat. The cost was high: In support of these efforts, sweeping legal measures were taken which affected the civil rights of all citizens and caused a large portion of the country to live under martial law for over two years; and confidence in the political system was shaken. Even the draconian steps taken by Turkish officials have not prevented a resurgence of leftist and rightist violence which is continuing today in Turkey. Last, the hostages' governments did not play an important role in affecting the local government's response to the kidnappings.

This review of three political kidnappings in Turkey demonstrates the complexity of the phenomenon of terrorism and suggests some factors that may favor or hinder its spread. Policy factors have been found to be relatively unimportant for the overall objective of deterring political kidnapping, although less cosmic goals such as enhancing hostage survival may be achievable through a flexible, tactical approach.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to acknowledge the guidance and support of Brian M. Jenkins in his role as project leader for the Rand research effort on international political kidnapping. Ralph E. Strauch offered invaluable and constructive suggestions for improvement of the report. Thanks are also due to Ciro Zoppo for his detailed technical review and insightful comments. Former Israeli Chief of Intelligence General Elihu Zeira provided helpful observations on the Elrom kidnapping case.

The Office of the State Department Special Cabinet Committee to Combat Terrorism arranged for informal review of the paper by Elaine Smith, a staff member with diplomatic experience in Turkey. Susanna Purnell and Paul Hammond conducted interviews with other State Department staff members knowledgeable about the incidents discussed in the report. Janera Johnson obtained important source materials.



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## I. INTRODUCTION

This report describes three major incidents of political kidnapping in Turkey during 1971 and 1972. The first occurred on March 4, 1971, when five members of a leftist organization known as the Turkish People's Liberation Army (TPLA) took hostage four American airmen stationed in Ankara. Two months later, on May 17, a separate group calling itself the Turkish People's Liberation Front (TPLF) kidnapped Israeli Consul-General Ephraim Elrom from his home in Istanbul. Members of the two terrorist groups joined forces to carry out the final kidnapping on March 28, 1972; this time, the victims were three civilian employees of NATO, two British and one Canadian, stationed at a radar base on the Black Sea coast. Of all the hostages taken, only the American airmen survived.

### THE POLITICAL CONTEXT

Turkey in 1971 was the scene of continuing turmoil and conflict between radical leftist groups and the regime. Issues in contention on the ideological level revolved around the degree of American influence in Turkey's political, economic, and military affairs: Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel's right-of-center Justice Party government was declared to be a puppet of the Americans; local Turkish businessmen were accused of collaborating with American business interests in Turkey to exploit Turkish workers and peasants; and, the leftists argued, Turkey's membership in NATO involved accepting limitations on her freedom of action that were against the national interest.

Underlying the rhetoric of leftist protest were real political problems: a growing number of unemployed university graduates; the difficulty of younger faculty members in gaining promotion under the rigid seniority system of the universities; soaring inflation, including rising food prices; labor unrest and strikes in some important labor unions; chronic underdevelopment in the agricultural sector, which employed two-thirds of the work force; a large military budget; continuing underdevelopment of Kurdish-populated and other eastern

provinces. Moreover, the country was in the midst of social, political, and economic changes with profound implications for its susceptibility to radical, terrorist activities. Urbanization was proceeding at a rapid rate; literacy was increasing; as many as two hundred thousand Turkish workers were returning from Western Europe, where they had been working for several years; communications, including television, were linking the rural areas with the urban to an unprecedented extent. In many ways, the politicized segment of Turkish society was expanding. The traditional elite power groups--the urban-based government officials, military officers, professionals, and intellectuals who established the modern Turkish republic upon Western principles of democracy and secular government--were being joined by representatives of different backgrounds and orientations--provincial leaders, including local professionals and officials, and businessmen--for whom Islam was not merely a private religious belief, but a community identity. It would be extreme to say that the two-thirds of the population classified as agriculturally occupied had become active and informed participants in the national political process, but what can loosely be termed the Turkish polity had expanded from perhaps 10 percent of the population to roughly 30 percent over the previous 25 years.

A most significant factor in the evolution of terrorist activities in Turkey was the increasing availability of educational facilities, including higher education, to Turks from rural areas, including the Kurdish ethnic minority of Turkey who comprise roughly 6 percent of the population and are concentrated heavily in the southeastern provinces. As more Kurds attended the universities, an awareness of Kurdish problems became inextricably entwined with other political and economic issues in the debates of activist, often leftist Turkish college youths.

#### Origins of the Radical Student Movement

Students have traditionally played an important role in Turkish political life. The universities have served as the training grounds for government officials, just as the military academies have produced military officers. In the late 1950s, Prime Minister Adnan Menderes became a target for student protests because of measures he imposed to

limit freedom of speech and the right to seek reforms. Menderes attempted to use the military, which prided itself on political neutrality, to suppress the student protests. For this and other actions regarded by political elites as threatening to the secular basis of Turkish democracy, he was arrested and later executed in the Revolution of 1960-1961. A reform-minded group of military officers pledged to return the country to civilian rule as soon as possible. During this period of turmoil, the students found great sympathy among members of the opposition party, the Republican People's Party (RPP), and built up a reservoir of sympathy even in the military for their role in opposing totalitarian measures taken by the regime.

The military made good its promise to withdraw from politics and returned the country to civilian rule. In 1961, a new constitution was promulgated which for the first time allowed open discussion of controversial political ideas, including Marxist philosophy. Many major Marxist and Maoist works were translated into Turkish for the first time.

As the issues of U.S. political and economic influence in Turkey (U.S. policy toward Cyprus, the presence of American industrial firms in Turkey, and the growth of the Turkish labor movement) became a focus of attention in educated circles, especially after the 1964 Cyprus crisis, student organizations grew in size and in activist orientation.

#### Radical Terrorist Actions

In 1970, some of these student groups participated in labor strikes and public demonstrations protesting exploitation of labor by private businessmen who were accused of supporting American influence in Turkish economic and political affairs, and some violent acts were aimed at symbols of U.S. military presence. The economy was plagued by inflation, and public support for the government of moderate-conservative Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel and his Justice Party weakened. Leftist demonstrations touched off counteractions by rightists, leading to armed clashes between these rival groups.

Some leftists seemed to be getting their arms from outside the country. On February 7, 1970, a group of 11 students were arrested in Diyarbakir (a heavily Kurdish province on the Syrian border) in possession of a large quantity of arms which had allegedly been obtained from

the Palestinian organization, Al-Fatah, with whom the group had been undergoing training. After questioning, the students were released. At least two of this group were later involved in the first international political kidnappings in Turkey.

Bombings and bank robberies--virtually unheard of in Turkish history--were perpetrated by leftist activists, creating an atmosphere of fear and growing concern for public order by the time of the first kidnapping. Violent acts had been directed at U.S. servicemen (there were about 16,000 Americans in Turkey) and their homes and automobiles, as well as at Turkish enterprises in which Americans were investors.

Concern was growing in the military as well over diminishing public order and signs of antidemocratic influence within the ranks of junior officers. Senior military leaders felt that the Demirel government was not doing enough to control dissidents of all political leanings.

In this context, on February 15, 1971, a group of armed youths entered the U.S. Air Force installation at Balgat, just outside of Ankara, looking for weapons. They took prisoner an American Sergeant, James Finley, who confronted them while on patrol duty, and released him 17 hours later, after having questioned him on subjects relating to U.S. politics and foreign policy and the U.S. military presence in Turkey.

In spite of the growing frequency of violent incidents in Turkey's three largest cities and the kidnapping of the U.S. soldier, Prime Minister Demirel hesitated to take too harsh a line against student protesters. Even though the circumstances of the situation were very different from those of the 1950s, Demirel was reportedly fearful of meeting the same fate that former Prime Minister Menderes met after he attempted to suppress student protests. Demirel found himself in a precarious political position, attempting to balance opposing forces: military demands for stringent measures, student demands for elimination of American and NATO influence, and a divided public opinion, concerned about declining public order but at the same time traditionally supportive of youth, nationalistic, sympathetic to the students' anti-imperialist position, and resentful of evidence of foreign influence.

An additional factor fueling discontent was the growing feeling among some intellectuals that the archaic French-style Turkish system



of higher education badly needed reform, and that students and young professors had legitimate complaints about their institutions. Reform legislation to remedy some of these problems was pending before the Turkish Assembly but had been hindered by Justice Party opposition.

On March 4, 1971, a group identifying itself as the Turkish People's Liberation Army (TPLA) kidnapped four American airmen in Ankara,\* demanding \$400,000 ransom from the U.S. government, publicity for their ideological manifesto, and a moratorium on arrests of "revolutionaries." Their ransom note acknowledged responsibility for bank robberies, attacks on police posts, and the earlier kidnapping of the U.S. soldier. This incident was the first political kidnapping for ransom in the history of Republican Turkey. The government of Turkey (GOT) had no specific policy formulated for dealing with such situations. Officials uniformly condemned the tactics of the terrorists but seemed unsure as to the appropriate response. The gut reaction within the government was to denounce the kidnapers as little more than bandits or brigands, but the reservoir of sympathy for student activists among influential elite groups stemming from the 1950s and the memory of Menderes' fate contributed to a total abstention from public comment by top echelons of the government. Meanwhile, police, gendarmerie, security officials, and the National Intelligence Organization (MIT) were trying desperately to track down the TPLA members and their supporters and find the airmen. The Turkish military followed the proceedings closely. In what appeared to be an attempt to shame the students into surrendering their hostages, leaders of opposition political parties spoke out publicly at length, condemning the act of kidnapping as a violation of the Turkish tradition of hospitality toward visitors and a stain on the nation's honor.

The fifth day after the kidnapping, the hostages were released unharmed. But confidence in the government had been sufficiently shaken that four days later, on March 12, senior military leaders issued an ultimatum calling for the resignation of Demirel's cabinet and the installation of an "above-party" regime acceptable to them.

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\* See Sec. II for details.

Reports circulated that the officers' "demi-coup" was staged in part to preempt a similar move by junior officers regarded as less committed to democratic principles.

Later in March, a civilian cabinet headed by centrist Nihat Erim took office. Because the collapse of the Demirel regime had been largely due to its inability to deal effectively with the young radicals in the months preceding the kidnapping of the American airmen, the successor cabinet, sponsored by the military, was particularly concerned with tracking down the leaders of the radical movement and decisively suppressing the challenge to the state.

One of the kidnapers of the airmen had been captured immediately, and three were arrested within the month, en route to the group hideout in the mountains of southeastern Turkey. The fifth, who had reached those mountains and trained a new group of recruits, was killed in late April in a gun battle with local police who stopped the group on their way to attack an American radar base in the mountains. Three of those taken alive were later sentenced to death.

Although he was serving at the pleasure of the military, Prime Minister Erim was endowed with independent status as a veteran member of Parliament and an important party official. While he cannot be viewed as a puppet of the military, the climate of crisis and the extraordinary power of the military closely circumscribed his authority. Demirel's behavior in the airmen case, and its consequences, must have loomed as a negative example in the minds of government officials following him. At the direction of the new regime, several hundred individuals suspected of supporting or partaking in illegal acts of terrorism were arrested. On April 26, martial law was declared in 11 key provinces--the major industrial areas plus provinces with heavy Kurdish population in southeastern Turkey. The latter precaution hints at a largely unspoken government fear that the Kurdish minority might be a target for the radical agitation and/or that some of its members might be involved in it. (Currents of Kurdish separatism have existed since uprisings that occurred in the 1920s and 1930s.) Later developments

revealed that a number of Kurdish students were indeed participating in the radical student movements.\*

Senior military commanders took the opportunity to remove a number of officers through retirement or transferral to "safe" posts. (The Turkish military was top-heavy with officers at the time, anyway, which was a source of frequent complaints from the lower echelons.)

Martial-law commands were set up in designated districts and a nationwide campaign was undertaken to eradicate the terrorist movement by removing the activists and penalizing anyone suspected of aiding or abetting them. The net was cast wide; observance of fundamental civil liberties was given lower priority than suppression of leftist or communist thinking, which was considered to have poisoned the minds of Turkish youth. Newspapers were closed, some temporarily, some permanently. Some publishing houses were forced out of business. Journalists, college professors, teachers, and labor leaders were jailed for spreading communist propaganda. Suspect leftist political parties were banned. Under martial law, outright criticism of the government often resulted in several days of suspended publication. The respected editor of *Cumhuriyet*, a widely circulated Istanbul daily, resigned in protest at the large-scale arrest of leftist intellectuals during this period. Even Prime Minister Erim cautioned the provincial governors to discriminate carefully when taking in suspects.

In spite of the government's draconian measures, acts of political violence were not deterred. On May 17, the Israeli consul-general to Turkey, Ephraim Elrom,\*\* was kidnapped in Istanbul by members of a radical leftist group that called itself the Turkish People's Liberation Front (TPLF), the armed action wing of the Turkish People's Liberation Party (TPLP).\*\*\* Its ransom demands were for publicity and release of prisoners.

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\* For example, the *New York Times* of December 31, 1972, reports that 70 people were sentenced for Kurdish separatist activities in Diyarbakir province.

\*\* See Sec. II.

\*\*\* The TPLF was distinct from the TPLA at this time, according to authoritative sources, including the government's white paper on terrorism. The individual terrorist groups and their origins are discussed in more detail on pp. 15-26.

The Elrom kidnapping seemed to come as a profound shock to the government and the public as well. With Demirel and the Justice Party out of power and a cabinet supported by the traditionally reform-minded and highly respected military installed, a decline in violence had been expected. This challenge served to coalesce opinion within the government (or at least to silence opposition) in support of the policy to resist all terrorist demands, relentlessly pursue the terrorists, apprehend suspects, and utilize no-holds-barred questioning methods to determine the whereabouts of the hostage and the identities of the kidnappers. The GOT issued threats of countermeasures against all leftist lawbreakers, including a retroactive death penalty for political kidnappers. As in the earlier kidnapping, the GOT took the position that bargaining with "toughs" or "punks" was unthinkable for representatives of the Turkish State.

The traumatic effect of the kidnapping was heightened when Elrom was found murdered during the course of a house-to-house search of Istanbul conducted by security officials. Officials and citizens alike were further outraged when two of the TPLF group responsible for Elrom's kidnapping took hostage the 14-year old daughter of an Army officer, keeping her in her family's apartment for two days. Although the girl escaped unharmed, the acts of the terrorists had undermined whatever support they might have had in the cities that housed their prime constituency and that served as their recruiting grounds. Rural Turks, although theoretically a focal point of the radical ideology, had not reacted favorably to the leftist movement; on the contrary, when the airmen's kidnappers fled from the cities into the countryside, they were immediately reported to the authorities.

All of Elrom's kidnappers were rounded up in the weeks that followed. A series of trials before military tribunals began in the summer of 1971, most of them involving charges of undermining the constitution. Students and teachers of the Naval and Air Academies were tried quietly, while civilian defendants usually received more sensational coverage. As a general rule, the military students received lighter sentences than the civilians.

Although the TPLA and TPLF had originated largely separately from one another, members of both organizations were thrown together in the

military prisons where they were being held for trial. In late November 1971, three TPLF and two TPLA leaders, including the accused murderer of Elrom, escaped from a supposedly unbreachable military prison in Istanbul. Several of the guards were later convicted of aiding in the escape by "looking the other way." (Reportedly, the roll call of prisoners was not taken for 36 hours, and the terrorists somehow obtained the use of a military vehicle in which to make their getaway.)

Members of the TPLF and TPLA joined forces thereafter in three different attempts to obtain the release of the three TPLA members sentenced to death in connection with the airmen kidnapping. The first, and most spectacular, attempt occurred in March 1972, when three European technicians were kidnapped from a NATO Air Defense Ground Environment base on the Black Sea, an area of less stringent security precautions than the metropolitan regions.\* In carrying out this plan, the kidnapers had the help of local friends--some small-town professionals and teachers who were bitter at having been dismissed by the government because of leftist political beliefs--in locating the NATO employees' quarters and determining what security regulations were in effect.

Surrounded in a village about 60 miles inland with their hostages--two British and one Canadian citizen--the kidnapers demanded release of the sentenced TPLA terrorists. After some hours of discussion between the terrorists and the Minister of Interior, in the presence of foreign and local journalists, the talks broke off. An explosion was heard from within, and the security forces rushed the building. All but one of those inside were found dead, including the three hostages.

In early May, a Turkish airlines plane was hijacked by TPLA members to Sophia, Bulgaria. Again, release of the three condemned terrorists was the ransom demand. When the Turkish government rejected the demand, the hijackers released the plane and took political asylum in Bulgaria. Two days later, another group of TPLA/TPLF members attempted to kidnap the commander of the Turkish gendarmerie. Their attempt was aborted, although the general was wounded in the gun battle between his guards and the would-be kidnapers. On May 6, 1972, the three kidnapers of the American airmen were hanged.

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\* See Sec. II, pp. 70-75, for details of this incident.

A last airplane hijacking in October 1972, again unsuccessful, marked the final dramatic effort of the Turkish terrorist groups to gain favorable publicity for their cause, to discredit the government, and to obtain the release of political prisoners.

#### Aftermath

Martial law continued in Turkey until September 1973, when it was terminated in preparation for national elections and a return to civilian government. During the intervening period, leftists, reactionary rightists, Kurdish separatists, and anyone who was considered to pose a threat to the unity of the state could expect to be investigated. Many hundreds were arrested.\* But the emphasis was decidedly on leftist activities. The Marxist Turkish Workers Party (Türk İşçi Partisi, TIP), which had succeeded in electing two representatives to Parliament, was abolished, its leaders sentenced to long prison terms. Leftist university professors in particular were punished because of allegedly inciting the nation's youth with communistic notions. Student activists heard stories of psychological and physical torture allegedly inflicted on movement members in prison. Incidents of political violence grew less and less frequent. The loss of most of its activist leaders and the government's infiltration of its organizations crippled the leftist radical movement.

The government took specific legal steps as well to provide itself with a wider assortment of means for dealing with terrorist violence. First, the universities were deprived of their autonomous status. (A general was made chancellor of Middle East Technical University in Ankara.) The law provided that in a time of crisis, the universities could be directly taken over and operated by the cabinet. Second, Turkish Radio and Television (TRT), which operates all television and radio stations, was also stripped of its autonomy. Third, a Law of

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\* Because of the provision in Turkish law allowing for detention for a period without actual arrest, it is difficult to determine precise figures. Over 4,000 prisoners were released in the general political amnesty of May 1974, and these did not include those regarded as dangerous. Over the 2 1/2-year period, beginning in 1971, there were probably between 4,000 and 6,000 arrests.

Associations was passed outlawing all student organizations that had any kind of political character. Over 100 organizations were closed down under this law.\* Another regulation extended the period for which an individual could be held without being charged with a crime. In late December 1973, the Security Directorate announced that the "centers of extremism and divisive circles in various places had been dispersed."\*\*

The elections of October 1973 resulted in a plurality but not a majority vote for the left-of-center Republican People's Party (RPP), led by American-educated Bülent Ecevit. Four months of caretaker government passed before the RPP could build a majority coalition, in alliance with a small, right-wing populist religious party. This government gained the cooperation and confidence of influential political elites while it was in office from January to August 1974. In May, it succeeded in enacting a limited amnesty law, releasing from prison those charged with lesser political crimes, and commuting some death sentences.

However, tensions with Greece over exploration for oil in the Aegean Sea and, ultimately, the Cyprus crisis preoccupied the regime and brought it down. The coalition fragmented over the fate of Turkish Cyprus.

After the fall of this regime and another period of caretaker government, a conservative cabinet led by Suleyman Demirel, the same Prime Minister who had been ousted by the military in March 1971, came to power in March 1975, with a margin of four votes in the Assembly. The new government faced, and continues to face, economic conditions as bad as or worse than those that existed when the leftist student organizations moved to action in 1971. Inflation, for example, has been increasing at a rate of 30 percent per year. With the return of thousands of Turkish workers from Europe, Turkey's foreign exchange reserves have plummeted, leaving a growing balance-of-payments deficit. Unemployment rates continue to be high, dangerously high among the educated. While the government is having difficulty meeting the demand for higher educational facilities, graduates are having difficulty finding appropriate work.

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\* *Area Handbook for the Republic of Turkey*, 2nd ed., 1973, p. 353.

\*\* *Ibid.*

Complicating the picture further are important political factors: One of the Justice Party's coalition partners is the National Action Party, led by supernationalist Alpaslan Türkeş, a former military officer who has supported the formation of right-wing commando groups that are trained and armed to respond to threats from leftist activists, a position opposed by Demirel. Former Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit of the RPP is anxious to take office once more and supplies frequent criticisms from the left-of-center. Newly reorganized leftist student groups have reemerged, reportedly under the leadership of some of those amnestied in 1974. Clashes between student groups of left and right began occurring with greater frequency during the 1974-1975 school term and continue today. Deaths have occurred. Prime Minister Demirel himself has recently publicly recognized the parallels between the current situation and the one that saw his own government forced out of office over five years ago: "The same things that happened during the period 1971-1973 are happening today, and the causes are the same. It is our government's primary task to prevent these incidents. The government is trying to carry out this task by all means available. One has to admit that this is a difficult task."\*

It is important to stress that there have been no recent incidents of terrorist violence with international implications. However, the current crisis over Turkey's relations with the United States and NATO increases the peril to the 7,000 American personnel remaining in that country. With anti-American feeling being expressed by both extremes of the political spectrum, the potential for political violence against U.S. citizens and interests in Turkey is once again at a peak.

This, then, is the political context in which the three kidnappings with which we are concerned took place. This context is summarized in the following chronology:

Date	Action
1969	Leftist university Idea Clubs joined to form Federation of Revolutionary Turkish Youth, the Dev Genç.

\* News conference of July 10, 1976, translated in *FBIS Daily Report*, Western Europe, July 12, 1976.



Date	Action
1970 December 28	TPLA shot at police post in Ankara, wounding four.
1971	
January 11	TPLA robbed bank in Ankara of TL* 120,000 (\$8,000).
February 15	U.S. Air Force Sergeant James Finley kidnapped by TPLA from U.S. base outside of Ankara and released 17 hours later.
March 4	Four U.S. airmen kidnapped outside of Ankara by TPLA. Ransom demands included publicity for manifesto, payment of \$400,000 by U.S. government. One kidnapper captured.
March 5	Turkish government launched search of university campus, looking for airmen, arms; hours-long gun battle with students; 2,000 detained.
March 8	After police visited their apartment building (on other business), kidnappers abandoned their hideout; airmen were released unharmed.
March 12	Senior Turkish military officers demanded and received resignation of civilian cabinet led by Suleyman Demirel; called for installation of "above-party" regime.
March-April	Several hundred suspected terrorist sympathizers arrested; three TPLA kidnappers captured in rural areas.
April 26	Martial law declared in key provinces (major industrial regions, Kurdish populated areas); military ranks purged; leftist Turkish Workers Party suppressed.
April 28	TPLA group led by kidnapper still at large confronted by police in south central Anatolia; kidnapper killed.
May 17	TPLF kidnapped Israeli Consul-General Ephraim Elrom from his apartment in Istanbul; ransom note demanded release of prisoners, publicity for ideology.
May 18	GOT rounded up over 400 leftist students and intellectuals; issued counterdemands, threatened retroactive death penalty for political kidnapping.
May 22	Martial Law Command announced total curfew as of May 23 in Istanbul province; registration of population. TPLF member killed Ephraim Elrom.

\*Turkish liras.

