

Ecevit: 'foreign interference' behind terror

The following are excerpts from an interview with Turkish Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit conducted by Jean-Pierre Clerc and printed May 10 in the French daily LeMonde.

Question: *Terrorism has claimed more than 1,000 victims in Turkey in recent years. Why?*

Ecevit: Terrorism has escalated in Turkey in the past 12 years. Right-wing movements, including a legal party (Nationalist Action Party—ed.), have openly supported members of extreme right-wing groups. They have had training camps for years. The conservative Justice Party (of Süleyman Demirel—ed.) has tried to take advantage of that. ... Under the coalition that preceded my government, right-wing terrorism enjoyed official protection. ...

Question: *What are the deep-seated causes of this terrorism?*

Ecevit: Our economic and social problems obviously provide a favorable climate. What country with an annual inflation rate of 50 percent and an unemployment rate of 20 percent would be exempt from terrorism? There is certainly foreign interference.

Terrorism is international. Turkey is just one target among many. However, that does not explain everything. If our society were sound, the danger from outside would not be very great.

Question: *Can Turkey contemplate diplomatic alternatives?*

Ecevit: As I have said on many occasions, we do not intend to leave NATO; we have never attempted to blackmail our allies. ...

Nonetheless, it would not be accurate to think that Turkey is going to remain an anachronistic remnant of the cold war. Detente is progressing. We want to make a contribution to detente too, and our geostrategic position enables us to do so. We can take part in collective defense by helping the establishment of an atmosphere of mutual understanding in the region. ...

If there is a tendency to move away from the West, it is because we are forced to do so by the attitude of some Western countries and by their failure to understand our economic problems. If, for example, our trade relations with the West are strained, it is not our fault.

accept. ... Mr. Ecevit has been fighting the IMF austerity measures for months as he knows the proposed package would give the Opposition Justice party of Mr. Demirel the final leverage to obtain a vote of no confidence in Parliament."

Several other stringent conditions are being forced upon Ankara, according to the Turkish press: 1) Turkey must surrender its national economic planning prerogatives to the OECD—a clear infringement of Turkey's national sovereignty; 2) the Turkish government must announce that it has no differences with NATO and will work with the alliance to "check Soviet expansionism"; and 3) Turkey must back the Camp David accords and withdraw support of those Arab countries opposed to the Egypt-Israel war pact.

To strongarm the Turks into line, Alexander Haig, the just-retired commander of NATO, visited Turkey June 1 on his first civilian deployment. Both Haig and NATO Secretary General Joseph Luns have been loudly sounding the alarm about Turkey in recent weeks, declaring Turkey to be the most critical security problem facing the West today because of its economic problems and related political instability.

That Haig's British sponsors are coordinating the

"break Turkey" operation is clear. According to the London *Financial Times*, "the new British Government [is] reportedly prepared to play a more active role than its predecessor" in getting Turkey to resume its post-World War II commitment to "stand up to the Soviets." In particular, wrote the *Financial Times*, "the Conservatives put more emphasis on the importance of Turkey to NATO." As a result, the British have suddenly become "more willing to contribute to an aid package for Turkey," the *Financial Times* article concluded.

In a speech last month before the Council of Europe, Ecevit charged "certain Western allies" with trying to exploit Turkey's economic difficulties by imposing disastrous economic and political policies. "The West is trying for further detente," he added. "But when Turkey tries to do the same, they ask suspiciously, 'Is Turkey trying to break with the West?'"

Domestic desertions

Adding to Ecevit's problems is the fact that the Turkish business community has abandoned him. The Association of Turkish Industrialists and Businessmen (TUS-