Date	Action
May 27	Six TPLF members arrested in Istanbul.
May 30	Two top TPLF leaders seen in Istanbul; during chase, these leaders kidnapped an army officer's daughter, held her in her apartment for 50 hours.
June 1	Government commandos rushed apartment, killed one, wounded the other kidnapper; hostage escaped alive, unhurt.
August	Trials of TPLF, TPLA members began, along with trials of military officers and others suspected of aiding terrorists.
September	Warrants issued for arrest of entire Dev Genç administrative council.
November 29	Three TPLA and two TPLF members escaped from Istanbul military prison with help from military sympathizers.
December	Death sentences handed down for three TPLA kidnappers.
1972	
February	Two TPLF kidnappers caught by police in Istanbul; one killed.
March	Members of TPLA, TPLF joined forces in Ankara; planned way to gain release of three terrorists sentenced to death; selected NATO technicians at remote Black Sea location as targets.
March 26	Five terrorists kidnapped three NATO employees, drove 60 miles inland to mountain village; no ransom note left.
March 30	Government troops surrounded house where kidnappers were hiding; some communications between the two sides but no concessions; kidnappers wanted release of three condemned TPLA terrorists. Security forces heard explosion inside house, rushed the kidnappers in heavy shooting. All dead inside.
March 31	Searchers found one terrorist left alive, hiding in a barn.
May 3	TPLA members hijacked Turkish Airlines plane to Bulgaria, demanded release of the three jailed kidnappers; government rejected demands; terrorists released plane, took asylum in Bulgaria.
May 5	TPLA/TPLF members attempted to kidnap gendarmerie commander; one killed in shooting with guards; attempt failed.

Date	Action
May 6	Three TPLA kidnapers of U.S. airmen hanged.
1973	
September	Martial law allowed to lapse in preparation for national elections.
October	Elections gave left-of-center Republican People's Party (RPP) plurality.
1974	
January	RPP succeeded in forming coalition with right-wing party.
May-June	Government supported amnesty for political prisoners, approved by Parliament; 4,000 people released from prison, including some TPLA and TPLF members.
July	Turkish forces invaded Cyprus.
September	Turkish coalition broke up over Cyprus policy; caretaker government installed.
November-December	New wave of political violence hit universities; armed rightist commandos battled leftists.
1975	
February	Left-right clashes erupted in eastern provinces; Army intervened to restore order; 10,000 rioters involved, according to one source.
March	Conservative Justice Party leader Demirel, who had been forced out of office by March 12, 1971, coup, returned to office.
1976	
	Clashes between rightist and leftist student forces increased in frequency; labor unrest also increased; caches of weapons discovered; arrests of suspected terrorists and sympathizers increased.

THE RADICAL ACTIVISTS: TPLA AND TPLF

A persistent characteristic within the Turkish left throughout its history has been its fragmentation.\* Certainly that quality can be seen in the post-1962 period. One writer lists seven different major groupings of leftists, including the Turkish Workers Party (TIP) and its supporters, five circles centering on specific individuals or publications

\* For an overview of the Turkish communist movement, see M. Krahenbuhl, "The Turkish Communists: Schism Instead of Conciliation," in *Studies in Comparative Communism*, Vol. 6, No. 4, Winter 1973, pp. 405-413.

whose ideologies ranged from doctrinaire Soviet-style Marxism to extreme Maoism, and the student organizations.\*

No single leftist organization, outside of the TIP to some limited extent, was able to achieve any significant level of grass-roots support. Traditionally, government suppression of leftist ideas and organizations had confined socialist and communist discussion to tiny intellectual audiences, by means of esoteric journals and private contacts. However, Turkish students studying abroad often returned with Marxist convictions as a result of exposure to European--often French or German--intellectual circles.\*\*

Violence had not been a characteristic tool of such groups, although it did erupt in periods of crisis such as the two years following World War II. Significantly, that too was a time when the government experimented with lowered restrictions on ideological content of publications; leftists and rightists demonstrated and counterdemonstrated, often engaging in pitched battles with one another. The postwar crisis with the Soviet Union brought an end to that brief episode when controls on the expression of radical views were reimposed.

#### Origins of Student Radicalism

After the new constitution of 1961 once more removed restrictions on public discussions and leftist organizations, hitherto covert leftist (and rightist) groups brought their activities out into the open. The TIP was formed under the leadership of largely foreign-educated intellectuals determined that their party would play a parliamentary role in Turkish politics as leftist parties had successfully done in European nations. For this reason, certain internationalist Marxist tenets were carefully eschewed, to the dissatisfaction of more doctrinaire leftists.

In 1965, several socialist study groups at various universities joined together to form the Association of Idea Clubs (Fikir Kulüpler

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\* M. Toker, *Solda ve Sağda Vuruşanlar*, p. 92.

\*\* For a recent historical review of Turkish student activism, see J. Szyliowicz, *A Political Analysis of Student Activism: The Turkish Case*, Sage Publications, Beverly Hills, California, 1972.

Federasyonu). Control of this loosely-knit organization seemed to fluctuate from the TIP to a faction which had been ejected from it in 1968, then back to the TIP again.\*

Student dissatisfaction at conditions in the universities rose to a critical level by 1968-1969. Some statistics will serve to illustrate the basic problems: Government plans allowed for an increase in university enrollments from 63,000 in 1963 to 88,000 in 1967. In 1968, however, 126,000 students were enrolled. Furthermore, "less than 20 percent of the students enrolled in the Law Faculty of Istanbul University since 1960 have graduated; of every 100 students in the Faculty of Letters, only 15 ever continue their studies, and a mere 6 graduate."\*\* Students who succeeded in graduating often could not find appropriate employment.

During this period, some right-wing students received paramilitary training with the help of a right-wing party now known as the National Action Party. For its part, the leftist Association of Idea Clubs reorganized itself into the Federation of Revolutionary Youth (Devrimci Gençler Federasyonu), better known as Dev Genç (pronounced *dev gench*). According to one source, "The new organization soon spread rapidly in all faculties and higher institutes and gained control of the student associations therein. From these associations, Dev Genç secured an income reputedly of 3 million Turkish liras [about \$200,000] per year, which it used to further its own ends."\*\*\* The emergence of Dev Genç and the rightist commandos marked a turning point in the methodology of student activism. From theoretical debates and academic arguments, the highly politicized groups turned to mass action accompanied by the use of violence.

#### The Turkish People's Liberation Front and Party

Operating legally from 1969-1971, Dev Genç supplemented its boycotts, sit-ins, and protests of U.S. Sixth Fleet visits with efforts

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\* Szyliowicz, p. 63.

\*\* Ibid., p. 59.

\*\*\* Ibid., p. 63.

to propagandize rural peasants and laborers. Striking coal miners found student pickets on their lines; protesting tobacco growers were harangued by youthful activists. Students were sent to visit rural villages with orders to determine the villagers' concerns and political views, and to pass out leftist pamphlets. The government scrutinized these activities carefully.\*

According to press reports, Dev Genç held a meeting of its General Council in October 1970, at which time a 27-member Administrative Council was elected. Included on the council were Ertuğrul Kürkçü, President, and Mahir Çayan, Yusuf Küpeli, Münir Aktolga, and Kâzım Özüdoğru. It was decided that the time had come to form a "war party" which would put theories of revolutionary socialism into practice, i.e., "unify theory and action."

In January 1971, these five individuals, along with two friends, Ulaş Bardakçi and Hüseyin Cevahir, were chosen for the General Council of the new organization, and Kürkçü, Çayan, and Küpeli were named to the smaller planning body, the Central Committee. Calling itself the Turkish People's Liberation Front, the paramilitary organization was to be composed of "professional revolutionaries" who would act as catalysts for the proletarian revolution to come. At the same time, the group founded a political organization, the Turkish People's Liberation Party, whose tasks were to inform the members of the working classes, organize the peasants, and generally play an educational role in raising the level of socialist consciousness in Turkish society.

Since Dev Genç still operated legally at the time the TPLF was organized, every effort was made to keep the activities of the two entirely separate and the existence of the TPLF completely secret. Figure 1 shows the probable overlap of leadership between Dev Genç and the TPLF.

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\* Feroz Ahmad, in his article, "The Turkish Guerrillas: Symptom of a Deeper Malaise," *New Middle East*, April 1973, pp. 13-16, states that the Turkish National Intelligence Agency (MIT) had attempted since the middle 1960s to infiltrate the ranks of radical movements, without a great deal of success. He notes that infiltration attempts had fared better among the ranks of the military cadets than among civilian university youth. The MIT was known to have utilized *agents provocateurs* before, and it is likely that Dev Genç was eventually infiltrated.

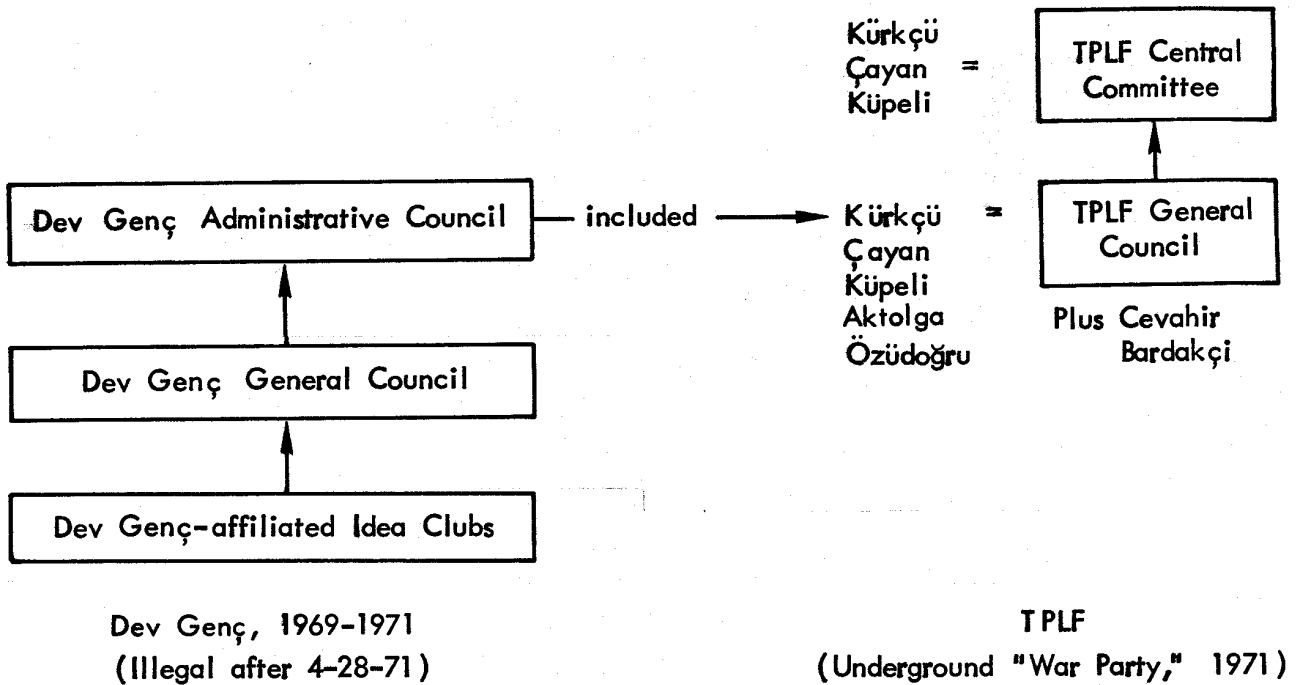


Fig. 1 — Interlocking leadership of Dev Genç and TPLF

The ideological orientation of the TPLF/P can be traced through the debates that appeared in the pages of various leftist periodical publications: *Ileri* (Forward), *Aydinlik: Sosyalist Dergisi* (Enlightenment: Socialist Review), and *Kurtuluş* (Liberation). Handwritten tracts covering organizational goals and regulations for the Dev Genç and the TPLF/P are also available. Generally speaking, the writings of Lenin on third world revolution and Mao's *New Democracy* seem to have been most often cited.\*

Without going into too much detail, we shall briefly examine the TPLF view of the stages of revolution and the concept of "People's War." Three stages of the "National Democratic Revolution" are envisioned: (1) a transitional stage, during which the vanguard of professional revolutionaries works to educate, organize, and activate workers and peasants, and strikes, demonstrations, and boycotts are

\* *Cumhuriyet*, August 18, 1971.

common phenomena; (2) a tactical assault stage, in which activities expand from the cities to the countryside and the struggle is "taken to the masses," the goals being to "terrorize the enemy," "open the fissures" in society, and "deepen the crisis of today";\* (3) a strategic assault stage, in which revolutionary forces coalesce to form an army which makes a frontal assault upon the state. This is the socialist revolution which gives birth to the "dictatorship of the proletariat."

TPLF theorists considered these three stages to be continuous, not completely distinct from one another, and possibly overlapping at any one point in time. In Turkey, the shift from first to second stage was thought to have occurred at the end of 1970 and the beginning of 1971, i.e., at the time the TPLF/P was founded.

According to an article by Çayan appearing in *Kurtuluş*, March 15, 1971, "The objective conditions for revolution now exist. But because the country is under occupation, a People's War is necessary against imperialism."\*\* The People's War, in Çayan's view, is aimed as much against the United States (as the "imperialist" occupier) as against the Turkish government. It is the mobilization of the masses into active struggle for which terrorism and guerrilla activities by the vanguard are the catalysts. The entire period of TPLF/P violence can be seen as an effort to generate a People's War.

#### The Turkish People's Liberation Army

In contrast to the TPLF, the Turkish People's Liberation Army was a tiny organization without a highly developed ideology. It considered itself a "rural guerrilla" group.\*\*\* Its main headquarters were located in Malatya, a primarily Kurdish province in southeastern Anatolia, about 200 miles north of the Syrian border.

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\* *Cumhuriyet*, August 17, 1971.

\*\* See Appendix B for other excerpts from Çayan's writings.

\*\*\* *Beyaz Kitap: Türkiye Gerçekleri vs Terörizm* (White Book: Turkish Realities and Terrorism), Prime Ministry, Ankara, 1973, p. 31.



The TPLA had established bases of operations in Istanbul as well as Ankara in order to acquire funds through bank robberies and holdups for further arms purchases and operations, and to publicize itself and its goals. Thereafter, the struggle would be taken to the countryside. According to the statement of a TPLA member captured several weeks after the airmen kidnapping incident, the group intended to liberate south-eastern Anatolia and expected to get the support of the local population as well as that of the Palestinian groups.\*

More than 20 TPLA members are known to have received training with elements of the Palestinian resistance movement in Syria and possibly in Jordan, beginning about 1969, apparently with both Al-Fatah and the more extreme PFLP. The main benefits derived from these contacts seem to have been improved organizational and tactical skills and the securing of a source of supply for arms, which were smuggled across the border into Turkey in considerable quantities by the TPLA. An underground cache of weapons unearthed by officials in December 1972 in Malatya included rockets, machine guns, grenades, and ammunition, some of it of Chinese manufacture. While the Palestinians reportedly did not take their youthful Turkish trainees very seriously, they seemed willing to provide arms and ammunition as well as training.

The Turkish government's white paper on terrorism, issued in 1973, asserts that the TPLA operated under collective leadership, with major decisions made by consensus and risks shared equally.\*\* As far as the overall structure is concerned, the organization seems to have been composed of small groups operating independently from one another. One such group, consisting of Deniz Gezmiş, Yusuf Aslan, Hüseyin Inan, Sinan Cemgil, and Mete Ertekin, set up its headquarters at Middle East Technical University in Ankara. There they planned the kidnapping of four U.S. airmen in March 1971.

#### The Question of a TPLA/TPLF Connection

At the time of the airmen kidnapping, there was speculation that the TPLA was affiliated with Dev Genç, and many western sources simply

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\* *Beyaz Kitap*, p. 64.

\*\* *Ibid.*, p. 31.

lumped the TPLA/TPLF together as one organization. While there are similarities between the two, and some members of both did cooperate in later undertakings, the bulk of the evidence suggests that they were in fact distinctly separate, at least at the outset.

It is possible that members of both groups had once been affiliated with the Idea Clubs Association. Certainly, their backgrounds were similar: men and women in their middle 20s, of middle- or upper-class social status, university students, English-speaking, residents of one of Turkey's three major cities--Ankara, Istanbul, or Izmir. Many of them were battle-scarred veterans of the student movement.\*

Where the two groups differed significantly was in their ideological emphasis and level of organizational sophistication. The TPLA ideology reflected a strong nationalist sentiment with a populist flavor. (See the TPLA Manifesto in Appendix A.) Its primary target was the United States' influence in Turkey, as represented by the U.S. military presence and the growth of private American business interests. One passage of the TPLA Manifesto declares, "Because of America and its Turkish collaborators, we have become step-children in our own country." The TPLA appealed to all groups of society--not just workers and peasants--to join them in throwing off the American yoke. Its members were believers in the spontaneous uprising of the masses. They hoped to provide the needed inspiration through their spectacular acts of defiance against the regime and the United States. Their ideology does not seem to have provided much guidance for various outcomes other than the one hoped for. When senior military officers forced the Demirel government to resign, at least one TPLA member welcomed the development and expressed his hope that the military would remedy the injustices his group was fighting.

The TPLA produced no known publications. Its members seemed much more inclined to fight than to write.

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\*Gezmiş claimed to have been imprisoned for two years for participating in a student demonstration. While a prisoner, he had contracted tuberculosis and nearly died. For this, and for the deaths of several of his comrades during various protest demonstrations, he held a grudge against the government, he said.

By contrast, TPLF literature reflected a doctrinaire brand of Marxist-Leninism. Çayan, who had been active in Dev Genç as a theoretician, wrote articles expounding on the finer points of the national liberation revolution for *Kurtuluş* (Liberation), a leftist student leaflet named for one published by the Turkish communist party after World War I. The TPLF literature did not stress the issue of Kurdish rights; it seemed to focus more on questions of concern to the urban intelligentsia than did the TPLA ideology. Çayan termed the military leaders who carried out the demi-coup "lackeys to the imperialists, traitors."

Organizationally as well, the TPLF was more highly sophisticated than the TPLA. The TPLF "war party" was designed as a cell-style organization, which was to behave with all the precaution of a clandestine European communist party. Strict discipline was to be observed within the hierarchy, in sharp contrast to the seemingly casual leadership arrangements of the TPLA.

Moreover, the TPLF showed itself more proficient in tactical planning and preparation. For example, before the Elrom kidnapping, a number of safe hiding places were secured, disguises were provided for, false identity papers were printed, equipment was obtained to monitor police communications. By contrast, the TPLA seemed not to have prepared safe hiding places between Ankara and its mountain hideout many miles away.

In view of these dissimilarities, then, it seems reasonable to accept the conclusion of the Turkish government that the NATO technicians' kidnapping in March 1972 marked the first joint operation between the TPLF and the TPLA.\* Only one circumstance, of uncertain significance, links the two organizations before that time. An individual named İrfan Uçar was arrested in the airmen case because he allegedly owned the apartment unit where the four American servicemen were held. In his courtroom appearance, which was delayed for several days, allegedly due to illness (Uçar claimed that he had been tortured), he denied having any knowledge of the TPLA or its activities. However,

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\**Beyaz Kitap*, p. 72.

Uçar traveled to Istanbul not long after Çayan and established friendly relations with TPLF members there. He underwrote his sincerity with a substantial financial donation. Uçar was later arrested in the roundup of TPLF members after Elrom's murder, but otherwise, his name did not figure prominently in events. At his trial, Uçar asked for a separate hearing.

There is a possibility that the government may have coopted Uçar into infiltrating the TPLF in return for his release from charges relating to the airmen case. Such a conclusion would be speculative in the absence of additional information, however. He might simply have been a sympathizer with leftist causes who enjoyed circulating on the fringes of radical groups.

#### Previous Experience

In their student demonstration days, TPLA members claimed to have participated in a number of protests against visits by the U.S. Sixth Fleet to Turkish ports and against Turkish involvement in NATO, which they felt prevented the country from pursuing its rightful interests in Cyprus. In later operations, they acknowledged responsibility for shooting and wounding Turkish riot policemen on duty outside the U.S. embassy in Ankara in December 1970; robbing a Turkish bank of TL 24,000 (about \$1,600)--the government declared the amount was TL 120,000 (about \$8,000)--in Ankara in January 1971; bombing an American launch in Istanbul in February 1971; and shooting two more policemen and kidnapping an American soldier from the U.S. base at Balgat, also in February 1971. In addition, the government charged the group with having extorted TL 10,000 from the Phillips Company in January 1971, dynamiting a teachers college during the same month, and robbing another bank in March 1971, all in Istanbul.\*

After the airmen kidnapping, with the three key leaders of the Ankara TPLA branch out of action, the Istanbul group, led by Cihan Alptekin, seems to have become more active on its own and in collaboration with the TPLF. Its two airplane hijackings and its attempt to

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\**Beyaz Kitap*, p. 32.

kidnap the gendarmerie commander proved unsuccessful, except in providing publicity, much of which was unfavorable.

Much more is known about the TPLF's activities and tactical planning. Not long after its formation, the TPLF moved to obtain needed capital. In early February 1971, Çayan, Cevahir, Bardakçi, and two others robbed a Turkish bank in Istanbul of TL 48,660 (\$3,500), escaping in a stolen taxicab. After the success of this undertaking, the leadership decided that Çayan should organize a militant cell there for further operations.

In Istanbul, Çayan called upon members of sympathetic Idea Clubs for assistance, including one group of military students. His inner circle was joined by Ziya Yilmaz, a 33-year old member of the Turkish Workers Party from the Black Sea area and a trained accountant. Yilmaz took over the management of the group's finances. Hüseyin Cevahir and Ulaş Bardakçi, both members of the TPLF General Council, were Çayan's primary lieutenants in Istanbul. It is clear that the inner circle of those active and informed of TPLF affairs remained small, probably under 10 persons. The local Idea Club members, in all likelihood, were told very little about the organization they were asked to assist. In this way the TPLF protected itself from complete exposure in the event that individual members were arrested.

Using false identity papers, counterfeited from blanks stolen from the Population Directorate by Bardakçi, and with the help of military officers Air Force Captain Ilyas Aydin and Lieutenant Saffet Alp, the group rented at least four apartments in various parts of the city under various aliases. Another bank was robbed in Istanbul, this time of TL 114,500 (\$7,600). The getaway vehicle, stolen from an American soldier stationed in Istanbul, was later burned.

The money acquired from these enterprises was used to buy weapons and to maintain the group, and some was sent to Ankara for the parent organization, Dev Genç. But tightening security soon made bank robbery too risky for the TPLF, so it turned to kidnapping wealthy civilians for ransom.

The first kidnapping, carried out on April 14, 1971, proved to be a slick operation. Kadir Has, a wealthy Turkish executive for a foreign

firm, was selected as the target. Five TPLF members broke into his house and took the man's nephew and brother-in-law away, demanding TL 400,000 (\$27,000) in return for their safety.\* Çayan took Has to the executive's business office, where he was able to make arrangements for half the ransom.\*\* Later, the two hostages were released unharmed, as promised; the authorities were not notified until their safe return. Their first kidnapping effort had proven successful and lucrative for the TPLF and must have boosted their confidence.

In bringing off these various crimes, then, both the TPLA and TPLF had been successful in flouting the authorities before undertaking their major political kidnappings. It should be pointed out that in involving foreigners as the objects of those kidnappings, the radicals were escalating the warfare between students and state to a new plateau. The internationalization of the conflict served as a catalyst for military intervention, brought imprisonment to literally thousands of people, changed the nation's laws regarding freedom of association and the press, and drastically altered the university environment in which the student movement operated.

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\* During the kidnapping, each member of the group called the others by number, perhaps reflecting the hierarchy among them: Çayan was number one; Cevahir, two; Bardakçi, three; the others, four and five.

\*\* TL 140,000 of the ransom was paid in 500-lira notes and TL 60,000 was in 100-lira notes. Serial numbers for the 500s had been registered; only the 100s were completely safe to use.

II. THE KIDNAPPINGS

THE KIDNAPPING OF FOUR AMERICAN AIRMEN ON MARCH 4, 1971

The events of the first international kidnapping incident, in which four American airmen were taken hostage, are summarized in the following detailed chronology:

Date	Action
12:30 a.m. March 4, 1971	Four U.S. airmen returning home from installation outside Ankara seized by five Turks and driven to apartment in Ankara.
About 2:00 a.m. March 4	One of the kidnapers apprehended parking airmen's vehicle outside Soviet embassy and taken in for questioning.
8:30 a.m. March 4	Ransom note from TPLA delivered to Turkish Radio and Television (TRT) and Turkish news agencies, demanding U.S. pay \$400,000 ransom and broadcast publicity for ideology over TRT; 36 hours given for response (until 6 p.m., March 5).
7:00 p.m. March 4	TRT broadcast selected portions of TPLA communique with brief factual reporting of incident.
About 8:00 p.m. March 4	Second ransom note delivered to newspapers' offices addressed to American ambassador, demanding release of TPLA members, publicity; extended deadline 12 hours (to 6:00 a.m., March 6). Letters from airmen, one identification card enclosed.
4:00 p.m. March 4	President Nixon held news conference and stated he would not recommend that GOT bargain with kidnapers.
4:00 a.m. March 5	GOT security forces searched Middle East Technical University for hostages; pitched battle with students in dormitories lasted for over 5 hours; 2,000 rounded up, detained. Hostages not found.
March 5	Police raided a number of houses and apartments, following tips. No hostages found.
March 5	Student protest demonstrations erupted in Ankara at many colleges.
March 6	Pregnant wife of one airman appeared on Turkish television, appealing for her husband's release and lives of all airmen.

Date	Action
6:00 a.m. March 6	Deadline passed with no further word from TPLA; GOT continued search, questioning of students. Turkish cabinet met, announced no bargaining whatsoever with kidnapers.
March 7	Press published names, pictures of suspected kidnapers.
Afternoon March 8	Leftist university professor contacted by TPLA, agreed to act as communications link between TPLA and U.S. embassy.
9:00-10:00 p.m. March 8	Municipal police car stopped at apartment where hostages held; officers entered building, investigated domestic quarrel in another apartment; departed.
10:30 p.m. March 8	Airmen ordered to lie flat on floor, with apartment in total darkness; kidnapers departed.
Midnight March 8	After careful reconnaissance, airmen departed apartment, took taxi to American billets, and reported their safe release.
March 17	Two kidnapers captured while motorcycling toward mountains in southeastern Turkey.
March 22	Third kidnapper captured traveling in same direction.
April 28	Fourth kidnapper killed leading TPLA raid on U.S. radar installation in mountains.
May 6, 1972	Three kidnapers hanged.

Summary of Events

At 12:30 a.m. on March 4, 1971, four American airmen were kidnapped by five heavily armed Turks while returning to Ankara from their place of work at an American installation about 10 miles outside the city. The airmen were being driven to the city in an Air Force station wagon with a Turkish driver. As the vehicle slowly proceeded down the narrow and somewhat icy road, the soldiers saw several men walking alongside the road. This was not an unusual sight and caused no great concern. As they neared the men, however, a pole lying across the road also became visible, and the driver was forced to stop the station wagon. The airmen could see that the men walking by the road--now joined by several more who had been hiding in a roadside ditch--carried arms, including a machine gun, a machine pistol, and grenades. One hostage



thought there might have been as many as seven terrorists involved, although other reports indicate that five was the actual number.

The driver was forced to get out of the station wagon and was marched over into a nearby field and bound. The airmen too were ordered out and marched in a different direction to a waiting automobile. Their kidnapers spoke both Turkish and English. The hostages fully anticipated being shot immediately. Instead, they were placed in the back seat of a four-door sedan while three of the kidnapers climbed in front, guns in hand and at the ready. Two of the captors drove away in the military station wagon, and the sedan followed. The airmen were told to keep their eyes closed but were not bound or blindfolded. They did not converse on the way. At least one of them contemplated escaping from the moving vehicle but feared for the safety of the others.

At one point, the young man driving the station wagon, Mete Ertekin, apparently made a wrong turn; the sedan following was unable to stop before colliding with the station wagon, although the damage was slight. The drivers of the two vehicles got out and exchanged some heated words before resuming the drive.

Shortly thereafter, the two vehicles split up, with Ertekin taking the station wagon off to ditch it in front of the Russian embassy. There, he was seen by a policeman and apprehended. It is not clear what became of the man riding with Ertekin. Meanwhile, the airmen were driven to an apartment building in an upper-middle-class section of town, where they were herded into a hallway storage closet in a ground-floor apartment. They spent the next five days in this closet, with alternating periods of sitting on the hallway floor. The floor plan of the apartment is shown in Fig. 2.

Later that morning, between 8:00 and 9:00, copies of a lengthy manifesto entitled "To All the Peoples of the World and to the Peoples of Turkey" were delivered to the offices of TRT and several Turkish news agencies.\* Calling itself the Türkiye Halk Kurtuluş Ordusu (Turkish People's Liberation Army), the group declared its intentions "to purge Turkey of American and all foreign enemies, to wipe out collaborators

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\* The complete text of the manifesto is reproduced in Appendix A.

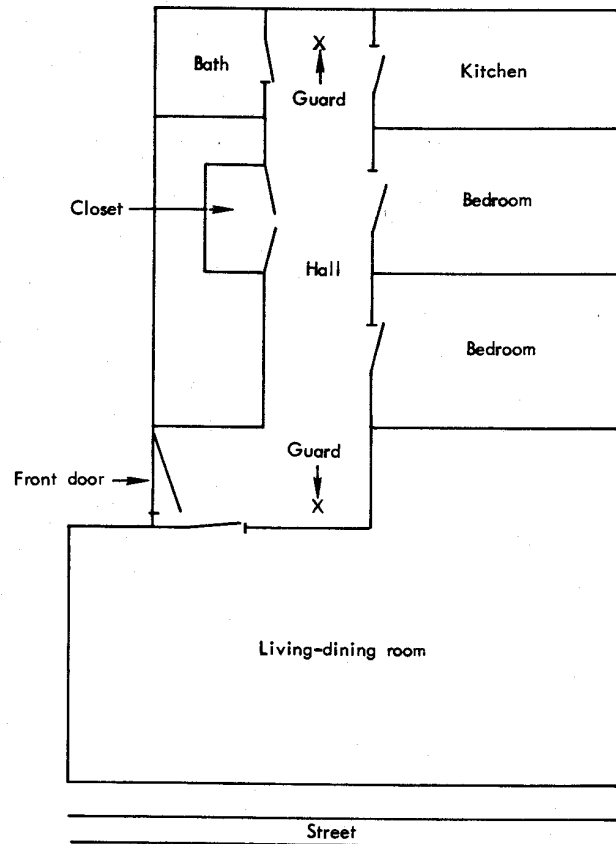


Fig. 2—Floor plan of the Ankara apartment where the airmen were held captive

and to establish a completely independent Turkey . . . by means of armed struggle." Its demands were stated as follows:

The People's Liberation Army of Turkey has taken hostage four American NCO's stationed at TUSLOG\* Det 18 American base. [The hostages were named.]

The People's Liberation Army of Turkey is giving 36 hours to release the Americans it has taken hostage. Within this period government officials should announce through TRT and the press that the conditions set forth shall be complied with. All developments should be made public through the same media by the authorities. If such an announcement is not made, it will be considered that the conditions are not accepted. At the end of the period stipulated, the hostages will be shot.

\*The United States Logistics Group.

Conditions: (1) In order to secure the release of all the hostages, USA shall pay a ransom of \$400,000 (four hundred thousand) dollars to the People's Liberation Army of Turkey. (The method of pickup shall be relayed later.) (2) The declaration of the People's Liberation Army of Turkey entitled "To All the Peoples of the World and to the Peoples of Turkey" and the conditions shall be broadcast over TRT on 0730, 1300, and 1900 hours news bulletins. . . . (3) No revolutionary shall be arrested because of this incident during the time American hostages are in custody. The period [for payment of ransom] . . . expires at 1800 hours on March 5 . . . any search campaign . . . undertaken by the police shall endanger the lives of the hostages.

The statement recapitulated the group's past actions, claiming credit for bank robberies, bombings, and shootings, as well as the kidnapping of an American Air Force Sergeant on February 16 (an unplanned action in which no demands were made and the captive was released after 17 hours). (See Sec. I for a detailed discussion of the TPLA's previous activities.) An identification card from one of the airmen was included with the messages.

Operating under acute domestic political pressures and rumors of a possible military takeover, the Turkish government from the beginning adopted a hard line toward the kidnapers, refusing all demands except for a partial broadcast of the "manifesto," including the "conditions," in the context of TRT's regular 7:00 p.m. news program on March 4. At least at the outset, no mention was made of the capture of Ertekin.

The TPLA dropped a second note at the office of a large Turkish newspaper in Ankara at about 8:00 the same evening. A copy was delivered to the Security Directorate as well. Addressed to the American ambassador, the note expressed dissatisfaction that the conditions of the first note had not been complied with and accused the government of trying to cover up the whole incident.\* (The language of the note suggests that it was written before the TRT 7:00 p.m. news broadcast.) The government was told to comply with the demands and announce its compliance over the radio. The note added that the hostages' freedom

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\* See Appendix A for the text of the second note.

would depend upon the release of all students arrested during the episode, including Ertekin. The kidnapers extended their deadline 12 hours, "in order to secure the release of our friend." Brief letters from the airmen to their wives were also included, along with another identification card from one of the airmen.

Meanwhile, after his arrest, Ertekin had revealed the names of the group members, and the GOT learned that four of the five had undergone commando training in Syria in 1969-1970 with elements of the Palestinian resistance. They had smuggled large quantities of arms back into Turkey with them and were understood to be well-armed. Ertekin had not been a member of the group for long, however, and had not been told the kinds of crucial information the police were looking for.

Initially, the top government officials refrained from making public statements about the event or threatening severe punishment for the kidnapers, claiming that such action would only provoke the terrorists into more drastic behavior and might also generate public sympathy for them. The government preferred to concentrate all its efforts on capturing the kidnapers quickly before making public statements, and about 30,000 police and gendarmerie were mobilized for a massive search operation.

On the basis of information given by Ertekin, the government concluded that the airmen were being held on the campus of the Middle East Technical University (METU). After consultations between the Minister of the Interior, security officials, and the National Intelligence Agency, at about 4:00 a.m. on March 5 the METU campus was cordoned off and a search operation was undertaken, beginning with the student dormitories where the kidnapers had headquartered before the event. Armed students had barricaded themselves in the dormitories. A shoot-out ensued in which one student and one soldier were fatally wounded and many others were injured. When the wounded student subsequently died, sympathy demonstrations were staged on a large scale by students on the other college and university campuses in Ankara. As a result, about 2,000 students were detained for questioning, although only 24 were ultimately charged. Stocks of weapons and ammunition were found on the METU grounds. Relations between the university and the government, already hostile, deteriorated further after this action, and the

METU campus was closed for three weeks. Civilian government appeared to be losing its ability to maintain public order, and the press criticized the heavy-handedness of the operation.

The first indication of what the U.S. policy in this case would be came in a presidential news conference on March 4. When President Nixon was asked if he thought the GOT should negotiate with the terrorists, he replied, "I would not suggest that the Turkish government negotiate on this matter because I believe that is a decision the government must make having in mind its own internal situation." He noted the U.S. government's complete confidence in the GOT in obtaining the release of the airmen and apprehending the terrorists.\* In a then-confidential cable sent to the ambassador in Ankara on March 4 and signed by Undersecretary of State Joseph Sisco, the U.S. position was stated in greater detail: "We are opposed as a matter of principle to payment of ransom since such payment is a poor solution to the specific problem and would encourage other such kidnappings in Turkey, and would be an open invitation to others in other countries to take similar action."\*\* More detailed guidelines were cabled March 6, stressing the important role of the host government in dealing with political kidnappings and underscoring American resolution to abjure the payment of ransom in order to deter such acts in the future.\*\*\* The guidelines added that the United States would not hinder the efforts of private citizens to transmit ransom money but noted that "frequently," in similar cases, ransom was paid but hostages were killed anyway because of their knowledge of kidnappers' identities and hiding places.

Late in the evening of March 4 and again on March 5, American Ambassador Handley in Ankara issued several public statements appealing for the release of the airmen and expressing U.S. concern for their safety. No mention of ransom was made in these statements. Embassy

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\* *New York Times*, March 5, 1971.

\*\* Department of State telegram #36285, March 4, 1971 (originally classified Confidential, Excluded from GDS; declassified by Department of State, June 1976). See Appendix A for text.

\*\*\* Department of State telegram #38109, March 6, 1971 (originally restricted to Limited Official Use; all restrictions removed by Department of State, June 1976). See Appendix A for text.

officials arranged to have TRT interview the pregnant wife of one of the airmen who also had a small son. Her appearance and appeal had a significant impact in swaying public opinion against the kidnapers, neutralizing some of the gains they had made after the METU raids.

At 6:00 a.m. on March 6, the announced deadline expired. Two days passed without further communication from the TPLA. Meanwhile, March 7 newspapers carried names and photographs of the suspected kidnapers, although official statements continued to be restrained. (Non-governmental political leaders, however, did speak out against the terrorists.) Security forces completed their unproductive search of the city's "shanty-town" districts and turned to the more affluent sections.

On the afternoon of March 8, one of the kidnapers telephoned Muammer Aksoy, a moderately leftist university professor, and asked him to intercede directly with the American embassy. Between 9:00 and 10:00 that evening, however, before Aksoy could carry out his mission, a police car from the local "morals squad" briefly visited a unit in the apartment building where the hostages were being held, to investigate a family quarrel. The kidnapers, increasingly tense, apparently decided the authorities were getting too close. At about 10:30 p.m., the airmen were told to get down on the floor and be quiet; all the lights in the apartment were turned off. The airmen could hear people walking around for a while and then all was silent. After cautiously waiting until they were absolutely sure that no one remained, the airmen began searching the apartment. They put on some of the civilian clothing their captors had left behind, then waited a while longer. Around midnight, the four soldiers slipped out of the apartment and crept carefully along, using the buildings as cover. Finally, they flagged a passing taxi and, after being unable to enter the American embassy because of the clog of reporters' and officials' vehicles, were driven to the TUSLOG airmen's billets, where they reported their safe release.

The kidnapers managed to evade the authorities for the time being. They later claimed to have actually encountered police while fleeing from the apartment where they had held the hostages, but said the police

seemed unsure of what to do in the face of superior arms and made no move to apprehend them. Where they took refuge in Ankara and how they managed to avoid the roadblocks thrown up on roads leading out of the city is not known. On March 17, the police apprehended Gezmiş and Aslan motorcycling in Sivas province, about 280 miles east of Ankara, on the way to their Malatya hideout. Aslan was wounded and taken immediately, but Gezmiş managed to give police a lengthy chase before he was finally caught. Five days later, Inan was arrested in a rural area after being reported by villagers. He too was en route to Malatya.

One of the airmen's kidnappers, Sinan Cemgil, managed to reach the TPLA's mountain hiding place. Regrouping his forces there, he undertook to train a number of recent recruits in guerrilla tactics. On April 28, they set off to attack a U.S. radar base in the not-too-distant mountains. On the way, the group was confronted by gendarmerie who had been called by concerned villagers. Cemgil was killed in the exchange of fire that followed, along with many of his group.

During the summer of 1971, the three TPLA leaders, Gezmiş, Aslan, and Inan, were tried for undermining the Turkish constitution and were sentenced to death. Their cohorts made a number of unsuccessful efforts to obtain their release, managing only to have the date of execution postponed for several weeks during a March 1972 hostage episode. (This incident is described on pp. 70-75.) Finally, the three leaders were hanged, on May 6, 1972. Each made a last statement of his revolutionary beliefs and was permitted to kick the chair out from under himself.

#### Evolution of Policy in the Local Government

Coming as it did after months of demonstrations, disorders, assorted criminal acts, and a decline in public confidence in the government, the kidnapping of the airmen posed a threat to the survival of the Demirel regime. Its first response was to withhold all public statements by officials, to suppress certain facts about the case, including the capture of TPLA member Ertekin, and to concentrate all resources on capturing the kidnappers and freeing the hostages. The GOT requested that the American government go along with its chosen plan of action and, above all, *not* pay the ransom or pressure for negotiations.

Upon first learning of the kidnapping, Prime Minister Demirel called in the Ministers of Defense and Interior for a conference. In a brief meeting with the Turkish press afterwards, Demirel was asked his opinion of the manifesto issued by the TPLA. He replied only, "What liberation is this? Who are they supposed to be liberating?," and referred all other queries to the Interior Ministry.\* Later that day, the Interior Ministry issued a statement declaring that the investigation would be pursued energetically. No emphatic moral condemnation or promise of swift retribution was included, much to the disappointment of American observers. The GOT had issued such a declaration after the kidnapping of Sergeant Finley in February.

Political leaders outside of the government did make public statements emphatically condemning the kidnapping and urging immediate release of the airmen. Ismet Inönü, former Prime Minister and hero of the Turkish Revolution, lent his considerable prestige to such an appeal. Elements of Demirel's own party grew uncomfortable with his handling of the incident, a factor which contributed to the stress under which the government was operating.

The decision to search METU early on March 5 held grave risks for the GOT in terms of undermining public support even further among the academic and intellectual community. The mystique of university autonomy had some ten years of tradition behind it, but the hope for a quick resolution to the acute present problem--along with a feeling that a search of the campus might turn up evidence useful in combatting the chronic problem of student unrest--outweighed all reservations.

After the METU search failed to produce the hostages, the GOT was faced with another decisionmaking crisis. Investigatory efforts intensified. Telephone tips and other clues gathered from the questioning of students were followed up, including a report that the hostages were being held at the Salt Lake, 80 miles south of Ankara. A number of apartments and houses belonging to known leftists were raided, creating further ill will for the government. The second day passed without results.

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\* *Cumhuriyet*, March 5, 1971.



In its precarious position, the GOT refused to consider opening up negotiations with the TPLA, even for merely tactical reasons. Silence on the policy level was combined with a massive show of force at the action level. On March 6, after a cabinet meeting, the Turkish Labor Minister succinctly summed up the attitude of the GOT, saying, "You don't bargain with bandits." GOT officials apparently felt that engaging in personal exchanges with the terrorists would only dignify the cause of the radicals, whose intention was to humiliate the government. Moreover, it was feared that the terrorists might attempt even more spectacular crimes.

On the fourth day, after the deadline given in the manifesto had passed, the government allowed names and pictures of suspected kidnapers to be published in local newspapers. Meanwhile, police were systematically searching the city's poorer areas before moving into the middle- and upper-class neighborhoods.

High military officials were following events closely, keeping informed with frequent briefings from MIT (Turkish intelligence). The High Command called for a special "secret" meeting to be held March 10, an ominous development for the government. Knowing that some military officers had criticized the regime's inability to maintain order, the GOT may have felt increased pressure upon learning of the meeting. Its hard-line, no-negotiations policy was maintained until the end of the incident.

#### Evolution of Policy in the U.S. Government

At the time the airmen were kidnapped, an internal debate as to the proper U.S. policy toward political kidnappings was taking place within the Department of State.\* Beginning with the kidnapping of Ambassador to Brazil C. Burke Elbrick in September 1969, the American position had been to emphasize getting the hostage back alive; local governments had been encouraged to release political prisoners, if that was necessary to attain this goal. However, some State Department

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\* See Brian Jenkins, David Ronfeldt, and Ralph Strauch, *Dealing with Political Kidnapping* (U), The Rand Corporation, R-1857-DOS/ARPA, September 1976 (Secret).

employees disagreed with that posture. An editorial in the June 1970 issue of the *Foreign Service Journal* of the American Foreign Service Association argued that, "As long as the kidnapers believe they can . . . influence their own government or the foreign government involved, the kidnapping of foreign officials will be a tempting mode of political action." Instead, the editorial argued, the U.S. government should let it be known that it would not pay "political or financial" ransom, nor would it pressure other governments to bargain for the lives of its citizens beyond what would ordinarily be done for their own.

President Nixon's news conference of March 4 indicated that U.S. policy had shifted in favor of the no-ransom posture advocated in the *Journal* article. Undersecretary of State Sisco's cable of March 4 (cited above) and the follow-up cable of March 6 corroborated the shift. No public statement of the policy was issued, however, until March 9, when the *New York Times* carried a short item stating that the Administration had adopted a policy of not paying ransom in cases of political kidnappings. The decision was announced a few hours before the airmen's release, by lower-echelon rather than higher officials of the Department of State, out of "concern for the lives of the airmen." According to the announcement, it had been an agonizing decision for the highest levels of government, but experience had convinced decision-makers that the payment of ransom only encouraged further kidnappings.

The precarious position of the Turkish government and its urgent appeals that the U.S. support its policy and not pay the ransom may well have contributed to the decision to shift the U.S. policy emphasis at that particular time. Certainly, State Department officials knowledgeable about Turkish affairs worked diligently within the Department in support of the Turkish position. An unfavorable U.S. posture in the airmen kidnapping incident could contribute to the fall of a friendly government, they argued.

One problem tended to cloud the credibility of the U.S. no-ransom position, at least as far as the Turkish government was concerned. The prompt release of Sergeant Finley had led to a false newspaper report that the U.S. had actually paid \$100,000 ransom. In spite of a firm American denial, many Turks continued to believe that ransom had been

paid. At one point during the airmen incident, a local newspaper printed a story that the \$400,000 ransom demanded by the TPLA had been brought to Ankara and was being held at the embassy pending arrangements with the kidnapers for an exchange. Once more, U.S. officials denied the story. Rumors persisted for some time, however, that ransom money was paid by the American government.

#### Actions of the U.S. Embassy in Ankara

American embassy officials in Ankara determined to maintain a low profile from the outset of the incident. No statements were made mentioning the ransom issue or the shift in U.S. policy. Picking up on a paragraph from the March 6 State Department telegram, which said that the U.S. government "would make its good offices available as appropriate," Ambassador William J. Handley's statements stressed the human aspects of the situation; he did nothing that might discourage the kidnapers from approaching the embassy as an alternate communications conduit.

One of the first steps taken by the embassy was to arrange for the broadcast of a humanitarian plea. Partly because the second TPLA note was addressed to the American embassy, the American ambassador on the evening of March 5 asked the GOT to broadcast the following appeal by radio, in the context of regular news programs: "The American ambassador in Ankara has asked the government of Turkey to broadcast by radio his plea for the prompt and safe release of the four American airmen." He revised and updated the statement slightly for release to the news media the morning of March 6: "Last night I asked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to arrange for the broadcast of my appeal that the four American airmen be released safely and as soon as possible. It is my fervent hope that those who are holding the four airmen have heard my appeal and will release them immediately and unharmed." The statement received front-page coverage in the press and was aired repeatedly over the radio.

American officials also organized publicity for appeals from the hostages' families. On March 6, the day the deadline for meeting the kidnapers' demands was to expire, the embassy arranged for Mrs. Jimmie

Sexton, five months pregnant and the only dependent of any of the airmen in Turkey at the time, to make a statement to the Turkish press which also received wide media coverage. Mrs. Sexton appealed as follows: "My son Anthony is 13 months old. His father and I love him. For him, for me, for our family, I ask the kidnappers to return Jimmie to us, and the other three airmen to their families. Anthony and I need Jimmie."

The embassy encouraged the GOT to highlight this story on TRT's noon broadcast on March 6, along with the ambassador's entreaty. The impact of these statements created widespread public sympathy for these men, who were, after all, low-ranking soldiers and not members of an upper-class diplomatic corps with whom the mass public would have little in common. The kidnappers themselves, during trial questioning, testified to having been deeply affected by Mrs. Sexton's appeal. The airmen attribute their survival in part to the effect of her statement on Turkish public opinion.

The third embassy statement to the public was made after the airmen had been released unharmed. The ambassador issued the following declaration: "I am happy that reason has prevailed and that senseless tragedy has been averted. I am sure that people everywhere share the joy of the families of the four airmen at their safe return. All Americans in Turkey will never forget the overwhelming sympathy and support expressed in these difficult days by the people of Turkey."

Thus, the embassy, mindful of the presence of 16,000 Americans in Turkey as potential kidnapping targets, continued its humanitarian theme even after the release of the airmen. All its statements were designed not to antagonize or provoke kidnappers to similar acts or close any options for future U.S. policy in similar situations.

Behind the scenes, American officials were working with the Turkish government as closely as possible. Based upon previous U.S. experiences with political kidnappings, suggestions were made of courses of action that might be taken to encourage the kidnappers to release the hostages. For example, the ambassador asked whether the GOT had considered offering the kidnappers safe conduct to another country on condition the four airmen were released. The answer was affirmative. Turkish

officials were encouraged to review the experiences of the Canadian and Brazilian governments for possible applicability to this case. Mindful of the GOT's vulnerable position, the embassy carefully refrained from seeming to pressure the Turks, even if American advice was not taken.

#### The Media

Turkish newspapers, news agencies, and radio and television were called upon to play two vital roles during the airmen kidnappings: observer and reporter of events, and communications link for messages from major parties involved. Each of those roles carried extra significance in this case. Without the existence of a relatively uncensored press, this kidnapping and those that followed might not have occurred. A primary goal of the terrorists was to gain publicity and the support of elite opinion groups for their cause, and the media provided the means for reaching this audience, thus the added importance of their observer-reporter role.

In the absence of any substantial negotiations process during this episode, the terrorists depended upon media institutions to ensure that messages were delivered and at the same time publicized. As noted above, two news agencies, a daily newspaper, and TRT were utilized as carriers for messages to the Turkish and American governments. On the American side, Ambassador Handley communicated a non-provocative U.S. position to the kidnappers via his appeals in the media and that of the airman's wife. Only the Turkish government failed to utilize the press during this incident.

The GOT kept press briefings to a minimum; aside from prepared factual handouts, little news was made available to the press by higher Turkish officials. Pictures and names of suspects whose identities were learned from Ertekin early in the episode were withheld from the press until March 7.

In performing their basic reporting function, Turkish newspapers gave generous front-page coverage with banner headlines to the kidnapping story and related events throughout the period of captivity

and for some time thereafter.\* Few investigative feature articles appeared at the time, however, and most items consisted of straight news reportage, with an occasional editorial column about the kidnapping or the general political situation.

No state of emergency was declared during the episode which affected the functioning of the media. However, TRT, as a government-operated organization, withheld certain facts and was generally selective in its reporting, according to government desires. The general climate of political polarization extended to journalism as well as politics (see Sec. I), and papers supporting the opposition stressed aspects of events that showed the government in a negative light. The leftist press, for example, carried certain stories in more detail than the government would have liked, including a rather defiant interview with the President of METU's student union who had been wounded in the police search of March 5. Some stories, such as the rumor that the U.S. government had paid ransom for the airmen, appeared to be fabrications. Some reporting was simply inaccurate, such as one item that the airmen had been released near their point of capture outside of Ankara.

#### The Hostages and Their Kidnappers

It was perhaps inevitable that activists who were increasingly turning to violent methods and whose major ideological theme was opposition to American influence should choose their targets from among the 16,000 U.S. citizens near at hand. Clearly, these particular airmen were kidnapped as symbols of U.S. power. They had had no personal contact with any of the kidnappers beforehand, nor were their captors aware of the nature of their employment at an intelligence-gathering facility. The surprise shown by the kidnappers upon seeing the airmen alight from their vehicle suggests that they had hoped to capture higher-ranking soldiers and perhaps garner even more extensive publicity and greater attention from government officials.

The airmen were surprised and shocked to find themselves confronted by the heavily armed Turks in the dark of night. They feared intensely

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\* Comments on Turkish newspaper reporting are based primarily on our perusal of *Cumhuriyet*, a well-regarded Istanbul daily.

for their lives both during the initial confrontation and throughout the drive to the hiding place, although their kidnapers told them they would not be killed if they did as instructed.

The short-lived kidnapping of Sergeant Finley two weeks earlier had aroused concern among Americans living in Ankara, but at the time the incident was regarded as one more in a series of seemingly random anti-American acts. The airmen knew of this incident but never anticipated being hostages themselves. They were not aware of the program of information instituted after Finley's experience to advise American residents on how to avoid situations where kidnapping might be a danger. After their work shift was over, these airmen had had to use the access road they were on between their installation and Ankara, as the alternate route was in an impassable condition at the time. Thus, their path to and from work could easily be predicted; in fact, TPLA members had reconnoitered the area, not far from METU, two nights earlier.

The apartment to which the airmen were taken was on the ground floor of a building in the Yukari Ayranci section of Ankara, an upper-middle-class neighborhood dotted with embassies and inhabited by a number of foreign residents.\* The hostages were all initially herded into a hall storage closet; several hours later, two of them were permitted to sit on the floor in the hallway in front of the closet. This arrangement was to be the regular pattern for the duration of their captivity. The men were physically cramped and uncomfortable, being forced to sleep on the floor of the closet or in the hallway and being denied exercise. Access to bathroom facilities was provided, although the men were allowed no privacy. The kidnapers did not bind or blindfold their captives, evidently considering the two guards, one at each end of the hallway, sufficient to prevent escape attempts. Five days passed from the time of capture to the time of release.

The captives were well treated, generally. The food they were given consisted of bread, cheese, and tea, and a single can of beans, a typical diet for poor Turks.\*\* The airmen were not abused except

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\* See p. 30 for a diagram of the apartment.

\*\* At one point, when the airmen asked for a little wine to relieve their monotonous diet, one TPLA member replied, "No, your minds must be clear in case you have to make an important decision." The hostages never learned what that decision might have been.

for being kept in cramped quarters. They suffered only from anxiety and constipation, the latter due to their diet, lack of physical activity, and lack of privacy.

Their kidnapers showed no personal animosity toward the Americans. They even went so far as to offer to send someone out to buy some playing cards to help them pass the time. To keep their minds occupied, the captives passed around the reading materials they had brought with them from work and devised a chess set out of paper and toothpicks. They sometimes mused for hours on various topics of interest, generally unrelated to their situation. For example, the legend of Noah, whose ark is reputed to have touched down on Mt. Ararat in eastern Turkey, served as the subject for one lengthy discussion.

At times, the kidnapers joined in the conversation. However, they were mainly interested in discussing political topics such as U.S. involvement in Viet Nam and racial problems in the United States. One hostage reported that he did not feel he was being indoctrinated, in spite of the political nature of the topics discussed.

Possibilities for escape seemed to dominate the private thinking and conversation of the hostages. At some points during the night only one guard was posted, a situation that tempted the airmen to try to overpower him before the other guards, sleeping in bedrooms adjoining the hallway, could come to his aid. There were differences of opinion among the airmen, however, on the question of trying to escape. They eventually decided that without a consensus, the risk of making an attempt to escape would be too great.

The only demands made of the hostages were the letters they were asked to write, addressed to the American embassy. The letters followed a similar pattern, as the airmen were told to include certain points. In each letter they requested that all necessary steps be taken to ensure their release; they were told not to mention the ransom issue. One letter read as follows: "We are being protected as political prisoners of the Turkish People's Liberation Army. We have been well treated up to the time I am writing. These people are asking that their demands be carried out. Let us say that we, too, want this. Our captors have warned us that if these demands are not granted, our



survival will be in question. We hope that the authorities will make a decision at once." The other messages were similar, except for one, which included the additional statement, "Never before has it occurred to me that my life would be ended at the barrel of a gun."\* The airmen were given only a short period of time to write the letters and could think of no way to insert clues to their whereabouts.

After writing the letters demanded by their captors, the Americans asked for permission to write additional letters to their families, which the Turks agreed to mail. These letters were written but were never mailed. During their search of the apartment after the departure of the kidnapers, the airmen found their letters, unposted.

The relationship between the kidnapers and the hostages gradually changed as time passed. After the initial acute fear for their lives abated somewhat and activities became routinized, the airmen exchanged views with their captors in what can only be called a friendly manner. They grew to respect each other as worthy opponents. At first, the airmen had offered all of their money and valuables in exchange for release, but the kidnapers rejected this offer, illustrating their disdain for the money by flashing a large quantity of their own currency. In spite of the ransom demands, the hostages did not regard their captors as common criminals concerned primarily with material gain.

During their captivity, the hostages deeply feared that the Turkish police would discover their location. They envisioned being caught in the middle of a gun battle between police and TPLA members. The GOT, they suspected, in its overwhelming desire to crush the terrorists, placed little if any value on the lives of hostages and would not even refrain from killing them to increase public outrage against the whole radical movement.

The intensity of the airmen's anxiety rose and fell with events throughout their captivity. As noted, their initial state of mind was one of profound fear for their lives. The first two days, March 4 and 5, passed in uncertainty for them; they were not told of the ongoing

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\* These are retranslations from the Turkish translations; the original English versions were unavailable.

communications between their captors and the GOT. The level of tension dropped somewhat as their lives became routinized and they became absorbed in evaluating their situation.

After the first two days, the hostages were given newspapers, including the *International Herald Tribune* and the local press, and were allowed to listen to radio broadcasts of related news stories. One of the first news items they heard was the report of President Nixon's March 4 announcement that the United States would rely on the Turkish government to handle the kidnapping. This information sent the airmen's spirits plummeting; they were not confident that the Turkish government would be concerned for their survival and felt abandoned by their country.

From newspaper articles, the airmen learned that \$400,000 ransom had been asked for their release. Their immediate reaction was great discouragement at the prospects for payment, mainly because of their low rank. Later, when the newspapers incorrectly reported that the ransom money had been brought to Turkey and was being held at the U.S. embassy, they began to believe that it might be paid after all, and their hopes for imminent release rose. However, these were dashed by subsequent reports that the earlier rumor had been denied by the American and Turkish governments. At that point, the airmen felt they were "down the drain."

The level of tension experienced by the Americans was also related to the nervousness displayed by their kidnapers, which rose and fell with events. The Turks appeared confident and in control once they had become established in their hiding place. However, they grew increasingly agitated after the expiration of the announced deadline and showed their anxieties and indecision in various ways. They took turns cleaning their weapons ostentatiously in front of the airmen, often pointing an unloaded pistol at their hostages and pulling the trigger. (One of them was so covered with bandoliers and grenades that the airmen nicknamed him the "walking arsenal.") The TPLA leader, Gezmiş, on two occasions deliberately showed the airmen his grenades. The brandishing of weapons thus served two purposes--to intimidate the hostages and to release the nervous tension felt by the kidnapers.

(This behavior brings to mind the brandishing of sharp teeth by rival baboons, which serves similar purposes.)

Throughout their captivity, the airmen noted that visitors came and went at various times. However, because the living room was located adjacent to the front door, they were unable to see who these people were. On only one occasion did a hostage get a clear view of a visitor, later identified as the daughter of a prominent Turkish politician, a former military officer who had participated in the coup of 1960 and was now serving in the Senate. It did not appear to the airmen that these visitors were bringing instructions to the kidnappers, although they could not be sure of this point.

After the deadline expired, the kidnappers began to discuss the possibility of attempting to get out of Ankara and escape, perhaps leaving the country. They spoke of these matters in Turkish, so the airmen could only partially understand the gist of their remarks. The hostages feared most that they would be taken to the Soviet Union, although their captors had expressed criticism of the USSR. It is more likely that the TPLA members contemplated taking the prisoners to their primary hiding place in the mountains of southeastern Turkey or perhaps across the border to Syria, where they retained some contacts with the Palestinian resistance movement. In fact, their eventual escape path headed in that direction.

The tension of the final days of captivity grew so acute that the Americans seriously considered risking their lives in an escape attempt, feeling that they would be shot in any case as the kidnappers grew more agitated and increasingly desperate. The television and radio interview of the pregnant wife of one of the hostages seemed to have turned the tide of public opinion against the kidnappers and added to the build-up of pressure. But before the hostages could act, the TPLA members gathered up most of their belongings and departed, leaving them free to escape. As the airmen's taxi proceeded away from the apartment, they encountered a number of Turkish police converging on the area. The Americans were relieved at passing unnoticed. The hostages concluded that their captors had notified the police of their whereabouts--an unlikely supposition, since the kidnappers too reported meeting police as they left.

After their escape, the airmen were debriefed at length by both American and Turkish officials. They were given a physical examination but no psychological or psychiatric counseling. A press conference was held, where they answered questions from local and foreign newsmen-- a task they did not relish. They also spoke with Ambassador Handley.

The ambassador explained the government's decision not to pay ransom in terms of its deterrent value. The airmen felt that the ambassador would have paid the ransom had it been his personal decision to make. They recognized that others might be kidnapped should the terrorists be encouraged by payment of the ransom, but as one said, "When you're in that closet, you don't really care what might happen to somebody else. All you care about is getting out in one piece yourself."

During the interlude before their return to the United States, the airmen stayed in barracks on the American base at Balgat. They later learned that someone had tried to cut the fence and enter the base grounds while they were sleeping there. This development served to prolong their already uneasy state of mind.

After the debriefings were over, the exhausted airmen were excused from duty in Turkey, given 30-day sick leave, and flown back to the United States. They felt they received a hero's welcome upon their return, including telegrams from Secretary of State William Rogers commending their behavior.

THE KIDNAPPING OF ISRAELI CONSUL-GENERAL EPHRAIM ELROM ON MAY 17, 1971

The second international incident, the abduction of the Israeli consul-general in Istanbul, is summarized below:

Date	Action
1:30 p.m. May 17, 1971	Israeli Consul-General to Turkey Ephraim Elrom kidnapped by five members of TPLF in Istanbul as he returned to his apartment for lunch.
5:00 p.m. May 17	TPLF ransom note delivered to TRT and the Turkish News Agency demanding release of all political prisoners by 5:00 p.m., May 20, and publicity for ideological manifesto; noncompliance would mean Elrom's death.

Date	Action
Late p.m. May 17	Deputy Prime Minister Koçaş broadcast message to terrorists: (1) no bargaining; (2) release Elrom immediately; (3) if anything happens to Elrom, Assembly will be asked to pass a law declaring death penalty for political kidnappers, applied retroactively. Message included report to public of terrorist's demands.
May 18	Elsa Elrom received letter from her husband confirming he was alive and in good health.
May 17-18	National Security Council met, MIT called in; GOT began rounding up over 400 leftist intellectuals, teachers, students for questioning.
May 19	TPLF members gathered for meeting, debated Elrom's fate; difference of opinion about whether to switch demands to ransom. Apparently no resolution of issue at this time. (Kidnappers said messenger was sent to Ankara to poll five members of TPLF general council there.)
5:00 p.m. May 20	Deadline passed without action. Elsa Elrom appealed for her husband's safe release.
Late p.m. May 20	Woman accomplice to Elrom kidnapping arrested, along with her fiancé, a Dev Genç member. They did not know where Elrom was, however,
May 21	Prime Minister Erim told Finnish television interviewer he knew Elrom was alive as of day before; GOT was doing all possible to find him. Absolutely no bargaining. Elsa Elrom repeated her appeal for his release.
May 21	Koçaş declared death penalty for kidnapping would not apply retroactively if Elrom's life was spared.
11:00 a.m. May 22	Martial Law Command announced house-to-house search of Istanbul province, and registration of population during total curfew to begin midnight and last until 3 p.m. May 23.
12:00 noon May 22	TPLF members gathered to decide what to do with Elrom.
4:00 p.m. May 22	Two members attempted to move Elrom under cover of hauling furniture; attempt aborted when others decided risk was too high. Official reports indicate vote was taken, deciding to kill Elrom. Lots drawn to see who would do it. Çayan selected. Others left the apartment.
About 6:30 p.m. May 22	Elrom shot three times by TPLF member, probably Çayan.

Date	Action
4:40 a.m. May 23	Security officials discovered Elrom's body during search.
May 27-28	Four key TPLF members arrested, including two of the kidnapers; Elrom's gun discovered in apartment. Turkish Workers' Party leaders arrested.
8:00 a.m. May 30	Two other kidnapers located, chased by police; took 14-year old daughter of Army major hostage in apartment and held her for 50 hours. Commandos surrounded building; kidnapers asked for safe passage out of country; request denied. Dialogue drawn out to tire the girl's captors.
11:40 a.m. June 1	Troops charged the apartment; killed one kidnapper, wounded the other. Hostage escaped unhurt.
August	Trials of 26 civilians, 83 military men opened in military courts. Charges based on violation of three articles of Turkish constitution.
September	Warrants issued for all 27 Dev Genç administrative council members.
November 29	Three TPLF leaders escaped from military prison in Istanbul along with two TPLA members.
February 1972	Two of three TPLF members who escaped in November captured; one killed, the other sentenced to die on March 16.
March 30	All but one TPLF high command member killed in gun battle with security forces after kidnapping of three NATO technicians.

Summary of Events \*

At about 12:15 p.m., on Monday, May 17, 1971, three young, well-dressed Turks met in front of an apartment building near Istanbul's busy Taksim Square. One of them brought a large bouquet of red and white carnations purchased on the way. While two allies stood watch outside, the three gained admission to the apartment building on the pretext of delivering flowers to an occupant. The youths drew revolvers, taking the doorman and his helper prisoner, and entered the first-floor apartment nearest the front door of the building. There

\* Many of the details in this section are taken from a very useful 10-part series appearing in the newspaper, *Cumhuriyet*, August 17-August 26, 1971. An effort has been made to corroborate important points from other sources.

they bound the doorman, his helper, the elderly widow who resided in the apartment, and her servants and waited for the arrival of Israeli Counsul-General Ephraim Elrom. Through preliminary observation, they had ascertained that Elrom was driven home for lunch every working day, according to an almost invariable schedule. Before Elrom arrived on this day, a dozen persons entered the building at various times and were taken into the apartment and similarly bound and gagged.

At 1:30 p.m., Elrom arrived at the apartment and entered the building with his chauffeur. The kidnapers greeted him just inside the door, weapons drawn. They spoke to him in English, telling him to come with them quietly. He resisted and received a blow to the back of the head with a revolver handle, which rendered him semiconscious. After changing his bloodied shirt and tie for clean ones, the kidnapers placed him in a large leather military bag, carried him out to a waiting automobile, and drove away. The car, stolen several days earlier in Ankara, was later abandoned.

The kidnapers took Elrom to an apartment rented some weeks before under an assumed name. (They had rented at least five such places, using forged identity papers.) Thereafter, he was asked to write a short letter to his wife assuring her of his good health. The letter was mailed from a distant post office and was received the following day. Copies of a note addressed to the "Pro-American" Turkish Council of Ministers, along with an ideological statement, were dropped near the TRT office building and the Turkish News Agency. The kidnapers then telephoned these offices and told of the whereabouts of the notes. Copies of the ideological declaration were also mailed from various post offices in the city to other news agencies, political party chairmen, and a number of intellectuals.

The note presented the following demands: All political prisoners, designated as "revolutionaries," were to be released; and the ideological declaration, entitled "Declaration #1: The Path of Revolution," was to be broadcast repeatedly for three consecutive days over Turkish state radio and television. The deadline for government action was 5:00 p.m., Thursday, May 20. If the demands were not met by then, the hostage

would be killed. The signature on the demand note read, the Central Committee of the Turkish People's Liberation Front (TPLF).\*

Deputy Prime Minister Koçaş read the government's reply over the radio three times during the evening of May 17. The suggestion that the government should negotiate with such impudent "punks" was regarded as insolent and was rejected out of hand. The government also issued a counterthreat: If the Israeli was not immediately released, all persons connected with the kidnapers' organization and all those considered to have incited them to this act would be arrested. Second, the government would prepare a draft law calling for the death penalty for political kidnapers and any persons caught harboring them or failing to reveal their whereabouts. If the Israeli's life were jeopardized, the law would be made retroactive to apply not only to those kidnapers but to those already in custody charged with other kidnappings.\*\*

The Istanbul Martial Law Commander issued a statement asking for public support in the search for the guerrillas. Roundups of known leftists began immediately, and over 400 persons, including teachers, students, journalists, and labor leaders, were soon taken into custody.

Israeli government officials supported the Turkish government's hard-line no-bargaining position from the outset. Soon after the news of Elrom's kidnapping reached Israel, Foreign Minister Eban issued a request for the GOT to find and free Elrom as soon as possible. As events developed, additional statements were issued, affirming Israeli confidence that the GOT was doing everything it could to achieve that goal. An Israeli diplomat with experience in Turkey was sent to confer with Turkish officials and arrived the morning of May 20. His exact contribution is unclear.

The same day, Mrs. Elrom issued an appeal to the kidnapers to release her husband. She asked for their compassion, referring to herself as a woman who had already lost her only son in an airplane accident and could not bear the further loss of her husband.\*\*\* On Friday,

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\* The origins of this group and their previous activities are described in Sec. I.

\*\* See Appendix B for the text of Koçaş' statement.

\*\*\* See Appendix B for the text of Mrs. Elrom's statement.



May 21, she repeated her appeal in an effort to break the silence from the kidnappers. No response was forthcoming.

Meanwhile, on May 19, the kidnappers and their cohorts gathered in one of the rented apartments to decide how to respond to the government's counterthreats and no-bargaining position. The group was unable to resolve differences of opinion over whether to execute Elrom or substitute a demand for ransom money instead of release of prisoners in exchange for his life. The 5:00 p.m. May 20 deadline passed without action by the kidnappers. GOT Justice Minister Ismail Arar discussed with the press the contents of the draft law being drawn up by the Council of Ministers requiring the death penalty for kidnapping and took the opportunity to appeal once again for Elrom's release.

Newspapers of Friday, May 21, reported a breakthrough in the case for the government: Two people connected with the TPLF had been arrested. Later, it was learned that one of these two was a woman accomplice who had assisted the TPLF in obtaining names and apartment and telephone numbers of those residing in Elrom's building. The captives did not know where the consul was being held. They may have known that he was still alive, for Turkish Prime Minister Erim announced to Finnish television personnel that the government knew Elrom had not been killed as of a late hour on May 20. In his interview, Erim also reconfirmed the GOT's no-bargaining position and, in response to a question, denied the existence of a Kurdish problem in Turkey.

Pressure on the kidnappers for some kind of resolution of Elrom's fate must have been building after the capture of two of their accomplices. On the morning of Saturday, May 22, some of them gathered at the apartment of a couple associated with the TPLF, the man an Air Force lieutenant, to discuss the situation. At about noon, they heard on their police wireless an announcement of an impending curfew issued by the First Army and Martial Law Command in Istanbul. A registration of residents was to be undertaken that day, to be completed by 11:00 p.m. At midnight a full curfew was to go into effect for the following 15 hours, until 3:00 p.m. Sunday, May 23. All roads in and out of Istanbul province would be blockaded; incoming foreign air passengers would be bussed to hotels. Over 25,000 troops were to conduct a house-to-house search of the sprawling metropolitan area of over 2 million people.

Returning to the apartment where Elrom was being held, the TPLF members gathered together to decide what to do about this new development. According to official reports, the three TPLF General Council members, Mahir Çayan, Hüseyin Cevahir, and Ulaş Bardakçi, were the most influential members of the group.

Some members thought that Elrom should be transferred to the apartment of Air Force Lieutenant Saffet Alp, a collaborator of the group, in another part of the city. Alp and his wife would provide a respectable cover and might be able to pass the search. Those favoring this approach obtained a military truck on the pretext of transporting some furniture which was purchased for that purpose, and drove the vehicle to the apartment building. While one member waited with the truck--somewhat nervously, as traffic policemen were patrolling the area and parking time was limited--the other went in to confer with those inside. The time was about 4:00 p.m. Preparations for the curfew were well under way.

The group inside continued to debate and argue about the safety of the move in light of the tight security prevailing and the shortage of time. Finally, a traffic officer asked the truck driver waiting outside to move on, and he drove away. The transfer plan was never executed.

Meanwhile, the TPLF members could postpone their decision no longer. Some suggested they remain with Elrom in the apartment and barricade themselves in, to deal with the authorities at the time they were discovered. When a vote was finally taken, it favored Elrom's death. A coin was flipped to see who would carry out the execution; the lot fell to Mahir Çayan. After the others left for their various locations, at about 6:35 p.m., Çayan turned on the radio as a cover and fired three shots into Elrom's temple. The Israeli's hands were tied behind his back.\* Security officials discovered Elrom's body at 4:40 a.m. on Sunday, May 23, in the course of their house-to-house search.

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\* This version of the killing was reported in *Cumhuriyet*, August 24, 1971, and in *Beyaz Kitap*. At his trial, Çayan claimed that Air Force Captain Ilyas Aydin was the murderer, that he himself disagreed with the vote and refused to take part. His story has little evidence to support it.

The news of Elrom's death evoked outrage and indignation from all quarters of Turkish society. Elrom has been a foreign guest, from a country with which Turkey had quite good political and commercial relations. Moreover, the diplomatic corps had traditionally been considered sacrosanct from domestic quarrels. A government announcement referred to the murderers as "hoodlums who have no relationship to humanity." Steps were taken to publicize widely the pictures and identities of the suspects, including the distribution of "wanted" posters in public places. One spokesman said, "The terrorists are being hunted mercilessly; they showed no mercy."\*

On May 27, one of the wanted posters enabled a security official to identify Ilkay Demir, whose husband had been one of Elrom's kidnapers, near a post office in Istanbul. He followed her back to the apartment where she, her husband, and another TPLF member were captured. They apparently told police of the other apartments secured as hide-outs, and the next day these were raided by police. Ulaş Bardakçı and one other member were arrested in one location, and Ziya Yilmaz was taken at another. The Istanbul Martial Law Command sent TL 50,000 in reward money to be divided up among the officers who captured the Demirs. A fund was established at the Central State Bank for such rewards, and officers and citizens who played a role in the capture of Dev Genç suspects in other parts of the country were rewarded similarly.

Çayan and Cevahir, having narrowly escaped capture on May 28, managed to establish themselves in an Istanbul apartment belonging to a Dev Genç member then in Ankara. On May 30, on a neighbor's report of suspicious activity, police officials came to question the two, who managed to escape, with the police in hot pursuit. In their flight, the two men entered a second-floor apartment unit belonging to a military officer and forced the man's wife and son to leave the place, retaining his 14-year-old daughter as hostage. Çayan and Cevahir remained barricaded in the apartment for nearly 50 hours, while a special armored unit and sharpshooting commando team surrounded the building and tried to persuade them to give up. During one such exchange, Çayan

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\* *Cumhuriyet*, May 26, 1971.

refused to surrender, declaring, "A real man never gives up his arms." Çayan's mother and Cevahir's uncle were brought in and begged them to turn themselves in. After a fruitless exchange of words, Çayan and Cevahir told the two relatives to leave. Meanwhile, stealthy efforts were made to move soldiers in bulletproof vests closer to the apartment, while sharpshooters found favorable positions on the balconies of adjacent buildings.

The guerrillas demanded safe passage to Palestine [sic] and valid passports in return for the girl's life. Rejecting all demands, the officer in charge continued to demand their surrender. Çayan and Cevahir insisted they would die fighting and take the girl with them. But they were tiring and tense. The girl later testified that Cevahir had wanted to give up, but Çayan refused to agree, and relations between the two became quite strained. Finally, at 11:40 a.m. on June 1, a sharpshooter took aim at Cevahir through a nylon-curtained window and shot him. That was the signal for the assault; the whole affair was over in two minutes, according to reports. Çayan was found wounded, Cevahir had been riddled with 23 bullets, and the girl was unharmed, although badly shaken. (One newspaper report suggested that Çayan, seeing he had no chance, had taken the gun of the girl's father and shot himself in the arm to avoid being killed by the onrushing soldiers. This kind of story, however, sounds much like a government plant to discredit Çayan in the public eye. His wounds were quite serious.) Military authorities had all they could do to prevent the crowd that had gathered from lynching the surviving kidnapper.

Security continued to be very tight during the following weeks. Bodyguards were supplied for European and U.S. diplomats. There was a pervasive concern that yet another kidnapping would be attempted, especially now that the terrorists had made good their threat to murder the hostage. It was learned that the original target of the TPLF had been James Spain, the U.S. consul-general in Istanbul. When TPLF observers erroneously concluded that Spain resided in the American consulate (because his official car returned there each night), they decided that taking him would be too dangerous. Elrom was then selected as a secondary target because he was regarded as "an agent of U.S. imperialism in the Middle East."

Public cooperation improved considerably after Elrom's death. The kidnapping of the 14-year-old girl eroded what residual sympathy might have remained for the TPLF activists and their accomplices.

Trials for 26 civilians and 83 members of the armed forces opened in mid-August in martial law courts. (The trials for military men were held separately and received less publicity.) Charges as read by the military prosecutor involved violations of three articles of the Turkish constitution which prohibited organizing groups with the goal of destroying the existing state, making propaganda in support of that goal, and carrying out violent acts to achieve that goal. Along with the charges, the prosecutor's brief included a lengthy indictment of the Demirel government which had fallen on March 12. The death penalty was demanded for many of the accused.

The trials dragged on for months. Meanwhile, the search for suspects continued. In September, warrants were issued for the arrest of all 27 members of the Dev Genç Administrative Council.

On November 29, three TPLF leaders--Çayan, Bardakçi, and Yilmaz--escaped from the military prison in Istanbul, along with two members of the group responsible for the airmen kidnapping who were also being held there. The press reported at the time that they had tunneled out of the prison under the cover of an inmate riot. However, that story was later declared to be a fabrication; a number of prison guards were punished for aiding in the escape by not taking roll call of the prisoners for 36 hours and by procuring a vehicle for the getaway.

Two months after their escape, Bardakçi and Yilmaz were captured in Istanbul, and Bardakçi was killed in the exchange of fire. Yilmaz was convicted of violating the constitution and sentenced to be hanged on March 16, 1972. (As far as is known, the sentence was not carried out.)

Çayan and the TPLA members went to Ankara after their escape, where the TPLA had stores of weapons and Çayan had many Dev Genç contacts; there they concocted another kidnapping plan to obtain the release of their comrades who had been sentenced to death. This operation, the kidnapping of three NATO technicians in late March 1972, is described in detail below.

### Evolution of Policy in the Local Government

A number of factors made the GOT response to the Elrom kidnapping quite different from that in the earlier kidnapping of the airmen. First, the cabinet at the time of the Elrom incident was nonpartisan and had the support of the military. Second, the government was more experienced in dealing with the terrorist challenge and had learned valuable lessons from the airmen incident.

Because the Erim cabinet had the confidence of the military, and of many progressive intellectuals as well, it was able to function without the dire sense that any wrong move might mean its downfall. The left-right polarization that permeated the political climate while Demirel was in power--with the leftists outside of the power structure attacking the rightists in power--was muted to some extent after the centrist government took office. With the military and other segments of the traditional elite supporting the government, the leftist activists became isolated, and their activities were considered illegitimate by increasing numbers of people. Erim was free to act decisively and openly.

The immediate concern of the GOT was to identify the terrorists. One obvious guess was that Palestinians had chosen a Turkish setting for another operation against Israel. The TPLF declaration tended to discredit that hypothesis, however, and authorities soon became convinced that the kidnapers were Turks.

The first response of the Erim cabinet was to condemn the terrorists loudly and clearly, perhaps to compensate for the government's silence during the airmen episode. Beginning the day of the kidnapping and continuing daily thereafter, newspapers, radio, and television carried statements by government spokesmen condemning the kidnapping, rejecting the terrorist demands categorically, and promising dire punishment for the perpetrators if the hostage was not released unharmed.

One novel stratagem introduced into the GOT response to the Elrom kidnapping came in the form of counterdemands aimed at the terrorists immediately after their own demands had been received. In issuing its counterdemands, the government threw the burden of responsibility for action back upon the kidnapers in hopes of disrupting their plans. This response appears to have caught the TPLF unprepared.

Officials repeatedly pledged not to make the death penalty for kidnapping retroactive if Elrom's life was spared, offering an incentive to the kidnapers to release their hostage alive.

In some ways, the GOT response under Erim did resemble the Demirel cabinet's response; in both cases, for example, an all-out effort was launched to track down and round up suspects who might lead to the kidnapers and the hostage. This time, however, the military became more actively involved in the process, through participation in the National Security Council and the Martial Law Commands. Two operations in particular required the specialized qualifications of the military: the curfew and search and the barricade and hostage situation involving the 14-year-old girl.

Bringing about a full curfew of the populous province of Istanbul was an expensive and complicated step for the government but one with great payoff potential if done effectively. Such a move also required a high level of public cooperation and extensive manpower resources, the former enhanced by the prestige of the military, and the latter satisfied by its available troops. Twenty-five thousand men were utilized. Although triggered by the specific incident at hand, the Elrom kidnapping, the registration of all population served a number of wider goals: it located some suspected leftist activists and their supporters (photos and names were provided the searchers); it revealed the locations of weapons stores; it offered a show of state force that might discourage further disruptive acts. It did succeed in forcing the kidnapers to action--which was fatal for the hostage--but the most important terrorists were not discovered, as they had protected themselves with disguises and false identity papers. As a deterrent to further kidnappings, it failed.

During the barricade and hostage episode involving the young girl, a specially equipped and trained military commando team was utilized with much effectiveness, in tandem with the Army's Second Armored Brigade. The besieging forces patiently tired out the barricaded kidnapers, using bull-horns and spotlights to keep them awake. Ultimately, a Navy sharpshooter was able to bring one of the kidnapers down, while others waiting outside the apartment rushed in through the windows.

All in all, the commandos had functioned quite effectively and with restraint.

The authorities also stepped up efforts to infiltrate the radical student movement, and these efforts appear to have achieved some success. The fact that Dev Genç had operated legally and the identities of many of its members were known facilitated this process and also helped the government to identify likely suspects for questioning.

In contrast to the behavior of Demirel's government, the new cabinet took steps to publicize the names and faces of suspects in the case. Soon after the kidnapping, a booklet was distributed to police and other security officials containing the photographs and names of 50 people thought to be kidnapers or their associates. Moreover, wanted posters showing 9 key individuals, including some of Elrom's kidnapers, were widely displayed in public places and contributed to the arrest of key TPLF members.

There is no reason to believe that the GOT's announced policy of not bargaining with the kidnapers on any level was a posture, although it was more flexible than Demirel's earlier stand. Government officials under Erim took steps to communicate with the terrorists, at least indirectly. Some of the published appeals were stated in a highly personal manner, directed at the consciences of the individual kidnapers. Moreover, perhaps because of the reported effectiveness of the appeal made by the wife of one of the airmen, Mrs. Elrom's pleas for her husband's safe release were given wide publicity. It was hoped that the kidnapers would respond to these appeals by releasing their hostage and claiming the humanity inherent in the act in order to save face. They were being offered an escape hatch.

Unfortunately, we do not have first-hand information that would provide insight into the processes of deliberation that went on inside the Turkish government circles. Thus we do not know the range of options considered for dealing with the terrorists or the divisions of opinion. There is a suggestion that the possibility of offering ransom in exchange for Elrom's release was considered at one time and may have even been mentioned publicly early in the case.

In its dilemma of choosing between acceding to the kidnapers' demands, which could have been easily accomplished, and refusing to



comply with them in order to deter future kidnappings, the Turkish government clearly took the latter stand. Its position was hardened by the consideration that a bargaining process might imply some degree of equal status between kidnappers and government, an unthinkable situation.

There is some evidence to indicate that the Elrom case marked a turning point in the attitude of many members of the Turkish government and the public toward the young terrorists. Before Elrom's murder, it appears that the threat to the hostage's life may not have been taken very seriously. Leftist activists had not killed any hostages up to this time, and an unspoken assumption seemed to exist that no idealistic Turkish youth would stoop so low or bring such dishonor on his country as to murder a foreign diplomat.

This attitude is well reflected in a statement made by Deputy Prime Minister Sadi Koçaş during a press conference on May 20. Koçaş was asked, "You have said there would be no negotiations of any kind with the kidnappers of Consul-General Elrom. Aren't you concerned about Elrom being killed?" He replied, "We have no such fear, because we know that the kidnappers were Turks. In all our history there has never been a single Turk or group of Turks who would fall into such error, who would descend to the amorality and shame of killing a defenseless foreign diplomat who is under the protection of the laws of the state, our legal traditions, and of Turkish honor demonstrated throughout history. According to our traditions, the kidnapping of such a person for ransom weighs heavily on public opinion. I hope that by now the kidnappers have learned of the [negative] sentiment of public opinion and will adjust their position accordingly."\*

A different emphasis was revealed the next day when Prime Minister Erim declared, "Yes, we, too, are concerned for Elrom's life. . . . After our investigations, we conclude that the terrorist organizations in Turkey are being sustained by foreign groups. These acts are not the acts of innocent youth. They are directed at overturning by violent means the democratic regime provided for in the Constitution. And they are being directed by *professionals who are supported from outside.*"\*\*

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\* *Cumhuriyet*, May 21, 1971.

\*\* *Ibid.*, May 22, 1971.

References to "foreign groups" appeared frequently in official statements during these events. "Our neighbor(s) to the south" were also referred to often. Because of the training given by some Palestinian groups in Syria to members of Dev Genç and the TPLA, and because of the nationality of the hostage, the Turkish government seemed to consider the Palestinians and Syria to be contributing factors in the Turkish terrorist problem. Another logical point of reference might have been Iraq, whose large Kurdish minority was then struggling for autonomy. The GOT may have feared the influence of Iraqi Kurds on Kurdish citizens across the border in Turkey. Moreover, Soviet influence in Iraq and Syria could have suggested to the GOT that communist propaganda was reaching Turkish youth through these two conduits. Turkish leaders saw the radicals as youth led astray.

Government tactics utilized in the days just after Elrom's kidnapping also suggest that at least some in the GOT still had faith in the essential honor of the kidnapers as Turks. The offering of escape hatches, such as the appeal of Elrom's wife, is one example. An almost paternalistic tone characterized many official statements, as well as those of well-known political leaders not in the government who spoke out about the kidnapping.

Of course, some groups in the government judged the leftist youth more harshly and regarded them as lower than common criminals. Statements that came out of the government after Elrom's murder, and especially after the hostage episode with the girl, substantiate the view that the wayward innocence of young terrorists no longer merited credibility.

Whatever differences may have existed initially within the government about the reasons behind the terrorist acts, all segments of the GOT seemed united on two basic assumptions which guided operations: (1) that the young radicals had escalated their activities to kidnapping because of the Demirel regime's lack of firmness in dealing with lesser crimes from the inception of the movement's activist phase (around 1970); and (2) that a hard-line position with no bargaining would discourage further kidnappings. On May 21, Prime Minister Erim declared, "We have not and will not bargain with these terrorists.

Compromising with blackmail and threats cannot bring a desirable result."

After the Elrom episode, Turkish authorities expressed satisfaction in the government's unity and firmness and in having frustrated the kidnappers' demands. A large number of students and intellectuals involved in the leftist movement had been rounded up and questioned, and at least one agent had been planted among those remaining at large. Within a short time after Elrom's death, all the primary actors in the kidnapping had been apprehended or shot resisting arrest. While GOT officials were regretful at losing the hostage, the operation and the policy were regarded as successful.

#### Evolution of Policy in the Hostage's Government

The Israeli government demonstrated its profound interest in the Elrom case from the outset through statements issued by Foreign Minister Abba Eban, as well as in the sending of a personal emissary, a former chargé d'affaires in Turkey, Moshe Sasson. On at least two occasions, Eban expressed the confidence of his government in the GOT's willingness to do everything possible to secure Elrom's safe release.

Israeli policy toward political kidnappings had evolved through long experience and was well known. It very much coincided with the GOT position of engaging in no real negotiations, refusing exchange of ransom, and offering severe punishment for the kidnappers. At all times, the Israeli government acted supportively of the GOT's policy. However, recognizing that the kidnapping had been planned and carried off in a highly sophisticated manner, Israeli officials may have wondered if the Turkish government would be able to deal effectively with the TPLF challenge. Perhaps Sasson was dispatched for this reason. Unfortunately, no information is available on Sasson's activities while in Turkey. He refused to discuss his mission with the press.

When word of Elrom's death reached Israel, its government and people mourned their loss deeply. A special funeral was held with state honors, at which the Turkish government was well represented. The Israeli government and public continued to stand by the no-bargaining policy, however, and thus seemed to regard Elrom much as a warrior lost in a battle

that had been won. A message was sent to the GOT acknowledging its efforts to rescue Elrom.

### The Media

As in the airmen case, the newspapers and TRT depended very much on the information the government released to them for their news reporting. Deputy Prime Minister Koçuş provided several detailed briefings on developments for press and public. But conflicting and sometimes inaccurate reports did appear in spite of the close government control of news released. For example, newspaper issues on May 18 carried an article declaring that the names of the kidnappers were well known by the government, and several individuals were listed who in fact had not been involved with the TPLF. Later lists of suspects proved more accurate.

It is also useful to note what information did *not* appear in the newspapers during the Elrom episode. The TPLF declaration, "The Path of Revolution," was not printed in the daily newspaper reference relied upon for this study, nor were the demands themselves given in their entirety.\* The kidnappers had provided for this eventuality by mailing copies out to a number of people. Details of the investigation, capture, and questioning of suspects appeared in print only months later, largely through reporting of testimony at the trials.

The government did not prevent release of a story stating that on May 22, Prime Minister Erim sent a letter to provincial governors cautioning against an overzealous effort to round up suspected leftist conspirators. He ordered that innocent people not be disturbed and that efforts be confined to apprehending "militants guilty of illegal acts." Perhaps this news was aired to quiet criticism based on reports from various provinces that the government was acting indiscriminately in carrying out directives to track down terrorists and their supporters.

All things considered, the GOT utilized the press rather effectively in generating and sustaining support for itself and opposition to the radical activist movement, a sharp contrast to the almost total

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\* Whether other newspapers may have printed them is not known.

nonutilization of the media by the government during the airmen case. The kidnapers, on the other hand, failed completely to sustain and direct the media attention that they had seized so dramatically.

#### The Hostage and the Kidnappers

Fifty-eight-year-old Ephraim Elrom was selected as a target by the TPLF in lieu of an American diplomat whose capture was considered too dangerous. TPLF leader Çayan declared that his group chose Elrom because he was "a representative of Zionism."\* Another TPLF member termed Elrom "an agent of American imperialism in the Middle East."\*\* There is no evidence to indicate that Israel was the true target of the kidnapping act as the United States had been in the airmen incident. The selection of Elrom simply allowed the group to express symbolic solidarity with the Arab cause with which some of them had had contacts. The kidnapping was addressed to the Turkish government.

There are aspects of Elrom's background and habits, however, that the TPLF may have been ignorant of beforehand, which made him an unusual choice. First, his experience in what might be considered terrorist activities for Israel; second, his surprisingly regular daily behavior pattern.

According to Turkish newspapers, Elrom had headed the secret Israeli police organization responsible for kidnapping Adolph Eichmann in Argentina and spiriting him back to Israel for trial and conviction. A colonel in the political police, with guerrilla experience in the struggle for Palestine, he had announced his retirement in 1968 due to a personal tragedy (his only son had died accidentally in an airplane crash) and entered the diplomatic corps. Elrom had served as consul-general in Istanbul for 19 months before being kidnapped.

For a man with his experience and his awareness that all Israeli diplomats abroad are potential targets, it is surprising that Elrom was perhaps the most punctual and regular of all diplomats in the corps, perhaps the most predictable in his daily movements. According to reports, he invariably returned to his apartment each day at the same time

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\* *Cumhuriyet*, August 24, 1971.

\*\* *Ibid.*, August 17, 1971.

for lunch. TPLF members reconnoitered the Elrom schedule and residence carefully before acting. Their target's predictability made him an especially easy mark.

Moreover, it is reported that when consular members were offered additional Turkish protection after the airmen incident, Elrom had refused a bodyguard. He was accompanied only by a driver.

Mitigating against a higher degree of awareness or alertness to danger on Elrom's part was the atmosphere of generally friendly relations between Turkey and Israel. No previous acts of terrorism had been committed against Israeli citizens in Turkey, and the young radicals seemed very much preoccupied with NATO and the United States as their primary enemies.

The experience and analysis of one so knowledgeable about terrorist-type operations would have provided an invaluable source of data on the behavior of terrorists under pressure. Because of his death, of course, there is no information on the conditions of his captivity or on his perceptions and reactions. We can assume he was regarded as a resourceful captive, probably tied and under guard at all times. There is no evidence of attempts to escape. One TPLF member testified that on the first day of his captivity, Elrom asked for medical aid for his head wound. The oldest member of the group, 33-year old Ziya Yilmaz, reportedly disguised himself as a doctor, brought a medical kit, and attended to the hostage's wound. If this story is true, it supports the contention that the TPLF did not intend to kill the hostage at first. Otherwise, the ruse would have been superfluous.

As for Elrom's kidnappers, they regarded him as a pawn in their struggle to mobilize the masses in a People's War.\* In creating public disorder and disruption, they hoped to activate the revolutionary forces in society which they believed were ready to explode; at best, the government might be toppled.

The intensity with which these ideological beliefs were held is illustrated by an incident that occurred while Çayan and Cevahir were barricaded with the 14-year-old girl. After the two men had established

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\* See Sec. I for a more detailed discussion of TPLF ideology.

themselves in the girl's apartment, with police beginning to surround them and a crowd of people gathering to watch, they were heard to shout from the window, "Long live the People's War! Long live the TPLF!," as if expecting the onlookers to rush to their aid in revolutionary brotherliness. Later, these same onlookers had to be restrained from lynching Çayan.

Secondary objectives of the kidnapers included creating widespread publicity for their organization and its ideology, showcasing their organizational capabilities, and gaining the release of their jailed cohorts. Desire for money does not seem to have been a motivating factor, although they did at one time consider asking for ransom instead of prisoner release when it appeared that the latter would be impossible. The group probably regarded its success at bringing off the operation smoothly as a victory of sorts. Certainly, they seemed to have given little thought to what to do once they had the hostage in hand, in contrast to the carefully thought-out preparations for taking him. An examination of the decision points faced by the group reveals this striking lack of attention to contingency planning.

Once the carefully laid plan for taking the Israeli hostage had been carried out, two situations arose requiring a decision on future action: (1) How should the group respond to government counterthreats to arrest known members of the radical movement and make political kidnapping a capital crime?, and (2) What action should be taken in response to the declared curfew and search?

According to Çayan's testimony in court on August 23, 1971, the TPLF Istanbul activists met on May 19, two days after Elrom's kidnapping, to decide on further action in light of the government's rejection of their demands and issuance of counterdemands.\* (Leaving a guard with Elrom, they were able to move freely around the city with the aid of their forged identity papers. Çayan's involved story has it that word

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\* Çayan testified that the alternative of accepting ransom was considered and voted on, he said, favorably. However, a final disposition of the issue required the approval of the TPLF General Council members in Ankara, so an acquaintance who was not in the inner TPLF circle was sent to Ankara with a request for a reply; he was told he was carrying an ideological tract for publication in *Kurtuluş*.

came from the TPLF General Council in Ankara on May 21 that its members had voted for Elrom's execution and ordered it to be carried out. According to the government, this entire account was dreamed up by Çayan in prison and was passed along to Bardakçi as well so that his testimony could corroborate Çayan's.) The alternative of accepting ransom instead of release of prisoners was considered at this time, but the group was unable to resolve its dilemma and reach a consensus. Apparently the only decision that could be reached was to do nothing.

The second major decision point occurred on May 22, when the impending curfew and search operation created acute pressure for action. Newspaper reports indicate that Mahir Çayan, Lieutenant Saffet Alp, Hüseyin Cevahir, Oktay Etiman, Captain Ilyas Aydin, Hudai Arikan, and Ulaş Bardakçi (the Demirs and Yilmaz were also consulted) met at the apartment where Elrom was being held, to discuss their options as they saw them: (1) abandon Elrom and flee; (2) move Elrom to another location; (3) make a stand together and hope to pass the search; (4) execute Elrom.\* Option 1 was ruled out as unacceptable. Some of the group attempted to put option 2 into action but were discouraged by the presence of security police patrolling in the area.

The Demirs and Yilmaz suggested option 3, that the entire group should gather at the apartment building where Elrom was held and await the search together, to stand and fight if discovered. That suggestion was rejected.

Once more, the group seemed unable to reach a consensus and some members simply left, tired of the endless debate.\*\* Newspaper accounts indicate that only the Demirs and Yilmaz were not there for the vote; the others jointly arrived at the decision to execute Elrom and seek safety in the assumed identifications and rented hideaways secured in advance.

When faced with challenges by the government, then, the TPLF members seemed not to have thought in advance of various tactics they

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\* *Cumhuriyet*, August 24, 1971.

\*\* Çayan again testified that he was among those who left, saying he would abide by the final decision reached by his colleagues. He claimed Cevahir told him Captain Aydin had actually killed Elrom. Again, this appears to be a self-serving fabrication.



might use to exploit the kidnapping for their own purposes, nor did they think creatively or flexibly of alternative courses of action under the pressure of the moment. They had considered every detail of the kidnapping but the bargaining process itself.\*

The failure of the Elrom kidnapping to generate any revolutionary response in the public may have disillusioned at least some radicals. A note written by Mahir Çayan to his uncle when in prison was intercepted by authorities and read aloud in open court during the trial. Relevant passages read as follows: "How are those on the outside? . . . How are our friends? I haven't revealed anything about that subject. If it is being thought of, if they are organizing to kidnap someone (of course, if they are in a position to be able to do that), let them absolutely not count on public opinion. And let them negotiate secretly. Rather than ask for our release, let them ask that we not be given the death penalty. . . . If they are not strong enough to carry out this task, they shouldn't try it. The important thing is that the TPLP and TPLF survive."\*\* A later passage reads, "Most of those they have arrested are not ours, anyway. They are people of the second level. The majority are still outside. They also have money. (A day before being taken, I sent it.)"\*\*\*

In light of Çayan's opportunistic mind, it is tempting to conclude that this letter was planted for the government to find in order to sustain the level of alarm and make the group appear much larger than it actually was. However, the messenger bearing it was killed, and this, together with the specific references to money, suggests that the letter was probably a valid communication.

The failure of public opinion to support its cause during the Elrom episode may have disillusioned the TPLF about the immediate revolutionary readiness of the masses, but it did not seem to discourage future activities. The radicals only became more embattled. Balancing their failure to gain widespread publicity for their ideology and the

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\* See Sec. III for a more thorough evaluation of this issue.

\*\* *Cumhuriyet*, August 24, 1971.

\*\*\* Çayan had left some money with the ex-wife of a Dev Genç leader who had led them to a hiding place after Elrom's death.

highly negative image they acquired from executing the hostage were certain successes: They had put on a good show, demonstrated a high degree of organization and sophistication, and gained considerable grudging respect from officials; they had provoked a drastic measure from authorities--the search and curfew operation--which was costly and disruptive and indicated a government acknowledgment of the seriousness of the TPLF threat.

THE KIDNAPPING OF THREE NATO TECHNICIANS ON MARCH 26, 1972

The third major incident, the kidnapping of three foreign civilians working at a NATO base, is summarized as follows:

Date	Action
Evening March 26, 1972	Five armed terrorists took hostage three NATO technicians--two British, one Canadian--from their quarters near a Black Sea radar base; drove 60 miles south to a mountain village hideout where five others were waiting.
March 28	Turkish court ordered postponement of three TPLA members' execution.
5:30 a.m. March 30	Negotiations began in the village between Turkish Minister of Interior and kidnappers. Government demanded unconditional surrender. Terrorists wanted release of three TPLA members, passage out of the country; group included key surviving members of Elrom's kidnappers.
2:00 p.m. March 30	Terrorists began shooting at troops surrounding them, threw grenades.
4:10 p.m. March 30	Government forces heard explosion inside of house; charged and found all dead inside; the three technicians appeared to have been shot earlier.
March 31	One kidnapper, former President of Dev Genç, found alive in barn. Dev Genç set off bombs in Istanbul, in retaliation for deaths of TPLF leaders.

Summary of Events

Sometime early in 1972, members of the TPLA and the TPLF, some of whom had escaped from prison together, formulated a plan to obtain the release of three TPLA members awaiting execution for the kidnapping of the four American airmen and once again challenged the government with

further disruption. They first considered taking hostage a diplomat from a Common Market country, then thought about taking a prominent Turkish political leader. Both ideas were discarded because of the exceedingly tight security precautions in effect in the capital, Ankara.

The TPLA's Istanbul cell leader, Cihan Alptekin, reportedly suggested that the group occupy the embassy of a Western European nation. This idea also was rejected as too dangerous. Finally, a member from the Black Sea area, a schoolteacher who had been discharged for his leftist views, proposed the kidnapping of some foreign technicians who worked at a NATO installation at Çarşamba, near the town of Ünye on the Black Sea coast. There, security precautions would be less stringent and the expectation of a kidnapping would be low. Moreover, a number of leftist sympathizers were known to reside in the area. This plan was chosen.

The TPLF's Mahir Çayan, together with Alptekin, provided the leadership and planning for this operation. Most of their henchmen were from the TPLF. The same careful, thorough approach was followed in planning this operation as in the planning of the Elrom kidnapping the year before. Several men reconnoitered the BOQ where the technicians were housed; others arranged for a hiding place.

In Ünye, the guerrillas found a cordial welcome from a group of leftist professionals, teachers and lawyers, who formed the nucleus of a Turkish Workers' Party branch. TPLF activist Ziya Yilmaz had come from this region, and one of his relatives joined the group for this operation. According to some press reports, local supporters entertained the kidnapers at an ostentatious dinner at an outdoor restaurant the night before the kidnapping.

The evening of March 26, as eight NATO technicians were finishing dinner in their BOQ, five Turkish youths armed with submachine guns broke into the apartment. The intruders reportedly asked which three of the eight were "the toughest." Two Britishers, Gordon Banner and Charles Turner, and one Canadian, John Law, were taken; the other five were bound and left behind. These men were not discovered until the following morning, giving the kidnapers a 10-hour head start over the authorities who set out in pursuit.

There is some confusion as to whether a ransom note demanding the release of the three convicted TPLA members was left behind with the bound technicians. The Turkish press reported that such a note existed, and a respected political leader mentioned a note in a public statement. Other sources indicate that no note was found in Ünye.

The hostages were driven south over winding mountain roads for 60 miles to Kizildere, a mountain village of about 100 houses, where five more terrorists awaited them in the house of the village headman. Meanwhile, the entire country expressed shock and revulsion at this latest incident of kidnapping for political ends. Prime Minister Erim declared, "These are the final convulsions of the street bandits, for they are being caught, one by one."\*

Opposition party leader Ismet İnönü declared it the national duty of all citizens to help track down the kidnapers and save the hostages' lives, to salvage the honor of the nation. The execution of the condemned TPLA members was postponed while the Constitutional Court heard their appeal on the legality of the charges.

The government launched a massive search operation, utilizing helicopters in the hilly terrain. Several days passed, however, before the kidnapers were tracked to their hiding place and surrounded by a battalion of government commandos. At 5:30 the morning of March 30, communications opened between Interior Minister Ferit Kubat, representing the government, and the kidnapers. Kubat demanded that the kidnapers give themselves up and release the hostages, promising only to take them safely into custody. The terrorists first demanded that the three TPLA leaders awaiting execution be freed; when they got no response to that demand, they asked for safe passage to the Syrian border in exchange for releasing the hostages. Kubat remained adamant.

As heated exchanges continued, journalists and photographers, both local and foreign, began to gather at the site. At one point, one of the kidnapers' accomplices, a lawyer from Ünye who had been captured by the government, was brought to the scene, where he advised them to surrender. His arguments made no visible impression.

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\* *New York Times*, March 29, 1972.

For their part, the kidnapers brought one of the captive technicians to the window, where he told those outside that his captors could not be reasoned with; they would make good their threat to kill him and the other hostages. His statement brought no change in the government's position.

At approximately 2:00 p.m., according to government accounts, the terrorists opened fire at the troops and began throwing hand grenades. During periods of inactivity, they were heard shouting abuses at the security forces. According to Kubat, they declared that they had come to die, not to surrender. "We then realized that the kidnapers had lost all hope, and that they would murder the foreign technicians," he asserted.\*

Finally, at about 4:10 p.m., security forces reported hearing an explosion from inside the house. Assuming that the hostages were probably dead already, they rushed the house, throwing tear-gas canisters ahead of them. Many shots were exchanged; the house was riddled with bullets.

Upon taking the house, the authorities found that everyone inside had perished, including the three hostages, who were reportedly tied hand and foot and had been shot at close range. The nine dead kidnapers were Mahir Çayan, Ahmet Atasoy, Ertan Saruhan, Lieutenant Saffet Alp, Kâzım Özüdogru, Selahattin H. Kurt, Nihat Yılmaz, all of the TPLF, and Cihan Alptekin and Ömer Ayna of the TPLA. The following day, former Dev Genç President and TPLF leader Ertuğrul Kürkçü was found hiding in the barn in a haypile, the only survivor of the fire fight.\*\*

The following note was found at the scene of the bloody confrontation:

Traitors! Pro-American dogs! People die sooner or later. The worst way to die is in shame with one's back

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\* *New York Times*, April 1, 1972.

\*\* It has been speculated that this man was in fact an agent provocateur, coopted at some point into serving the government's ends by funneling information on the group's plans. He was not sentenced to death, as might have been expected in view of his participation in the Elrom kidnapping and in light of the public outcry at the technicians' deaths. Kürkçü apparently remains in jail.

turned toward the enemy. We died proudly by fighting to our last breath for our people.

These English agents were from NATO forces occupying our country. As the revolutionaries of a country under occupation, it is our most fundamental right and debt of honor to kill these agents by shooting them. We died with peace of mind, having done our last duty toward our people.

The revolutionary path is difficult. It is full of obstacles and it is tortuous. It is lighted with the blood of every guerrilla who falls. The revolutionary flag in the hand of the guerrilla who falls at each obstacle is raised by the guerrilla after him. We are the vanguard fighters of revolution. We believe that this flag is going to be erected on oligarchy's nose without fail, and we died in the pride of having done our vanguard's duty in traveling along this path!

Long live the Turkish Revolution! Long live the Turkish Peoples' Liberation Party! Long live independent Turkey."\*

Notes of condolence were sent by the Turkish government to the Canadian and British prime ministers. Meanwhile, Dev Genç mourned the deaths of the nine kidnapers with a series of bombings in Istanbul the following night.

Following Kürkcü's capture, over 100 arrests were made of TPLF and Dev Genç members in Ankara, in connection with the NATO incident. Certainly, this man was in possession of extensive information concerning the identities of student activists.

#### The GOT and the Kidnappers

As in the barricade and hostage situation in which Çayan and Cevahir held the young girl, the surrounding government forces adopted a waiting game in the NATO technicians' case. The kidnapers were talked to, friends were brought in to appeal to them to give up, and the level of tension was sustained so as to tire them out. All the while, the government maintained its tough, no-concessions position.

The kidnapers must have been familiar with the government's policy on political kidnappings by this time. In undertaking this

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\* Department of State telegram, Ankara 2499, April 7, 1972 (originally restricted to Limited Official Use; all restrictions removed by Department of State, June 1976).

act, they were expressing the determination to die if necessary as sacrifices to their ideological cause. It is likely that they regarded their own martyrdom as a blow of sorts at their enemies. Their final note suggests as much. Some observers have concluded that the Turkish terrorists were among the most committed and the toughest of the world's various guerrilla groups.

The government story that the terrorists had murdered the technicians before the rush by security forces was substantiated by the report of doctors that the three had died somewhat earlier than their captors. Sympathizers of the Turkish left claimed that the government simply disregarded the hostages' lives and threw grenades into the building, killing everyone. According to official sources, the kidnapers had used the grenades to bring down interior walls in the building so as to widen the field of fire. Two British journalists who were on the scene credited the Turkish officials with doing everything in their power to save the lives of the hostages.

A question remains as to why no ransom note was left behind at the technicians' residence. The omission may have been a simple oversight by the kidnapers, since circumstantial evidence strongly indicates that their initial intention was to exchange the NATO technicians for the three TPLA leaders awaiting execution. Then again, a note may have been left but suppressed by the government.

With this kidnapping incident taking place in the spotlight of world attention, a firm stand against the terrorists was a matter of honor for the Turkish government. The terrorists too must have regarded their own willingness to die as a matter of honor before their audience of leftist activists. Moreover, at this point, they had little to lose, as they faced a certain death penalty if captured. The deaths of so many of their top leaders and the relentless pursuit of supporters of leftist causes severely crippled the terrorist organizations and curtailed major acts of political violence, at least for the time being.\*

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\* See Sec. I for further details of the political context at the time.

### III. ANALYSIS OF THE CASES

In this section, we shall discuss significant points of interest from the three cases that permit comparison with other incidents of political kidnapping. These points are the ones that recur most frequently in discussions of policy aimed at dealing with terrorism.

#### POLITICAL CLIMATE AND TERRORIST ACTIVITIES

The political climate provides the medium in which terrorist activities either take root and multiply or wither away. Moreover, aspects of a country's economic and political situation usually are the explicit cause (or the pretext, depending on one's perspective) for political terrorist actions.\*

#### The Local Government

The Demirel regime's apparent inability to cope with the radical activists' challenge during the months of increasingly violent anti-government incidents preceding the kidnapping of the American airmen lent momentum to the terrorist movement. The government became isolated from major sectors of the political elite, such as important segments of the military and many intellectuals and professionals, who seemed to sit waiting on the sidelines, critically observing the government's performance. This isolation may well have contributed to the near-total media silence of the government during the airmen incident and to its willingness to attempt high-risk tactics in an effort to resolve the crisis at the earliest possible time. Moreover, the government's sense of its own precarious political position prevented the opening up of bargaining tactics that might have helped locate the prisoners and their captors.

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\* Since the long-term causes of terrorism are beyond the purview of this report, the focus in this section is the impact of the immediate political situation upon the behavior of the actors in the three cases at hand. Broader aspects of the Turkish political situation as they relate to terrorist activities are discussed in Sec. I.



Learning from the experience of its predecessor and benefiting from a more favorable political climate, the Erim cabinet was determined to be heard from decisively from the beginning. Military sponsorship and support from center and right elite groups offered advantages that Demirel did not have. As a result, the Erim government generated an image of unity and determination. Erim had the latitude to innovate and did so by issuing counterdemands, placing agents within the student organizations, instituting a curfew and search, and utilizing a specially trained military commando team to handle the barricade and hostage situations both in Istanbul and in Kizildere.

#### The Hostages' Governments

The instability of the Turkish political situation under Demirel had a strong impact on the way the U.S. government responded to the incident, and on longer-range U.S. policy as well, coming as it did when the existing American policy toward political kidnappings was undergoing reformulation. Turkey specialists within the U.S. government worked diligently to gain support for the Turkish policy of not paying ransom or negotiating seriously, arguing that a more aggressive U.S. posture might bring down the friendly Demirel government; their activity dovetailed with arguments already being made within the State Department that the payment of ransom or the granting of other demands to kidnappers only encourages further acts of terrorism.

The American embassy in Ankara was forced to tread very lightly in its dealings with the local government during the airmen case, in spite of the strong reaction that might have been expected in light of the long and close U.S.-Turkish political relationship. Suggestions for possible tactics had to be put forth very tentatively and kept in the strictest confidence. If advice was not taken, as was usually the case, this had to be accepted and not protested. The Turkish government exercised the power of the weak to say, "No, if I do what you want, it will be the end of me." Thus, American leverage upon Turkish behavior was diminished.

The political climate in Turkey proved to be a less important factor in the behavior of the hostages' governments in the Elrom and

NATO technicians incidents. The Israeli government's policy and tactics dovetailed so well with the Turkish that no special action was called for. Its behavior was directed toward its own domestic audience, primarily to demonstrate to the Israeli public that its government was doing everything possible to secure Elrom's safe release. By the time of the NATO case, the Turkish political situation had stabilized and thus played a very minor role in the position of the British and Canadian governments.

#### The Impact of Public Opinion

Changes in the mood of public opinion in Turkey exerted considerable influence on local and hostage governments, as well as on the kidnapers, during the three incidents. The TPLA acted thinking that it had a good chance to win significant public approval for its deed. Public outcry at the kidnapping and sympathy for the hostages contributed to the kidnapers' restraint. During the Elrom case, public opinion united more strongly behind the government and its military sponsors; the murder of Elrom and the kidnapping of the young girl created such public antipathy toward the kidnapers that even they, in spite of their ideological blindness, were able to see that an expectation of public support was wholly unrealistic. Public opinion exerted little influence on the kidnapers of the NATO technicians, as they were playing to a much narrower audience, but continued to support the government's no-ransom posture.

Thus, the general political climate surrounding these international political kidnappings limited tactical options of the Turkish government at the outset, helped shape the U.S. government's policy, and certainly influenced the kidnapers both with respect to their expectations of success and their handling of the hostages.

#### THE KIDNAPPERS

##### Ransom Demands, Tactical Objectives, and Strategic Goals

In considering the kidnapers' goals, a useful distinction can be made between ransom demands, tactical objectives, and strategic goals.

Ransom demands are usually contained in the first communication from the kidnapers to the authorities, telling the target or targets of the kidnapping what must be done in order to obtain the hostage's release. Common ransom demands are release of prisoners and payment of money.

Strategic goals refer to the ultimate purpose of the kidnapers, usually as dictated by their ideology. The initiation of a Marxist-Leninist social revolution is one example; for some groups, the overthrow of the current regime and replacement by one more sympathetic to their cause could be an ultimate goal. In the case of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, the strategic goal of the leading faction has been to generate sufficient worldwide publicity to cause pressure to be brought on the Israeli government toward settlement of the Palestinian question.\* Because strategic goals are related to ideology, and the terrorists' ideology tends to remain constant, these long-term ideals persist for any one group, unchanged by success or failure.

Tactical objectives may be more difficult to pinpoint but perhaps provide the best insights into terrorist behavior. Often implied but not explicitly stated in the ransom demands, these are reflections of the jockeying-for-power game played by many terrorist groups vis-à-vis a government target in front of the audience of national or international public opinion. At the outset of its exploits, a group's objective may be to gain recognition from the authorities and public audience as a force in the nation's affairs that has something serious to say, some problem to raise that requires the authorities to act. The tactical objectives tend to be sensitive to shifts in public opinion and in the security situation, and thus may change as these factors vary. At a time when security officials are cracking down on activists, a terrorist group may decide to stage a spectacular kidnapping primarily to demonstrate its continuing viability and capability to operate under pressure--its refusal to withdraw from the political scene.

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\* The Israeli government would probably argue that the PLO's ultimate goal is the destruction of Israel.

Such a pattern of change might usefully be characterized as a shift from "offensive" to "defensive" objectives.\* Offensive objectives would include provoking the local government into overreaction so as to bring it into disrepute and possibly cause it to fall. A group can afford to try for such a goal when it feels it has some support in the public audience and a possibility of escape. Defensive objectives imply limited goals held from a position of weakness; for example, a group may wish to dramatically assert that it is not inoperative or cowed because of government measures, or to remind the government that the problems raised still have not been addressed. This type of goal may have a desperate quality.

This framework for consideration of terrorist motivations in political kidnapping focuses attention beyond the specific ransom demands, which are important but may not reveal much about the group itself, and beyond the ultimate ideological goals, which are often so wildly ambitious as to be totally unrealistic and thus not very informative about particular actions taken at particular times. A group's tactical objectives must be deduced from whatever information is known about its operation patterns, leadership characteristics, resources and capabilities, ideology, and past history, as well as from the facts surrounding the kidnapping incident at hand. If little is known, the task will be difficult. But some degree of understanding of kidnappers' tactical objectives will permit the authorities to have greater management control over a situation than they would have if they simply took the ransom demands at face value and reacted to them, or focused only on the ultimate goal of the terrorists. Let us examine the three Turkish kidnapping incidents, keeping in mind the above distinctions.

In the airmen case, the TPLA selected four U.S. soldiers as representatives of the occupying "imperialist power." Ransom demands included a large payment of money from the hostages' government, in addition to publicity for the group's ideological manifesto. Also included was a demand that the local government not arrest "revolutionaries" while the hostages were being held.

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\*These distinctions remain to be developed and refined into more useful concepts, but they are included here for whatever heuristic value they may offer.

The kidnapers indicated in a number of ways that the money was not a high-priority demand. They showed large sums to the airmen, told them not to mention the ransom money specifically in their letters, and eventually released the hostages without getting any ransom. Moreover, the bank robberies they had carried out earlier had provided them with a sizable amount of operating capital. Then why was the money demanded? Both the hostage selection and the fact that the ransom was demanded explicitly from the U.S. government indicate that the purpose was to involve the United States directly in the affair.

The explicit addressing of demands to the U.S. government has been an unusual occurrence in political kidnappings. The TPLA showed unusual persistence in pursuing its goal of emphasizing American involvement, as shown by its last-ditch attempt to establish a link to the U.S. embassy. This behavior can be partially explained by the fact that the U.S. government had been the only target that responded to the kidnapping, thus inviting further communications. But that responsiveness came after the fact of the kidnapping. The kidnapers' actions imply that their objective was to raise the issue of American military presence and influence in Turkey in a dramatic way before Turkish public opinion and see what judgment would be made. According to that judgment, the airmen would be killed or would not be killed.

In their ransom note, the kidnapers also demanded publicity from the local government. They persisted in this demand through their second ransom note, which included the airmen's letters. Clearly, publicity was the means required to pursue their primary objective of addressing public opinion.

Secondary objectives are perhaps less obvious but can be inferred from the group's activities. In carrying out such a spectacular act and issuing their manifesto, the group probably hoped to gain recruits to the cause, as well as sympathizers who could provide support services when needed. In addition, given the existing climate of political turmoil, they probably hoped to provoke the Demirel government into overreacting to the threat, thus bringing down upon itself the disapproval of major center and leftist segments of elite opinion. An exacerbation of Turkey's political polarization did indeed occur, as

the METU raid brought the government widespread condemnation for heavy-handedness and for ineptness as well, since the hostages were not found.

In staging the kidnapping, the TPLA had an ultimate goal of providing a catalyst for a profound social revolution in Turkey. GOT officials reacted only to this long-range goal and thus gave up the possible advantages of a negotiations procedure for swaying the outcome to favor hostage survival or for turning public opinion against the kidnapers.

In the Elrom kidnapping, the two primary TPLF ransom demands were for release of prisoners and publicity. The hostage seems to have been selected for a number of reasons: Since security precautions made taking an American too dangerous, an Israeli seemed a good second choice because of that country's close ties with the United States; and choosing an Israeli gave the Turks an opportunity to show "solidarity" with the Palestinian cause. In addition, the Israeli was a particularly vulnerable target--he followed an incredibly regular schedule and had refused the GOT's offer of bodyguards.

In light of the changed political situation, with a new centrist regime sponsored by the military, a primary tactical objective of the TPLF was to show those in power that the radical student movement could not be diverted from its struggle simply because some changes had been made in the cabinet. These terrorists wanted to demonstrate the ideological virility of the leftist movement against the most powerful local opponent of all, the Turkish military. Unlike some TPLA members who seemed to respect the military, the TPLF classified the Turkish military according to Marxist doctrine, as an ally of the imperialists. Some TPLF members came from leftist cells of military students and teachers at the Air Force and Naval academies who were working for socialist revolution from within the military establishment. Successfully kidnapping a foreign diplomat under the noses of the military had to be deemed a remarkable gesture of defiance in and of itself, even if it did not secure the release of any prisoners.

Certainly, the release of prisoners cannot be discounted as an important TPLF objective. Several hundred leftists had been arrested since the airmen episode, and another large group was taken in for

questioning the day after Elrom's capture. A demand for release of prisoners would not seem to have been very useful, however, in furthering the kidnapers' goal of gaining public sympathy but has obvious importance for the terrorist organization and its sympathizers. In the TPLF case, the demand demonstrated the group's loyalty to followers of the leftist cause and illustrated to prospective recruits the TPLF concern for its own supporters. While the release of key leaders may be an objective in some cases, because of special skills those leaders have which are needed for the group's operation, this does not seem to have been the case with Elrom's kidnapers.

In the NATO technicians kidnapping, the extreme isolation of the leftist activists from legitimate public opinion is indicated by the absence of broad goals. The only known demand was for the release of the three imprisoned TPLA leaders who had been sentenced to death. Although at one time the kidnapers offered to release the prisoners in exchange for safe passage to the Syrian border, it is unlikely that they believed the government would respond favorably, in light of the past record. Short of realizing their prime demand, the intention seems to have been to stage a fiery, defiant suicidal stand against government forces, to become martyrs to the leftist cause. The terrorists' "audience" had shrunk to the point where it consisted only of ideological peers.

#### The Kidnapers' Expectations

In the airmen case, the kidnapers may truly have expected that the U.S. government would pressure the Turkish government to allow payment of ransom and publicity for terrorist ideology. In this way, the TPLA would benefit by receiving the extra funds, but more importantly, they would reveal to the entire world the subservient relationship of their government to the will of the United States. Aware as they must have been of the precariousness of the Demirel regime, under attack from many sides, the TPLA may have even anticipated a military intervention such as eventually occurred.

In operational terms, though, the TPLA appears not to have anticipated the total silence with which the government responded throughout

the airmen episode. Bargaining of some sort must have been expected. Certainly, the last-ditch efforts to open up a communications link to the U.S. embassy indicate as much.

There are fewer indicators of TPLF expectations in the Elrom incident. Based on the GOT's performance during the previous kidnapping, they may have expected a tough response but a less-than-competent search effort. However, TPLF members could not have been ignorant of the important changes in the government that had occurred since the airmen episode. The military was now a publicly active participant in political affairs; the new civilian government brought with it a renewed legitimacy; and the institution of martial law permitted government tactics that would have been considered illegal earlier. The elaborate precautions and preparations of the TPLF members suggest that they anticipated that these factors would mean a more effective government response. Still, they underestimated the improvement in government capabilities and overestimated their own.

The question might be raised as to whether the TPLF thought that military involvement might mean a change in the GOT's no-contact policy for dealing with political kidnapers, in the direction of more communications or a real bargaining process. Some leftists believed that many military officers were more or less sympathetic to their cause because of the military backing of protesting students under Menderes.\* But the TPLF view of the Turkish military noted above, together with the comment of some TPLF members during their trials that they did not consider themselves "Kemalists,"\*\* suggests that the terrorists would not have expected any softening of government policy because of the influence of the military's high command. (They may have expected a more sympathetic view from more junior officers, however.) Moreover, they certainly could not have expected that the Israeli government would want to or would be able to persuade the GOT to bargain seriously; quite the contrary. The Israeli government's policy of no compromise

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\* See the discussion under the heading "Political Context," in Sec. I.

\*\* That is, supporters of the reforms of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish Republic, whose legacy the military is sworn to protect.



with terrorists was well known; if anything, Israel's influence would reinforce the GOT's hard-line position.

If the foregoing is a generally accurate evaluation of TPLF expectations, it helps to explain why the TPLF seemed so ill-prepared to develop a two-way communications process approximating bargaining with the government. They simply had not expected an opportunity to do so. They sent no communications after the initial ransom demands and ideological statement (except for the letter from Elrom to his wife); they made no response to government hints that ransom might be considered; they showed no willingness to take advantage of the escape hatches proffered in the appeals of Mrs. Elrom or the offer to make the death penalty for kidnapping not retroactive.\* Instead of concerning themselves with anticipating government responses and possible counters, the terrorists may well have centered their considerations on public reaction to their exploits. There is some evidence to support this contention.

In testimony, TPLF zealots voiced profound disappointment at the absence of favorable public response to the Elrom kidnapping and its aftermath. During the barricade incident with the 14-year-old girl, Çayan and Cevahir showed that they expected that the crowd gathering outside would rally to the support of the TPLF against the authorities. Moreover, it should be remembered that TPLF activists considered themselves professional revolutionaries. Their purpose was to trigger a social revolution, not to engage in tactical maneuvering with the government for which they had so much contempt. All of these factors suggest that TPLF activists did not respond to the government's initiatives because they were awaiting revolutionary developments from the people. It could be concluded, then, that the terrorists did not expect an opportunity to bargain with the government, nor did they care very much whether or not such an opportunity came about.

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\* There is, however, an understandable logic in the decision not to respond explicitly to the latter offer: If the TPLF released the hostage in exchange for withholding of the retroactivity clause by the government, the GOT would be credited with a victory and the painstaking planning and execution that went into the kidnapping would have gained very little. On the other hand, if the TPLF members had responded negatively, they would have appeared callous toward the fate of the terrorists already in prison.

Coming as it did after nearly a year of government crackdowns on leftists and arrests of hundreds, probably thousands, of activists and suspected supporters, the combined TPLF/TPLA kidnapping of the NATO technicians showed more realistic expectations on the part of the terrorists. At this point, they faced severe punishment, perhaps the death penalty, if captured. They must have expected a hard-line position from the government and little sympathy from general public opinion. With little to lose, this group seems to have been prepared to die in the hope of ennobling the leftist cause and inspiring others to join the struggle.

To some small extent, the terrorists' martyrdom may have succeeded in achieving their goal. In certain circles, they came to be regarded as folk heroes. Certainly, the only survivor of the NATO kidnapping, Ertuğrul Kürkçü, has been vilified by many intellectuals and tagged as an agent provocateur because he did not perish alongside his comrades.

#### Psychological Factors in Terrorist Behavior

Clearly, an effective method for dealing with terrorism requires some understanding of psychological factors affecting individual and group terrorist behavior. At the same time, data on the subject are difficult to accumulate, the population is relatively small, and what little is known is difficult to generalize. Ultimately, questions such as the following will have to be addressed: Why do certain individuals become terrorists? What roles do social factors play? What roles do individual and family factors play? Are terrorists psychologically similar to criminals who commit similar acts? Are they more like national revolutionaries? Are they, in fact, something in between? What factors affect a terrorist's willingness to use violence? What factors affect his willingness to kill an innocent hostage? To what degree and under what conditions are terrorists suicidal?

Much work remains to be done in probing for answers to these and other such questions. Currently, the greatest interest has focused on operational aspects of terrorist behavior in which psychological characteristics are involved. For example, given that a government is willing and able to enter into some sort of bargaining process with

terrorist kidnapers, the answers to certain questions would be useful in determining an appropriate approach: If the terrorists have a past record, to what extent have they used violence? Have they killed any hostages? Do they see themselves as implacable enemies of the government? Do they want to appeal to a broad public audience? If so, would this make them more concerned about their public image? Could they recognize an escape hatch offered by the government (such as safe passage out of the country) and would they be likely to take it? Are the kidnapers leaders or followers? If they are leaders, would they be likely to seek martyrdom to set an example to their followers?

Certain points relevant to these questions emerge from an analysis of the Turkish cases. First, a noticeable and perhaps unusual aspect of those operations was the active involvement of terrorist leaders in the actual kidnappings. Rather than staying safely in the background and planning operations as some terrorist leaders in other countries have done, the TPLA and TPLF leaders carried out the kidnappings themselves as well as the planning. As leaders--ideological pace-setters for the group--they were highly committed to their cause, resembling religious zealots in many ways, with a rigidly structured view of the world. Not only did they see themselves as exalted because of their leadership role in the leftist movement, but as professional revolutionaries they claimed the role of "vanguard of the proletariat." Perhaps the best illustration of the degree of commitment of these terrorists is their willingness to be martyred at the conclusion of the NATO technicians kidnapping.

If the Turkish terrorist leaders did have this unusually high level of ideological commitment, it is perhaps remarkable that on a number of occasions, some of them preferred to live to fight again rather than die for the cause. The TPLA kidnapers chose to release the airmen and abandon their hideout when they thought the police were closing in. During the Elrom incident, the TPLF rejected a suggestion that the group stand at the apartment with the hostage and fight it out with the military police. Later, Hüseyin Cevahir, who was high in the TPLF command, urged leader Çayan to give up and surrender to officials during the barricade episode. Even though they must have

realized their mission was doomed, the kidnappers of the NATO technicians did propose to exchange their prisoners for safe passage out of the country. When even the most dedicated terrorists, the leaders of the movement, were faced with the immediate alternative of life or death, they were not blindly, totally suicidal. Certainly this observation, if found to be generally true of terrorists, has implications for government responses to political kidnappings.

Another significant characteristic of the Turkish terrorists is their view of themselves as honorable people, following a certain code of behavior. Personal gain seemed to be an irrelevant factor in their actions. In fact, they regarded themselves as totally unselfish. They saw themselves pursuing the cause of society's downtrodden and deprived classes against the impersonal forces of imperialism and state capitalism. The justifications for their acts which were presented in the courtroom were of course self-serving, but they cannot be disregarded as irrelevant to the terrorists' self-view. Çayan and Bardakçi claimed to be defending the constitution, especially the guarantees of free speech and assembly, against the reactionary forces of the right which would encroach upon those provisions and sell out the interests of the nation to the imperialists.

The code of behavior followed by the terrorists included the provision of humane treatment for the hostages, at least initially. Even Elrom, who was eventually killed, had his wound attended to, or so the terrorists claimed. Even though the TPLA members could have killed the four airmen in order to eliminate witnesses to their identities, they chose to allow them to live. Of course, reasons other than a code of personal behavior also played a large part in the hostages' ultimate fate. Still, the point remains.

Perhaps the terrorist's self-view as an actor in a positive struggle on behalf of disadvantaged groups sets him apart psychologically from the criminal who tends to be aware that he is violating social codes for his own individual gain. Here again, comparisons need to be made cross-culturally to verify such hypotheses.

From this very preliminary analysis, one important conclusion emerges which has broad significance: It would be a mistake to assume

that terrorists are irrational people who are either so ideologically brainwashed that they do not care if they live or die, or so criminally minded as to be beyond appeals to principle.

#### BEHAVIOR OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

##### No-Contact Policy

A number of factors contributed to the Turkish government's no-contact policy in dealing with terrorist kidnappings. Perhaps the most important in the airmen case was the GOT view that its very survival was at stake and depended upon how tough the government showed itself to be in dealing with the radical challenge. Such a defensive outlook precluded the opening up of a negotiations process for the Demirel regime and thus severely limited possible options for controlling or managing the situation to maximize the chances for hostage survival.

Serving as it did with the support of the military, the Erim government had the flexibility to move slightly away from the no-contact position (which may represent one extreme of a policy spectrum measuring the degree of government willingness to compromise). Even Erim's communications with the kidnapers were totally limited to the public media, however, an approach which limited the kinds of positions that could be taken. But Erim's policy at least offered some advantages over Demirel's: Official statements gave the kidnapers something to think about and increased the pressure upon them for action; the government was able to mobilize public opinion effectively against the terrorists through its use of the media; the population was made aware of the identities and appearance of the terrorists, making their escape more difficult. In this particular case, a two-way communication process between government and terrorists might not have increased the hostage's chances for survival. But such an approach should not be ruled out in other kidnapping situations where the terrorists involved are more concerned with tactical gains.

### Government Views Toward the Kidnappers

There is an interesting contrast between the ways the Demirel and Erim regimes regarded the kidnappers. Demirel considered them to be common criminals--"bandits," he called them--and he refused to accord them any political identity. Erim first saw the terrorists as idealistic, misguided children, led astray by sinister "professionals" with connections "outside." Erim argued that the kidnappers would not stoop to killing Elrom. This view changed as events unfolded.

One plausible explanation for Erim's reluctance to believe that the terrorists could commit such heinous crimes is that many of the leftist activists were the sons and daughters of middle-class Turks, even members of the bureaucracy, parliament, or the military. This situation would have been less true with the Demirel regime, which represented a different socio-economic constituency. (See the discussion of the Turkish political context in Sec. I for further comment.)

### Performance of Local Security Forces

One of the factors contributing to the outbreak of terrorist violence in Turkey under Demirel was the inability or unwillingness of security forces to cope with the increasingly dangerous situation. Authorities under Erim apparently concluded that the unwillingness was due to political considerations and set about rectifying the situation.

The response of authorities to the airmen kidnapping appeared sluggish: Reportedly, no roadblocks on major arteries leading out of the city were set up until noon of the first day; no stakeouts were instituted at TRT or the news agencies; police who encountered the terrorists after they had abandoned the hostages refused to challenge them; authorities were unable to capture the terrorists while they hid in the city, nor could they prevent them from leaving. Only in the countryside, where the terrorist support system was weaker, were the kidnappers caught. Moreover, the government attempted a heavy-handed, high-risk strategy at the outset, putting all its eggs in one basket, and badly lost the gamble. Senior Turkish military officers found the government's performance wanting and intervened.

During the Elrom kidnapping, the military played a much more prominent role as a participant with civilian security forces. The kidnapers might have anticipated that security would be tighter and a kidnapping riskier with the military involvement. This knowledge did not deter them, however, although they did move their kidnapping operation to Istanbul, a larger and more diverse city which would be more difficult to police. Still, even with strict military security precautions, the kidnapers were able to walk around the city freely. They were defiant and confident enough to hold Elrom in an apartment only 500 yards from the Israeli consulate.

As a tactic for dealing with an at-large type of kidnapping, where the location of captors and hostage is unknown, the curfew and search stratagem used by security forces during the Elrom kidnapping had some cumbersome aspects: Necessary preparations included registration of a resident population of over two million, a complete cessation of normal traffic and business flow, and the mobilization of large quantities of resources and manpower. Obviously, a high degree of public cooperation was necessary. The announcement of intended action ahead of time, required by the nature of the operation, gave the kidnapers a cushion of time in which to dispatch the hostage and escape. And even though authorities had the photos and names of the TPLF and Dev Genç activists, the curfew and search failed to disclose their hiding places. With disguises and counterfeited identity papers, the leftists succeeded in passing the search. Only the capture of some accomplices and possibly inside information from an informant led to the exposure of TPLF hiding places.

On the other hand, viewed in the larger context of the overall political crisis, the curfew and search operation offered many dividends to security officials who may have been wanting to do something similar for a long time. During the search, they managed to locate a number of weapons caches and arrest some alleged leftist activists. Perhaps the most important payoff was the registration of an entire population, which could be of particular benefit in future terrorist incidents. As a massive show of force, the search operation may have been impressive, but it did not deter further terrorist activities in the long run.

Local security officials demonstrated more flexibility in handling barricade and hostage situations than in handling at-large kidnappings. The utilization of specially trained commando units in two incidents has been noted. In these incidents, the authorities waited out the kidnappers, exhausting them with tension. The authorities showed a willingness to try various ploys to persuade the kidnappers to give up, including bringing in close relatives or friends, always stopping short of any compromise that would allow the kidnappers to escape capture. In both cases, however, the eventual climax came when officials rushed the kidnappers, putting the hostages in acute danger. All the hostages involved could easily have perished.

One factor that probably contributed to the relentless, unyielding determination of the Turkish military to stifle leftist activism was its concern for its international reputation. Senior officers took pains to assure their NATO colleagues that the Turkish military could be relied upon; they acted quickly to remove rebellious junior officers and quell disorder in the ranks. The successful escape of four TPLA/TPLF leaders from a supposedly unbreachable military prison must have been regarded as a defiant blow to the military's reputation.

Another effort by the military to protect its image involved a careful division of labor among security officials, whereby suspected leftist activists who were apprehended were questioned by civilian intelligence authorities. When the activists protested in court that they had been tortured, the military prosecutor could deny any knowledge of such procedures.

There is another plausible explanation for the military's attitude toward the kidnappers, based primarily on inference but nevertheless worth noting. The leftist students were probably not entirely mistaken in their feeling that important military officers sympathized with some of their causes and certainly disapproved of some of the behavior of the Demirel government. But in acting to supplant Demirel's cabinet with a technocratic, above-party regime, military leaders may have felt that they had in fact responded to the legitimate leftist protests. When yet another political kidnapping was perpetrated after the declaration of martial law, the leftists succeeded in undoing any credibility



or legitimacy they might have attained in the eyes of influential military men.

#### THE HOSTAGES' GOVERNMENTS

None of the hostages' governments attempted to change the no-concessions direction taken by Turkish officials in dealing with the terrorists. As noted earlier, the outcome of the airmen incident may have reinforced a new, harder-line U.S. policy which was set during the episode.

During the Elrom case, the Israeli government supported the GOT's no-concessions policy. Its public statements expressing satisfaction with the Turkish position and handling of the affair underlined the similarity of the two governments' views of how to deal with terrorist challenges.

Much less is known about the behavior of the British and Canadian governments during the NATO technicians episode, except for the fact that both governments held a low profile. We did not have access to confidential communications between the governments in this case.

On the level of tactical response, however, differences did occur, notably between Turkish and American governments. By their actions, U.S. embassy officials showed that they did not equate a no-concessions policy toward terrorism with no contact. When their suggestions for possible GOT tactics were rejected, the embassy staff, which had more flexibility to maneuver than the local government, itself acted to shape the situation to the extent permitted by the circumstances. Effective use of the local media to influence public opinion was the main contribution made by U.S. officials. This technique had an impact because the terrorists seemed to be so concerned with public response to their actions. Although there is no way of knowing the exact degree to which the embassy's actions contributed to the airmen's safe release, these actions do illustrate the kind of creative thinking on the scene that could increase the chance of favorable outcomes in hostage situations.

Certainly, the possibility existed for an even more decisive U.S. role in the kidnapping--that of cooperating in a bargaining process

with the terrorists, had an intermediary link been successfully established. Engaging in a bargaining process, whether or not there was any intention of granting concessions, would have offered possibilities for controlling or managing the situation. (Even the Israeli government has used this technique.) The Turkish political kidnappings were handled by the local government in such a way as to provide little leeway for the hostages' governments to explore the range of tactical responses available.

#### THE HOSTAGE EXPERIENCE

The recollections of the American airmen represent a valuable source of information on what it is like to experience a kidnapping. They were, after all, the only survivors of the three major political kidnapping incidents in Turkey.

To say that the airmen were shocked to find themselves confronted by the heavily armed kidnapers in the middle of the night would be an understatement. As soldiers, they had been trained to expect danger in battlefield situations, but the circumstances of their capture were unrelated to that preparation. Even the knowledge that Sergeant Finley had been kidnapped two weeks earlier had not suggested to them that they themselves might be vulnerable.\*

As has been the case in other political kidnappings, the terror level experienced by the hostages dropped once a routine pattern of events became established in the apartment hideout. Their anxiety level rose when they heard of the high amount of ransom being demanded, then they became optimistic when they heard the rumor that the ransom might be paid; discouragement increased when the ransom possibility was denied by both U.S. and Turkish governments. As the hostages observed the kidnapers becoming more intensely involved in discussions about their own fate, their fears again intensified, reaching a peak not long before they were released.

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\*The airmen apparently had not seen a copy of the U.S. government pamphlet put out shortly after Finley's experience which provided guidelines to Americans in Turkey on precautions to take to avoid becoming victims of anti-American violence.

The question of survival dominated the thoughts of the captives. Given the opportunity to discuss the issue privately among themselves, they debated the pros and cons of various plans but could not agree on any single plan of action. None of them seemed to have any feeling of being humiliated by their plight or any resentment of their misfortune. They simply wanted to get out of their closet alive.

The airmen harbored mixed feelings about their kidnappers. During the incident, an almost comradely spirit developed between the captors and their hostages. Most of the TPLA members had served in the Turkish Army; they knew their weapons well and demonstrated intelligence, discipline, and dedication, all qualities respected by the airmen. However, in retrospect, the hostages expressed hatred toward their captors for placing them in such a position. The airmen felt that they would have killed their captors if that had been necessary in order to escape. It is possible that the dependency of the hostages and their relatively amicable relations may have also worked upon the kidnappers in favor of the hostages' survival. After Deniz Gezmiş, the TPLA leader, was captured he was reported to have expressed regret at not having shot them. It would appear, then, that hostile feelings on both sides had been submerged during the incident itself.

There was apparently some feeling among the hostages that neither the U.S. nor the Turkish government handled the incident particularly effectively. They gave the Turkish government no credit for their escape and continued to feel that if the police had discovered the apartment, they might have been sacrificed in the cross fire. They had felt abandoned at President Nixon's expression of a U.S. hands-off policy and support for the Turkish government. They also resented the fact that their supervisor had not reported them missing until noon of March 4; reportedly, he had assumed that they had taken their vehicle and gone joyriding.

The airmen continued to experience anxiety after their release, especially during the approximately 10 days following, during which they remained in Turkey undergoing intensive questioning by both Turkish and American authorities. They were given physical examinations but no psychological counseling. One of the airmen reported

continuing to experience psychological after-effects of the experience, even after returning to the United States, for almost a year. Unexpected loud noises caused him to drop to the ground; he experienced claustrophobia at times and would have to go outdoors. If a visitor drove up to his home, he would cautiously go out the back door until he determined that the visit was friendly. He experienced nightmares in which his life was threatened.

Several factors contributed to the hostages' ability to bear the burden of captivity and uncertainty. Being allowed to talk to each other and to the kidnapers, to exchange ideas and experiences, seemed to help, as did the planning of possible escape routes. Playing chess with their makeshift set and reading served as relaxation.

Four of the five hostages were of the Roman Catholic faith. They prayed often, and their faith seemed to help sustain them and drive off discouragement.

Their military training also contributed to the hostages' ability to cope with their situation. Their relationships with each other and with their captors seemed to be governed somewhat by their own sense of military discipline and duty. For example, they spent a good bit of time memorizing details of their surroundings, noting the captors' appearances, and identifying the weapons they used and the country of manufacture. Afterwards, the airmen expressed pride at being able to offer such detailed information to the authorities. It gave them a goal and a focus for mental activity that connected with a time beyond captivity when they might be free again.

In sum, these hostages proved to be unusually practical and resourceful in coping with the acute dependency and helplessness of their situation; this practical orientation, together with their sense of discipline and military order and the fact that they had each other for company, eased the trauma of the experience.

#### HOSTAGE SURVIVAL AND THE STRUCTURE OF THE SITUATION

What impact did the structure of the kidnapping situations have upon the hostages' survival? Counting the incident with the 14-year-old girl, we have two at-large and two barricade and hostage situations to consider in answering this question.

During the airmen episode, the kidnapers could afford to abandon their hostages and flee, partly because their at-large situation permitted this option. They could separate the question of their own survival from that of the hostages. Moreover, operating on their own home grounds, the kidnapers had developed a local support system which could sustain them at large in the city.

The TPLF's kidnapping of Elrom represents a similar situation, with the kidnapers enjoying extraordinary freedom of movement with the benefit of their forged identity papers. The outcome for the hostage was different, however. Even though the situation would have permitted the kidnapers to survive the curfew and search by abandoning Elrom and fleeing to their various hideouts, other factors intervened to bring about his death.

Çayan and Cevahir's unplanned kidnapping of the young girl found the terrorists in a desperate situation. They did not kill their hostage, although she could easily have perished when the government commandos raided the apartment. The combined TPLF/TPLA kidnapping of the NATO technicians turned into a barricade and hostage situation which resembled a Palestinian raid into foreign territory: As urban educated youth, the terrorists stood out like foreigners in a rural village setting. No support capability was available in the villages, and this time, the hostages and kidnapers all perished.

Based on these four incidents, it would appear that the hostage may be in somewhat more danger in barricade situations, especially if they are planned ahead, but that other factors are more important than the structure of the situation in determining whether or not a hostage will survive.

#### IV. FINAL OBSERVATIONS

##### POLICY OBJECTIVES OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Just as terrorists have different kinds of goals in taking political hostages, so governments pursue different goals in handling political kidnapping incidents. Deterrence of future kidnappings and other terrorist acts is mentioned frequently as the prime concern of local governments.\* Safe rescue of current hostages is also an important objective but is usually ranked lower in priority. Local governments also concern themselves with demonstrating competence and reinforcing their own legitimacy before the public audience. Conversely, local authorities hope that the public will view the terrorists as ineffectual, weak, and illegitimate.

If deterrence is successful, the taking of future hostages should be prevented; in this sense, the objective of rescuing hostages is subsumed under deterrence. However, conflict arises when officials must choose between actions dictated by a long-range policy of deterrence and steps that may be required to save the lives of current hostages. If deterrence is assumed to require a no-concessions policy by the local government, may not present hostages become sacrifices to the long-range goal? The answer, of course, is yes, suggesting a real moral dilemma for policymakers. Generally speaking, the dilemma has been resolved in favor of long-range rather than immediate considerations.

But must we accept the assumption that deterrence requires a no-concessions policy? And if a no-concessions policy is adhered to, what actions by the local government are consistent with it? What actions are ruled out by it? The more fundamental question is, What deters political kidnapping and other acts of terrorism? These issues

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\* Deterrence is defined here as the reduction of kidnapping incidents to a level considered nonthreatening by the government--almost never occurring and, if occurring, only as isolated incidents and not as part of a more general antigovernment effort.

are complex and cannot be thoroughly dealt with in the present context.\* But certain insights can be drawn from the events in Turkey that we have reviewed here.

#### Tight Security as a Deterrent

The increasingly stringent security measures taken by the Turkish government did not of themselves deter kidnapping or other terrorist incidents, although they may have reduced the number of such incidents. Instead, their effect was to force the terrorists to select different locations and targets than they otherwise might have. For example, bank robberies in Ankara and Istanbul, which had been increasing in number, virtually ceased after bank security was tightened. Thereafter, the kidnapping of private citizens for ransom provided the radicals with needed operating capital. Again, after security precautions were intensified in Ankara, the terrorists moved their activities to Istanbul, a less controllable city from a security viewpoint. When the larger cities became too dangerous, the terrorists selected an outlying location for their operations. In moving to rural areas, the terrorists functioned less effectively and were more liable to be noticed and reported than before; in this limited sense, tight security did contribute to the deterrence of terrorism.

#### The Death Penalty as a Deterrent

The Turkish government's decision to make examples of the three TPLA kidnapers\*\* was intended to deter further incidents as well as to punish the kidnapers. Unfortunately, it failed to achieve the former goal and, in fact, acted as a provocation (or pretext) for at least three further terrorist acts aimed at saving the lives of the TPLA militants--the kidnapping of the NATO technicians, the attack on Gendarmerie General Eken, and the hijacking of a Turkish Airlines plane to Bulgaria.

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\* For a thorough analysis of these and related questions, see Brian Jenkins, David Ronfeldt, and Ralph Strauch, *Dealing with Political Kidnapping* (U), The Rand Corporation, R-1857-DOS/ARPA, September 1976 (Secret).

\*\* Their death sentences were announced in December 1971.

Another important point should be made about the GOT's use of the death penalty as a deterrent: The TPLA kidnapers had allowed their hostages to live, but they had received the death penalty anyway. This verdict offered no incentive for future kidnapers to let their hostages escape alive.

Generally, if a hostage happens to be killed during a final confrontation with authorities, responsibility for the loss is often placed on the government. Suggesting its concern over this possibility, the Turkish government took great pains to demonstrate to reporters and foreign diplomats that the three NATO technicians had been killed by the kidnapers before Turkish soldiers rushed the house, and not as a result of the government initiative.

The GOT attempt to use the death penalty as a deterrent during the Elrom incident--by promising not to make the death penalty retroactive if the hostage were released alive--did not contribute to deterrence or forbearance. In this case, the offer may not have been taken seriously by the TPLF, or it may have been considered meaningless, since the terrorists were hoping to create a revolutionary climate in which the government would be unable to punish them. In any case, the hostage was killed.

The analogy of capital punishment for the civil crime of homicide may throw some light upon the question of the effectiveness of the death penalty as a deterrent to terrorism. Comparative studies have shown that the presence or absence of the death penalty in an area does not seem to have a significant effect upon the homicide rate. Apparently, most murderers do not rationally consider what sort of punishment they might receive before they act. The same phenomenon may apply to terrorists, although for different reasons.

Murderers may kill during moments when emotion overwhelms reason. Terrorists' reason may be distorted by ideological considerations which include the idea of taking grave risks for their cause, even facing death. The Turkish terrorists, for example, regarded themselves as warriors, or soldiers in a war against capitalist and imperialist oppression. Civilian concepts of criminality were irrelevant to their perspective. Just as innocent noncombatants become hostages or victims



during wartime, foreigners were regarded as fair game during the terrorists' "revolutionary struggle."

#### The No-Concessions Policy as a Deterrent

Although the GOT policy toward terrorism remained constant throughout the two-year period under consideration, the rate of terrorist activity varied widely. The military-sponsored Erim government succeeded in preventing major political kidnappings for nearly a year after Elrom's death, but the sentencing to death of the three TPLA leaders brought another outburst of incidents. Considerations other than the local government's policy position appear to have been responsible for the decline of terrorism in Turkey.

The GOT announced officially at the end of 1972 that the era of terrorist violence had been successfully brought to a close, but this was primarily because most of the terrorist leaders were imprisoned or dead and their networks of supporters had been broken up. The government's success at infiltrating the activists' leadership groups to gather intelligence on personnel and operations also contributed significantly.

Extraordinary legislation effected by the declaration of martial law, along with the passage of constitutional amendments, permitted security forces to take actions to end leftist activity that would otherwise have been considered illegitimate. These included the curtailment of civil rights, such as the right to free assembly and speech, and the creation of special security courts with wide-ranging jurisdiction.

As a result of the government crackdown, avenues of terrorist recruitment were blocked, and sources of arms supplies cut off. The terrorists could not operate without new leaders to replace those imprisoned or killed, new weapons to replace those confiscated, and new networks of sympathizers to hide them away or perform other necessary support tasks.

The transferability of the Turkish government's tactics to political kidnapping situations in other countries may be limited by the willingness or ability of members of the local political system to tolerate such draconian measures as those taken by the GOT. And there

is evidence that these severe measures suppressed the problem only temporarily. Student violence on both left and right has once more begun to increase during the last two educational terms. Arms caches have been discovered in southeastern Anatolia again, and the GOT has arrested alleged members of the TPLA who are active in the area once more.

These events suggest a proposition that might be useful in thinking about long-term policy to combat terrorism: If the local terrorists are a small, isolated force with a narrow base and shallow depth of support in the country, removing the current leadership and breaking up the organization may terminate the terrorist threat. However, if the terrorists represent significant (in numbers and/or political influence) social or cultural groups who have grievances against the government, a policy of repression will be effective only in the short term. In such cases, terrorist activities may escalate into general political unrest or even civil war, or they may simply persist as a chronic but manageable problem.

#### POLICY AND THE HOSTAGES' GOVERNMENTS

Based on available evidence, we have concluded that the hostages' governments were not able to influence the local government's behavior significantly in these cases. Other factors, particularly the local political situation--the political exigencies faced by the local government--shaped its response to the terrorists. In the case of the kidnapped U.S. airmen, however, these limitations did not prevent American officials from acting so as to affect the outcome of the kidnapping incident.

#### Using the Media

Given the availability of appropriate media outlets, the hostages' governments may be able to contribute to shaping local public opinion, thereby enhancing the chances for their survival. This technique was especially effective in the situation where the kidnappers were very concerned about their public image and about public assessment of their actions.

Contacts with the Kidnappers

American officials in the airmen case stated that they would be willing to talk to the kidnappers, if contact were established through an intermediary. Although this did not transpire, the idea had potential advantages and might be transferable to other cases. The hostages' governments may enjoy greater flexibility for maneuver than the local government, and contact with the kidnappers may offer an opportunity to control or manage the situation to an extent not possible without direct communication. Valuable information may be gained about the kidnappers, their goals, and methods of operation. Even a process of negotiations might be called for by tactical considerations, in some cases. However, too active or forthcoming behavior by the hostages' governments could bring charges of meddling or interference from the local government.

The Turkish cases do not provide evidence for further exploration of the bargaining process during political kidnappings because that territory remained essentially unexplored by the governments involved. Our assessment of these incidents has demonstrated primarily the complexity of the phenomenon of terrorism and the factors that may favor or hinder its spread. We have stressed the significance of the local political situation, since policy factors have been found to be less important for the overall objective of deterring political kidnapping. However, limited goals such as enhancing the chances for hostage survival may be achievable through a flexible, tactical approach.



Appendix A

MATERIALS RELATING TO THE AIRMEN CASE

MANIFESTO OF THE TURKISH PEOPLES' LIBERATION ARMY

THE TURKISH PEOPLES' LIBERATION ARMY'S CALL TO ALL THE  
PEOPLES OF THE WORLD AND TO THE PEOPLES OF TURKEY

This is the voice of the People's Liberation Army of Turkey.

1. The Peoples' Liberation Army of Turkey believes that the liberation of our people and the independence of our country will be achieved by armed struggle and that this course is the only course.
2. The Peoples' Liberation Army of Turkey calls all patriots to the ranks of this sacred struggle and declares that it will continue to fight to the last man in its struggle against the traitors.
3. Our aim is to liquidate American and all foreign enemies, destroy the traitors and establish a fully independent Turkey cleared of the enemy.
4. The Peoples' Liberation Army of Turkey is the vanguard force of our oppressed peoples and will not enter any movement beyond the liberation of our people.
5. We announce to our people: don't pay attention to the wealth of the enemy, its number, resources and terror. Don't succumb to the enemy; we shall forcibly extract our rights because they take everything from us by force.

TO ALL PATRIOTS:

Rather than living dishonorably, die honorably. Instead of pleading, resort to force. Have confidence in yourself and those like you, and not in orders.

Our slogan is not to succumb to traitors wherever and whatever form they take.

Revolutionaries: Abandon the methods of struggle by peaceful means. Join the ranks of the Peoples' Liberation Army in armed struggle which is the basis of the policy of violence which will lead the peoples' masses to liberation. Let us all together wave the peoples' banner of national liberation war against the aggressive policy of imperialism.

Workers, peasants: the gendarmerie and police of the herd of traitors continue to plan new crimes every day. We have not yet taken the revenge of our brothers who were shot and tortured in commando attacks in the east, on the June 16 incidents, at Bossa and many other places. Let us all raise the banner of revolt against the herd of traitors who are exploiting our sweat and blood.

Teachers, minor officials: do not ask for mercy from the lackeys who are reluctantly paying you the equivalent of a piece of dry bread but who banish you from place to place when they don't like it and who exploit you like a servant. The only path of liberation of the oppressed is a sacred revolt against the oppressors.

Peoples' Liberation Army of Turkey assumes the responsibility of the incidents which took place within the short period it has engaged in its struggle and makes its first declaration to our people:

1. On the night of December 29, 1970 the policemen of the riot squad on duty in front of the American Embassy were shot. This incident gave confidence to the revolutionaries and to the people and for the first time in Turkey the traitors were faced with a terrorist act of the revolutionaries.
2. On January 11, 1971 the Emek branch of IŞ bank was robbed and 24 thousand liras were taken. The objective of the robbery was to upset the business mechanism of the banks that secure the continuation of the system of exploitation on the one hand, and to secure arms in order to be able to fight better with the enemy on the other hand. For this reason, after the robbery the enemy has increased its pressure on the people and our fighters with an unprecedented savagery. After one month of pursuit, the enemy failed to catch our fighters, but helped them to become heroes, in a short time.

3. In mid-February an American launch was bombed and was saved from sinking with great difficulty.
4. On the night of February 20 two policemen of the riot squad were shot. This action was carried out for the same reasons as the shooting of the policemen in Ankara.
5. On the night of February 16 the American base at Balgat was entered. The base remained under the control of our fighters for four hours. The base was entered for the purpose of [obtaining] ammunition; no weapons were found on the guards. Upon departure our fighters took along with them an American sergeant on guard duty, but gave up shooting him when it was seen that he was a negro, and he was released after securing necessary information [intelligence] about Americans in Ankara.

The incidents proved the following:

The enemy is cruel, but also an extreme coward in appearance. Although it appears strong it is weak. We are the strong, brave and courageous ones. For the past month and a half the police organization of the traitor administration has bowed to a handful of our fighters. Despite all pressure and violence, not one of our fighters has been caught, but in order to deceive the people and to appear successful some revolutionaries who had no connection with the incidents were arrested and tortured.

The Peoples' Liberation Army of Turkey has taken hostage four American NCO's stationed at TUSLOG Det 18 American base.

The hostages are:

S/Sgt. Jimmie J. Sexton

A/lc James M. Gholson

A/lc L. J. Heavner

A/lc Richard Caraszi

The Peoples' Liberation Army of Turkey is giving 36 hours to release the Americans it has taken hostage. Within this period government officials should announce through TRT and the press that the conditions set forth shall be complied with. All developments should be made public through the same media by the authorities. If such an



announcement is not made, it will be considered that the conditions are not accepted. At the end of the period stipulated the hostages will be shot.

CONDITIONS

1. In order to secure the release of all the hostages, USA shall pay a ransom of \$400,000 (four hundred thousand) dollars to the Peoples' Liberation Army of Turkey. (The method of pick-up shall be relayed later.)
2. The declaration of the Peoples' Liberation Army of Turkey entitled "To All the Peoples of the World and to the People of Turkey" and the conditions shall be broadcast over TRT on 0730, 1300, and 1900 hours news bulletins in their entirety.
3. No revolutionary shall be arrested because of this incident during the time American hostages are in custody.

Note: The period stipulated begins at 5:00 o'clock on the morning of March 4, 1971 and expires at 1800 hours on March 5. It should be known that any search campaign to be undertaken by the police shall endanger the lives of the hostages.

Officers, students, technicians: Use the weapon in your hands for the sake of the liberation of our country. Oppose the commanders under orders to NATO and the interest of the traitors fed by America.

Small tradesmen, artisans, orphans, widows and pensioners: you are in need of protection to live as human beings, to be considered as human beings. Poverty bends you more with each passing day. You look to the future with fear. Your salvation is not separate from the salvation of all of our people. Until the end of the traitors who have put you into this state comes, you will know no comfort.

All patriots:

Because of America and the traitors in her services, we have become step-children in our own country. No one is certain of the future. Our lives pass in hunger and want, without doctors, medicine, without schools, roads. We cannot leave the homeland to the coming

generation in this state. It is our most sacred duty to rebel against the handful of traitors who suck our life blood, and against America behind them. As long as this order of pillage continues we will be the ones who die of hunger, who are without work, who are not treated as human beings, who groan under high cost of living and increased prices, and who are mistreated.

Until now we always begged but we did not get anything. As we asked for little we were dragged towards a precipice. We waited for help from them, but we gained nothing but harm.

Therefore:

There is no other course but to rebel against the traitors.

If we are weak today it is because we are not united, for they throw us against each other. Let's open our eyes well and see the real enemy all together. The real enemy is America, the treacherous bosses, the agas, the usurers, the money-lenders.

Let us not be afraid:

It is a debt of honor to fight for the salvation of the country and besides we have no life left to lose.

Already, from the police to our president, no one sleeps easily in their homes: they cannot come and go comfortably to their homes. They know very well what will happen tomorrow and that the Peoples' Liberation Army of Turkey, which is a handful of fighters today, will tomorrow become thousands and millions and they wonder what they will do then.

We repeat: Do not take heed of the numbers of the enemy, its wealth, its terrorism and the means it has. When we take away the weapons and means in its hands there will be no power left to stop us. Let us get rid of the lack of confidence we have in ourselves and in those like ourselves. Let us know well that no force is capable of withstanding the peoples' power, that is to say, our power. Let us take up our sacred duty in this honorable struggle.

The Turkey of tomorrow will become a paradise for us, the dungeon for the enemy.

The Peoples' Liberation Army of Turkey declares that it will continue this struggle to the last breath and to the last drop of its life-blood.

TEXT OF THE SECOND TPLA NOTE, EXTENDING THE DEADLINE 12 HOURS\*

Despite our announcement made some six hours ago, the government has refrained from issuing a statement and has covered up the incident. Although one of our fighters directly involved in the incident was caught, this fact was not disclosed. We again inform the American embassy of our conditions, namely that \$400,000 ransom must be paid (conditions of delivery will be announced later).

We are extending the original period of 36 hours to 48 hours (until 6 a.m. local time March 6) in order to secure the release of our friend.

The Manifesto of the Turkish Peoples' Liberation Army should be read in TRT news bulletins of 7:30 a.m., 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. in its entirety.

No revolutionary should be arrested during this 48-hour period and all developments relating to the affair should be announced over TRT immediately.

If GOT fails to make announcement during this period, or if GOT announcement is unfavorable re our conditions, the hostages will face firing squad.

The hostages will not be released until all revolutionaries detained or arrested during this 48-hour period are freed.

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\* Department of State telegram 1495, March 4, 1971 (originally classified Confidential, declassified by Department of State, June 1976).



DEPARTMENT OF STATE TELEGRAM #38109, MARCH 6, 1971\*

ACTION: AMEMBASSY ANKARA - IMMEDIATE

INFO: Amconsul ISTANBUL - IMMEDIATE  
Amconsul IZMIR  
Amconsul ADANA  
CINCEUR  
CINCUSAFE  
16th AF TORREJON  
DIA/AA-2 Wash., D.C.  
CSAF

JOINT STATE/USIA MESSAGE

Deliver Opening of Business

SUBJECT: Kidnapped Airmen: Answers to Questions Re Ransom

1. Authority received to draw on following as background to answer questions from press and others.

IS THE USG PREPARED TO PAY THE \$400,000 RANSOM? This has quite literally been an agonizing question for the highest levels of this Government. The USG has, and will continue to have, the deepest concern for the safety of all Americans abroad. We have taken, and continue to take, steps to provide greater protection for our personnel overseas and to make it more difficult for kidnapping to take place. If, as in this unfortunate case, a kidnapping does occur, we look to the host government to do all that is practicable to insure the safe return of our personnel. In this respect, the GOT has been exerting--and continues to exert--extraordinary efforts. Painful experience over the years convinces us that payment of ransom to kidnapers would only encourage terrorist groups to kidnap other Americans all over the world. Specifically in this case it would only serve to place in serious jeopardy all of the approximately 16,000 Americans in Turkey. If pressed: No, for the reasons previously given, the USG does not believe it desirable or in the interest of Americans overseas to meet such demands by terrorist groups.

Would the USG Assist in Transmitting Money or Messages if Other Americans Wished to Pay? If the USG thought payment was the solution, it would

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\* Drafted by F. E. Cash, Jr., NEA/TUR, March 6, 1971.

do this itself. However, it could not stand in the way of efforts of private citizens and would make its good offices available as appropriate.

2. Can add that experience also shows this not RPT not simple matter of paying and getting victims back alive. Victims frequently killed even if money paid because know who abductors are and where were hidden and can therefore aid in apprehension and conviction.





Appendix B

MATERIALS RELATING TO THE ELROM CASE

EXCERPTS FROM WRITINGS BY MAHIR ÇAYAN

A proletarian party is needed to lead the revolutionary struggle. This party is a war-structure brought into being by professional revolutionaries. These professional revolutionaries are people who break all ties with existing society, devote their whole lives to the revolution (not just their free evenings), and who become experts on Marxist organization. In the beginning, no distinctions can be made with respect to class origins within this party which has arisen from these professional revolutionaries. Such an organization must not be large, and must be kept as secret as possible. . . . Some may not be told of the activities of others.\*

The proletarian revolutionary movement is becoming an avalanche in many areas of the country; it has spread to the farthest corners; there are groups of revolutionaries in nearly every region. Our group will centralize this movement in a proletarian structure with iron discipline. We see now the beginning of a trend--which will shortly flow full, growing like an avalanche, to sweep away political reaction and achieve success.\*\*

An article, entitled, "The Game Being Played in our Country and the Treason of all Petty Bourgeois Opportunist Groups" characterized the March 12 memo as "an imperialist plot." "Revolutionaries must expect difficult but satisfying days ahead--they must prepare themselves and all the cadres for a most active struggle. Concrete examples of organized and active struggle will be shown to the masses." "We will silence the 'heroes' of martial law. The generals are lackeys of the imperialists, traitors."\*\*\*

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\* *Cumhuriyet*, August 18, 1971, p. 5. Quote from Çayan Brochure, "Kesintisiz Devrim" (Permanent Revolution) issued April 1971.

\*\* *Aydinlik*, January 1970, June 1970 issues.

\*\*\* *Kurtuluş*, April 1, 1971.

GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUÉ RESPONDING TO DEMANDS FROM ELROM KIDNAPPERS:

TEXT OF DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER KOÇAŞ' BROADCAST\*

Israeli Consul-General to Turkey Ephraim Elrom has been kidnapped by four ruffians. It has been established that this vile attack--carried out against a person doing his duty in Turkey, protected by traditional Turkish hospitality and Turkish law--was perpetrated by members of a secret organization which has already been involved in illegal activities and whose goals are to undermine and destroy the Turkish Republic; their identities have been established.

The armed attackers, known as the Central Committee of the Turkish Peoples' Liberation Front, carrying their insolence even further, have shown the impudence to set forth conditions for the initiation of negotiations with the Turkish state and its government. They have demanded that all terrorists (so-called revolutionaries) in custody be freed by 5:00 p.m., May 20. If not, they announce, they will execute the kidnapped foreign Consul-General. At this time, we are communicating our decision to them and making it public.

If the kidnapped Consul is not released immediately after the broadcast of this announcement, those who are found to have any connection with the above-mentioned secret organization and those who have made provocative statements, issued provocative publications and encouraged our innocent youth to illegal activities--all of whose identities have long been known by our security authorities--will be taken into custody at once under martial law provisions; those residing outside martial law districts will be turned over to the nearest martial law commander.

Moreover, a draft law providing for the death penalty for all kidnapers, regardless of reasons, their accomplices, and those who fail to inform officials upon learning of their whereabouts, will be submitted to the Turkish Grand National Assembly at once. If the current kidnap victim is killed, the aforementioned law will be made retroactive, to apply equally to those involved in this act as well as other members of this organization and others arrested and charged with the same crime.

This declaration is an explicit directive to administrative heads and security courts outside the martial law districts as well as the Martial Law Command.

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\* *Cumhuriyet*, May 18, 1971.

PLEA ISSUED BY ELSA ELROM, MARCH 20, 1971

I am addressing you young people as a desolated mother who has lost her only son in a terrible plane crash. My husband is all that I have in life. Without him my life would have no meaning. You have parents and perhaps spouses who are thinking of you at this very moment. For their sakes, I hope that you will show understanding of my state of mind and the fear and agitation that comes over me when I think of losing my husband.

I am hoping that you will not remain indifferent to my appeal, that the sense of humanity which is the highest value of mankind will triumph and that you will not prolong the pain I suffer.

(Signed) Elsa Elrom